

CONNECTION

A NEWSLETTER FOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS PARENTS

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Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) wishes you and your family a happy holiday season. We hope this time of year allows you to share in time-honored traditions with your loved ones. This is a hopeful time of the year when we can reflect on our

many blessings and look forward to the exciting year ahead.

Thank you for being a safe and stable presence in the lives of our students and dedicating yourself to their wellbeing. We know their many

accomplishments are a testament to the involved families and passionate employees of M-DCPS. We stand together to ensure excellence in public education.

As we enter 2022, let us renew our commitment to the education of our children and ensure that they are fully supported to end the 2021-2022 academic year with much success. Now is the time to recalibrate our efforts and forge ahead to build a stronger community, a brighter future and a better tomorrow.

We wish you a joyous, peaceful and safe Winter Recess and look forward to your return on January 3rd.

A MESSAGE FROM SUPERINTENDENT ALBERTO M. CARVALHO



As you may have heard, I will be ending my tenure as Superintendent of Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) to lead the Los Angeles Unified School District. While excited for this opportunity, it is bittersweet as I will be leaving the community I love – a vibrant, diverse community

that welcomed me with open arms as an undocumented immigrant. Over the past 30 years, I have devoted my career to public education, which I believe is the cornerstone of our democracy.

Through your support and partnership over the years, M-DCPS has become

a national model for educational excellence and innovation. Together, we turned what seemed like an impossible situation – financial crisis, low-performing schools at risk of closure by the State, and a 58 percent graduation rate – into an inevitable success story. Since 2008, we have reimagined what is possible for the children of Miami-Dade, receiving the 2012 Broad Prize for Urban Education, often considered the Nobel Prize in the field, as well as the 2014 College Board Advanced Placement Equity and Excellence District of the Year. We have raised the graduation rate to 93.1% for traditional schools.

We have eliminated F schools and have been recognized as an “A” rated school district for three consecutive years. We have accepted that one size fits none, offering more than 1,000 unique choice programs tailored to meet the individual interests and needs of students throughout Miami-Dade.

As I bid you farewell, I trust that the legacy our system has built will continue in earnest. All that we have achieved has been a direct result of our partnership with you as parents. I ask that you remain engaged and

continue advocating for all children.

Thank you for affording me the privilege of joining you in celebrating many of your children’s milestones and successes – first days of school, award ceremonies, graduations. It is these moments I have cherished the most as the leader of this school system. Thank you for allowing me to stand alongside you during difficult times – homelessness, hurricanes, and the tragic loss of some of our children to senseless violence. It has been my honor to serve you.

IMPORTANT DATES & INFORMATION

**December 20 –
December 31**
Winter Recess

January 15
Deadline for Magnet Applications

January 17
Observance of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s Birthday

HANTMAN, GALLON RETURN TO LEAD MIAMI-DADE SCHOOL BOARD FOR 2020-2021



Perla Tabares Hantman has been re-elected for an unprecedented fourteenth time as Chair of the Miami-Dade County School Board. Ms. Hantman, who represents District 4, was originally elected to the School Board in 1996. She is the first Hispanic woman to serve as Chair, and has previously served from 1999-2001, then each consecutive year from

2010-2015 and again from 2017 to 2021.

Dr. Steve Gallon III was re-elected as Vice Chair. Dr. Gallon, who represents District 1, was first elected to the School Board in 2016. This is his third time serving as Vice Chair.

STAY SAFE AROUND RAILROAD TRACKS AND TRAINS

Brightline, the only provider of modern, eco-friendly high-speed rail in America has resumed operations at FRA-approved and authorized top speeds of 79 miles per hour along the entire 67-mile corridor. In light of this, Brightline is reminding the public, pedestrians, motorists and cyclists to make safe choices around trains and crossings. The safety message is simple: look, listen, live. Drivers and pedestrians should obey all traffic laws around crossings and never stop on the tracks.

Pedestrians should remain alert and aware when near railroad tracks and only cross the tracks at a

designated railroad crossing. Key safety tips from [Operation Lifesaver](#), a non-profit organization dedicated to increasing awareness about rail safety:

- The train you see is closer and faster-moving than you think.
- Be aware that trains cannot stop quickly.
- Never drive around lowered gates – it’s illegal and deadly.
- Do not get trapped on the tracks; proceed through a highway-rail grade crossing only if you are sure you can completely clear the crossing without stopping.
- If your vehicle ever stalls on the

tracks, get out and get away from the tracks, even if you do not see a train. Locate the Emergency Notification System sign and call the number provided, telling them about the stalled vehicle.

- At a multiple-track crossing waiting for a train to pass, watch out for a second train on the other tracks, approaching from either direction.
- When you need to cross train tracks, go to a designated crossing, look both ways, and cross the tracks quickly, without stopping. Remember it isn’t safe to stop closer than 15 feet from a rail.
- ALWAYS EXPECT A TRAIN!

OPEN ENROLLMENT FOR MORE THAN 370 MAGNET PROGRAMS RUNS THROUGH JANUARY 15



Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) began accepting Magnet program applications for the 2022-2023 school year on Friday, October 1, 2021. Applications will be accepted through January 15, 2022.

More than 370 Magnet programs for all grade levels will offer

specialized courses with unique thematic strands of study that focus on students' special interests, talents and abilities.

Through M-DCPS' Magnet programs, students prepare to thrive and excel in post-secondary education and in the workplace. Some of the available programs

include Space and Oceanic Exploration, Cybersecurity, Investing (using Bloomberg stock exchange terminals), Artificial Intelligence through Robotics, Gaming Design and Animation, Medicine, Nursing, Visual & Performing Arts, and International Studies just to name a few!

The Magnet application system can be accessed at miamimagnets.org and is available in multiple languages.

Follow Magnets on Twitter [@miamimagnets](https://twitter.com/miamimagnets) for magnet-related updates. For additional information, please call 305-995-1922 to speak with the Magnet staff.

M-DCPS WARNS: THREATS TO SCHOOLS WILL RESULT IN ARRESTS



Over the few past weeks, the school district has received multiple hoax threats – mostly on social media. These threats have caused fear and uneasiness among families and staff, disrupted the educational day and depleted the resources of our dedicated Schools Police. We understand the enormous concern that arises with these targeted school violence threats and assure families that the wellbeing of our students and

staff is of the utmost importance to us. Any threat to Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) will be thoroughly investigated and those found responsible will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. M-DCPS remains committed to providing a safe and secure learning and work environment. Schools Police works closely with local and federal law enforcement entities to investigate these threats, which

often result in short- or long-term consequences including arrests.

We ask that you continue to speak with your child about online safety and using social media responsibly, as well as the values of honesty, integrity and responsibility. For useful digital citizenship resources, please visit http://digital.dadeschools.net/digital_citizenship.asp. We also encourage the reporting of any suspicious activity to 305-995-COPS. Mental health professionals are available to assist students and families. They can be contacted via the Mental Health Services Assistance line at 305-995-7100.

Together, we can ensure our schools continue to be a safe haven for all.

'PRINCIPAL TODAY' CONTINUES ANNUAL TRADITION, RETURNS TO IN-PERSON VISITS



Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) held its 28th annual Principal TODAY on December 7th, with more than 400 principals and community leaders participating. This is one of M-DCPS' signature programs, which focuses on developing partnerships that support public education. The program returned to in-person school visits after being held virtually last year.

As is the case every year, school principals had the option to choose a partner or be paired with one through outreach to local chambers and the business community at-large.

"This annual event allows us to showcase the magic happening in our schools while forming partnerships that result in internships and mentoring for the benefit of our students," said Schools Superintendent Alberto M. Carvalho. "It also gives us an opportunity to have an open conversation with the business community around topics such as academic support, advocacy and workforce development, which is a win-win for public education and our community."

Individuals "stepping into the shoes" of the principal ranged from CEOs of for-profit and non-

profit organizations, as well as elected officials and members of the media.

The event was held in partnership with long-standing sponsor Bank of America.

PARENT E-TIPS

Practicing Self-Care

<https://bit.ly/3y3Tfmv>

SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

January 12

11:00 a.m.
Regular Meeting

SOCIAL MEDIA



@MDCPS
@EscuelasMDCPS
@MiamiSup



@MiamiSchools
@AlbertoMCarvalho1



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Cori'Anna White
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