

Ms. Maria Teresa Rojas, Board Member

Co-Sponsors: Dr. Lawrence S. Feldman, Board Chair  
Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall, Board Member  
Ms. Susie V. Castillo, Board Member  
Dr. Steve Gallon III, Board Member  
Ms. Lubby Navarro, Board Member

} Added

**SUBJECT: MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS (M-DCPS)  
HURRICANE MARIA RELIEF EFFORTS FOR THE PEOPLE  
OF PUERTO RICO AND THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS**

} Revised

**COMMITTEE: INNOVATION, GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS, AND  
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

**LINK TO STRATEGIC  
BLUEPRINT: INFORMED, ENGAGED, AND EMPOWERED  
STAKEHOLDERS**

Hurricane Maria, the most powerful storm to make a direct hit on Puerto Rico in almost a century, ravaged the island knocking out all electricity, overwhelming towns with flashfloods and mudslides, compounding the already considerable pain of the residents. Additionally, a few weeks ago Hurricane Irma dealt the island a glancing setback, leaving nearly 70 percent of households without power.

The storm, which made landfall as a Category 4 hurricane, took the island's entire power grid and only added to the anguishes of a commonwealth that has been grinding under the burden of a prolonged financial crisis. Beyond the immediate damage from winds up to 155 miles per hour, continuous rain flooded coastal communities as well as neighborhoods in the central, mountainous areas of the island, which is full of rivers and streams. The power failures has largely cut off communications with some of the worst-hit areas. The hurricane blew out windows at hospitals, schools, police stations, homes, apartment buildings. It has turned some streets into roaring rivers and destroyed hundreds of homes across the island. It is unclear as to when and how schools will reopen and many children are not receiving the services they need to deal with the impact of this ravaging storm. It's also been reported that it will take months before power is restored and the human suffering throughout the entire island is beyond comprehension.

After the devastating impact of Hurricane Irma, a Category 5 storm, to the U. S. Virgin Islands, Hurricane Maria took aim at the Caribbean islands mixing deadly combination of winds and rising waters. Government officials and local residents have reported damages as catastrophic and say that it will be months before they are able to recover. It's been reported that 80% of the islands are destroyed and over 40,000 people are homeless.

} Added

Throughout the years, Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) has had to deal with its own issues related to hurricanes but has also been very responsive in providing relief and humanitarian aid to other parts of the country impacted by natural disasters. At the September 6, 2017, Board meeting, Dr. Lawrence S. Feldman, Chair, proffered agenda item H-15 Revised, which authorized the Superintendent to provide assistance to school districts affected by Hurricane Harvey. It is in that same spirit this item seeks to provide any assistance that M-DCPS can offer to the commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. } Revised

This item has been reviewed and approved by the School Board Attorney's office as to form and legal sufficiency.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY**

**MS. MARIA TERESA ROJAS:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorize the Superintendent of Schools to provide any assistance or humanitarian aid, as deemed appropriate, to the commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. } Revised