

Ms. Raquel Regalado, Board Member

**SUBJECT: PET EDUCATION AND RESPONSIBILITY TRAINING PROGRAM FOR M-DCPS STUDENTS**

**COMMITTEE: ACADEMICS, EVALUATION AND TECHNOLOGY** } Revised

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

For several years, Miami-Dade County Public Schools has celebrated Be Kind to Animals Week and has supported several initiatives to educate our students about pet responsibility. Historically, these initiatives have included everything from airing Miami-Dade County's PSA's on WLRN to providing adopt-a-thons and internships at Miami-Dade County's Animal Services.

The Pets' Trust Miami, Inc. (PTM) is a private non-profit entity that in January of 2012 started a grass roots effort that resulted in the inclusion of the straw ballot question on the November 2012 ballot. As a result of the same, 64% of voters approved to fund a no-kill initiative and create programs to reduce the number of cats and dogs killed at Miami-Dade Animal Services. Not surprisingly, a component of this plan is an educational initiative aimed at informing residents about animal welfare and responsibility.

To date, the PTM initiative has not been fully implemented by Miami-Dade County. However, there is an opportunity for M-DCPS to aid in the educational aspect of this plan now that all M-DCPS classrooms have Promethean boards and a single video and/or PSA can be broadcasted to every single classroom in the District. Furthermore, considering M-DCPS's ties to WLRN, said video or PSA could also be aired on WLRN and M-DCPS's social media platforms, thereby reaching well beyond our over 350,000 students and employees.

This is important because Miami-Dade Animal Services is taking in an average of 70 abandoned animals on a daily basis and historically, 20,000 of these are killed every year. And while the video would mention these numbers, it would focus on the need to spay and neuter pets, which is not a common practice in many of our communities and is the main cause of the overpopulation and abandonment issues.

Currently, a documentary is being produced on the PTM campaign that includes footage from experts regarding pet welfare and abandonment statistics in Miami-Dade County. Royal Palm Films has offered to aid M-DCPS students, at no cost to the District, in the production of a pet welfare video that could be aired during Be Kind to Animals Week. Ron Magill, of Zoo Miami, has also volunteered to narrate the video and speak about the different components of pet responsibility.

**Revised<sup>3</sup>**  
**H-11**

**ACTION PROPOSED BY  
RAQUEL REGALADO:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, request the Superintendent explore the feasibility of working with appropriate entities on the production of a pet welfare video that may be aired in Miami-Dade County Public Schools during Be Kind to Animals Week.