

Dr. Steve Gallon III, Board Member

**SUBJECT: PARTNERSHIPS WITH MUNICIPALITIES TO EXPLORE THE DEPLOYMENT OF POLICE OFFICERS TO SUPPORT STUDENT SAFETY AND COMPLIANCE WITH MARJORY STONEMAN DOUGLAS HIGH SCHOOL PUBLIC SAFETY ACT, SB 7026**

**COMMITTEE: FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY & GOVERNMENT RELATIONS**

**LINK TO STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT: SAFE, HEALTHY AND SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) is committed to ensuring the safety and security of its schools, employees, community members, and most important, its students. This has been and must always remain a priority of the School Board, Superintendent, and school and district staff. This commitment has been shared by the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) and its members employed through the Miami-Dade County Public School Police Department and municipalities throughout the county.

The issue of school safety and security has been elevated because of the tragedy that took place at Marjory Stoneman Douglas Senior High School on February 14, 2018. Consequently, the district, state, and nation have increased proactivity in the provision of attention, resource, and strategy to improve school security and student safety.

On March 9, 2018, Governor Rick Scott signed into law the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act (MSDHPSA), SB 7026. This law, among other initiatives, requirements, and strategies, provides a \$400 million investment to keep students safe in school and enhance the provision of supports to address mental health. One critical component is the provision of \$162 million for safe-school officers and the requirement that a safe-school officer is present at each school in the state. All safe-school officers must be sworn law enforcement officers.

The provision of these additional resources represents a tremendous enhancement to improving school safety and security as schools in Miami-Dade County and around the state. However, the School Board and Superintendent have recognized that meeting the requirement that a safe-school officer is present at each school will pose a significant human resource challenge. Presently, there is a dearth of sworn law enforcement officers available to fill these positions throughout Florida and from a limited pool being competitively drawn from 67 school districts. Even Miami-Dade County Public Schools, with its own established school police force of dedicated and committed sworn law enforcement officers, will face the daunting task of providing safe-school officers from this limited pool.

Additionally, at the School Board Meeting of March 21, 2018, School Board Chair Perla Tabares Hantman proffered Board Agenda Item H-1, which addressed partnerships with municipalities to support school safety. The item which passed unanimously, was co-sponsored by Vice-Chair, Dr. Martin Karp, and School Board members Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall, Dr. Lawrence Feldman, Dr. Steve Gallon III, Dr. Marta Perez, and Ms. Mari Tere Rojas.

The provision of safe-school officers to meet the requirement of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act for providing sworn law enforcement officers requires the exploration of new, innovative partnerships with municipalities that may be willing to establish cooperative agreements for the deployment of sworn law enforcement officers and Miami-Dade County, as some schools, such as many in School Board District 7, are located in areas devoid of an individual municipality. Such partnerships will not only address the dearth of available sworn police officers in support of school security and student safety, and compliance with SB 7026, but may also provide for cost efficiencies to be realized by the District in the hiring of employees from partnering municipalities or Miami-Dade County without incurring long-term employment and financial liabilities, health/insurance, and FRS/retirement obligations---liabilities and obligations that come with the District hiring new full-time employees on its own.

This item seeks to direct the Superintendent to initiate this exploration and examine the operational and financial feasibility and efficiencies that may be afforded through such agreements with local municipalities.

This item has been reviewed by the School Board Attorney for legal sufficiency.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY  
DR. STEVE GALLON III:**

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

1. meet with the FOP to review and discuss the requirements of MSDHSPSA/SB 7025 and receive feedback and recommendations regarding compliance;
2. survey and meet with Miami-Dade County and municipalities that may be interested in exploring a partnership agreement to deploy sworn law enforcement officers to schools to provide for school security and student safety, and compliance with MSDHSPSA/SB 7026;
3. conduct a cost-benefit analysis of partnering Miami Dade County and with local municipalities to deploy sworn law enforcement officers to schools to provide for school security and student safety, and compliance with MSDHSPSA/SB 7026; and
4. provide an update and recommendations to the Board no later than the School Board Meeting of September 5, 2018.