

Ms. Lucia Baez-Geller, Board Member

**SUBJECT: RECOGNIZING NO ONE EATS ALONE DAY ON FEBRUARY 17, 2023
ACROSS MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

COMMITTEE: ACADEMICS, INNOVATION, EVALUATION & TECHNOLOGY

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

The outbreak of COVID-19 created a “new normal” of social distancing for families across the country. As a result of these measures, students experienced an extended period of social isolation that have profound long-term impacts. Specifically, the mental and physical toll of prolonged periods without satisfying relationships or human contact is linked to the development of cardiovascular problems, mental health problems, and other psychological harms in people of all ages. Students have missed hands-on learning opportunities and time to bond with peers, suffering from a lack of social interaction and communication.

To combat this, Beyond Differences, a nonprofit organization, established National No One Eats Alone (NOEA) Day. NOEA empowers students to create a culture of belonging and help disrupt social isolation in the lunchroom. Through the initiative, students are encouraged to sit with others and make new friends.

The first NOEA Day was established in 2012 in Northern California at a handful of schools. Today, over 9,000 schools across at 50 states, and even internationally, participate in NOEA Day, reaching over 4,500,000 students. Currently, there are almost 70 schools signed up for the program this year in Miami-Dade County. The Office of Educational Equity Access, and Diversity (OEEAD) at Miami-Dade County Public Schools is partnering with Beyond Differences to bring No One Eats Alone Day to all schools on February 17, 2023.

This item seeks to bring awareness to social isolation and to encourage a culture of belonging for all students by recognizing February 17, 2023, as No One Eats Alone Day across Miami-Dade County Public Schools and supporting all informational campaigns that promote the initiative.

This item has been reviewed and approved by the Office of the General Counsel as to form and legal sufficiency.

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

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, recognize February 17, 2023, as No One Eats Alone Day across Miami-Dade County Public Schools, and support all informational campaigns that promote the initiative.