

Dr. Lawrence S. Feldman, Board Member

**SUBJECT:                   REQUEST APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION NO. 18-046 OF THE  
SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA,  
RECOGNIZING THE 2017 FLORIDA MIGRANT EDUCATION  
PROGRAM EXEMPLARY STAFF**

**COMMITTEE:               PERSONNEL, STUDENT, SCHOOL & COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

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

Each year the Florida Department of Education Bureau of Federal Education Programs acknowledges the efforts of the Florida Migrant Education Program (FMEP) and its honorees through the FMEP Exemplary Scholars and Staff publication. Migrant student graduates and rising scholars are recognized, alongside the extraordinary staff that has provided them with necessary support and access to education. This year Miami-Dade County Public Schools claims honorees in five categories, including Migrant Advocate of the Year; Community Volunteer of the Year; Migrant Parent of the Year; Migrant Support Services of the Year; and Migrant Educator of the Year. The 2017 Florida Exemplary Staff are to be commended for their passion and dedication to serving migrant students and families.

Migrant Advocate of the Year Amanda Sotomayor has been an employee of the Title I Migrant Education Program (MEP) for over 5 years. She was born and raised in Miami, Florida and is a 2009 graduate of South Dade Senior High. Ms. Sotomayor joined the MEP family as a paraprofessional in 2012 and has fulfilled her dreams of helping students prosper. She currently serves over 100 migrant students weekly in the capacity of paraprofessional, advocate, home visitor, recruiter and outreach professional, which she finds to be both rewarding and challenging. Ms. Sotomayor co-sponsors the largest existing migrant mini-corps group at Homestead Senior High School and is a member of the South Dade partnership for a Better Community. She plans on pursuing her interest to become a teacher with the MEP in Homestead, Florida so that she may continue to work with the families she dutifully serves.

Community Volunteers of the Year Chuck and Olga Nielsen have been contributors to the MEP since 1996. Throughout the years they have served migrant families with meaningful donations and family assistance. In times of crisis, they have stepped forward to help families and have provided necessary financial aid and support. Whether providing aid to arrange services for grieving families or simply helping a family make rent and put a meal on the table, the Niensons are a consistent and engaged couple the community can rely on. Those who work closely with them describe them as humble, caring, loving and extremely thoughtful of others, particularly students, whose college tuition, schooling activities, field trips and transportation they have contributed to or made possible. Over the course of over twenty years, this couple has touched countless lives, particularly those facing dire straits. The generosity and compassion of the Nielsen's knows no bounds. Exemplifying the values they espouse, they are to be commended for their meaningful and sustained impact on the often-overlooked migrant community.

Migrant Parent of the Year Jose Guzman Sanchez serves as a role model for all engaged parents and guardians from every community. Born in Michoacan, Mexico in 1972, he is one of many immigrant families who traveled to this community in search of a better life for his children. Mr. Sanchez cites his parent's influence upon him at a very young age. They taught him the value of hard work and the rewards that come from honest efforts; he also learned to be tolerant and respectful of others, while always looking for the bright side of any situation. These lessons would stay with him all of his life and along with his wife, Eva, he continues to impart these learnings to his four children, who are equally hard-working, wonderful students by all accounts. Although he continues his labor as a farm worker and is proud of what he does, he emphasizes to his children they can achieve much more through education, hard work and building relationships with others. Although he has had to decline due to his work schedule, Mr. Sanchez has twice been considered for the position of President of the Migrant Parent Advisory Council. He enthusiastically attends every event held by the MEP and has contributed time and energy to many program initiatives; from campsite cleanups to planting vegetation, from building science projects to assisting students in need, Mr. Sanchez is a consistent source of support and assistance. He stands ready to assist the students and migrant community and is recognized for his outstanding service.

Migrant Support Services Person of the Year Yolanda Sotomayor remembers a time when she, the third of seven siblings, was a migrant camp resident. Ms. Sotomayor vividly recalls the communal bathroom and shower facilities, a source of angst for her and her family. Along with other experiences unique to life in the migrant camps, this served to motivate her to better herself through education. Education and hard work were always important to her family and although her mother worked the fields, she could always be found home waiting for her children to arrive from school. Ms. Sotomayor's father was also a driving force encouraging her education as a pathway to a better life. She remembers when he took her and her siblings to a field to pick beans. The experience with back-breaking work left a lasting impression and underscored her father's message to, "Take education seriously or enjoy working in the field." With that lesson in mind, she went on to graduate in the top 10% of her class and was awarded a two-year scholarship at Miami Dade Community College, where she received her Associates in Arts degree in 1982. She began working with the MEP in 1986 as a part-time teacher assistant. From there she was promoted to School Clerk II, then later to Data Input Specialist II. Currently, she is a Secretary II with the Office of Operation and Implementation Office of the Migrant Program. She continues to make time for various civic and nonprofit ventures, serving as an assistant coach for YMCA T-ball and a team mother for the Migrant Program Office Team. Ms. Sotomayor believes that parent involvement is an essential to a child's wholesome development and strives to support her community.

Migrant Teacher/Educator of the Year Orlando Sotomayor was born in Miami Florida. Mr. Sotomayor's family has always played a pivotal part of his life. His parents, particularly his mother, provided consistent support towards his educational efforts. His grandparents, who were hard-working immigrants, ensured he learned to overcome obstacles through dedication and effort, while embracing each and every challenge. Mr. Sotomayor went on to graduate in the top 10% of his high school class and earn his Bachelor's in Science in Exceptional Student Education in 2013. He is a proud International Honor Society in Education alumni. Since joining the MEP, he has gained the respect and admiration of his peers and of the community he serves. Currently, Mr. Sotomayor is assigned to South Dade Senior High School as a teacher advocate for migrant students. His students revere and respect his leadership skills. His commitment and service have not gone unnoticed, as he spends countless hours and free time dedicated to improving the quality of life of his students and their families. One of his major undertakings is the Mini-Corps, a club

designed to increase the value of community service and citizenship recognition for migrant students. His work, values and leadership are admired by the members of Mini-Corps and the migrant community. Mr. Sotomayor considers his work with the MEP one of the greatest accomplishments of his life.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY**

**DR. LAWRENCE S. FELDMAN:** That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 18-046 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, recognizing the Florida Migrant Education Program 2017 Exemplary Staff.



**RESOLUTION NO. 18-046**  
**OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA,**  
**RECOGNIZING THE 2017 FLORIDA MIGRANT EDUCATION PROGRAM**  
**EXEMPLARY STAFF**

**WHEREAS**, each year the Florida Department of Education Bureau of Federal Education Program acknowledges the efforts of the Florida Migrant Education Program (FMEP) and its honorees through the FMEP Exemplary Scholars and Staff publication. This year Miami-Dade County Public Schools claims honorees in five categories; and

**WHEREAS**, Migrant Advocate of the Year Amanda Sotomayor has been an employee of the Title I Migrant Education Program for over 5 years. She was born and raised in Miami, Florida and is a 2009 graduate of South Dade Senior High. Ms. Sotomayor joined the Title I Migrant Education Program (MEP) family as a paraprofessional in 2012 and has fulfilled her dreams of helping students prosper. She currently serves over 100 migrant students weekly in the capacity of paraprofessional, advocate, home visitor, recruiter and outreach professional, which she finds to be both rewarding and challenging. Ms. Sotomayor co-sponsors the largest existing migrant Mini-Corps group at Homestead Senior High School and is a member of the South Dade partnership for a Better Community; and

**WHEREAS**, Community Volunteers of the Year Chuck and Olga Nielsen have been contributors to the MEP since 1996. Throughout the years they have served migrant families with meaningful donations and family assistance. In times of crisis, they have stepped forward to help families and have provided necessary financial aid and assistance. Whether providing aid to arrange services for grieving families or simply helping a family make rent and put a meal on the table, the Nielsons are a consistent and engaged couple the community can rely on. Those who work closely with them describe them as humble, caring, loving and extremely thoughtful of others, particularly students, whose college tuition, schooling activities, field trips and transportation they have contributed to or made possible; and

**WHEREAS**, Migrant Parent of the Year Jose Guzman Sanchez serves as a role model for all engaged parents and guardians from every community. Born in Michoacan, Mexico in 1972, he is one of many immigrant families who traveled to this community in search of a better life for his children. Mr. Sanchez cites his parent's influence upon him at a very young age. Although he continues his labor as a farm worker and is proud of what he does, he emphasizes to his children they can achieve much more through education, hard work and building relationships with others. Although he has had to decline due to his work schedule, Mr. Sanchez has twice been considered for the position of President of the Migrant Parent Advisory Council; and

**WHEREAS**, Migrant Support Services Person of the Year Yolanda Sotomayor remembers a time when she, the third of seven siblings, was a migrant camp resident. Ms. Sotomayor vividly recalls the communal bathroom and shower facilities, a source of angst for her and her family. Along with other experiences unique to life in the migrant camps, this served to motivate Ms. Sotomayor to better herself through education. She went on to graduate in the top 10% of her class and was awarded a two-year scholarship at Miami Dade Community College, where she received her Associates in Arts degree in 1982. Currently, she is a Secretary II with the Office of Operation and Implementation Office of the Migrant Program; and

**WHEREAS**, Migrant Teacher/Educator of the Year Orlando Sotomayor was born in Miami Florida. Mr. Sotomayor's family has always played a pivotal part of his life. His parents, particularly his mother, provided consistent support towards his educational efforts. He went on to graduate in the top 10% of his high school class and earn his Bachelor's in Science in Exceptional Student Education in 2013. Since joining the MEP, he has gained the respect and admiration of his peers and of the community he serves. Currently, Mr. Sotomayor is assigned to South Dade Senior High School as a teacher advocate for migrant students. One of his major undertakings is the Mini-Corps, a club designed to increase the value of community service and citizenship recognition for migrant students. His work, values and leadership are admired by the members of Mini-Corps and the migrant community.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 18-046 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, recognizing the Florida Migrant Education Program 2017 Exemplary Staff. A copy of this resolution is placed in the permanent records of this Board.

**Presented this twenty-fifth day of July, A.D. 2018**

**THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA**

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CHAIR

ATTEST:

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Secretary