

Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman, Chair

**SUBJECT: SCHOOL BOARD ENDORSEMENT OF NATIONAL TEEN DRIVER SAFETY WEEK, OCTOBER 19-25, 2014, AND ENCOURAGE IMPROVEMENT 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 U.S. Department of Transportation reports that distracted driving has become a dangerous epidemic on the nation's roadways, contributing to more than 5,000 traffic fatalities each year. Distracted driving activities include, but are not limited to, using a cell phone, electronic text messaging and eating. Texting is the most alarming and prevalent distracted driving activity among our youth, as surveys show that nearly half of all U.S. high school students, aged 16 years or older, text or email while driving.

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 19-25. 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.

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 87 entities that have rallied to speak in one voice. The campaign will also emphasize the new No Texting While Driving law. In the month leading up to the Teen Driver Safety events, weekly E-mail blasts and web banners with important related safety messages will be transmitted to all appropriate schools and employees via the District's portal/website.

In addition, during the safety week, the winning Public Service Announcements and Posters developed by senior high school students for the 2014 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 19-25, 2014, and encourage improvement year-round of teen driver safety skills at all District senior high schools.