

Dr. Lawrence S. Feldman, Chair

SUBJECT: THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, ENDORSE MAY AS BILINGUAL LITERACY MONTH

COMMITTEE: ACADEMICS, EVALUATION, AND TECHNOLOGY

LINK TO STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT: INFORMED, ENGAGED AND EMPOWERED STAKEHOLDERS

In recent years, the number of children learning to read and speak second languages has grown throughout the world. As we recognize the expansion of a global economy, the development of literacy skills in a second language becomes an important component in the education of generations to come. The combination of increased immigration and educational language and schooling options, along with heightened requirements for multilingual competence in the global economy has prompted research to investigate the impact of bilingual experience on the literacy development of young children. Research over the past decade has shown that bilingual children demonstrate advantages over their monolingual peers in the development of several areas of non-verbal and verbal abilities. Bilingual Literacy Month promotes the educational and social benefits of reading in two languages and is designated to emphasize the benefits of raising bilingual children.

Bilingual Literacy Month celebrates its 4th year in 2017 and was initiated by Read Conmigo, a bilingual literacy campaign for children recently recognized as a "Bright Spot for Hispanic Education" by the White House Initiative for Educational Excellence for Hispanics. Read Conmigo allows children to receive award-winning bilingual books, games and activities in grade levels Pre-Kindergarten through fifth. Books are designed to assist in the development of English and Spanish literacy and language skills and bridges the resource gap for Hispanic parents by funding these bilingual storybooks free of charge. The organization has the distinction of nearing the one million mark in distribution of free books. Events designed to celebrate the month include story time sessions at area malls, the Homestead YMCA and Bel Aire Park, an essay contest, and a "Bilingual Educator of the Year" award which will be presented to local teachers.

This items seeks to celebrate bilingual literacy and endorse the month of May as Bilingual Literacy Month in Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

ACTION PROPOSED BY

DR. LAWRENCE S. FELDMAN: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida endorse the month of May as Bilingual Literacy Month in Miami-Dade County Public Schools.