

Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall, Board Member

**SUBJECT: REQUEST APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION NO. 19-048 OF THE
 SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY FLORIDA,
 RECOGNIZING JUDGE RODNEY SMITH**

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL, STUDENT, SCHOOL & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

**LINK TO STRATEGIC
BLUEPRINT: INFORMED, ENGAGED AND EMPOWERED STAKEHOLDERS**

Judge Rodney Smith was raised in the Liberty City community of Miami, where he graduated with honors from Miami Northwestern Senior High School. In 1996, he graduated cum laude from Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University, and three years later, graduated cum laude from Michigan State University College of Law.

In 2008, the Honorable Rodney Smith was appointed to the Miami-Dade County Court by Florida Governor Charlie Crist. Four years later, Governor Rick Scott elevated Judge Smith to the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Court. In 2014, the Miami-Dade County voters overwhelmingly elected Judge Smith to serve another term.

On June 12, 2019, the Honorable Judge Rodney Smith was nominated and confirmed to the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida. Judge Smith's elevation is of high significance because the community he was raised in has a majority of the residents that live below the U.S. poverty level.

Judge Smith follows in the footsteps of Judge Wilkie D. Ferguson Jr., who was the first Black person appointed to the Miami-Dade County Circuit Court and the Third District Court of Appeals. Judge Smith is the first Black judge to be appointed in five years to the bench for the Southern District of Florida.

Judge Smith has volunteered for countless organizations including: the Virginia Key Beach Park Trust, NAACP, 5000 Role Models of Excellence Project, 100 Black Men of South Florida, Inc., the New Birth Baptist Church Cathedral of Faith, International and the National Bar and Wilkie D. Ferguson, Jr. Bar Associations. Judge Smith is an Eagle Scout and he serves as a Boy Scout troop leader and is a Life Member of Kappa Alpha Psi, Fraternity, Inc., (1998 Lansing Alumni Chapter initiate); Alpha Phi Omega National Service Fraternity, Inc., (Kappa Delta Chapter initiate).

**Replacement
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Judge Smith has also provided pro bono legal services through his church, the Caribbean and the Miami Beach Bar Associations. Judge Smith's honors, awards and recognition include the 2019 Florida A & M University National Alumni Association Distinguished Alumni Award, American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA) Jurist of the Year, Haitian Lawyers Association Ally Award, National Eagle Scout Association Outstanding Eagle Scout Award, Boy Scouts of America Silver Beaver Award and the National Black Lawyers Top 100 Lawyers.

ACTION PROPOSED BY

DR. DOROTHY BENDROSS-MINDINGALL: That the School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 19-048 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, honoring Judge Rodney Smith

**RESOLUTION NO. 19-048
OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY FLORIDA,
RECOGNIZING JUDGE RODNEY SMITH**

WHEREAS; Judge Rodney Smith was raised in the Liberty City community of Miami, where he graduated with honors from Miami Northwestern Senior High School. In 1996, he graduated cum laude from Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University, and three years later, graduated cum laude from Michigan State University College of Law; and

WHEREAS; in 2008, the Honorable Rodney Smith was appointed to the Miami-Dade County Court by Florida Governor Charlie Crist. Four years later, Governor Rick Scott elevated Judge Smith to the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Court. In 2014, the Miami-Dade County voters overwhelmingly elected Judge Smith to serve another term; and

WHEREAS; on June 12, 2019, the Honorable Judge Rodney Smith was nominated and confirmed to the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida. Judge Smith's elevation is of high significance because the community he was raised in has a majority of the residents that live below the U.S. poverty level; and

WHEREAS; Judge Smith follows in the footsteps of Judge Wilkie D. Ferguson Jr., who was the first Black person appointed to the Miami-Dade County Circuit Court and the Third District Court of Appeals. Judge Smith is the first Black judge to be appointed in five years to the bench for the Southern District of Florida; and

WHEREAS; Judge Smith has volunteered for countless organizations including: the Virginia Key Beach Park Trust, NAACP, 5000 Role Models of Excellence Project, 100 Black Men of South Florida, Inc., the New Birth Baptist Church Cathedral of Faith, International and the National Bar and Wilkie D. Ferguson, Jr. Bar Associations. Judge Smith is an Eagle Scout and he serves as a Boy Scout troop leader and is a Life Member of Kappa Alpha Psi, Fraternity, Inc., (1998 Lansing Alumni Chapter initiate); Alpha Phi Omega National Service Fraternity, Inc., (Kappa Delta Chapter initiate); and

WHEREAS; Judge Smith has also provided pro bono legal services through his church, the Caribbean and the Miami Beach Bar Associations. Judge Smith's honors, awards and recognition include the 2019 Florida A & M University National Alumni Association Distinguished Alumni Award, American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA) Jurist of the Year, Haitian Lawyers Association Ally Award, National Eagle Scout Association Outstanding Eagle Scout Award, Boy Scouts of America Silver Beaver Award and the National Black Lawyers Top 100 Lawyers.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 19-048 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, recognizing Judge Rodney Smith.

A copy of this resolution is placed in the permanent records of this Board.

Presented this fourteenth day of August, A.D. 2019

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

CHAIR

ATTEST:

Secretary