

Ms. Susie V. Castillo, Board Member

SUBJECT: COALITION TO SUPPORT GRIEVING STUDENTS

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL SERVICES AND STUDENT AND SCHOOL SUPPORT

LINK TO STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT: HIGHLY EFFECTIVE TEACHERS, LEADERS AND STAFF

In the United States, approximately one in 20 children will lose a parent by the time they reach 16 years of age, and the vast majority of children experience a significant loss by the time they complete high school. Yet grieving children are often overlooked - both in society, and in schools, where they spend so much of their time. Schools have a critical role to play in the grief journeys of children who have lost a loved one, as this can have a serious impact on learning and can manifest itself in decreased academic performance, social withdrawal, and/or behavioral problems.

The Coalition to Support Grieving Students has come together to remedy a current gap in the educational professions: the development of a set of resources broadly approved by leading professional organizations to guide educators and other school personnel in supporting and caring for their grieving students. The primary resource, a practitioner-oriented website - grievingstudents.org - provides practical, accessible information for classroom educators, principals, administrators, and student support personnel. This user-friendly, interdisciplinary site represents a major step forward in enabling educators to learn about the issue of childhood grief and develop an understanding of how to help.

Founding members of The Coalition to Support Grieving Students include: AASA - The School Superintendents Association, the American School Counselor Association, the National Association of School Psychologists, and the University of Southern California's School of Social Work - National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement, among others.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
MS. SUSIE V. CASTILLO:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorize the Superintendent to explore the feasibility of incorporating materials and resources from the Coalition to Support Grieving Students into professional development opportunities for staff, and report back to the Board by the December 14, 2016 School Board meeting.