

**PROCLAIMING MAY 2018, MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS AND TRAUMA INFORMED CARE MONTH IN OKEECHOBEE COUNTY, FLORIDA**

**WHEREAS**, mental health is essential to everyone's overall health and well-being, and;

**WHEREAS**, everyone experiences times of stress and struggles in their lives, and;

**WHEREAS**, one in four adults and one in five youth ages 13-18 experience serious mental illness and;

**WHEREAS**, 60 percent of adults and 50 percent of youth do not receive the treatment necessary for their mental health needs due to limited or no knowledge of the need, barriers to care, or fear and shame, and;

**WHEREAS**, research recognizes that adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), which include, but are not limited to physical, emotional and sexual abuse, physical and emotional neglect, household dysfunction, untreated mental illness, or incarceration of a household member, domestic violence, micro-aggressions and separation or divorce involving household members, are traumatic experiences that can have a profound effect on a child's developing brain and body and can result in poor physical and mental health during childhood and adulthood, and;

**WHEREAS**, community understanding and available supports and services can greatly impact a person's ability to handle their stress and struggles and move forward, and;

**WHEREAS**, promoting mental health and wellness leads to higher overall productivity, better educational outcomes, lower crime rates, stronger economies, lower health care costs, improved family life, improved quality of life and increased lifespan, and;

**WHEREAS**, studies show that the effects of ACEs are felt by people regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or socio-economic status, and;

**WHEREAS**, each business, school, government agency, healthcare provider, faith-based organization, non-profit agency and resident shares accountability for the community's mental health needs and has a responsibility to promote mental wellness and support prevention efforts, and;

**WHEREAS**, Okeechobee County School District, recognizes the impact of awareness and education, access to services and acceptance of the importance of mental health and well-being to a person's overall success and supports the implementation of trauma informed approaches throughout the systems of care.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE OKEECHOBEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT in OKEECHOBEE COUNTY, FLORIDA**, that May 2018, is hereby proclaimed as:  
**MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS AND TRAUMA INFORMED CARE MONTH.**

**BE IT FURTHER PROCLAIMED BY OKEECHOBEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT, OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA**, that this proclamation is duly sealed, ribboned and executed by the members of this School Board. The foregoing proclamation was spearheaded by the Southeast Florida Behavioral Health Network and the Okeechobee County School District Children's Mental Health System of Care project.

BY: Jill Holcome  
Chairperson, Okeechobee County School Board

ATTEST: Ken Kereally  
Superintendent, Okeechobee County School District