

Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman, Chair

**SUBJECT: SCHOOL BOARD ENDORSEMENT OF NATIONAL TEEN DRIVER SAFETY WEEK, OCTOBER 20-26, 2013, AND ENCOURAGEMENT YEAR-ROUND OF TEEN DRIVER SAFETY SKILLS AT ALL DISTRICT SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS**

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

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

The National Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that each day in the United States, more than 9 people are killed and more than 1,060 people are injured in crashes involving distracted driving. Distracted driving activities include, but are not limited to, using a cell phone, electronic text messaging and eating. Texting while driving has become a national epidemic, as statistics show that 77% of young adult drivers are confident they can safely text and drive. Most alarming, in June 2011, more than 196 billion text messages were sent or received in the Nation, up nearly 50% from June 2009.

The School District participates in National Teen Driver Safety Week, designated by the U. S. Congress as the third week of October, as part of its annual efforts to help bring awareness and reduce distracted driving. This year, the national event will run from October 20-26. This safety initiative encourages parents, young drivers, lawmakers and educators to work together to change risky driving behaviors at the high school age level and help save lives across the country. On a local level, the State of Florida has made great strides with the passage of new legislation that prohibits texting while driving; the law becomes effective October 1, 2013.

To help strengthen awareness efforts, for the past several years the School District has partnered with the Florida Department of Transportation in its "Put It Down" Campaign, which helps educate teens and the general public on the dangers of all forms of distracted driving. In this community-wide endeavor, the District is one of 26 entities that have rallied to speak in one voice. The campaign will also emphasize the new No Texting While Driving law, and its eminent effective date. In the month leading up to the Teen Driver Safety events, weekly E-mail blasts with important related safety messages will be transmitted to all high school students and employees via the District's portal.

In addition, during the safety week, the winning Public Service Announcements and Posters developed by senior high school students for the 2013 Senior High School Student Safety Campaign contest will be reproduced and distributed to all District senior high school campuses, along with promotional safety material.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY CHAIR**

**PERLA TABARES HANTMAN:** That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, endorse National Teen Driver Safety Week, October 20-26, 2013, and encourage year-round teen driver safety skills at all District senior high schools.