

Dr. Marta Pérez, School Board Member

Co-Sponsors:      Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman, Chair } A  
                             Dr. Steve Gallon III, Vice Chair        } D  
                             Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall        } D  
                             Ms. Maria Teresa Rojas                    } E  
                             Ms. Luisa Santos                             } D

**SUBJECT:            THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA,  
                             RECOGNIZE THE MONTH OF MAY AS WATER SAFETY MONTH  
                             IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**COMMITTEE:        ACADEMICS, INNOVATION, EVALUATION & TECHNOLOGY**

**LINK TO STRATEGIC  
PLAN:                RELEVANT, RIGOROUS, & INNOVATIVE ACADEMICS**

Florida leads the nation with more child drownings than any other state. Drowning is the leading cause of accidental death in the United States in children ages one through four. With water-related activities taking place throughout the year, our youngest children are the most vulnerable. Of growing concern is the rising popularity of the use of private homes as vacation destinations. Florida has the second highest number of residential swimming pools in the country. Residential swimming pools are not required to meet the same safety standards and regulations as commercial and hotel pools.

We recognize the benefits that swimming, and aquatic-related activities have on good physical and mental health and enhance the quality of life for everyone. We understand the essential role that education regarding the topic of water safety plays in preventing drowning and recreational water-related injuries.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools successfully implemented the “Learn to Swim” program and the iSwim initiative, bringing together stakeholder groups to advance awareness of water safety throughout the community. Legislative efforts served to strengthen our position of providing on-site swimming lessons for children in kindergarten. We actively promote water safety events and offer the Red Cross water safety curriculum for younger students. Secondary school students can participate in outdoor water sports such as kayaking, sailing, and open water safety training that include safe boating practices. These courses are provided in our three community partner locations: Coconut Grove Sailing Club, Miami Yacht Club, and Oleta State Park.

As a community, we commend the ongoing efforts and commitments by local municipalities, non-profit organizations, and other stakeholder groups to educate the public on the importance of water safety.

**Revised  
H-15**

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

**ACTION PROPOSED BY  
DR. MARTA PÉREZ:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, recognize the month of May as Water Safety Month in Miami-Dade County Public Schools.