

Mr. Danny Espino, Board Member

Co-Sponsors: Ms. Maria Teresa Rojas, Chair
Ms. Monica Colucci, Vice Chair
Mr. Roberto Alonso
Ms. Lucia Baez-Geller
Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall
Ms. Mary Blanco
Dr. Steve Gallon, III
Ms. Luisa Santos

REVISOR
AT DAIS
BY
BOARD
ACTION

**SUBJECT: THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA,
RECOGNIZES VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM WEEK**

COMMITTEE: ACADEMICS, INNOVATION, EVALUATION, & TECHNOLOGY

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

Throughout history, countless individuals have suffered under the oppressive regimes of communist governments worldwide. In the pursuit of control and absolute authority, these regimes have often denied basic human rights, such as freedom of speech, religion, and the press, while subjecting citizens to severe persecution, violence, and economic deprivation. The stories of those who lived and died under these regimes remind us of the importance of upholding democratic values, individual liberties, and human dignity.

The state of Florida has established a day of remembrance to honor the victims of communism and recognize the millions of people who lost their lives or endured unspeakable hardships under communist rule. Victims of Communism Day is an opportunity to educate students about these historical events, ensuring that future generations understand the devastating consequences of totalitarianism and appreciate the freedoms they enjoy today.

Victims of Communism Day occurs annually on November 7. It was formally recognized when Florida Governor Ron DeSantis signed House Bill 395 in 2022 to require Florida schools to include instruction on the history of communist regimes and their impact on human rights. The law mandates that high school students be taught about the victims of communism and the ideologies that have led to widespread repression. On May 18, 2022, then Board Member Maria Teresa Rojas proffered and unanimously passed Agenda Item H-3, *MIAMI-DADE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD'S OFFICIAL ENDORSEMENT AND SUPPORT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEWLY ADOPTED FLORIDA HOUSE BILL (HB) 395 – VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM DAY*, adding the governor's bill to the District's list of recognized historical remembrance days.

This observance also aligns with the efforts of the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation, established by an Act of Congress in 1993, to educate Americans about the history and legacy of communism. This organization hosts remembrance ceremonies and educational initiatives each year to raise awareness of the victims' plight.

This Board item seeks the Board's approval to recognize November 18-22, 2024, as Victims of Communism Week in accordance with applicable School Board policies and state and federal laws. It is proposed that during this week, teachers in Miami-Dade County Public Schools engage students in meaningful discussions, lessons, and activities where it is aligned with the curriculum standards to honor the memory of those who suffered under communist regimes and reinforce the importance of safeguarding democratic principles.

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

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
MR. DANNY ESPINO:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, recognize November 18-22, 2024, as Victims of Communism Week and requests that the Superintendent encourage teachers, where it is aligned with the curriculum standards, to engage students in meaningful discussions, lessons, and activities to honor the memory of those who suffered under communist regimes and reinforce the importance of safeguarding democratic principles.