Office of School Board Members
Board Meeting of October 14, 2026

October 14, 2026

Ms. Maria Teresa Rojas, Chair

CO-SPONSORS: **Ms. Monica Colucci, Vice Chair**
Mr. Roberto Alonso } REVISED AT DAIS BY BOARD ACTION
Ms. Mary Blanco
Mr. Danny Espino
Mr. Joseph S. Geller } REVISED AT DAIS BY BOARD ACTION
Ms. Luisa Santos

SUBJECT: **A DAY AT THE SCHOOL BOARD: FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING AN ANNUAL STUDENT CIVIC ENGAGEMENT DAY FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN: **RELEVANT, RIGOROUS, & INNOVATIVE ACADEMICS**

Students in Miami-Dade County Public Schools are directly affected by decisions made by the School Board. Despite the substantial influence these decisions have on students' educational experiences and opportunities, relatively few students have meaningful chances to learn about, observe, or understand the School Board's decision-making processes. At present, opportunities for student engagement with the Board are limited primarily to the Student Advisor position and occasional individual school visits. Considering expanding these opportunities would provide M-DCPS students with a greater understanding of matters that directly affect them while fostering civic awareness, leadership development, and a stronger understanding of local government.

Each year, during Florida's Children's Week, hundreds of students travel to Tallahassee to experience the State Capitol as an extension of the classroom and gain firsthand insight into the legislative process. Through opportunities to meet with state legislators, engage with policymakers, and observe government action, students develop a deeper understanding of civic engagement and the decision-making processes that shape their local communities. The significant impact of this state-level experience underscores the importance of considering providing Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) students with a comparable, hands-on opportunity to engage with local leaders and gain an understanding of how decisions are made within their own school communities. By equipping students with firsthand knowledge of local governance and public decision-making, this experience may in fact better prepare them to navigate the responsibilities and opportunities that await them after graduation, including entering the workforce, serving in the military, attending college, or pursuing post-secondary education, and empowering them to make informed decisions that will shape their future.

This proposed initiative to consider establishing an annual student civic engagement day in Miami-Dade County Public Schools is the vision and thoughtful recommendation of the School Board Advisor, Mr. Alejandro Duran Jr., whose commitment to strengthening student civic engagement and meaningful understanding of local government serves as the foundation for this effort. Recognizing that students are not merely recipients of educational policies but key stakeholders in the decisions that shape their schools and future opportunities, the School Board Advisor has identified an important opportunity to expand student access to and understanding of the School Board's work. By creating a structured and meaningful avenue for students to observe Board proceedings, engage directly with elected School Board members

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and district leaders, and gain firsthand knowledge of policy development, governance, and the district's budget process, this initiative may also help bridge the gap between students and the institutions responsible for shaping their educational experiences. More importantly, it reflects a forward-thinking commitment to preparing M-DCPS students to become informed, engaged, and responsible citizens and future leaders who understand the importance of participating in the democratic process and making informed decisions throughout their lives.

This agenda item seeks to direct the Superintendent of Schools to explore the feasibility of developing a framework for the establishment of an annual *"A Day at the School Board"* program designed to provide Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) high school students with meaningful, firsthand exposure to School Board operations, governance, and the decision-making process. Throughout this experience, students would have the opportunity to tour the facility, observe Board proceedings, learn about the roles and responsibilities of elected School Board members and district leadership, and gain insight into how policies and decisions affecting students are developed and implemented. The Superintendent shall also include in the proposed plan student eligibility and selection criteria, program structure, scheduling, logistics, the identification and utilization of existing District resources necessary to support this initiative, and any other measures deemed appropriate to ensure successful implementation of the intended goals. The framework shall be designed to maximize the educational value and impact of the program while ensuring that its implementation does not result in additional costs to the District.

This item has been reviewed and approved by the Office of the General Counsel 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:

1. to explore the feasibility of developing a framework for the establishment of an annual *"A Day at the School Board"* program designed to provide Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) high school students with meaningful, firsthand exposure to School Board operations, governance, and the decision-making process;
2. include in the proposed plan student eligibility and selection criteria, program structure, scheduling, logistics, the identification and utilization of existing District resources to support this initiative, and any other measures deemed appropriate to ensure successful implementation of the intended goals
3. maximize the educational value and impact of the proposed program while ensuring that its implementation does not result in any additional costs to the District; and
4. provide a report to the School Board at the Academics, Innovation, Evaluation & Technology Committee meeting on December 9, 2026.