

Ms. Monica Colucci, Vice Chair

Co-Sponsors: Ms. Maria Teresa Rojas, Chair
Ms. Mary Blanco
Mr. Danny Espino
Dr. Steve Gallon III
Mr. Joseph S. Geller

} A
D
D
E
D

**SUBJECT: THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA
RECOGNIZE AND OBSERVE APRIL 2026 AS AUTISM ACCEPTANCE
MONTH AT ALL MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

COMMITTEE: ACADEMICS, INNOVATION, EVALUATION & TECHNOLOGY

**LINK TO STRATEGIC
PLAN:**

SAFE, HEALTHY, & SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Each April, the Autism Society of America promotes the development of inclusive communities in which individuals with autism are supported and empowered to achieve the highest possible quality of life. Founded in 1965 by Bernard Rimland and other parents of children with autism, the organization is one of the nation's oldest grassroots advocacy groups.

In 1972, the Autism Society launched the first nationwide observance, National Autistic Children's Week, which later evolved into Autism Awareness Month. In 2021, the observance was reframed as Autism Acceptance Month to emphasize inclusion, understanding, and acceptance of individuals on the autism spectrum.

Autism, or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), is a developmental disability characterized by differences in social communication and interaction, as well as restricted or repetitive behaviors and interests. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, ASD affects approximately 1 in 36 children in the United States (based on the most recent published estimates). Autism is a spectrum condition with diverse presentations and support needs, influenced by a combination of genetic and environmental factors. Individuals with ASD may require varying levels of support, ranging from minimal assistance to substantial daily support.

Each April, organizations throughout Miami-Dade County join in recognizing Autism Acceptance Month by promoting awareness, acceptance, and inclusion within the community. Local chapters of the Autism Society and other community partners host educational initiatives and events throughout the month.

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

ACTION PROPOSED

BY MS. MONICA COLUCCI: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, recognize April 2026 as Autism Acceptance Month.