

Ms. Maria Teresa Rojas, Chair

SUBJECT: FEASIBILITY OF EXPANDING THE DISTRICT'S *GIRL-TO-GIRL MENTORING* INITIATIVE

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL, STUDENT, SCHOOL & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

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

Improving the quality of education for young ladies while providing mentorship can empower them to become confident, engaged, and effective members of society. Mentors can guide young ladies in areas like self-confidence, goal setting, and communication skills, all of which are critical for their success as students and future leaders in our community.

Connecting students with female mentors who are successful in various fields such as education, law, medicine, engineering, architecture, entertainment, and other fields gives them tangible examples of what they can achieve and how they can overcome challenges. Furthermore, offering programs and extracurricular activities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) can inspire girls to pursue these fields. Female mentors in STEM can also help break the stereotype that these subjects are "for boys only."

The School Board has been an active supporter of all mentoring programs in Miami-Dade County Public Schools, including the *Girl-To-Girl Mentoring Initiative*. The Board approved Agenda Item H-4 at the meeting of January 16, 2019, establishing a districtwide mentoring program for girls. A follow-up agenda item was also approved by the Board and unanimously co-sponsored, at the meeting of February 13, 2019, exploring the feasibility of hosting a Women's Summit designed to raise awareness. Staff worked with the Junior League of Miami to partner on a Women's Empowerment Summit prior to their annual *Women Who Make a Difference* Spring luncheon. This summit raised awareness of the need for female mentors and served as a call to action by inviting participants to commit to be a mentor through their attendance.

Most recently, at the School Board meeting of February 15, 2023, the Board approved Agenda Item H-3, proffered by School Board Member Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall, which requested for the Superintendent to explore the feasibility of initiating a girl-to-girl mentoring pilot program during the 2023-2024 school year and to explore the feasibility of including funding for the pilot program in the 2023-2024 proposed budget. A staff follow-up memorandum from the Superintendent was submitted to the Board on March 2, 2023, which indicated that a partnership had been established with Global G.L.O.W (Girls Leading Our World) with funding from the organization for mentoring programs at ten senior high schools: G. Holmes Braddock, Hialeah, Homestead, Miami Beach, Miami Carol City, Miami Jackson, Miami Killian, Miami Springs, Miami Norland, and South Miami. The memorandum further stated that "staff will continue to collaborate with existing partners to discuss the expansion of the program to include mentoring opportunities for middle-school-aged female students in the District."

Therefore, this agenda item seeks to direct the Superintendent of Schools to explore the feasibility of expanding the *Girl-To-Girl Mentoring Initiative* to ten more high schools and nine middle schools; to provide a report to the Board about the findings of the 2023-2024 pilot program with the ten original high schools; and to include in this report to the Board the feasibility to expanding the program.

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

ACTION PROPOSED BY CHAIR

MS. MARIA TERESA ROJAS: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent of Schools to explore the feasibility of expanding the *Girl-To-Girl Mentoring Initiative* to ten more high schools and nine middle schools; to provide a report to the Board by April 1, 2025, about the results of the 2023-2024 pilot program with the ten original high schools; and to include in this report to the Board the feasibility to expanding the program.