

Ms. Maria Teresa Rojas, Board Member

**SUBJECT: MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS (M-DCPS)
HURRICANE MARIA RELIEF EFFORTS FOR THE PEOPLE OF
PUERTO RICO**

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

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

Hurricane Maria, the most powerful storm to make a direct hit on Puerto Rico in almost a century, ravaged the island knocking out all electricity, overwhelming towns with flashfloods and mudslides, compounding the already considerable pain of the residents. Additionally, a few weeks ago Hurricane Irma dealt the island a glancing setback, leaving nearly 70 percent of households without power.

The storm, which made landfall as a Category 4 hurricane, took the island's entire power grid and only added to the anguishes of a commonwealth that has been grinding under the burden of a prolonged financial crisis. Beyond the immediate damage from winds up to 155 miles per hour, continuous rain flooded coastal communities as well as neighborhoods in the central, mountainous areas of the island, which is full of rivers and streams. The power failures has largely cut off communications with some of the worst-hit areas. The hurricane blew out windows at hospitals, schools, police stations, homes, apartment buildings. It has turned some streets into roaring rivers and destroyed hundreds of homes across the island. It is unclear as to when and how schools will reopen and many children are not receiving the services they need to deal with the impact of this ravaging storm. It's also been reported that it will take months before power is restored and the human suffering throughout the entire island is beyond comprehension.

Throughout the years, Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) has had to deal with its own issues related to hurricanes but has also been very responsive in providing relief and humanitarian aid to other parts of the country impacted by natural disasters. At the September 6, 2017, Board meeting, Dr. Lawrence S. Feldman, Chair, proffered agenda item H-15 Revised, which authorized the Superintendent to provide assistance to school districts affected by Hurricane Harvey. It is in that same spirit this item seeks to provide any assistance that M-DCPS can offer to the commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

This item has been reviewed and approved by the School Board Attorney's office as to form and legal sufficiency.

ACTION PROPOSED BY

MS. MARIA TERESA ROJAS: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorize the Superintendent of Schools to provide any assistance or humanitarian aid, as deemed appropriate, to the commonwealth of Puerto Rico.