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**SUBJECT: ENDORSEMENT OF MAY 2018 AS BILINGUAL LITERACY MONTH**

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

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

In recent years, the number of children learning to read and speak second languages has grown throughout the world. As we recognize the expansion of a global economy, the development of literacy skills in a second language becomes an important component in the education of generations to come. The combination of increased immigration and educational language and schooling options, along with heightened requirements for multilingual competence in the global economy has prompted research to investigate the impact of bilingual experience on the literacy development of young children. Research over the past decade has shown that bilingual children demonstrate advantages over their monolingual peers in the development of several areas of non-verbal and verbal abilities. Bilingual Literacy Month promotes the educational and social benefits of reading in two languages and is designated to emphasize the benefits of raising bilingual children.

Bilingual Literacy Month celebrates its 5<sup>th</sup> year in 2018 and was initiated by Read Conmigo, a bilingual literacy campaign for children recognized as a "Bright Spot for Hispanic Education" by the White House Initiative for Educational Excellence for Hispanics in 2012. Read Conmigo allows children to receive award-winning bilingual books, games and activities in grade levels Pre-Kindergarten through fifth. Books are designed to assist in the development of English and Spanish literacy and language skills and bridges the resource gap for Hispanic parents by funding these bilingual storybooks free of charge. The organization has the distinction of surpassing the one million mark in distribution of free books and will celebrate this special month through local events and read-alouds featuring their latest bilingual children's book "Leonard Discover's Cuba"- a story that explores Cuban Culture, written by local Cuban author Sonia Jones. Additionally, a Bilingual Educator of the Year Award and cash prize will be presented to local teachers nominated by the community.

This items seeks to celebrate bilingual literacy and endorse the month of May as Bilingual Literacy Month in Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY**

**DR. LAWRENCE S. FELDMAN:** That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida endorse the month of May as Bilingual Literacy Month in Miami-Dade County Public Schools.