

Ms. Maria Teresa Rojas, Board Member

**SUBJECT: SCHOOL BOARD ENDORSEMENT OF THE MONTH OF MAY 2021 AS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH AND MAY 6, 2021 AS NATIONAL CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS DAY IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS (M-DCPS)**

**COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL, STUDENT, SCHOOL & COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

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

Mental Health Awareness Month has been observed in the month of May in the United States since 1949, reaching millions of Americans through the media, local events, screenings, community agencies, local hospitals, schools, and institutions of higher learning. The concept was started in the United States by the National Association for Mental Health. Again, this year's theme is *Tools 2 Thrive* which will continue to provide practical tools that everyone can use to improve their mental health and increase resiliency regardless of the situations they are dealing with. Each year, millions of Americans face the reality of living with a mental health condition and everyone is affected or impacted by mental illness through friends and family.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound effect on the mental health of people of all ages, including students in Miami-Dade County Public Schools. Now, more than ever, it is crucial to reduce the stigma around mental health struggles, because that stigma often precludes individuals from pursuing and obtaining the help they need.

Additionally, the National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day, first sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), will be held May 6, 2021, and it seeks to increase consciousness about the importance of children's mental health and to show that positive mental health is vital to a child's healthy development. This is a day that shines on the national spotlight to guarantee the importance of caring for every child's mental health and to reinforce that positive mental health is crucial to a child's development.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools joins the mental health community to reaffirm our commitment to building our understanding of mental illness and ensuring those who are struggling to know that they are not alone.

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, endorse the month of May 2021 as Mental Health Awareness Month and May 6, 2021 as National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day in Miami-Dade County Public Schools.