

Dr. Lawrence S. Feldman, Vice Chair

**SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION NO. 12-012 OF THE
SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA,
RECOGNIZING THE MELISSA INSTITUTE FOR VIOLENCE
PREVENTION AND TREATMENT**

COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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

The Melissa Institute for Violence Prevention and Treatment was established in 1996 to honor the memory of Melissa Aptman, a Miami native who lost her life due to violence. The mission of The Melissa Institute for Violence Prevention and Treatment is to prevent violence and promote safer communities. The non-profit organization is committed to the study and prevention of violence through education, community service, research support, and consultation.

Since its inception, the organization has focused on literacy, bullying prevention and intervention, and the importance of parenting. In 2008, The Melissa Institute for Violence Prevention and Treatment announced that it was establishing a literacy website to provide professional development information and training for elementary school teachers. The website is being spearheaded by renowned child literacy expert Dr. Dale Willows and offers a wealth of information for educators. Research compiled by The Melissa Institute indicates that students with low reading scores in kindergarten through third grade often have problems with issues such as poor grades, drug abuse, and delinquency. Approximately 85 percent of juvenile offenders cannot read.

In November 2010, The Melissa Institute hosted a conference titled, "Bullying Prevention: Social Responsibility in 21st Century Schools," sponsored by Miami-Dade County Public Schools' Division of Student Services and Baptist Children's Hospital. More than 230 public school psychologists, social workers, counselors, and crisis team members in attendance heard from leading experts about the latest research on the effects of bullying, victimization, and cyberbullying on students.

Adults and Children Together Against Violence (ACT) is a program designed by the American Psychological Association (APA) to train child-care and mental health professionals. The Melissa Institute has been designated as the ACT Regional Training Center for the southeastern United States and has trained more than 200 professionals in South Florida alone. The ACT program's goal is to raise parent awareness and promote violence prevention through child development, anger management, social problem solving, and media literacy. The Melissa Institute for Violence Prevention and Treatment is to be commended for its commitment to the welfare and well-being of the students, parents, and families of Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

ACTION PROPOSED BY

DR. LAWRENCE S. FELDMAN: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 12-012 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, recognizing The Melissa Institute for Violence Prevention and Treatment.

**Replacement
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