

Dr. Martin Karp, Board Member

**SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION NO. 16-085
OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY,
FLORIDA, RECOGNIZING AUGUST 2016, AS CHILDREN'S
VISION AND LEARNING MONTH**

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

**LINK TO STRATEGIC
BLUEPRINT: INFORMED, ENGAGED AND EMPOWERED
STAKEHOLDERS**

August was declared National Children's Vision and Learning Month in 1995. The goal of this national observance is to help educate parents and educators about the critical link between vision and learning. As parents ready their children to start the new school year, we want to help raise awareness about the connection between vision and learning.

Current research shows that vision problems affect millions of American children and thereby impact their ability to learn. According to the American Public Health Association, 25 percent of students in grades K-6 have visual problems that are serious enough to impede learning. The American Optometric Association notes that when vision problems go undetected, children almost invariably have trouble reading and doing their schoolwork. They often display fatigue, fidgeting, and frustrations in the classroom - traits that can lead to a misdiagnosis of dyslexia or other learning disabilities.

Parents and educators often incorrectly assume that if a child passes a school vision screening, then there is no vision problem. However, school vision screenings often only test for visual acuity. In reality, the vision skills needed for successful reading and learning are much more complex. A child who can see 20/20 can still have a vision problem. Exams using only the eye chart do not measure how well a child can see at near distances, nor do they evaluate depth perception, eye coordination or numerous other visual skills required in the learning process.

Eighty percent of what a child learns in school is presented visually. Unfortunately, studies show that only 31 percent of children ages 6 - 16 have an annual eye examination, and 70 percent of children under 6 have never had an eye exam. As a result, 1 in 4 children will go back to school this year with an undiagnosed vision problem that could interfere with their ability to learn.

The school district should encourage all parents and caregivers to make a comprehensive eye examination part of their child's preparations for the new school year for our children to succeed and have opportunities for learning, growth, and fulfillment.

**Replacement
B-7**

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
DR. MARTIN KARP:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 16-085 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, recognizing August 2016, as Children's Vision and Learning Month.

**RESOLUTION NO. 16-085
OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, ENDORSING
AUGUST 2016, AS CHILDREN'S VISION AND LEARNING MONTH**

WHEREAS, as children across the State of Florida prepare for the start of another school year, many of them will begin their studies with undiagnosed and untreated vision problems that could interfere with their ability to read and learn; and

WHEREAS, research shows that vision disorders are a handicapping condition of children; and

WHEREAS, according to the College of Optometrists in Vision Development, as many as one in four school-age children have vision problems that could interfere with learning; and

WHEREAS, all children deserve the opportunity to learn and to achieve their full potential; and

WHEREAS, public awareness about learning-related vision problems is necessary to ensure that young people receive the prompt vision treatment they need to enhance their lives; and

WHEREAS, it is important to encourage parents, educators, school nurses, and all concerned adults to recognize the critical role good vision plays in the learning process; and

WHEREAS, together we can help prevent and reduce the impact untreated vision problems can have on our children's ability to read and learn.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 16-085 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida endorsing August 2016, as Children's Vision and Learning Month.

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

Presented this tenth day of August, A.D. 2016

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

CHAIR

ATTEST:

Secretary