

Dr. Steve Gallon III, Board Member

SUBJECT: PROVISION OF INFORMATION AND SUPPORT TO HAITIAN AND IMMIGRANT STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES THAT MAY BE IMPACTED FROM AN END TO TEMPORARY PROTECTIVE STATUS

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL, STUDENT, SCHOOL & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

LINK TO STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT: HIGHLY EFFECTIVE TEACHERS, LEADERS AND STAFF

The Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) remains committed to the education and uplift of children, youth, and families regardless of race, ethnicity, or national origin. M-DCPS' principles and practices are grounded in providing each student with an equal and equitable pathway toward learning and life-long success. Despite its primary purpose of educating students, M-DCPS has been resolute in providing a strong voice of advocacy, support, and service to immigrant students and their families in their pursuit of their life's goals, hopes, dreams, and aspirations. These efforts have also been demonstrated by the Superintendent, administrators, teachers, and employees throughout the district.

Most recently, the School Board and the Superintendent demonstrated their conviction and commitment to providing for and protecting immigrant children in response to federal legislative issues and policy positions that pose a direct threat to immigrant children and families that have lived, studied, worked, and prospered in the United States. Many of these families, such as those who arrived from the island of Haiti, had been granted Temporary Protective Status (TPS) by the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on January 15, 2010 as a result of the devastating earthquake in their homeland. This TPS designation allowed eligible Haitian nationals and other designated immigrants to continue living and working in the United States temporarily. Through TPS, the United States has provided a haven to individuals from Haiti as well as other countries who are unable to return to their home country because of insurmountable environmental obstacles, deadly diseases, and/or violence.

To date, TPS protected approximately 330,000 people in the U.S. from 10 countries who would otherwise be subjected to disease, violence, starvation, the aftermath of natural disasters, and other life-threatening conditions. The largest group of TPS recipients is from El Salvador (195,000 people) followed by Honduras (57,000 people) and Haiti (50,000 people) ---groups whose entry into the United States was allegedly questioned in a vile, divisive, offensive, and condescending manner during a meeting held in Washington, D.C. to discuss immigration issues.

Despite TPS, M-DCPS serves a significantly large population of students and families from Haiti as well as from other Central American and Caribbean nations, and has been a strong voice of advocacy, support, and service to immigrant students and their families.

In fact, at the School Board Meeting of March 15, 2017, the School Board unanimously approved Board Item H-7, proffered by Ms. Lubby Navarro, which reaffirmed the Board's and Superintendent's work over the last several years and called for several actions advocating for the rights of undocumented students and their families, including the continued distribution of guidelines to parents, students, and employees, and collaboration with community organizations on joint advocacy efforts.

Also, at the School Board Meeting of May 24, 2017, the School Board unanimously approved Board Item H-18, proffered by Dr. Steve Gallon III, which authorized the Superintendent to urge President Donald Trump and Secretary of Homeland Security John F. Kelly to extend Temporary Protected Status for Haitian nationals for at least another 18-month period.

However, amid a national debate around immigration and the anticipated end to Temporary Protective Status (TPS), the nation served witness to a painfully divisive discourse around race, ethnicity, and country of origin of certain groups of immigrants who sought and established new lives in the United States. Discussions around these alleged statements and related issues were held at the national and international levels and have had an impact on students and their families who have been perceived as the topics of alleged remarks and discussions; thus, exacerbating the emotional and psychological impact that a potential end to TPS would have on students and their families. For many, the alleged statement was not just a diplomatic insult to several foreign nations regarding the issues of TPS. It was a deep personal insult to the stories and histories of how their own parents and ancestors immigrated — or were kidnapped and forcibly trafficked - to the U.S.

Though the nation appears to have moved on from this alleged matter, the effects of these matters and the anticipated impact that an end to TPS will have on Haitians and other affected immigrant children and their families continue to linger. In South Florida, it is projected that the announcement that TPS will end on July 22, 2019 will impact nearly 60,000 Haitians who would have to return to Haiti or face possible detention or deportation. M-DCPS serves a significantly large population of students and families from Haiti. Nationwide, it is estimated that there are 27,000 U.S.-born children of Haitian TPS-holders and others with TPS. Nearly half—approximately 12,000 are K-12 students that are currently enrolled in M-DCPS, along with nearly 6,000 adult learners that will be impacted by TPS.

Considering these and related matters, M-DCPS must continue to stand in the gap for its children, students, employees and families who bear the emotional and psychological scars borne out of having their country of origin allegedly singled out in a vile, divisive, offensive, and condescending manner, while simultaneously and fearfully anticipating the destruction, division, and deportation of families that would occur with an end to TPS.

This item seeks to provide targeted, intentional counseling, as well as emotional and psychological support to K-12 Haitian and immigrant students enrolled in M-DCPS schools and their families, as well as employees where needed, that may be experiencing trauma due to alleged recent discussions around TPS and countries of origins and that will be impacted by an anticipated end to TPS scheduled for July 22, 2019. It also seeks to provide information, guidance, and support to adult learners enrolled in M-DCPS that may also be impacted by an end to TPS. Lastly, this item seeks to work with approved and appropriate community-based organizations that share the same mission and purpose in assisting and supporting children, youth, adults, and families that will be impacted by an end to TPS for Haitians and other immigrants.

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

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

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida directs the Superintendent to:

1. Determine the Haitian and immigrant students enrolled in M-DCPS and their families, and employees where needed, that may be impacted by an end to TPS on or before July 22, 2019 to:
 - a. Reaffirm the District's commitment to protecting and supporting students enrolled in M-DCPS and their families that may be impacted by an end to TPS;
 - b. Ensure that District and school-site employees that work with students and families are provided with relevant information to assist them in assisting and supporting students enrolled in M-DCPS and their families that may be impacted by an end to TPS;
 - c. Make available targeted, intentional counseling and support to students enrolled in M-DCPS and their families that may be experiencing trauma and/or bullying due to alleged vile, divisive, offensive, and condescending statements made regarding TPS and countries of origins and that may also be impacted by an end to TPS;
 - d. Provide information regarding TPS and related support services offered through the M-DCPS to adult learners enrolled in M-DCPS;
 - e. Work with approved and appropriate community-based organizations that share the same mission and purpose in assisting and supporting children, youth, adults, and families that will be impacted by an end to TPS for Haitians and other immigrants; and
2. Provide an update to the Board by October 22, 2018.