

Dr. Lawrence S. Feldman, Board Member

SUBJECT: MELANOMA AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

COMMITTEE: ACADEMICS, INNOVATION, EVALUATION & TECHNOLOGY

LINK TO STRATEGIC

BLUEPRINT: SAFE, HEALTHY AND SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Skin cancer is the most common cancer with over five million cases diagnosed each year in the United States. Melanoma skin cancer is the most serious form of skin cancer and the most common among adolescents and young adults ages 15-29. Alarming statistics indicate melanoma cases have increased by 53% in the past decade with 85% of these cases associated to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun. It is estimated that this most fatal form of skin cancer will effect over 175,000 people this year, with over 9,000 of those ending in fatalities. Sadly, Florida is the leading state in melanoma fatalities, but, fortunately, this type of cancer is also one of the most preventable.

Recognizing the alarming and increasing trend of Melanoma skin cancer incidences in our state and nation-wide, The Florida State Legislature joined other states like California, New York, and Texas, passing legislation authorizing sunscreen application at school sites in 2017. Florida State Statue 1002.20 (3) (m) addresses sun protective measures in schools, and states: *“A student may possess and use a topical sunscreen product while on school property or at a school sponsored event or activity without a physician’s note or prescription if the product is regulated by the United States Food and Drug Administration for over-the-counter use to limit ultraviolet light induced skin damage.”*

While the state of Florida has recognized the life-threatening consequences of unprotected sun exposure, removing previous sunscreen application restrictions at school sites, the level of community and student awareness regarding sun safety remains limited. With students exposed daily to the effects of the sun during physical education classes, sports and other outdoor after-school activities, particularly during the hours between 10 am and 4 pm when the UV rays are most harmful, it is incumbent upon the District to educate the school community, encourage sun-safe habits, and increase parent and student awareness of their ability to apply sunscreen. The School Board already has policy in place, 5330.02 *Sun Safety*, governing sunscreen application at schools and encouraging protective measures, which notes that, *“Schools shall encourage students and staff to seek shade when engaged in outside activities especially from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. when excessive UV rays are present; wear protective clothing when exposed to the sun, including hats which cover the ears and back of the neck; use para-aminobenzoic acid/PABA free sunscreen product thirty (30) minutes before engaging in outside activities; wear sunglasses which block the majority of UV rays and reduce the potential for cataract formation; and avoid artificial sources of UV rays such as sunlamps and tanning beds.* This comprehensive policy also addresses the vital component of education and awareness, noting that *“sun safety and skin cancer prevention shall be included in the District’s Comprehensive Health Education Curriculum.”* However, the increase in melanoma incidences and the state’s grim statistics indicate a need to elevate fidelity to this policy.

This agenda item seeks to authorize the Superintendent to launch a yearly sun safety awareness campaign encompassing educational components and supported with partnerships with local and nationwide organizations that offer no-cost resources in the areas of curriculum support, materials, and professional development.

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

ACTION PROPOSED BY

DR. LAWRENCE S. FELDMAN:

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

1. Develop a sun safety awareness campaign to further educate students and parents/guardians about sun safety and melanoma skin cancer;
2. Explore and determine use and implementation of curricular enhancements and resources, available at no cost to the District, that would serve to enhance the campaign and student learning experience;
3. Plan for the launch of the campaign at the commencement of each school year, beginning with the 2019-20 school year; and
4. Initiate rulemaking procedures in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act to amend Policy 5330.02 to include the implementation of annual, coordinated, grade-appropriate sun safety awareness efforts, inclusive of curricular/instructional delivery elements, designed to increase awareness and skin cancer prevention for K-12 students.