

Dr. Steve Gallon III, Board Member

SUBJECT: REQUEST APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION NO. 17-003 OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, RECOGNIZING MIAMI NORLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL DRAMA STUDENTS ALEX HIBBERT AND JADEN PINER AND THEIR DRAMA TEACHER TANISHA CIDEL, AS WELL AS, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ALUMNI BARRY JENKINS, TARELL ALVIN MCCRANEY AND ANDREW HEVIA FOR CREATING, PRODUCING AND APPEARING IN THE CRITICALLY-ACCLAIMED FILM *MOONLIGHT*

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL SERVICES AND STUDENT AND SCHOOL SUPPORT

LINK TO STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT: INFORMED, ENGAGED AND EMPOWERED STAKEHOLDERS

Winner of the 2017 *Golden Globe for Best Picture*, Drama, the critically-acclaimed independent film *Moonlight* is a timeless and universal story of human connection and self-discovery that chronicles the life of a young Black male from childhood to adulthood as he struggles to find his place in the world while growing up in Miami's renowned Liberty City neighborhood. The film sheds a light on the dark reality of growing up young, Black, and male in one of the nation's most turbulent urban centers.

Moonlight provides glimpses of moments in the lives of its characters -- moments that reflect grace, kindness, and even redemption. It is ultimately a story about people---people with their own individual struggles as they search for their own truths and wrestle to reconcile their own wellsprings of hope and pain. The characters ultimately reflect people, specifically children in the urban core, who live not on the silver screen, but whose lives exist in the harsh realities seen on a daily basis in our communities and in the work of public education in our community, in our own backyard.

Moonlight is set and filmed in Miami by native Miami filmmakers and Miami-Dade County Public Schools alumni - writer/director Barry Jenkins, a graduate of Miami Northwestern Senior High School; playwright Tarell Alvin McCraney, a graduate of New World School of the Arts; and co-producer Andrew Hevia a graduate of New World Schools of the Arts.

Moonlight showcases the talents of Miami Norland Middle School theatre students Alex Hibbert and Jaden Piner in pivotal roles in the film. It also features their beloved teacher, Tanisha Cidel, also a product of the Arts program at Miami Norland Middle School, who is affectionately referred to as 'Drama Mama' by her theater students. Their roles and performances, and the newfound national prominence of the film serve as a reminder of how critically important the Arts are in our schools and in supporting and advancing student learning. Norland Middle School Principal Ronald Redmond is also to be recognized and commended for his commitment to and support of Arts education.

Moonlight, the sometimes painful yet beautiful semi-autobiographical fusion of the lives of writer/director Barry Jenkins and playwright Tarell Alvin McCraney evidences the possible heights of success of students from underserved communities and dysfunctional family backgrounds. Barry Jenkins and Tarell Alvin McCraney exemplify life's possibilities when family members foster a love of reading; and when neighbors and educators fight for all students and encourage their talents.

Moonlight has been described as a groundbreaking cinematic masterpiece and has been recognized by many prestigious organizations in the entertainment industry via award nominations and wins including winner of the Golden Globe for Best Picture, Drama, Best Picture and Best Director awards by the National Society of Film Critics; and winner of four Gotham Awards including Best Feature, Best Screenplay and Special Jury Award for Best Ensemble. The film is also a top contender for Oscar Awards nominations.

Alex Hibbert; Jaden Piner; Tanisha Cidel; Barry Jenkins; Tarell Alvin McCraney and Andrew Hevia are to be commended for their roles in the groundbreaking cinematic masterpiece that is the film, Moonlight.

Moreover, they are to be commended for serving as positive role models for students of Miami-Dade County Public Schools, including those who seek, aspire for, and deserve increased opportunities to pursue their dreams, passions, and life's work through diverse educational pathways afforded through the Arts.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
DR. STEVE GALLON III:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 17-003 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, recognizing Miami Norland Middle School Drama Students Alex Hibbert and Jaden Piner and their drama teacher Tanisha Cidel, as well as, Miami-Dade County Public Schools alumni Barry Jenkins, Tarell Alvin McCraney and Andrew Hevia for their roles in creating, producing and appearing in the film *Moonlight*.

RESOLUTION NO. 17-003

OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, RECOGNIZING MIAMI NORLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL DRAMA STUDENTS ALEX HIBBERT AND JADEN PINER AND THEIR DRAMA TEACHER TANISHA CIDEL, AS WELL AS, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ALUMNI BARRY JENKINS, TARELL ALVIN MCCRANEY AND ANDREW HEVIA FOR CREATING, PRODUCING AND APPEARING IN THE CRITICALLY-ACCLAIMED FILM *MOONLIGHT*

WHEREAS, *Moonlight* is the winner of the 2017 Golden Globe for Best Picture, Drama and has received critical acclaim as an independent film which tells a timeless and universal story of human connection and self-discovery that chronicles the life of a young Black male from childhood to adulthood as he struggles to find his place in the world while growing up in Miami's renowned Liberty City neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, *Moonlight*, is set and made in Miami by native Miami filmmakers and Miami-Dade County Public Schools alumni - writer/director Barry Jenkins, a graduate of Miami Northwestern Senior High School; playwright Tarell Alvin McCraney, a graduate of New World School of the Arts and co-producer Andrew Hevia a graduate of New World Schools of the Arts; and

WHEREAS, *Moonlight* showcases the talents of Miami Norland Middle School theatre students Alex Hibbert and Jaden Piner in pivotal roles in the film. It also features their beloved teacher, Tanisha Cidel, also a product of the Arts program at Miami Norland Middle School, who is affectionately referred to as 'Drama Mama' by her theatre students; and

WHEREAS, *Moonlight*, the sometimes painful yet beautiful semi-autobiographical fusion of the lives of writer/director Barry Jenkins and playwright Tarell Alvin McCraney evidences the possible heights of success of students from underserved communities and dysfunctional family backgrounds. Barry Jenkins and Tarell Alvin McCraney exemplify life's possibilities when family members foster a love of reading; and when neighbors and educators fight for all students and encourage their talents; and

WHEREAS, *Moonlight* has been described as a groundbreaking cinematic masterpiece and has been recognized by many prestigious organizations in the entertainment industry via award nominations and wins including winner of the Golden Globe for Best Picture, Drama, Best Picture and Best Director awards by the National Society of Film Critics; and winner of four Gotham Awards including Best Feature, Best Screenplay and Special Jury Award for Best Ensemble. The film is also a top contender for Oscar Awards nominations; and

WHEREAS, Alex Hibbert; Jaden Piner; Tanisha Cidel; Barry Jenkins; Tarell Alvin McCraney and Andrew Hevia are to be commended for serving as positive role models for students of Miami-Dade County Public Schools, including those who seek, aspire for, and deserve increased opportunities to pursue their dreams, passions, and life's work through diverse educational pathways afforded through the Arts.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 17-003 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, recognizing Miami Norland Middle School Drama Students Alex Hibbert and Jaden Piner and their drama teacher Tanisha Cidel, as well as, Miami-Dade County Public Schools alumni Barry Jenkins, Tarell Alvin McCraney and Andrew Hevia for their roles in creating, producing and appearing in the critically-acclaimed film *Moonlight*.

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

Presented this twenty-fifth day of January, A.D. 2017

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

CHAIR

ATTEST:

Secretary