

Mrs. Mary Blanco, Board Member

SUBJECT: EXPLORE FEASIBILITY OF A WEARABLE PANIC BUTTON FOR SCHOOL STAFF TO ENHANCE OUR CURRENT MOBILE ALERT SYSTEM

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL, STUDENT, SCHOOL & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN: SAFE, HEALTHY, & SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The safety and security of our schools is of paramount importance to Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS). This has been and must always be a priority for the School Board and District. Having our own police department, a mobile panic alert system, school mapping, ensuring our schools are fortified with a single point of entry, and the use of Fortify FL are some of the many ways we are committed to protecting our students, employees and all stakeholders. As a district, it is our responsibility to not only provide these safety measures, but to continuously evaluate and review them regularly as well as constantly look for ways to enhance them. This commitment is evident in the items that Board members have actively proffered regarding safety and security. The School Board previously approved some items pertaining to safety and security, such as the following:

- Item H-14 (Good Cause) September 2024, proffered by Board Member Roberto J. Alonso – Review of School Safety and Security.
- Item H-7, December 2024, proffered by Board Member Roberto J. Alonso – Review of Procurement Policies to Allow Flexibility or for Exemption for Purchases Made in Furtherance of School Safety and Security.
- Item H-10, May 2024, proffered by Board Chair Mari Tere Rojas - Metal Detectors in Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS).
- Item H-1, July 2024, proffered by Board Chair Mari Tere Rojas - Review of Safety and Security Procedures, Protocols, Trainings and Public Information Campaigns
- Item H-2, December 2023, proffered by Board Chair Mari Tere Rojas - Review of Policies, Procedures, And Established Practices Regarding School Hardening, Student Drop-off, And Related School Safety and Security Measures at School Sites in Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS)
- Item H-15, April 2023, proffered by Board Member Danny Espino – Review of Safety and Security Notifications and Data.

- Item H-9, November 2023, proffered by Board Member Danny Espino – Enhancing Public Safety Through a Standardized Plan for Mapping, Cameras, and Communication to Reduce Real-Time Risk and Improve Emergency First Responders’ Response Time.
- Item H-17, October 2021 proffered by Vice Chair Dr. Steve Gallon III – Security and Safety Provisions, Protocols, and Procedures for School Board Related Events and Activities.
- Item H-4, July 2023, proffered by Board Member Dr. Steve Gallon III – Weapons on School Campuses and District-Owned Properties.
- Item H-10, June 2022, proffered by Board Member Mari Tere Rojas – Districtwide Safety and Security Committee Review and Evaluation of Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) Safety and Security Protocols, Procedures, and Mental Health Services; and Establishment of a Sub-Committee within the Districtwide Safety and Security Committee to Monitor the Development and Actions of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission.
- Item H-8, January 2025, proffered by Board Chair Mari Tere Rojas – Districtwide Safety and Security Committee Review and Evaluation of the Most Updated Miami-Dade County Public Schools Safety and Security Protocols, Procedures, and Mental Health Services, as They May Relate to the Findings of the Recent School Shooting in Madison, Wisconsin

In accordance with Section (s.) [1006.07\(4\)](#), Florida Statutes (F.S.), M-DCPS uses a mobile panic alert system capable of connecting diverse emergency service technologies to ensure real-time coordination between multiple first responder agencies. Board Policy 8410 Emergency Management, Preparedness, and Response requires that the Superintendent in conjunction with Emergency Management and School Safety Specialist, develop the District’s Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), which includes an active assailant response plan and a mobile panic alert system, also known as "Alyssa's Alert." This alert system was developed in consultation with the county 911 authority and local emergency management office to ensure that the system integrates with local public safety answering point (PSAP) infrastructure to transmit calls and mobile activations. The District's mobile panic alert system must include mobile devices placed throughout each school campus. The system we currently use has a mobile panic alert set up on desktop computers and staff members’ individual mobile cell phones that immediately notifies school staff and law enforcement.

Additional layers of technology exist that could enhance our current alert system. The use of a wearable panic button has been used in other school districts and proved to be a lifesaving factor in the Apalachee High School Shooting of 2024. A wearable panic system provides a way for staff to immediately alert school staff, law enforcement, and other first responders even if they don’t have immediate access to their phone or desktop computer. These systems can function everywhere without the need for Wi-Fi or cellular service. Other features are available with the wearable panic button such as activating a full audio and visual campus-wide notification system, allowing everyone on campus to be made aware that there is a current threat.

This board item seeks to request that the Superintendent of Schools explore the feasibility of enhancing our current mobile panic alert system by adding an additional layer of a wearable panic button for school staff members.

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

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
MS. MARY BLANCO:**

That the School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorizes the Superintendent to:

1. Explore the feasibility of enhancing our current mobile panic alert system by adding an additional layer of a wearable panic button for school staff members; and
2. Provide a report to the Board at the Personnel, Student, School, & Community Support Committee Meeting of March 12, 2024.