Office of School Board Members
Board Meeting of May 14, 2025

May 7, 2025

Ms. Maria Teresa Rojas, Chair

Co-Sponsors: Mr. Roberto J. Alonso, Mr. Danny Espino, Dr. Steve Gallon III (Added)

SUBJECT: **SCHOOL BOARD ENDORSEMENT COMMEMORATING THE 123rd ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF CUBA – MAY 20, 2025**

COMMITTEE: **ACADEMICS, INNOVATION, EVALUATION & TECHNOLOGY**

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

This agenda item is submitted endorsing and supporting the Cuban American community as it commemorates May 20, 2025, as the 123rd anniversary of the independence of Cuba from Spain.

By the end of the 1800s, Spain had lost all of its New World colonies except Cuba and Puerto Rico. Cubans did not wish to be under Spanish rule. Many fled to Florida and other parts of the United States (U.S.) while still remaining loyal to their country of birth, Cuba. The United States watched with interest as Cuba struggled for independence. The U.S. had investments and businesses in Cuba and there were many U. S. citizens residing on the island.

Throughout this time, Cuban patriots, including Carlos Manuel de Cespedes, Antonio Maceo, Máximo Gómez, Calixto García, Tomás Estrada Palma, and José Martí, fought for Cuba's independence from Spain's colonial rule. In 1898, the United States assisted in the war efforts to protect its citizens and businesses in Cuba. This war was known as the Spanish-American War. The U.S. declared war on Spain after the U.S. warship, the USS Maine, exploded and sank on February 15, 1898, while visiting Havana, Cuba. The Spanish-American War lasted only a few months and was over when Spain signed a peace treaty giving the United States control of Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippine Islands, and Guam. The United States remained as an occupying power until the Republic of Cuba was installed on May 19, 1902. On May 20, 1902, the United States relinquished its occupation authority over Cuba.

The Cuban American community in Miami and the rest of the United States continues to change as we now enter the fifth generation of Cuban Americans. The tragedy of the Cuban experience continues to be emotional, passionate, powerful, and inspiration. As we celebrate the 123rd anniversary of Cuba's independence, Miami-Dade County Public Schools honors the Cuban American community extending a sincere hope that liberty and democracy will soon become a reality for the Cuban people, and independence will again flourish in a free Cuba.

This agenda 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, endorse the commemoration of the 123rd anniversary of the independence of Cuba on May 20, 2025, and extend this celebration to the Cuban American community residing in Miami-Dade County, with a sincere hope that liberty and democracy will soon become a reality for the Cuban people, and independence will again flourish in a free Cuba.

Revised
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