

CONNECTION

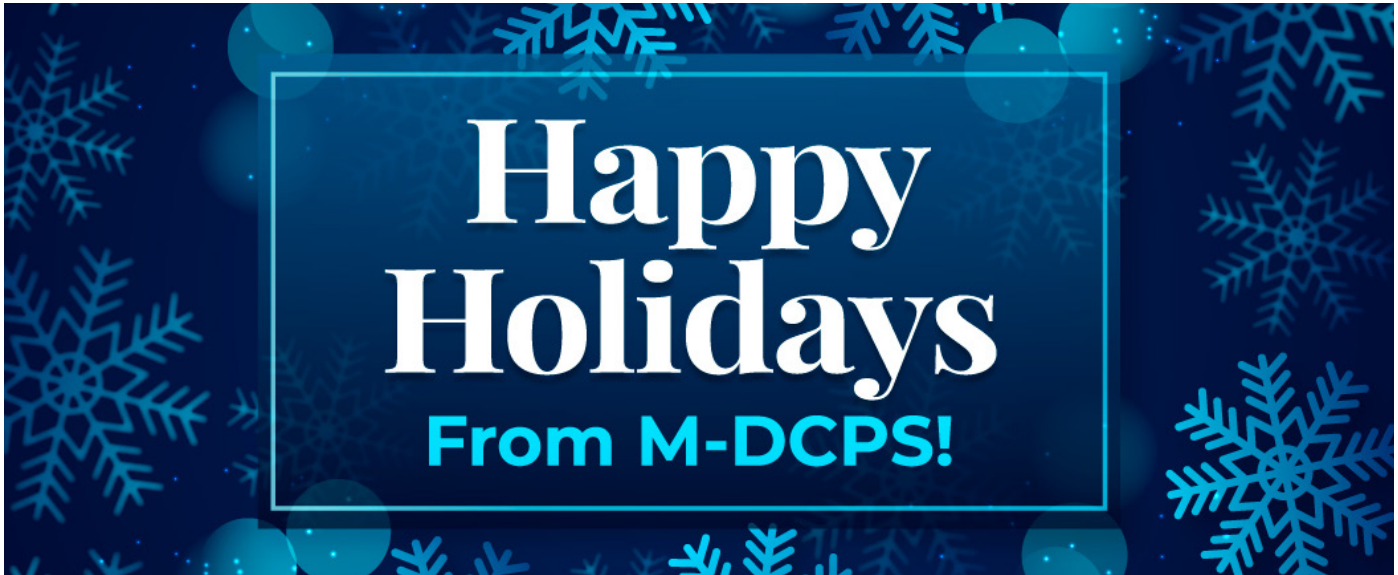
A NEWSLETTER FOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS PARENTS

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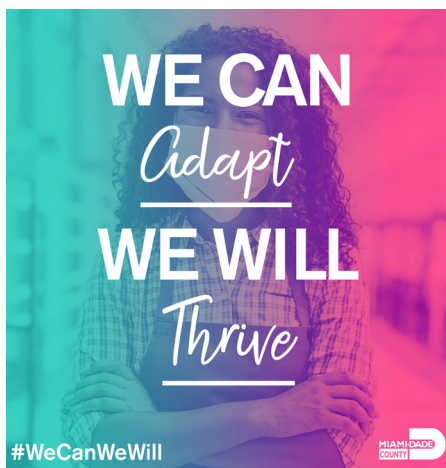
As we celebrate the holiday season and count down to the new year, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to our students, employees and families. This year has been particularly challenging, but it has also shown us

the power of community. Together, we have persevered.

This holiday season, we wish you and your family moments of peace, health, and much happiness. No

matter what 2021 brings, we remain committed to providing a world-class education for all children and to safeguarding the health and well-being of our entire community.

WE CAN, WE WILL



With the holiday season upon us amid a global pandemic, we must each do our part to ensure the health and well-being of our community.

A time traditionally spent reconnecting with loved ones will undoubtedly look very different this year. Still, we must come together and recognize the collective power we have in overcoming this public health crisis. Experts predict an increase in COVID-19 cases over the holidays, but we can reduce the spread by taking proper precautions.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) has joined forces with Miami-Dade County in the #WeCanWeWill campaign to share the urgent message that together, We Can Adapt and We Will

Thrive to overcome this challenge. We urge the M-DCPS family to continue wearing facial coverings, maintaining physical distance, and frequently washing their hands while also remaining cautious with their choices of gatherings outside of their household, public outings, and social situations. We invite our students, families, and employees to join us in saying We Can, We Will stop the spread of COVID-19. Let's commit to working together to keep our community safe.



Nine months ago, Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) joined hundreds of school districts across the globe when it was forced to physically close its facilities and transition to distance learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The prolonged time away from teachers, in-person learning, and the schoolhouse forced students to experience unparalleled pressures, which may have resulted in academic regressions. For many students, particularly for our youngest learners, this has undoubtedly led to an increase of achievement/opportunity gaps. To address these deficiencies, the District has closely monitored and analyzed student

progress data. Attendance has shown to be a baseline factor in student success. Those who are excessively tardy or absent from school will fall behind in academic achievement. Excessive school absenteeism precedes grade failure, loss of interest and may result in students withdrawing from school.

Parental participation, particularly for our youngest learners, is especially important to ensure students are in school and remain engaged.

Below are some tips on what you can do to keep your child present, engaged and learning.

- Contact your child’s teacher and provide them your updated contact information so they can easily reach you. Share any concerns you might have and ask for help when you need it.
- Check in frequently with your child throughout the day to ensure they have logged on and are actively engaged. Attendance is taken in each class in My School Online, as it is in the Schoolhouse Model of learning.
- Practice logging in to virtual classes and contact the school if you or your child need help logging in.
- Monitor your child’s attendance and participation and sign up for notifications through the Dadeschools Parent Portal by clicking on the View Grades & Attendance button.
- Make school attendance a priority. Establish routines for bedtime, waking up, and showing up. Don’t let your child stay home (and without connecting) unless he or she is truly sick.

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



Perla Tabares Hantman has been re-elected for an unprecedented 13th 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 2020.



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 second time serving as Vice Chair.

IMPORTANT DATES & INFORMATION

December 21 – January 1
Winter Recess

January 15
Deadline for Magnet Applications

January 18
Observance of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s Birthday

MENTAL HEALTH TIPS/RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES DURING THE HOLIDAYS



This holiday season may look very different for many people this year. Typically, the last few months of the year are full of parties and visiting family and friends. However, this year due to the coronavirus pandemic, things like traveling and getting together in large groups may not be possible. This change can be hard to handle and many parents may be wondering how they can best help their families cope with tough feelings, stress and loss of control on top of disappointment.

Below are a few tips and suggestions

to help you, your children and family cope, while still enjoying the holidays:

- Focus on quality family time, without emphasizing the details.
- Create new traditions that follow health and safety guidelines.
- Teach your child to build resilience by helping them overcome disappointment.
- Ask your child how they are feeling, listen and give them choices on positive social activities that honor the holiday season in a socially-distanced way.
- Practice gratitude and emphasize what's going well.

Seek professional help if a child is struggling for more than two weeks (lack of sleep, change in eating, displays of aggression, anxiety or withdrawn):

• M-DCPS Department of Mental Health Services:
<http://mentalhealthservices.dadeschools.net>

• Call 2-1-1- Helpline in Miami-Dade County

• National 24-Hour Crisis Support
Call: 1-800-784-2433
Text: HELLO to 741741

Let this information help you find hope, peace, joy and the sense of renewal that a traditional holiday season brings.

THE PARENT ACADEMY OFFERS ACCESS AND SUPPORT FOR PARENTS



Distance learning during these challenging times has reminded all of us about the integral role that families play in their children's education. Parents are their children's first teachers but since schools closed in March due to the COVID-19 pandemic, families have become the key to motivating and stimulating academic interest in their children,

more than ever before. Families should know that they are not alone in this vital mission...The Parent Academy (TPA) is here for you.

TPA hosts weekly webinars via ZOOM, entitled "TPA Live," in English, Spanish and Haitian-Creole. English webinars are held on Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m. and on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Webinars in Haitian-Creole are held on Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m. and on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Webinars in Spanish are held on Thursdays at 10:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m. and on the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

To register for any "TPA Live" ZOOM webinar, parents and caregivers must

visit <http://parentacademymiami.com> and click on the preferred language link on the "2020-2021 Workshop Registration" image. Space is limited to 500 participants per webinar. Additionally, the TPA website has a library of virtual resources to promote and support home learning, providing access to family topics, information about the school district, virtual fun activities and webinars through the Virtual Campus.

TPA is committed to fostering relationships at home and supporting teachers in their important work. By strengthening these relationships, students understand that both their parents and their teachers are on the same team, rooting for their academic success.

M-DCPS TO CONTINUE SERVING FREE MEALS TO CHILDREN THROUGH THE END OF THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced it would extend the summer meals flexibility waiver, allowing Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) to continue to serve free meals to all children

throughout the entire 2020-2021 school year.

The waiver of eligibility rules for children under 18 is particularly important in high-need communities like Miami-Dade County. M-DCPS always provides free breakfast to all students, but this federal waiver will allow schools to serve free breakfast and lunch to all children, no matter the socio-economic status of their families. This will help ensure all children have access to nutritious food during this difficult time in our community.

M-DCPS continues to distribute meals for children at all school sites. Grab-and-go breakfast and lunch pick-ups take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:00 p.m - 5:30 p.m

The USDA requires that parents/ adults provide proof of valid identification that the meal is for a child 18 years old or younger, if the child does not accompany them to the distribution. Identification can include a student ID, report card or progress report.

PRINCIPAL TODAY CONTINUES ANNUAL TRADITION WITH VIRTUAL VISITS



Principal TODAY event, continuing its tradition of engaging business/ community leaders to serve as school principals. This year, the event was held virtually and spanned a week.

The goal of the program is for participants to build relationships and translate their experience of the day into a long-term partnership that enhances the learning environment and supports student achievement.

On December 7, 2020, Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) kicked off the annual

PARENT E-TIPS

Setting Goals

<https://bit.ly/2Hvdu6E>

SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

January 13

11:00 a.m.

Regular Meeting

SOCIAL MEDIA



@MDCPS
@EscuelasMDCPS
@MiamiSup



@MiamiSchools
@AlbertoMCarvalho1



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