

Office of the Superintendent
Alberto M. Carvalho, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: CALLING ON SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS TO DEVELOP MORE RESPONSIBLE POLICIES TO COMBAT CYBER BULLYING, SWIFTER CONTENT REVIEW, INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION AND AWARENESS PROGRAMS RELATED TO BULLYING PREVENTION AND MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

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

The power of social media platforms such as Facebook, SnapChat, YouTube, and others to spread ideas, opinions, and information has transformed how we communicate, how we interact, and how we relate to each other as a society. The power and impact of social media is particularly acute among children and adolescents whose self-esteem and self-perception is often strongly affected by what others say to and about them. We have all been made aware of the problem of cyber bullying and as a District we have taken many steps to educate not only students, but parents as well about the appropriate use of the internet, social media, and the impact of words on one another. Unfortunately, the headlines are still filled with heartbreaking stories of individuals who have been tormented on-line and in some cases have taken their own lives or inflicted harm to themselves or others.

Tragically, such an event just occurred in our community where a teenager took her own life while broadcasting live on an on-line platform. Given the widespread use and proliferation of social media, and the profits generated by these firms, it is incumbent upon these companies to develop responsible policies to combat cyber bullying, institute swifter content review and protocols for the notification of emergency services, if warranted, and to engage in significant investments in education and awareness campaigns and programs related to bullying prevention and mental health support.

This item does not appear in the regularly published agenda. There is good cause to vary from the published agenda due to recent tragic events and the immediate need for a call to action for swifter social media content review protocols.

RECOMMENDED: That the School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida approve and endorse the Superintendent's call to social media platforms to develop more responsible policies to combat cyber bullying, swifter content review, and to engage in significant investments in education and awareness programs related to bullying prevention and mental health support.

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