

Ms. Maria Teresa Rojas, Board Member

Co-Sponsors: Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman, Chair
Dr. Steve Gallon III, Vice Chair
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Ms. Christi Fraga
Dr. Lubby Navarro
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Ms. Luisa Santos

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**SUBJECT: REVIEW OF THE CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT,
INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE IN SCHOOL BOARD POLICY
5500**

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL, STUDENT, SCHOOL & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

**LINK TO STRATEGIC
PLAN: SAFE, HEALTHY, & SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS**

Recent hoax threats in our schools have resulted in the arrest of young students in our communities resulting in the urgent need to review Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) *Code of Student Conduct* at all levels to ensure that threatening behaviors and corrective strategies for level III violations are reasonable and equitable throughout the school district. Hoax threats have seriously disrupted the teaching and learning process and have hindered police officers' ability to safeguard schools from actual dangers, increasing stress levels, anxiety, and students and staff absenteeism throughout the school district. It is of utmost importance that all students are treated fairly but forcefully as hoax threats are dealt directly, properly, and in a uniform manner.

Threat assessment teams must have proper guidance and explicit corrective strategies to address hoax threats, a level III violation. Currently, language in the *Code of Student Conduct* addresses threats of violence as follows: "Students are prohibited from making direct or indirect threats of violence against individuals or groups. Even threats made in jest or in exaggeration must be treated as serious threats. Any threat of such violence must be reported immediately to a teacher or school administrator. A threat to use a dangerous instrument or weapon on school grounds, on school sponsored transportation, or any school sponsored activity, is prohibited." Further, the language on zero tolerance states "This policy requires the school district to impose the most severe consequences provided for in the *Code of Student Conduct* in dealing with students who engage in violent criminal acts, such as making a threat or false report, respectively, involving school or school personnel's property, school transportation, or school-sponsored activity; shall also result in a referral for expulsion and mental health services pursuant to Section 1006.13 F. S." Specific guidance must be provided to schools to address corrective strategies and actions for those students who disrupt schools with hoax threats.

This agenda item seeks to direct the Superintendent of Schools to review the *Code of Student Conduct*, incorporated by reference in School Board Policy 5500, at all levels to ensure that threats or hoax threats are treated equitable and in a uniform manner, determine if these threats are a level III violation or higher, and ensure that corrective strategies and actions are uniformly addressed throughout the school district.

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, direct the Superintendent of Schools to review the *Code of Student Conduct*, incorporated by reference in School Board Policy 5500, at all levels to ensure that threats or hoax threats are treated equitable and in a uniform manner, determine if these threats are a level III violation or higher, and ensure that corrective strategies and actions are uniformly addressed throughout the school district, and report back to the Board by February 23, 2022.