

Ms. Luisa Santos, Board Member

**SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION NO. 24-004 OF THE
SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA,
RECOGNIZING THE HOMESTEAD OUTREACH TEAM**

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL, STUDENT, SCHOOL & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

**LINK TO STRATEGIC
PLAN: INFORMED, ENGAGED, & EMPOWERED STAKEHOLDERS**

The Homestead Outreach Team (H.O.T.) is an award winning 501c3 nonprofit organization composed of students who volunteer their time in benefit of their community. Founded by Nancy and Alexandra Garcia, a mother and daughter team, the organization allows students ages 12-18 to create and actively participate in different service projects every month of the school year. The focus of the organization is to help children in need due to food insecurity, homelessness, or medical issues; active military members, veterans, and their families; and abandoned animals.

In the early days of the organization, upon learning about children in the community going hungry during the weekends, the H.O.T. group met with school counselors and principals in the area to draw up a plan of action to address this problem. As a result, the Weekend Food Backpacks program was born. After collecting donations of money and food, every Thursday the team would meet and assemble hundreds of non-perishable food backpacks to be delivered to schools throughout Homestead. Since then, the Weekend Food Backpacks are distributed to students on Fridays. The students are identified as in need by their counselors and school administration.

In the spring of 2020, as a result of school closures due to the COVID health emergency, the Weekend Food Backpacks program was negatively impacted, leaving hundreds of children struggling with food insecurity. The H.O.T. group went into action and established food distribution sites throughout the City of Homestead. Moreover, the crisis became an opportunity that facilitated the creation of the WIN-WIN meal voucher program, helping students secure hot meals and local restaurants get customers. Five local restaurants agreed to honor a \$5 dollar voucher for a hot meal to any child who presented one, including Chefs on The Run, Mamma Mia 2, Sonny's BBQ, Royal Palm Grill, and Dairy Queen of Homestead. Over 2,000 vouchers were distributed to children at food sites, churches, and the local soup kitchen. These vouchers provided a much-needed hot meal to children who would otherwise go hungry. The restaurants provided hot meals with no questions asked. In return, the restaurants were given \$5 per voucher collected. Until the present time, H.O.T. has given away over 1 million meals to children in need throughout the City of Homestead and over \$10,000 worth of WIN-WIN meal vouchers.

ACTION PROPOSED BY

MS. LUISA SANTOS: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 24-004 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, recognizing the Homestead Outreach Team.

**RESOLUTION NO. 24-002 OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA,
RECOGNIZING TRISH AND DANIEL (DAN) BELL**

WHEREAS, Trish and Dan Bell are among our community’s most active and genuinely engaged supporters, both in terms of their extensive proven leadership and their generous philanthropy;

WHEREAS, for more than 20 years, they have conscientiously followed their deep passion to enhance our community, focusing primarily on providing opportunities to improve the lives of underserved individuals;

WHEREAS, the Bells provide meaningful and significant philanthropic support to a wide range of community service and cultural organizations. Among the recipients of their largest gifts are the United Methodist Church; Chapman Partnership; Branches, a multi-site organization supporting underserved children and young adults; and the Miami Science Museum;

WHEREAS, the Bells have been recognized with numerous awards, including the Alvah H. Chapman, Jr. *Humanitarian Award*; Miami-Dade’s *Outstanding Philanthropists*; MCCJ’s *Silver Medallion Humanitarian Award*; *Miami’s Power Couple* by Big Brothers Big Sisters; and a *Lifetime Achievement Award* from the FIU Robert Stemple College of Public Health;

WHEREAS, the Bells serve as Co-Chairs Emeritus of the Patricia and Phillip Frost Museum of Science. They also served on the Board of Trustees of the Florida United Methodist Children’s Home, and for 15 years they have been the principal advisors and financial supporters of Branches. Trish also is Past Chair, and Chair Emeritus, of the Board of Trustees of Chapman Partnership; and

WHEREAS, Trish and Dan serve on the Board of Trustees of the FIU Foundation, and Trish also serves on the Foundation Board for the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts and on the Steering committee of the American Red Cross Tiffany Circle. For many years, Trish has either chaired or been the principal advisor for numerous major fund-raising galas for a multitude of community non-profit organizations. Trish and Dan Bell have Co-Chaired six of Miami-Dade County Public Schools “Love of Learning” galas since its inception in 2015.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution NO. 24-002. of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, recognizing Trish and Daniel (Dan) Bell.

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

Presented this seventeenth day of January, A.D. 2024

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

SCHOOL BOARD CHAIR

ATTEST:

Secretary