Office of School Board Members August 6, 2020
Board Meeting of August 12, 2020

Dr. Martin Karp, Board Member

Co-Sponsors: Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall
Ms. Maria Teresa Rojas
} ADDED

SUBJECT: INTERNET SAFETY DURING THE PANDEMIC

COMMITTEE: ACADEMICS, INNOVATION, EVALUATION & TECHNOLOGY

LINK TO STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT: SAFE, HEALTY AND SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

At the June 15, 2005 School Board meeting, Agenda Item B-4 was proffered and approved, which included a specific action to add the topic of Internet solicitation to the District's sexual abuse prevention curriculum. At that time, the District was using instructional materials with a copyright date of 1982; therefore, it did not address the dangers associated with Internet solicitation.

In the agenda item, it was stated that according to Crimes Against Children Research Center "one in five children will receive some kind of sexual solicitation while using the Internet." With the increased use of virtual education during the current pandemic, and with children going online as early as kindergarten, the District should provide information warning our students of the problems they may encounter when they go online. Children, at ages younger than ever, will be on virtual platforms and exploring websites. Parents and guardians will need to be equipped to help their children from becoming victims.

When agenda item B-4 was first published, nationwide, one out of three girls and one out of six boys experienced some form of sexual abuse before the age 18. The individual suffering of victims was well documented along with social dilemmas. For example, it was reported that over 90 percent of all child molesters were assaulted as children, over 80 percent of prostitutes were sexually abused as children, and four out of five individuals incarcerated in penal institutions were abused as children. It was noted that child victims are at a higher risk of displaying aggressive and destructive behaviors negatively impacting their lives, the lives of their loved ones, and the wellness of the community.

The issue of sexual abuse persists today, and the statistics remain at alarming levels. Clearly, there is a need for providing prevention techniques and greater awareness with many, if not all of our students, and at younger ages, spending more time online than ever before.

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

ACTION PROPOSED BY DR. MARTIN KARP: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent to address issues pertaining to Internet safety during the COVID pandemic in an effort to prevent sexual abuse.

Revised
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