

Ms. Lucia Baez-Geller, School Board Member

**SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION NO. 21-011 OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, RECOGNIZING SAFE SCHOOLS SOUTH FLORIDA FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS LOWERING HIV RATES ON NATIONAL YOUTH HIV AND AIDS AWARENESS DAY ON APRIL 10 AND THROUGHOUT THE YEAR**

**COMMITTEE: ACADEMICS, INNOVATION, EVALUATION AND TECHNOLOGY**

**LINK TO STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK: RELEVANT, RIGOROUS, AND INNOVATIVE ACADEMICS**

National Youth HIV and AIDS Awareness Day #NYHAAD reminds us of the importance of investing in young people's health and education. One in 5 new HIV diagnoses occurs in young people ages 13 to 24 who make up 5 percent of the 1.1 million people in the United States living with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). According to recent statistics in a report from the Centers for Disease Control and prevention, South Florida has the highest rate of new HIV diagnoses in the country. Miami had a new HIV rate nearly four times the national average.

Safe Schools South Florida, founded in 1991 when school environments were not as accepting as they are today, creates safer schools where students can learn and thrive, regardless of real or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, their own or that of their parents and/or guardians. Safe Schools South Florida is comprised of education professionals committed to training other education professionals and school staff and provides scholarships to graduating seniors who attend Miami-Dade County Public Schools. Safe Schools' work and programs have been recognized nationally by the American Federation of Teachers and state-wide by the Florida Governor's Commission on Best Practices for Youth Suicide Prevention.

Other organizations that fight against HIV/AIDS in South Florida include Faith Responds to AIDS, which mobilizes churches and other faith-based organizations to raise awareness and reduce stigma around HIV/AIDS, the Hispanic Initiative (Iniciativa Hispana), which focuses on reducing the incidence of HIV/AIDS within the Hispanic community through community outreach and prevention education, the Black Treatment Advocates Network, which consists of various stakeholders who mobilize Black communities to confront HIV, the Miami Collaborative MSM Workgroup, which informs local governments and communities about the HIV/AIDS epidemic and its impact while mitigating the damaging effects of stigma and homophobia, and the AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF), which provides medicine and advocates for their patients regardless of one's ability to pay. AHF offers medical care for people living with HIV in at least one dozen wellness and healthcare centers in South Florida where free HIV testing is available.

Having open and honest conversations with adolescents about sexual health can help prevent HIV, STDs, and unintended pregnancy. Young people need to know their HIV status as it gives them powerful information to stay healthy. When adults communicate honestly about HIV prevention and the need for HIV testing, they can help adolescents make healthy decisions.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) applauds the efforts of Safe Schools for recognizing that student access to health education and services, and to programs that raise awareness and provide prevention techniques help protect against HIV. M-DCPS further acknowledges the efforts of the various organizations in South Florida that work to reduce the stigma and discrimination associated with HIV/AIDS and collaborate for the purposes of preventing HIV/AIDS by employing education initiatives, exhibiting leadership, providing support, and promoting healthy lifestyles.

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

**ACTION PROPOSED BY  
LUCIA BAEZ-GELLER:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida approve Resolution No. 21-011 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, recognizing Safe Schools South Florida for their contribution towards lowering HIV rates on National Youth HIV and AIDS Awareness Day on April 10 and throughout the year.

**REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION NO. 21-011  
OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA RECOGNIZING SAFE  
SCHOOLS SOUTH FLORIDA FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS LOWERING HIV  
RATES ON NATIONAL YOUTH HIV AND AIDS AWARENESS DAY ON APRIL 10 AND  
THROUGHOUT THE YEAR**

**WHEREAS**, April 10 is National Youth HIV & AIDS Awareness Day. #NYHAAD reminds us of the importance of investing in young people's health and education; and,

**WHEREAS**, Safe Schools South Florida creates safer schools where all students can learn and thrive, regardless of real or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, their own or that of their parents and/or guardians; and,

**WHEREAS**, Organizations that fight against HIV/AIDS in South Florida include Safe Schools South Florida, Faith Responds to AIDS, the Hispanic Initiative (Iniciativa Hispana), the Black Treatment Advocates Network, the Miami Collaborative MSM Workgroup, and the AIDS Healthcare Foundation; and,

**WHEREAS**, One in 5 new HIV diagnoses occurs in young people ages 13 to 24 who make up 5 percent of the 1.1 million people in the U.S. living with HIV and South Florida has the highest rate of new HIV diagnoses in the country and Miami had a new HIV rate nearly four times the national average; and,

**WHEREAS**, Young people need to know their HIV status as it gives them information to stay healthy and to communicate honestly with adults about HIV prevention; and,

**WHEREAS**, Students need access to health education and services to protect against HIV, STDs, and unintended pregnancy; and,

**WHEREAS**, The proportion of sexually active youth has decreased, yet more youth remain at risk for HIV, STDs, and unintended pregnancy.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 21-011 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida recognizing Safe Schools South Florida for their contribution towards lowering HIV and AIDS rates on National Youth HIV and AIDS Awareness Day on April 10 and throughout the year.

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

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CHAIR

ATTEST:

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Secretary