

Dr. Marta Pérez, Board Member

SUBJECT: REQUEST APPROVAL OF SCHOOL BOARD RESOLUTION NO. 10-007 RECOGNIZING THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, MIAMI CHAPTER, FOR ITS WORK IN THE COMMUNITY

COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

LINK TO STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK: STUDENT, PARENT, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The loss of a child is one of the most devastating events in a parent’s life, one that affects the family in untold ways. The grieving process can be lengthy and heartbreaking and sometimes not well understood by outsiders.

The Compassionate Friends is an international organization that provides the support that grieving parents, as well as grandparents and siblings, desperately need. The Compassionate Friends was founded in 1968 in England by Reverend Simon Stephens and individuals who were united by their common grief over the loss of their children. It has grown, quietly and steadily, to a worldwide movement. In the United States alone there are over six hundred chapters. Local chapters, such as the one in Miami, hold monthly meetings where individuals can express their feelings of loss with others who have or are experiencing the same grief.

Every year on the second Sunday in December, The Compassionate Friends conduct an evening candle-lighting memorial that starts in New Zealand and moves across the world through the different time zones. Grieving parents, grandparents and siblings, joined by their extended families and friends, sing songs and read poems in remembrance of their loved ones. It is a poignant ceremony attended by hundreds of people who otherwise would mourn in solitude.

Ms. Cindy Baum and Ms. Shelly Ellis, who describe themselves as “seasoned” grievers, head the Miami chapter of The Compassionate Friends. Along with other volunteers they offer their experience and time generously to anyone in need. By reaching out to families of children who have died, including children in Miami-Dade County Public Schools, they provide an invaluable service to our community.

ACTION PROPOSED BY DR. MARTA PÉREZ: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 10-007, recognizing The Compassionate Friends, Miami Chapter, for its work in the community.

**RESOLUTION NO. 10-007
OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA,
RECOGNIZING THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, MIAMI CHAPTER,
FOR ITS WORK IN THE COMMUNITY**

WHEREAS, The Compassionate Friends is an international organization that provides the support that grieving parents, as well as grandparents and siblings, desperately need; and

WHEREAS, founded in 1968 in England by Reverend Simon Stephens and individuals who were united by their common grief over the loss of their children, The Compassionate Friends has grown, quietly and steadily, to a worldwide movement; and

WHEREAS, as part of a poignant ceremony each year, The Compassionate Friends conduct an evening worldwide candle-lighting memorial in which parents, grandparents and siblings sing songs and read poems in remembrance of their loved ones; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Cindy Baum and Ms. Shelly Ellis head the Miami Chapter of The Compassionate Friends, where they and other volunteers generously offer their experience and time to anyone in need; and

WHEREAS, The Compassionate Friends provides an invaluable service to our community by reaching out to families of children who have died;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, approve Resolution No. 10-007 of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida recognizing The Compassionate Friends, Miami Chapter, for its work in the community.

A copy of this resolution is placed in the permanent records of this Board.

Presented this tenth day of February, A.D. 2010

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

CHAIR

ATTEST:

Secretary