

Ms. Raquel Regalado, Board Member

**SUBJECT: REQUEST THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD TAKE AN
OFFICIAL POSITION ON BILL SB 622 c. HB 627 RELATED
TO BULLYING OF SCHOOL CHILDREN**

**COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**

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

While we continue to face the challenges of protecting Florida's children against increasing threats of being bullied at school sites, we now face the increased use of Internet and cell phones by children. Bullying can now follow them wherever they go - even to their own homes; and the messages can be easily shared with a wide audience. Statistics show that twice as many children and youth were part of cyberbullying (as a victim, perpetrator, or both) in 2005 compared to five years earlier. Since about 80 percent of teenagers own a cell phone, personal digital assistant or computer with Internet access, cyberbullying is a convenient method of harassment and intimidation. Cyberbullying extends into the community at-large and into people's homes.

State Senator Ellyn Bogdanoff has introduced bill SB 622, and State Representative Dwight Bullard has filed comparable bill HB 627. The proposed legislation would prohibit bullying or harassment of a student or school employee by use of any computer, computer system, or computer network that is physically located on school property, regardless of ownership. The bill also adds "emotional hurt" to the list of behaviors that indicate that bullying may be involved. The proposed bill defines the term "within the scope of public K-12 educational institution; requiring that each school district include in its districtwide policy instruction on recognizing behaviors that lead to bullying and harassment and how to take appropriate preventive action" based on those individuals' observations, etc.

The Miami-Dade County Public School district should favor any and all measures to protect children and thus, support this legislation that aims at protecting victims who experience bullying in schools and electronic aggression beyond the school site.

ACTION PROPOSED BY

MS. RAQUEL REGALADO: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, take an official position on bill SB 622 c. HB 627 related to bullying of school children.