

Ms. Raquel Regalado, Board Member

SUBJECT: PUBLIC HEALTH INTERACTIVE GAMING INITIATIVE

COMMITTEE: ACADEMICS, EVALUATION AND TECHNOLOGY

LINK TO STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT: SAFE, HEALTHY AND SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

On September 19, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention declared the neighborhood of Wynwood a Zika-free area given that no new cases of the virus were reported since early August. However, the fight against the life-threatening virus is far from over. The need for countywide prevention knowledge prevails as the illness continues to actively spread throughout Miami-Dade County.

While at Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) we have been working to educate about Zika, our parents, teachers, and residents are legitimately concerned that the operations of our county's Mosquito Control Division are not optimally effective. Only two years ago, our communities were affected by outbreaks of dengue fever, also a mosquito-borne disease. As such, it is critical to create more levels of collaboration that will help Miami-Dade County now battle the spread of the Zika virus (which is known to be transmitted by mosquito species *Aedes Aegypti* and *Aedes Albopictus*).

The University of Miami, Florida International University, Barry University, and volunteer groups are jointly working on a public health interactive gaming initiative aiming to advance student and countywide knowledge about Zika.

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The program, which will be translated to Spanish and Haitian Creole, will employ video production and gamification techniques that can be shared throughout M-DCPS. All students participating will break out into brainstorming groups to produce a public service video in support of a Zika prevention campaign. All participants will be honored with a Zika training certificate and the winners of best work will participate in a radio interview with NPR, then honored by local officials as the school's honorary Zika Prevention Guards. Each school's winning video will be designated as the specific school's message and played over the M-DCPS TV network. The winning campaign slogan will be designated as the specific school's Zika slogan. Drain and cover will be part of the narrative to align the educational effort with the county's current Zika outreach campaign. Additionally, UM, FIU, Field Innovation Team, Third Wave Volunteers, South Florida Resilience System and the local community of students, along with city council members will do school walk-throughs to identify potential Zika mosquito propagation sites. Each school will also be introduced to a new digital vector-borne mapping application, known as VectorAnalytica, to showcase new technologies used in the fight against Zika. This project will also highlight Miami-Dade County's 311 application so that students can become Zika advocates at home and within their communities. A social media blitz will be hosted during each Zika game event. The colleges and volunteer groups organizing this program have agreed to provide any funding required for our students' video production.

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This program provides our students with a great opportunity to help eradicate a life-threatening disease countywide by increasing prevention knowledge through team work that will result in a public service video production that will empower locals to make a difference in their communities by increasing the Zika virus resilience.

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**ACTION PROPOSED BY
MS.RAQUEL REGALADO:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, through the Superintendent, determine the feasibility and best practices to have M-DCPS students participate in a public health interactive gaming and video production initiative that will help to advance countywide prevention knowledge about the Zika virus.

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