

Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman, Board Member

**SUBJECT: SCHOOL BOARD ENDORSEMENT OF TRAFFIC SAFETY  
MESSAGE FLYER FOR DISTRIBUTION DURING THE FIRST  
WEEK OF SCHOOL**

**COMMITTEE: INNOVATION, EFFICIENCY AND GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS**

**LINK TO DISTRICT  
STRATEGIC PLAN: IMPROVED SAFETY THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT BY  
IMPLEMENTING PREVENTATIVE MEASURES AND  
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING**

The Miami-Dade County Public Schools Community Traffic Safety Team (CTST) was endorsed by the School Board at its April 18, 2006 meeting under Agenda Item B-8, which I sponsored. For the past three years, the CTST has partnered with the School District to promote student pedestrian/bicycle safety in our neighborhoods. The CTST is a locally based team of multi-jurisdictional agencies under the auspices of the Florida Department of Transportation.

CTST membership includes School District representatives from the Division of Safety & Emergency Management, School Police, District Transportation, School Operations, Planning, Design, & Sustainability/MPO Liaison, and representatives from the following agencies: Florida Department of Transportation, Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization, Miami-Dade County Police Crossing Guard Unit, Miami-Dade County Public Works, Citizens' Independent Transportation Trust, Florida International University/Engineering Division, City of Miami Bicycle Coordinator, and the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine/WalkSafe Program.

The WalkSafe Program, which has been endorsed by the School Board on an annual basis, has been aggressively targeting elementary schools with a mission to decrease pediatric pedestrian injuries and fatalities, increase physical activity levels and improve walk-ability. Since 2002, there has been a 66% decrease in the number of children being sent to the two major trauma centers in Miami-Dade County, as a result of traffic related pedestrian injuries. This past school year, the WalkSafe curriculum was implemented at 143 Miami-Dade County Public Schools, teaching over 87,000 students to "walksafe". The goal for this coming school year is to implement the WalkSafe Program at all elementary schools in the District.

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The CTST recognizes that student pedestrian safety initiatives at the classroom level are an important component of overall traffic safety in our schools and surrounding communities. However, community-based encouragement and involvement is just as important to ensure pedestrian awareness and safe driving skills. Parents and student drivers need to also follow posted school speed zone signs, crosswalk signs and parking laws.

As such, in addition to promoting the WalkSafe Program during the Walk to School Day Events on October 7, 2009, the CTST wishes to start the new school year with a resounding safety message that aggressively promotes student traffic safety at the elementary, middle and high school levels. In this regard, it has developed a safety flyer for distribution at all schools to parents, students and teachers (see attached, which will also be translated into Spanish and Creole). Distribution will be handled via the District Weekly Briefing format, and postings on school websites. The messages shown below are short and simple, but the potential of saving lives and avoiding costly police enforcement violations are enormous:

- Walk with your children to school. Walking to school promotes health, saves gas and time, and reduces traffic congestion around the school for everyone.
- Obey all posted speed signs. Slow down when entering 15 MPH School Speed Zones. Police will enforce this!
- Obey all posted roadway signs. For example, "Do Not Enter" signs are for designated limited access streets around some schools. Police will enforce this!
- When stopping, standing, or parking your vehicle, please use the designated areas only. Do not block driveways or sidewalks. If you use non-designated areas, or are blocking access ways, you will be ticketed!
- Buckle Up! Ensure that all occupants of the vehicle, especially children, are always buckled up. Children must be secured in proper child safety seats and/or booster chairs, if applicable. The State of Florida Primary Seat Belt Law requires everyone (adults and children) to buckle up. Fines are \$114 per person, per infraction. If a child (under the age of 18) is seen not wearing a seat belt, the driver will be ticketed.
- Pedestrian Safety Tips: Always use the "look left, right, left" rule whenever crossing a street. Always use designated crosswalks and pedestrians signals, when available, making sure to follow all signal instructions. Do not cross mid-block between intersections, unless there is a designated crosswalk. Do not cross in front of a vehicle unless you know for sure the driver clearly sees you.
- Be Safe...Be Seen: When walking or bike riding wear bright colors during the day. During dawn, dusk and night times, use lights and/or reflective clothing so

you are more visible to drivers. Backpacks should have reflective materials on them. Carry a flashlight.

In order to jump-start the new school year with important traffic safety messages, it is recommended that the School Board endorse the Welcome Back to School Safety Flyer, developed by the CTST and the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, and continue to encourage the WalkSafe Program guidelines on a daily basis throughout the school year.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY**

**MS. PERLA TABARES HANTMAN:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, endorse Traffic Safety Message Flyers for distribution during the first week of school, as developed by The Miami-Dade County Public Schools Community Traffic Safety Team and The University of Miami Miller School of Medicine/Walksafe Program.

August 2009



MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
AND  
YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY TRAFFIC SAFETY TEAMS

**WELCOME YOU BACK TO SCHOOL! Be Smart. Be Safe.**

Summer is over and it's back to school time! In an effort to keep your new school year fun and safe we ask that parents and children/students, and also, school staff and teachers, follow these simple guidelines when traveling to and from school:

- Walk with your children to school. Walking to school promotes health, saves gas and time, and reduces traffic congestion around the school for everyone.
- Obey all posted speed signs. Slow down when entering 15 MPH School Speed Zones. Police will enforce this!
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- When stopping, standing, or parking your vehicle, please use the designated areas only. Do not block driveways or sidewalks. If you use non-designated areas, or are blocking access ways, you will be ticketed!
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- Be Safe...Be Seen: When walking or bike riding wear bright colors during the day. During dawn, dusk and night times, use lights and/or reflective clothing so you are more visible to drivers. Backpacks should have reflective materials on them. Carry a flashlight.

*This message is brought to you by Miami-Dade County Public Schools,  
Your Local Community Traffic Safety Teams, and its partners. Be smart. Be safe.*

