

Ms. Susie V. Castillo, Board Member

SUBJECT: "NO USE OF CELLPHONES WHILE DRIVING" SIGNS IN SCHOOL ZONES

COMMITTEE: INNOVATION, GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

LINK TO STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT: INFORMED, ENGAGED AND EMPOWERED STAKEHOLDERS

Section 316.305, Florida Statutes, entitled "Florida Ban on Texting While Driving Law," generally provides that a person may not operate a motor vehicle while manually typing or entering multiple letters, numbers, symbols, or other characters into a wireless communications device for the purpose of non-voice interpersonal communication, including, but not limited to, communication methods known as texting, e-mailing, and instant messaging. The intent of the law is to improve roadway safety for all motor vehicle operators, passengers, bicyclists, pedestrians, and other road users.

In spite of this law, reports have consistently ranked Florida as one of the top states in the nation for accidents attributed to "distracted driving." According to the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles: "In 2016, there were almost 50,000 crashes involving distracted driving in Florida, which is more than five crashes every hour...these crashes accounted for more than 3,500 serious bodily injuries and 233 fatalities". Moreover, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also report that each day in the United States, approximately nine (9) people are killed and more than 1,000 injured in crashes that are reported to involve a distracted driver.

Our community has been witness to similar tragedies involving students that have been injured or died as a result of a driver using their cellphone immediately prior to the accident. In September of 2015, a seventeen year old student from Ronald Reagan Senior High School lost his life after being struck by a car whose driver was using their cellphone while driving.

This item is being presented for the Board to consider collaborating with Miami-Dade County for the purpose of establishing a program that would provide for the installation of "No Use of Cellphones While Driving" signs in school zones. Based on the discussion at the School Board Innovation, Governmental Relations & Community Engagement Committee meeting of November 8, 2017, it is also recommended that the School Board include in its 2018 Legislative Priorities that texting while driving be made a primary offense.

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This item has been reviewed and approved by the School Board Attorney's office as to form and legal sufficiency.

**Revised
H-20**

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
MS. SUSIE V. CASTILLO:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida:

1. authorize the Superintendent to explore a collaboration with Miami-Dade County, that would provide for the installation of “No Use of Cellphones While Driving” signs in school zones with a report back to the Board at the January 2018 School Board Meeting; and } Revised

2. to include as part of the School Board’s 2018 Legislative Priorities a recommendation to amend §316.305, Florida Statutes, by making it a primary offense that a person may not operate a motor vehicle while manually typing or entering multiple letters, numbers, symbols, or other characters into a wireless communications device for the purpose of non-voice interpersonal communication, including, but not limited to, communication methods known as texting, e-mailing, and instant messaging. } Added