

# CONNECTION

A NEWSLETTER FOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS PARENTS

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## FDOE ISSUES EMERGENCY ORDER WAIVING ASSESSMENTS FOR GRADUATION, GRADE PROMOTIONS



On April 9, 2021, Florida Commissioner of Education Richard Corcoran released Emergency Order 2021-EO-02 providing flexibility to school districts across the state in addressing testing for students in Spring 2021 due to the challenges of the pandemic. Among other topics, the emergency order addresses graduation for current seniors, student promotion and retention decisions, and Bright Future awards.

In order to provide guidance to families in Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) about the implications of the emergency order, our District has prepared the following questions and answers.

### 1) How does this Emergency Order affect students who are not graduating in the spring of 2021?

The district recommends the participation of all students in state assessments to ensure proper placement in courses and the

provision of appropriate support services. This Emergency Order only provides flexibility regarding the testing requirements for third-grade promotion and for students who are graduating in the spring of 2021. The testing requirements are still in place for all other graduation cohorts.

### 2) What will happen if a third-grade student is unable to take the Florida Standards Assessment in English Language Arts (FSA ELA)? Will he/she be promoted to fourth grade?

As stated above, the district recommends the participation of all students in state assessments to ensure proper placement in courses and the provision of appropriate support services. However, if a third-grade student is unable to take the state assessment, the school district will use other locally administered assessments or tools, such as portfolio, to determine if the student can be promoted to fourth grade. As per the Executive Order, a student may be promoted to grade four if the district is able to determine that a student is performing at least at level 2 on the ELA assessment through the good cause exemption process provided in s. 1008.25, Fla. Stat., or other means reasonably calculated to provide reliable evidence of a student's performance.

### 3) What will be used to determine if a high-school senior can graduate?

Students who are expected to graduate in the spring of 2021 will be able to do so if they have met all the graduation requirements except the testing requirements (the 10th Grade English Language Arts Florida Standards Assessment and the Algebra I End-of-Course Exam). As per the Executive Order, a school district is authorized to waive the required state assessments for graduation, if the district determines on a case-by-case basis that the student's high school record establishes a comparable level of achievement. Students should contact their school counselor to make sure they have met all graduation requirements.

### 4) If a student is taking a class this year that has an End-of-Course (EOC) exam that determines 30% of the final course grade, what will the consequences be if the student is unable to take the EOC?

Promotion and final course grades for classes that have an EOC will be determined by the student's performance in the course. The 30% EOC requirement will be applied to a student's final grade in the course only if it IMPROVES the student's final grade. This applies solely to courses students successfully completed in the 2020-21 school year.

For a complete list of questions and answers, visit <https://bit.ly/2PRkK17>.

# COVID-19 VACCINATIONS AVAILABLE TO FL RESIDENTS AGE 16 AND UP



As of Monday, April 5, 2021, all Florida residents 18 years of age and older are eligible to receive any COVID-19 vaccine as prescribed by the Food and Drug Administration. In addition, the Pfizer vaccine is now also authorized for persons ages 16 and 17. All individuals under the age of 18 receiving a vaccine must be accompanied by a parent/guardian and complete the COVID-19 vaccine screening and consent form. To download a copy of the form, visit <https://floridahealthcovid19.gov/wp->

[content/uploads/2021/04/doh-covid-vaccine-screening-consent-form.pdf](https://floridahealthcovid19.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/doh-covid-vaccine-screening-consent-form.pdf).

Although vaccine trials on children between the ages of 12 and 15 indicate a 100% efficacy rate, the vaccine is not yet available to children under the age of 16.

The expansion of vaccine eligibility is welcome news for Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS), which continues to prioritize the health and well-being of its students and employees during the COVID-19 pandemic. The District has been guiding its decisions regarding the safety of students, employees and the community based on science-driven recommendations provided by public health experts.

M-DCPS is currently exploring opportunities for voluntary vaccination of eligible students at pre-designated sites, similar to what has been offered with COVID-19 testing for students and employees, as well as

vaccination efforts for employees.

Parents/guardians and employees are encouraged to visit the state's vaccine locator site at <https://floridahealthcovid19.gov/vaccines/vaccine-locator/> for the latest information on available vaccine providers. In order to keep our community safe, we encourage the observation of COVID-19 prevention practices, including the wearing of facial coverings, frequent handwashing and the use of hand sanitizer, and social distancing whenever possible.

## IMPORTANT DATES & INFORMATION

**April 15**  
Magnet Off-Cycle Application Period Begins

**May 31**  
Observance of Memorial Day

## MAGNET OFF-CYCLE APPLICATION PERIOD



The M-DCPS Off-Cycle Magnet application process officially begins on Thursday, April 15, 2021 and will remain open through the start of the 2021-2022 school year. Students must apply and meet all eligibility criteria to be admitted. Students are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

Accepting an Off-Cycle seat will not affect their waitlist status at another school. A list of available Magnet seats for the 2021-2022 school year is available at <http://offcycle.miamimagnet.com> or by calling 305-995-1922.

## FLORIDA PREPAID COLLEGE PLANS



As uncertain as the past year has been, what is for sure is that a consistent college savings strategy

now will help your future college graduate avoid burdensome student loan debt. When it comes to college savings, the earlier a family begins saving, the lower the cost per month. With Florida Prepaid, families can lock in the future cost of college. The open enrollment period runs through April 30, 2021 with plans starting at \$45 a month. Families

are encouraged to use the online Prepaid Plan pricing tool to explore the various plan costs and payment options. Start planning for a brighter tomorrow by saving for college today!

Enroll today by visiting <https://bit.ly/3ai1obu>. Use code MIAMI21 for \$25 off enrollment through April 30th.

Now that we have entered the final grading period, it is a great time to reach out to your child's teacher(s) to schedule a parent-teacher conference and ensure a solid finish to the school year. Whether your child is currently in My School Online or in the Schoolhouse model, it is important to have open, two-way communication between school and home. If you have not yet scheduled a parent-teacher conference this year, we encourage you to reach out to your child's school and teacher(s) to schedule one in the coming weeks. With less than nine weeks remaining, the earlier you reach out, the better to schedule a time that works for everyone. Below are some tips to ensure that your meeting is successful.

## Before the meeting:

1. Have a conversation with your child and ask them if they would like you to discuss anything with their teacher.
2. Come to the meeting prepared. Write down any questions you would like to ask during the conference to make the best use of the time with your child's teacher.
3. If your meeting is virtual or via telephone, make sure that you are in a quiet place where you can freely discuss your child. If you are meeting via Zoom, check to ensure

you have reliable internet and that your microphone/speakers are working correctly. If your meeting is in person, plan to arrive at the meeting 10-15 minutes before to park and check-in so that you can start the meeting on time.

## During the meeting:

1. Start the meeting off on a positive note. You may wish to share something you have appreciated about the teacher this year or a comment from your child about their teacher.
2. Stay on track and avoid lengthy discussions of topics that are not related to the purpose of the conference.
3. Listen to what your child's teacher has to say and be open-minded to suggestions from them. They only want what is best for your child and may have insight that could help you support your child at home. If the meeting doesn't go as planned, stay calm. Try to avoid angry or apologetic reactions. Instead, ask for examples with questions such as:
  - "When did the problem start and when does it happen?"
  - "How different is my child's performance from that of others in the class?"

4. Work with the teacher to develop an action plan. This plan should include both steps that you can take at home and steps that the teacher will take at school. At the end of the conference, show gratitude for the meeting, and discuss if a follow-up conference is appropriate. Ask how they prefer to stay in touch; making sure that you have their correct contact information and that they also have yours.

## After the meeting:

1. Have a conversation with your child and share what was discussed, both good and not so good.
2. If there was a plan of action set up during the meeting, make sure your child understands what steps will be made moving forward.
3. Send a thank you message to your child's teacher and if follow-up was discussed during the meeting, provide any updates.

Remember that you and your child are important members of the M-DCPS family. We believe that open two-way communication is essential for the academic and social-emotional success of your child. Your child's teacher(s) and administration want to hear from you to build a strong partnership.

## FATHERS IN ACTION AND ADVOCACY WEEK AND FATHERS IN EDUCATION DAY

Since December 2014, M-DCPS has celebrated fathers and father figures by implementing Fathers in Education Day and Fathers in Action & Advocacy Week. This year, Fathers in Action and Advocacy Week takes place from April 26 – 30, 2021. Fathers in Education Day will take place on Thursday, April 29, 2021.

During this week and throughout the school year, we encourage schools to increase the presence of positive male role models in supporting the

academic success of all students by inviting fathers and father figures into our classrooms. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, this year's celebration will be conducted virtually.

Schools and community members are encouraged to join the Fathers in Education (FIE) Day Challenge on Thursday, April 29, 2021, by participating via social media. Schools, teachers, principals, and community members are invited to post a photo or video of themselves

reading their favorite book with the hashtag **#MDCPSFIECHALLENGE** and **#MDCPSDad** and challenge others to do the same.

In partnership with the Fatherhood Task Force of South Florida and The Parent Academy at M-DCPS, virtual workshops will be offered each day from April 26 – April 30. The schedule of workshops can be found at <https://www.engagemiamidade.net/fathersineducationday>.

# ADDITIONAL COVID-19 TESTING DATES FOR CHILDREN



Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS), in partnership with University of Miami Health System, announces additional dates for free COVID-19 testing for all children, ages 4-18 in Miami-Dade County. Testing will be done through the Health System's Pediatric Mobile

Unit, which will be available in various school parking lots throughout the month.

A parent/guardian must accompany their child for testing; identification is not required. Walk-ups are welcome, but appointments are encouraged.

Appointments may be made by calling 305-243-2059. May testing dates and locations will be made available in the near future.

The dates and locations for the mobile unit testing, taking place from 3 p.m. – 5 p.m., are as follows.

<b>April 21</b>	<b>iTech @ Thomas A. Edison Educational Center</b>	6101 N.W. 2nd Avenue Miami, FL 33127
<b>April 22</b>	<b>Coral Reef Senior High School</b>	10101 S.W. 152nd Street Miami, FL 33157
<b>April 28</b>	<b>J.C. Bermudez Doral Senior High School</b>	5005 N.W. 112th Avenue Doral, FL 33178
<b>April 29</b>	<b>North Miami Beach Senior High School</b>	1247 N.E. 167th Street N. Miami Beach, FL 33162

## SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

**April 21 - 10:00 a.m.**  
Conference Session:  
Attendance Zones for  
2021-2022

**April 21 - 11:00 a.m.**  
Regular Meeting  
(Initial Reading-Attendance  
Zones for 2021-2022)

**April 28 - 12:00 p.m.**  
Board Workshop

**May 19 - 11:00 a.m.**  
Regular Meeting

## PARENT E-TIPS

**Connecting  
with other  
Families**

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

## SOCIAL MEDIA



@MDCPS  
@EscuelasMDCPS  
@MiamiSup



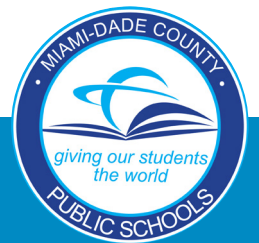
@MiamiSchools  
@AlbertoMCarvalho1



@MiamiSchools  
@MiamiSup



@MiamiSchools



[www.dadeschools.net](http://www.dadeschools.net)

Stay connected with Miami-Dade County Public Schools. Make sure you follow us on social media for the latest news and updates regarding the school district. #MDCPSConnects

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