

CONNECTION

A Newsletter for Miami-Dade County Public Schools Parents

M-DCPS LAUNCHES BOLD EDUCATION PROGRAMS, UNVEILS NEW OFFERINGS

When more than 340,000 Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) students walk into their classrooms, they will find more choices, more opportunities, and more innovation at their fingertips. New programs and improved procedures have been specifically designed to better serve the needs of M-DCPS students and educational partners.

Fifty-three new choice/magnet program offerings were created for the 2015-2016 school year, bringing the total of choice programs to over 500. This total includes 16 magnet programs at 12 schools in the areas of Science, Mathematics, Multimedia Entertainment Technology, Legal Studies, and Visual Arts; 37 choice programs at 30 schools, which include Advanced Placement (AP), Capstone Diploma (7), Cambridge (18), International (3), & Cybersecurity (1).

New magnet programs include:

- National Security Intelligence Studies, Forensic Sciences & Law Enforcement at Barbara Goleman Senior High
- Robotics and Visual Arts at Jose de Diego Middle
- Medical Health Sciences at McMillan Middle & South Dade Middle
- Engineering, Robotics and Legal studies at Rockway Middle
- Digital Media Technology at Hialeah Miami Lakes Senior High
- Forensic Investigative Academy at Miami Palmetto Senior High
- Communications at Sunset Senior High
- Global Trade & Logistics at Miami Central Senior High

Non-magnet choice programs coming to several schools include:

- Computer Science, Culinary Arts, and Performing Arts at Carol City Middle
- International Language (Italian) program at American Senior High
- Cybersecurity Academy at Alonzo and Tracy Mourning Senior High
- Forensic Science Academy at Palmetto Middle

New initiatives include:

Digital Convergence – U.S. History Classroom Tablet and English Language Arts (ELA)- Student Tablet Programs- The program provides 32,000 tablets to all middle school 8th grade U.S. History classrooms and all 10th grade high school students enrolled in ELA, bringing the total number of devices to more than 100,000.

Digital Convergence – Tablets for Middle School Students with Autism - The program provides tablets to students in self-contained Autism Centers to allow access to web-based tools that promote language learning, emotional development, and the development of social and communications skills.

School Mobile App - The mobile application, for iOS, Android and Windows, that provides a personalized user experience based on the individual logging in to the application. Principals can keep parents and students up to date with both District and school

specific information. Parents will have access to a school directory that will include email addresses, a school calendar of events and links to the schools social media sites.

Universal iCode Education 2.0 – The program strengthens the educational opportunities for students in the areas of coding and programming by initiating Launch Code at the high school level, increasing participation in coding and robotics competitions, and launching introduction to computer science units in seven middle schools.

WiFi-on-the-Go –The program creates opportunities for mobile learning by providing mobile “Hot Spots” on District-owned school busses which may be accessed by students on their way to and from school.

Flex Stops – This pilot program satisfies the need to transport magnet students that do not reside within the Transportation Service Zone area but are near a bus route with available seating capacity. The program is created near a school or park and will pick up several students at a time and it is established based on the number of magnet students residing in the area.

Global Positioning System (GPS) Bus Pilot – The GPS Bus Pilot establishes a school bus tracking system, which will provide parents and students the ability to track the whereabouts of their assigned bus.

Miami-Dade Schools Police Department Explorers Program – The program provides high school students an opportunity to gain insight into a career in law enforcement through the nationally recognized “Learning for Life” Police Explorers Program. Students engage in lessons that focus on the importance of clear and consistent rules, limits, and discipline. Students also learn the significance of personal character and being a role model for personal behavior change.

Health Clinic at Miami Northwestern - This school-based, primary healthcare clinic at Miami Northwestern Senior High School in Liberty City is funded by a \$1.45 million grant awarded to FIU’s Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing and Health Sciences by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration.

DATES TO REMEMBER

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| August 24 - | First day of School |
| September 7- | Labor Day |
| September 14- | Teacher Planning Day |
| September 23- | Teacher Planning Day |

MIAMI-DADE SCHOOL BOARD APPROVES FIRST READING OF 2015-2016 TENTATIVE BUDGET

The Miami-Dade School Board approved the first reading of the school district's tentative budget during its July budget public hearing. The proposed budget reflects fiscal priorities which include providing students with expanded, innovative course offerings, creating a fund reserve for employee salaries, giving homeowners additional tax relief, and ensuring that the economic viability of the school system remains sound and robust.

The tentative \$4.83 billion budget increases financial support to Magnet and Choice Programs, Guidance Counseling Services, Exceptional Student Education Services (ESE), Bilingual Services, and Safety and Security. The funding investment to academic initiatives and services will have a significant impact on student learning and overall student achievement. This investment includes the following:

- Increases support for bilingual education by \$4M
- Increases counseling and student support services by \$3.2M including a reengineering of alternative education programs
- Protects services to students with disabilities and increases contracted services by over \$1M
- Expands Information Technology support to schools by over \$4M
- Enhances classroom technology with an investment of \$27M
- Expands secondary school schedule to eight period day at up to eight additional schools at a cost of \$6M

Under the proposed budget, Magnet and Choice Programs will increase by 53 new offerings to students. Also, the school district has created a \$30 million collective bargaining reserve to support teachers and employees. Additionally, the proposed total millage is expected to drop by .362 mill, resulting in nearly a \$46 reduction in homeowner taxes based on an assessment of \$184,000. The reduction is the largest property tax reduction for a typical homeowner since the District began tracking this impact in the early 1990s. Protecting the financial health and stability of the District is fundamental to budget planning decisions.

The Miami-Dade County School Board will hold the final public hearing on the 2015-2016 tentative budget on September 9, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the School Board Administration Building auditorium.

VALUES MATTER AT M-DCPS

This year at M-DCPS, we are emphasizing the District's core values to reinforce the development of positive behavior in our students. We encourage you to speak to your child about the importance of values inside and outside of the classroom.

- **Citizenship:** Helping create a society based upon democratic values including rules of law, equality of opportunity, due process, reasoned argument, representative government, checks and balances, rights and responsibilities and democratic decision-making
- **Cooperation:** Working together toward goals as basic as human survival in an increasingly interdependent world.
- **Fairness:** Treating people impartially not playing favorites, being open-minded, and maintaining an objective attitude toward those

- **Honesty:** Dealing truthfully with people, being sincere, not deceiving them or stealing from them, not cheating or lying.
- **Integrity:** Standing up for your beliefs about what is right and what is wrong and resisting social pressure to do wrong.
- **Kindness:** Being sympathetic, helpful, compassionate, benevolent, agreeable and gentle toward people and other living things.
- **Pursuit of Excellence:** Doing your best with the talents you have, striving toward a goal and not giving up.
- **Respect:** Showing regard for the worth and dignity of someone or something, being courteous and polite, and judging all people on their merits. Respect takes three major forms: respect for oneself, respect for other people, and respect for all forms of life and the environment.
- **Responsibility:** Thinking before you act and being accountable for your actions, paying attention to others, and responding to their needs. Responsibility emphasizes our positive obligations to care for each other.

UPCOMING SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

Sept. 9	11:00 a.m.	Regular Meeting
	6:00 p.m.	Second Budget Public Hearing and Adoption of Final 2015-2016 Millage Levy and Annual Budget, Approval of 2014-2015 Annual Financial Report, and Approval of 2014-2015 Final Budget Resolutions
Oct. 14	11:00 a.m.	Regular Meeting

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