

Ms. Luisa Santos, Board Member

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION NO. 22-047 OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, RECOGNIZING HEARTCHARGED AND MARIA “MARUCHI” MENENDEZ IN HONOR OF SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST MONTH

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL, STUDENT, SCHOOL & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

LINK TO STRATEGIC

PLAN: INFORMED, ENGAGED, & EMPOWERED STAKEHOLDERS

Sudden Cardiac Arrest Awareness Month provides an opportunity to inform the public about the dangers and risk factors associated with cardiac emergencies and what to do when these emergencies arise. Sudden cardiac death is the leading cause of death among student athletes. In recognition of this month, we want to recognize some of the organizations that are dedicated to promoting awareness of cardiac health for all.

HeartCharged’s founders, Bethany and Hannah Keime, were high-school students when they learned the heartbreaking news that they had been diagnosed with hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM). While this detrimental diagnosis cut their athletic pursuits short, they were grateful for the screening that identified this asymptomatic “silent killer.” The two sisters searched for a support network of other students with HCM only to learn that most student athletes had died from HCM because their condition went undiagnosed.

The Keime sisters recognized that a simple heart screening had not only saved their lives but could save others. Their story is what they define as “survivor’s gratitude,” as they are fortunate to be survivors of a disease that is often undiagnosed. Their advocacy journey began ten years ago when they hosted their first public assembly for their classmates at Cutler Bay Senior High School. Today, they host informative assemblies at local schools, work tirelessly alongside local and state legislators to propose and pass policies, and host free informative training sessions on CPR and AED usage.

Like the Keime sisters, Maria “Maruchi” Menendez, is a strong supporter of cardiac health. After the unfortunate loss of her son, Ramiro “Toti” Mendez, she began her advocacy by handing out flyers to parents of student-athletes. Maruchi went on to found the JunTos Foundation, in honor of her son, which works to prevent the unnecessary loss of young people to heart disease and cancer.

Today, the JunTos Foundation advocates for the installation of AEG machines in schools and EKG screenings for student athletes. Maruchi has been awarded the Courage Award by the American Heart Association and has been invited to speak in front of Congress to push legislation regarding cardiac health among students. She works to ensure that no other family has to endure such suffering.

HeartCharged and the JunTos Foundation have shown exemplary leadership in ensuring that students are properly screened for conditions that often go unchecked. The founders and leaders of these organizations have dedicated themselves to spreading awareness of the importance of heart screenings and heart health. We recognize their continuous efforts and hard work and honor the impact they have had on our community.

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

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 22-047 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, recognizing HeartCharged and JunTos Foundation in honor of sudden cardiac arrest month.

**Replacement
B-4**

**RESOLUTION NO. 22-047 OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA,
RECOGNIZING HEARTCHARGED AND JUNTOS FOUNDATION IN HONOR OF SUDDEN CARDIAC
ARREST MONTH**

WHEREAS, Sudden Cardiac Arrest Awareness Month provides an opportunity to inform the public about the dangers and risk factors associated with cardiac emergencies and what to do when these emergencies arise. Sudden cardiac death is the leading cause of death among student athletes. In recognition of this month, we want to recognize some of the organizations that are dedicated to promoting awareness of cardiac health for all; and

WHEREAS, HeartCharged's founders, Bethany and Hannah Keime, were high-school students when they learned the heartbreaking news that they had been diagnosed with hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM). While this detrimental diagnosis cut their athletic pursuits short, they were grateful for the screening that identified this asymptomatic "silent killer." The two sisters searched for a support network of other students with HCM only to learn that most student athletes had died from HCM because their condition went undiagnosed; and

WHEREAS, The Keime sisters recognized that a simple heart screening had not only saved their lives but could save others. Their story is what they define as "survivor's gratitude," as they are fortunate to be survivors of a disease that is often undiagnosed. Their advocacy journey began ten years ago when they hosted their first public assembly for their classmates at Cutler Bay Senior High School. Today, they host informative assemblies at local schools, work tirelessly alongside local and state legislators to propose and pass policies, and host free informative training sessions on CPR and AED usage; and

WHEREAS, Like the Keime sisters, Maria "Maruchi" Menendez, is a strong supporter of cardiac health. After the unfortunate loss of her son, Ramiro "Toti" Mendez, she began her advocacy by handing out flyers to parents of student-athletes. Maruchi went on to found the JunTos Foundation, in honor of her son, which works to prevent the unnecessary loss of young people to heart disease and cancer; and

WHEREAS, Today, the JunTos Foundation advocates for the installation of AEG machines in schools and EKG screenings for student athletes. Maruchi has been awarded the Courage Award by the American Heart Association and has been invited to speak in front of Congress to push legislation regarding cardiac health among students. She works to ensure that no other family has to endure such suffering; and

WHEREAS, HeartCharged and the JunTos Foundation have shown exemplary leadership in ensuring that students are properly screened for conditions that often go unchecked. The founders and leaders of these organizations have dedicated themselves to spreading awareness of the importance of heart screenings and heart health. We recognize their continuous efforts and hard work and honor the impact they have had on our community.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approves Resolution No. 22-047 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, recognizes HeartCharged and the JunTos Foundation in honor of sudden cardiac arrest month.

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

Presented this 16th day of November, A.D. 2022.

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

SCHOOL BOARD CHAIR

ATTEST:

Secretary