

Dr. Martin Karp, Vice Chair

SUBJECT: EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

COMMITTEE: ACADEMIC, INNOVATION, EVALUATION & TECHNOLOGY

LINK TO STRATEGIC

BLUEPRINT: RELEVANT, RIGOROUS & INNOVATIVE ACADEMICS

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) has historically been a strong proponent of Holocaust education. M-DCPS implements their own curriculum and numerous activities at our school sites. M-DCPS has also allowed for many outside the classroom experiences including study abroad programs for a number of years.

The International March of the Living is an annual educational program, bringing individuals from around the world to Poland and Israel to study the history of the Holocaust and to examine the roots of prejudice, intolerance and hatred. Since its inception in 1988, more than 260,000 alumni from 52 countries have marched down the same 3-kilometer path leading from Auschwitz to Birkenau on Holocaust Remembrance Day - Yom Hashoah - as a tribute to all victims of the Holocaust. High school students in the 10th, 11th and 12th grades are eligible to participate.

Unfortunately, this year some students who are in the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program and expressed interest in participating in the March of the Living were told they would miss the IB testing if they attended.

Upon further research it was discovered that IB has a testing calendar with dates before and after the March of the Living trip and that test dates could be moved and exceptions could be made. M-DCPS asked over 6 months in advance for an exception in order for students to attend the March of the Living. The request was denied. As M-DCPS advocates for reduced emphasis on testing and giving our children the world, it was apparent in IB's response that a test was given greater value than a lifetime educational experience.

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

ACTION PROPOSED BY

DR. MARTIN KARP:

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

1. Determine our response to IB for denying a test change date exception for the March of the Living program; and
2. Provide an update to the school board.