

Frank J. Cobo, Member

SUBJECT: THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, DIRECT THE SUPERINTENDENT TO RECOMMEND A PLAN FOR HOSTING A CELEBRATION HONORING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF JOSE MARTI

COMMITTEE: EDUCATION AND SCHOOL OPERATIONS

January 28, 2003 marked the 150th anniversary of the birth of José Martí, Cuba's greatest hero, poet, statesman and martyred democratic revolutionary. Considered the apostle of Cuban independence, Martí was arrested at the age of 15 for writing letters advocating his country's independence from Spain. When he was only 17 his opposition to colonial rule caused him to be exiled to Spain, where he published a pamphlet on the horrors of his political imprisonment in Cuba. His numerous poems, articles and books advocated personal freedom as well as liberty for his homeland. "Liberty," he wrote, "is the right of every man to be honest, to think and to speak without hypocrisy." Martí was fatally wounded in Dos Ríos, Cuba, during his first battle against Spanish soldiers. He was 42 years old.

Although trained as a lawyer, Martí devoted much of his energy to writing and teaching. His writings, now seen as precursors to the "modernismo" movement in Spanish literature, were noted for their simple, fluent style and vivid imagery. A staunch supporter of public education, Martí was a teacher in Venezuela, Guatemala, and New York. "Education is like a tree," he said. "The seed is sown, and it opens out into many branches."

Jose Martí's words and example serve as inspiration to educators, students and citizens everywhere who yearn to teach, to learn and to live free. It is proposed, therefore, that The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, host a celebration honoring Jose Martí during the 150th anniversary of his birth.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
MR. FRANK J. COBO:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent of Schools to return to the Board at its next meeting with a recommendation and cost analysis for a celebration honoring Jose Martí during the 150th anniversary of his birth.