

Ms. Luisa Santos, Board Member

SUBJECT: POST-SECONDARY RESOURCES FOR UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS AND MIXED STATUS FAMILIES

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL, STUDENT, SCHOOL & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

LINK TO STRATEGIC

BLUEPRINT: INFORMED, ENGAGED, AND EMPOWERED STAKEHOLDERS

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) is regarded amongst the most diverse and inclusive school districts in the country, serving students from more than 179 different countries throughout the world. The willingness of this school system to embrace its duty and responsibility to educate immigrant children throughout several decades is well documented and has served as a model for districts nationwide. For many students, their immigration status presents a barrier to post-secondary education as federal laws, protections, and aid do not apply/extend to undocumented students attempting to attend these institutions. Behind only California and Texas, Florida graduates an estimated five thousand undocumented students each year according to the most recent data from The Migration Policy Institute. In Miami-Dade, we are particularly cognizant of the economic, education, and cultural barriers faced by this demographic.

The Board and District have worked through the years to cultivate a college-bound culture for all students; one that specifically advances the idea of a pathway to post-secondary education for at-risk and underserved students. Established over 30 years ago as an initiative spearheaded by School Board Member G. Holmes Braddock, the M-DCPS College Assistance Program (CAP) has offered its students resources and counsel to help them achieve their dreams of a college or post-secondary education. As a result of the Supreme Court's decision this past June, an opportunity now exists to enhance the training and services provided to undocumented/mixed-status students and because of the renewed interest in Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA); this opportunity must be met with informed and prepared advisors.

M-DCPS is fortunate to count amongst its faculty renowned CAP advisors who have amassed experience and expertise and seek opportunities to grow in their profession. Leveraging this internal capacity, coupled with external resources offered by a host of community-based organizations and 501(c)(3)s, will yield targeted professional development that will enhance advisory capacity and improve student services.

The Board has a longstanding commitment to the immigrant and undocumented student community with recent affirmation seen through the passing of agenda items including, but not limited to, agenda items *H-5 Support for Reasonable Immigration Relief for Undocumented Students Who Have Grown Up in the United States*, School Board Chair Perla Tabares Hantman (January 24, 2017); *H-7 Continued Advocacy and Protections for Undocumented Immigrant Students from Federal Immigration Authorities and Other Law Enforcement Authorities on School Grounds*, Dr. Lubby Navarro (March 15, 2017); *H-3 Educational Services for Immigrant Students*, Dr. Steve Gallon III (June 20, 2018); and *H-14 Miami-Dade County Public Schools Student Immigration Influx Plan Update*, Ms. Mari Tere Rojas.

This item seeks to reaffirm the Board's commitment to these students through the authorization of targeted yearly professional development regarding relevant topics including but not limited to DACA updates, scholarship opportunities, and federal aid guidance, to be deployed utilizing both internal and external capacity, to all CAP advisors and/or personnel who serve the same function, and the development of both digital and hard copy resources that provide clear and easy-to-read guidance and resources for assistance to undocumented students and mixed-status families in multiple languages and made accessible in schools and through community-based organizations and partnerships with these and other recognized organizations.

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

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
MS. LUISA SANTOS:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorize the Superintendent to reinforce pathways to post-secondary education for undocumented students and mixed-status families through the development of:

1. targeted yearly professional development starting with the 2020-2021 school year regarding relevant topics including but not limited to DACA updates, scholarship opportunities, and federal aid guidance, to be deployed utilizing both internal and external capacity, to all CAP advisors and/or personnel who serve the same function;
2. both digital and hard copy resources that provide clear and easy-to-read guidance and resources for assistance to undocumented students and mixed-status families in multiple languages and made accessible in schools and through community-based organizations and through partnerships with these and other recognized organizations; and
3. a report back to the Board regarding paragraphs 1 and 2 in the proposed actions above no later than February 3, 2021.