

Dr. Steve Gallon III, Board Member

Co-Sponsors: Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman, Chair } A
 Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall } D
 Dr. Lawrence S. Feldman } E
 Ms. Maria Teresa Rojas } D

**SUBJECT: DECLARATION OF OPPOSITION TO ARMING TEACHERS IN
 MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL, STUDENT, SCHOOL & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

**LINK TO STRATEGIC
BLUEPRINT: SAFE, HEALTHY AND SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

The Miami-Dade County Public Schools remains committed to ensuring the safety, security, and overall well-being of students, staff, and members of the community. In doing so, it adopts and implements various strategic and innovative safety and security measures and approaches that reflect both best practices and those required by law.

As is widely known, the issue of school safety and security has been elevated because of the tragedy that took place at Marjory Stoneman Douglas Senior High School on February 14, 2018. Consequently, the district, state, and nation have increased proactivity in the provision of attention, resource, and strategy to improve school security and student safety. In fact, several laws have been adopted, such as the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act (MSDHSPSA), as well as other initiatives, requirements, and strategies intended to keep students safe in school. Recently, the 2019 Legislature took action to amend provisions governing the implementation of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act. One significant amendment related to a school district's participation in the Coach Aaron Feis Guardian Program to meet the requirement of establishing a safe-school officer. This provision would allow for individuals, including teachers, to serve as school guardians and therefore be armed. Such a determination is to be made at the discretion and upon authorization by the School Board. On Wednesday, May 8, 2019, Governor Ron De Santis signed this legislation allowing teachers to be armed into law.

Despite some of the controversies and contentions around the notion and potential reality of arming classroom teachers, the law recognizes the differing perspectives, positions and perceptions regarding arming teachers and therefore defers to the local school boards. Thus, provides decision-making authority to the local school board or individual charter school governing board. As such, the ultimate authority on this matter in M-DCPS rests with the School Board. Presently, School Board Policy 4217 stipulates that "except for School Police, employees are prohibited from possessing, storing, making, or using a weapon, including a concealed weapon, in a school safety zone and any setting that is under the control and supervision of the Board..." This item further reaffirms this policy in opposing the arming of teachers in the classrooms.

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As this matter remains a source of both concern and contention to teachers, parents, students, staff, and community stakeholders in Miami-Dade County Public Schools, it is both incumbent and prudent for the School Board to lean into its leadership and position on this matter from a formal, public, and policy position. Doing so, will affirm the Board's position and convey to school, district, and community stakeholders of M-DCPS' decision on this critically important matter.

This item seeks to request that the School Board of Miami-Dade County, pursuant to the provisions of SB 7030 and law, publicly declare its position as policymakers and oppose the arming of teachers in Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

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

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
DR. STEVE GALLON III:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida,
declares its opposition to arming teachers in the Miami-
Dade County Public Schools.

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