

Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman, Chair

**SUBJECT: SCHOOL BOARD ENDORSEMENT OF NATIONAL TEEN DRIVER SAFETY WEEK, OCTOBER 19-25, 2015, AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF YEAR-ROUND SAFE DRIVING PRACTICES AT ALL DISTRICT SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS**

**COMMITTEE: INNOVATION, GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

**LINK TO STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT: SAFE, HEALTHY & SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

The U.S. Department of Transportation reports that distracted driving has become a dangerous epidemic on the nation's roadways, contributing to thousands of traffic fatalities, and nearly half a million injuries each year. Distracted driving activities include, but are not limited to, using a cell phone and electronic text messaging. Reaching for a phone, dialing and texting increases your crash risk by three times. Texting is the most alarming and prevalent distracted driving activity among our youngest and most inexperienced drivers, as evidenced by surveys showing that 71% of high school students have sent a text while driving. Young adults are not alone; statistics also reveal that at any given moment, over 660,000 vehicles are being driven daily by someone using a hand-held cell phone.

The School District participates in National Teen Driver Safety Week, 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, 2015. 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.

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. The School District is one of 93 community entities that have rallied to speak in one voice to help strengthen awareness efforts. The campaign will also emphasize the 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 2015 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, 2015, and encouragement of year-round safe driving practices at all District high schools.