

Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall, Board Member

**SUBJECT: FEBRUARY 2017 AS NATIONAL BLACK HISTORY MONTH TO BE CELEBRATED IN ALL MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**COMMITTEE: ACADEMICS, EVALUATION, AND TECHNOLOGY**

**LINK TO STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT: RELEVANT, RIGOROUS, AND INNOVATIVE ACADEMICS**

The celebration of Black History on a national level first began in February 1926 in large part to the efforts of the great American historian Dr. Carter G. Woodson. His efforts led to the national observance of Black History Week. This week became the time when the many achievements and contributions by African Americans to this nation were celebrated. In 1976, as part of the nation's bicentennial celebration, Black History Week became Black History Month.

The Association for the Study of American Life and History (ASALH), which was founded by Dr. Woodson, for many years has helped to lead the annual national Black History Month celebration. Every year, Black History Month is given a national theme by the Association for the Study of American Life and History (ASALH).

This year's theme is "The Crisis in Black Education." The theme for 2017 focuses on the crucial role of education in the history of African Americans. ASALH's founder Carter G. Woodson once wrote that "if you teach the Negro that he has accomplished as much good as any other race he will aspire to equality and justice without regard to race." Woodson understood well the implications associated with the denial of access to knowledge, and he called attention to the crisis that resulted from persistently imposed racial barriers to equal education.

Throughout the last quarter of the twentieth century and continuing today, the crisis in black education has grown significantly in urban neighborhoods where public schools lack resources, endure overcrowding, exhibit a racial achievement gap, confront policies that fail to deliver substantive opportunities, and must fight becoming a school to prison pipeline. The touted benefits of education remain elusive to many blacks of all ages.

Addressing the crisis in black education should be considered one of the most important goals in America's past, present, and future. Miami-Dade County Public Schools must continue to strive in being champions of access to exceptional education to all students, comprehensive curriculum that expresses the diversity of its students, and highlights the great accomplishments of minorities to our local community and nation. National Black History Month provides students with the opportunity to learn about the important role African Americans have had in the growth of this country.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY**

**DR. BENDROSS-MINDINGALL:** That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, recognize February 2017 as National Black History Month and join in promoting National Black History Month in all Miami-Dade County Public Schools.