



Date

Ms. Mari Tere Rojas
Chair, School Board of Miami-Dade County
1450 NE 2nd Avenue
Miami, FL 33132

Dear Ms. Rojas,

On behalf of the Prevention Committee of the Miami-Dade HIV/AIDS Partnership, the County planning body tasked with the coordination of HIV/AIDS prevention, medical care and support services throughout Miami-Dade County, we are writing to address an important issue that affects the health and well-being of our youth: HIV and sexually transmitted infection (STI) prevention in our middle schools and high schools.

We urge you to support initiatives that incorporate evidence-based HIV and STI prevention programs in school curriculum. Programs designed to provide comprehensive and age-appropriate education about HIV and sexually transmitted infections have been severely limited in scope over the past few years and we anticipate upward trends in new cases if prevention education continues to be restricted. Prevention can empower students to make informed choices, reduce stigma, and promote overall health.

HIV prevalence remains a significant public health challenge, particularly among school-aged youth. In 2022, the most recent year of complete data from the Florida Department of Health, there were **23 young people - aged 13 to 19 - who tested positive for HIV.**

In addition to HIV, cases of congenital syphilis, gonorrhea, and chlamydia are prevalent in our youth populations. In 2022, the Florida Department of Health reported **38 school-aged youth were diagnosed with syphilis; 669 were diagnosed with gonorrhea; and 2,591 were diagnosed with chlamydia.**

Investing in our youth's education on HIV and STI prevention is a crucial step towards ensuring a healthier future for our community and is in line with the national Ending the HIV Epidemic pillars, including preventing HIV and STI transmission using proven interventions. By fostering an environment of evidence-based age-appropriate prevention education, we can significantly impact our community's health outcomes.

We hope to see our schools become leaders in public health education. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Alecia Tramel-McIntyre
Chair, Miami-Dade HIV/AIDS Partnership

c: Mayor Daniella Levine Cava
School Board of Miami-Dade County
Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners
Miami-Dade HIV/AIDS Partnership and Prevention Committee