

Dr. Lawrence S. Feldman, Board Member

**SUBJECT: ENDORSEMENT OF THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY AS NATIONAL
TEEN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION AWARENESS
MONTH**

COMMITTEE: ACADEMICS, INNOVATION, EVALUATION AND TECHNOLOGY

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

Each year, approximately 1.5 million high school students report experiencing abuse from a dating partner. Other national studies indicate that ten percent of teens, female and male, had been the victims of physical dating violence, while 29% had reported being verbally or psychologically abused within the previous year. This growing and harrowing problem is addressed through Miami-Dade County Public Schools Board (M-DCPS) Policy 5517.03, which outlines reporting requirements, student complaints/reporting, support and reasonable accommodations, dating violence and/or abuse prevention curriculum and professional development, as prescribed by Florida State Statutes 1006.148. According to the M-DCPS policy definition, "Student dating violence involves a pattern of emotional, verbal, sexual, or physical abuse used by one person in a current or past dating relationship to exert power and control over another. Abuse may include insults, coercion, social sabotage, sexual harassment, stalking, threats and/or acts of physical or sexual abuse. It may also include abuse, harassment, and stalking via electronic devices such as cell phones and computers, harassment through a third party, and may be physical, mental, or both."

Fortunately, Teen Dating Violence (TDV) can be prevented through education fostering a focus on reducing risk factors and fostering protective factors. By empowering teens through relationships that encourage healthy lives and behaviors, role models, teaches, coaches, mentors and school community members play an important role in delivering the message to young people that abuse should not be tolerated under any circumstances. The M-DCPS policy and corresponding support services enforce this message and encourage the school community to be a safe space for students; a place where behavioral norms are not tolerant of abuse in any relationship.

Governmental agencies and organizations such as The Florida Department of Education, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and The Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence have all initiated awareness campaigns and access to support materials to assist in educational initiatives. Additionally, this month in South Florida, community partners Cox Media Group, Aetna and The Embrace Girls Foundation will join forces to shed light on dating violence through a Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking Forum featuring a well-known speaker, empowering information and resources. Perhaps closest to the M-DCPS School Board, School Board Member Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall's 'No More Broken Hearts' annual workshop will be held on February 23, 2019. This long-standing program has provided violence prevention and intervention training to teachers and community members since 2004.

This item seeks to endorse February as Teen Dating Violence (TDV) Awareness and Prevention Month in M-DCPS and raise awareness about healthy relationships and the prevention of violence and abuse.

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

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
DR. LAWRENCE S. FELDMAN:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, endorse February as Teen Dating Violence Prevention Month in Miami-Dade County Public Schools.