

Dr. Lawrence S. Feldman, Vice Chair

**SUBJECT: REQUEST APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION NO. 12-144 OF
THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA
COMMEMORATING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF
HURRICANE ANDREW AND HONORING THE EFFORTS OF
THE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM AND
COMMUNITY IN THE WAKE OF THIS DISASTER**

**COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**

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

In the morning hours of August 24, 1992, the second costliest storm in modern day U.S. history, Hurricane Andrew, made landfall in Miami-Dade County. The disaster left in the wake of Hurricane Andrew, totaled an estimated \$44 billion in damages, with over 150,000 homes made uninhabitable or severely damaged, 180,000 families left homeless in the following weeks, and 65 casualties attributed to the storm.

Approximately 200 Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) board owned facilities incurred some form of physical damage with the most serious damage concentrated in the southern half of the county. Schools such as Perrine, R.R. Moton, Air Base Elementary Schools, Arvida Middle School, and Homestead Senior High suffered from collapsed roofs and walls and extensive water damage and looked as if they "had been hit by a missile" according to then Superintendent of Schools, Octavio Visiedo. After assessing over 400 school-board owned properties, an estimated \$96 Million in damages to exterior and interior finishes, roofing, electrical and mechanical systems, fencing, and property content damage were recorded.

Despite obstacles and extenuating circumstances, the school system worked with the Red Cross and military personnel to ensure services to the community-at-large were made available. From shelter during the evacuation period to after the storm, schools provided the community with a place where they could receive hot meals, showers and air conditioning. Additionally, the school system provided assistance to its teachers and staff when estimates indicated that 5,000 employees had lost their homes in the hurricane. A temporary shelter with access to housing assistance, clothing, hot meals, and counseling was set up at Ruben Dario Middle School for employees and their families and a United Teachers of Dade caravan travelled throughout South Dade to deliver supplies to those in need.

**Replacement
H-16**

After the storm, M-DCPS led the charge to restore a sense of normalcy and stability to the community. Efforts of the Superintendent, District Staff, and Region Personnel, were among the most organized and visible amongst local agencies. Those efforts were realized thanks to each member of the school system, from administrator to teachers, counselors, and support staff, maintenance personnel to custodians, bus drivers to cafeteria workers. Despite the personal losses and crisis in their own lives, thousands of employees began to prepare for the monumental undertaking of opening schools on September 14, 1992, a mere three weeks after the storm. Through their shared sacrifice and efforts, the system and its employees ensured that schools were safe, clean, welcoming and ready to accept and welcome the children of a battered community. Countless untold personal sacrifices were made at each level and by all employees to assist in the transition to a successful opening of schools. M-DCPS employees quiet resolve and commitment to all students helped make schools often the only place where many students could reconnect to a sense of normalcy.

The role of M-DCPS and its employees with their efforts before, during, and after the 2nd worst natural disaster in U.S. modern day history cannot be understated. Deservedly so, after Hurricane Andrew, school systems throughout the country turned to M-DCPS and the standards developed here for emergency operations to assist them in reviewing their own procedures. Special recognition is given to the men and women of the Armed Forces, and especially the Navy Seabees and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, for providing assistance in connecting massive generators, installing new roofs, and addressing structural issues. Alongside District staff, administrators, employees, and parents on this particular Labor Day after Hurricane Andrew, 700 Navy Seabees worked on clearing debris and cleaning school interiors, provided meals, addressed sanitation concerns, moved furniture, and repaired playgrounds.

As a result of the hurricane, this community learned many lessons. Not the least of which was that Miami-Dade County Public Schools was an undeniable cornerstone in the community and played an instrumental role in the rebuilding process. It is the intent of this item that the resilient character, nurturing drive and committed culture displayed by this school system and each of its employees in the wake of Hurricane Andrew be honored and celebrated.

ACTION PROPOSED BY

Dr. LAWRENCE S. FELDMAN:

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 12-144 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, commemorating the 20th anniversary of Hurricane Andrew and honoring the efforts of the Miami-Dade County Dade Public School System and community in the wake of this disaster.

RESOLUTION NO. 12-144
OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, COMMEMORATING
THE 20th ANNIVERSARY OF HURRICANE ANDREW AND HONORING THE EFFORTS
OF THE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM AND COMMUNITY IN THE
WAKE OF THIS DISASTER

WHEREAS, in the morning hours of August 24, 1992, the second costliest storm in modern day U.S. history, Hurricane Andrew, made landfall in Miami-Dade County leaving approximately \$96 Million in damages to over 200 school board owned facilities;

WHEREAS, despite obstacles and extenuating circumstances, the school system worked with the Red Cross and military personnel to ensure services to the community-at-large were made available before and after the storm and provided assistance to its teachers and staff when estimates indicated that 5,000 employees had lost their homes in the hurricane;

WHEREAS, despite the personal losses and crisis in their own lives, thousands of employees began to prepare for the monumental undertaking of opening schools on September 14, 1992, a mere three weeks after the storm and through their shared sacrifice and efforts ensured that schools were safe, clean, welcoming and ready to accept and welcome the children of a battered community;

WHEREAS, special recognition is given to the men and women of the Armed Forces, especially the Navy Seabees and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, for providing assistance in connecting massive generators, installing new roofs, and addressing structural issues at school sites; and

WHEREAS, after the storm, Miami-Dade County Public Schools led the charge to restore a sense of normalcy and stability to the community and played an important role in the rebuilding process.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 12-144 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, commemorating the 20th anniversary of Hurricane Andrew and honoring the efforts of the Miami-Dade County Public School System and community in the wake of this disaster.

A copy of this resolution is placed in the permanent records of this Board.

Presented this fifth day of September, A.D. 2012

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

CHAIR

ATTEST:

Secretary

...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...

