Office of School Board Members
Board Meeting of April 14, 2010

March 22, 2010

Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman, Vice Chair

**SUBJECT:** **COMMEMORATION OF THE 108TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF CUBA FROM SPAIN – MAY 20, 2010**

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

**LINK TO STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:** **STUDENT, PARENT, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The struggle for Cuban independence ended on May 20, 1902, after a long and courageous battle against Spain and a brief occupation by the United States following the Spanish-American War in 1898. Throughout the late 1800s, Cuban patriots, including Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, Antonio Maceo, Máximo Gómez, Calixto García, Tomás Estrada Palma and José Martí, fought for Cuban independence from Spain's colonial rule.

Martí, the most well-known voice for Cuban independence, organized the Cuban Revolutionary Party. He was dedicated to the causes of freedom for Cuba and equality for Cuban people. Martí, along with several other patriots, garnered support from around the island colony and throughout Latin America, the U.S. and Europe. Martí paid the ultimate price for freedom with his life during a battle against Spanish troops at Dos Ríos, Cuba, on May 19, 1895 – seven years and one day before Cuba achieved independence. Martí's death served as inspiration to the cause for freedom and inspired feelings of nationalism throughout the island.

In commemorating the 108th anniversary of Cuban Independence from Spain, we also celebrate Cuban culture and the strong historical ties between Cuba and the United States. Following the Spanish-American War, the United States assisted Cuban nationals in their efforts to develop a strong and independent country. The U.S. contributed to Cuba's economic recovery and to the restructuring of Cuba's judicial and educational systems. Since 1959, the United States has offered refuge and protection to Cuban patriots and has promoted the preservation of democratic values and principles in the island nation.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools is proud of its efforts to support the Cuban-American community. Students at all grade levels are taught democratic principles to ensure that they understand the importance of liberty and freedom. Through strong instructional and support programs, Cuban-Americans and all members of our community have the opportunity to fulfill their educational and professional potential. As we approach the 108th anniversary of Cuban independence from Spain, Miami-Dade County Public Schools honors the Cuban-American community and extends hope that freedom and democracy soon will be a reality for Cuba and its people.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY VICE CHAIR PERLA TABARES HANTMAN:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, join the Cuban-American community as it commemorates May 20, 2010 as the 108th anniversary of the independence of Cuba from Spain.