

Ms. Maria Teresa Rojas, Board Member

SUBJECT: REQUEST APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION NO. 21-009 OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, RECOGNIZING MR. JAMES R. HAJ, PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (CEO) OF THE CHILDREN'S TRUST

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL, STUDENT, SCHOOL & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

LINK TO STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT: INFORMED, ENGAGED AND EMPOWERED STAKEHOLDERS

Successful community leaders must possess empathy, the ability to inspire, honesty and integrity, strong communication skills, and pride in the community they serve. They are problem solvers, and they get people to work together toward a common goal. This effective community leader is certainly Mr. James R. Haj, The Children's Trust President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) since April 2016.

Before joining The Children's Trust, Mr. Haj was a member of the Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) family where he served as principal at Paul W. Bell Middle School and Southwest Miami Senior High School, his alma mater. He took the latter from a "C" to an "A" school and significantly improved overall academic achievement, boosting graduation rates and championing inclusion for the school's special needs population.

Mr. Haj also served as administrative director for M-DCPS' south and central regions, during which time he provided one-on-one support and guidance to principals and assistant principals about curriculum and instruction, state accountability and school improvement, teacher evaluations and professional standards, crisis response plans, and student safety. He later served as an assistant superintendent acting as chief labor negotiator for M-DCPS, with five labor unions representing more than 31,000 full-time employees.

As president and CEO of The Children's Trust, Mr. Haj provides strategic leadership by working with the board of directors and stakeholders to establish strategic plans that include long-range goals focused on improving the lives of children and families in Miami-Dade County. Throughout his tenure, he has overseen unprecedented growth at The Trust, with its total budget and number of programs serving children and families reaching historic highs.

The Trust funds approximately 150 agencies and supports 200 programs at 2,000 sites across the county. During his time with The Trust, management ratios have dropped to all-time lows, resulting in additional funding to support children and families of Miami-Dade County.

Mr. Haj also led The Trust through what could have been its most challenging year in 2020, when all operations quickly pivoted to a remote model during the coronavirus pandemic to ensure the safety of all Trust staff and those who interact with them. During this time, all Trust operations remained intact, with adjustments made to support providers struggling to keep serving our most vulnerable children and families.

Mr. Haj is a lifelong Miami resident earning his Bachelor of Science Degree in Education from Florida State University, and receiving a Master Degree in Business Administration from the University of Miami. He also completed post-graduate studies in Educational Leadership at Nova Southeastern University and participated in the Graduate School of Education Harvard University Summer Institute “Improving Schools: The Art of Leadership.” He and his wife, Karen, are the proud parents of three children.

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

ACTION PROPOSED BY

MS. MARIA TERESA ROJAS:

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 21-009 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, recognizing Mr. James R. Haj, President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of The Children’s Trust.

**RESOLUTION NO. 21-009
OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA,
RECOGNIZING MR. JAMES R. HAJ, PRESIDENT AND
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (CEO) OF THE CHILDREN'S TRUST**

WHEREAS, Mr. James R. Haj, joined The Children's Trust as President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in April 2016;

WHEREAS, Mr. Haj was a member of the Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) family where he served as principal at Paul W. Bell Middle School and Southwest Miami Senior High School, his alma mater;

WHEREAS, Mr. Haj also served as administrative director for M-DCPS' south and central regions, during which time he provided one-on-one support and guidance to principals and assistant principals about curriculum and instruction, state accountability and school improvement, teacher evaluations and professional standards, crisis response plans, and student safety. He later served as an assistant superintendent acting as chief labor negotiator for M-DCPS, with five labor unions representing more than 31,000 full-time employees;

WHEREAS, as president and CEO of The Children's Trust, Mr. Haj provides strategic leadership by working with the board of directors and stakeholders to establish strategic plans that include long-range goals focused on improving the lives of children and families in Miami-Dade County;

WHEREAS, during his tenure, he has overseen unprecedented growth at The Trust, with its total budget and number of programs serving children and families reaching historic highs; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Haj earned his Bachelor of Science Degree in Education from Florida State University, and received a Master Degree in Business Administration from the University of Miami. He also completed post-graduate studies in Educational Leadership at Nova Southeastern University and participated in the Graduate School of Education Harvard University Summer Institute "Improving Schools: The Art of Leadership."

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 21-009 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, recognizing Mr. James R. Haj, President and Chief Executive Officer of The Children's Trust.

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

Presented this twenty-first day of April, A. D. 2021

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

CHAIR

ATTEST:

Secretary

