

CONNECTION

A Newsletter for Miami-Dade County Public Schools Parents

M-DCPS CONTINUES TO BUILD ON A FOUNDATION OF SUCCESS

We are just at the half-way mark of the 2015-2016 school year, and the story of success and innovation in Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) continues to unfold. The future is promising and we continue to add to an already notable list of school and district accomplishments. As we embrace the excitement and expectations of a new year, it's a good time to reflect on the good and noble work of the past year.

Despite mounting challenges around standardized testing and an ongoing lack of state funding support, M-DCPS and the school community have rallied to ensure that every child has the opportunity to succeed in the classroom. A world-class education coupled with cutting-edge technology and innovation means that we are preparing our children to enter colleges and professions across the globe.

In M-DCPS, we realize something significant about education and instructional diversity – one size-fits-none. When it comes to making comprehensive and diverse academic programs available to students we continue to hit the mark. Quite frankly, we hit the ball out of the park. In August, we opened the 2015-2016 school year with the rollout of 53 new choice and magnet programs, now boasting more than 500 choice offerings.

But it's not just our innovative programs and trendsetting initiatives that set M-DCPS apart from other school districts. It's also the exceptional academic performance of students on tests such as NAEP, widely referred to as the Nation's Report Card, as well as an impressive graduation rate, currently at 78.1 percent. According to 2014-2015 graduation data from the Florida Department of Education, Miami-Dade's high school seniors are graduating at a higher rate than high school seniors across the state.

This year, NAEP scores for M-DCPS students were higher than the national average in grade 8 and our students outperformed students in larger cities in grade 4. In specific subjects, like mathematics, the achievement of students in grade 4 improved significantly from 2013-2015, surpassing public schools nationwide, and making Miami-Dade one of only three school districts to see improvement over the same time period.

Notwithstanding the challenges we face regarding the Florida Standards Assessment's questionable validity, as well as the lack of baseline data and learning gains, our students' performance continues to outpace that of comparable school districts and the State. Florida's Commissioner of Education, Pamela Stewart, released the results of a simulated test-run of proposed cut scores used to calculate Florida's 2014-2015 School Performance Grades. The State Board of Education voted recently in support of the Commissioner's simulated proposed cut scores – a position that is both reasonable and prudent. The data for Miami-Dade County Public Schools was conclusive – M-DCPS outperformed the State.

Based on the cut scores:

- M-DCPS had a higher percentage of "A" rated schools than schools statewide
- M-DCPS outperformed Broward, Duval and Hillsborough counties on the percentage of "A" rated schools

These achievements reflect hard work in the classroom by teachers and students as well as the support of parents and communities that are fully engaged as our education partners. Together, they are the heart and soul of the Miami-Dade County Public Schools success story. It is a story that continues to evolve and will not be deterred by the challenges ahead.

Alberto M. Carvalho
Superintendent of Schools

M-DCPS TO HOST MIAMI-DADE STEM EXPO

More than 10,000 students, parents, and community members are expected to attend this year's Miami-Dade STEM Expo, to be held on Saturday, Feb. 6, 2016 at Miami Dade College's North Campus. The STEM Expo is a gathering of creative, intelligent, and resourceful students that compete and demonstrate their proficiency in STEM activities. This year's theme is Full STEAM Ahead.



You are Cordially Invited to Attend the

Miami-Dade STEM EXPO

Full STEAM Ahead

2016

Saturday, February 6, 2016
8:45 a.m.
Opening Ceremony
Miami Dade College, North Campus
11380 Northwest 27th Avenue
Miami, FL 33167

Artwork by: Sofia Hernandez Grade 8 student South Miami K-8 Center

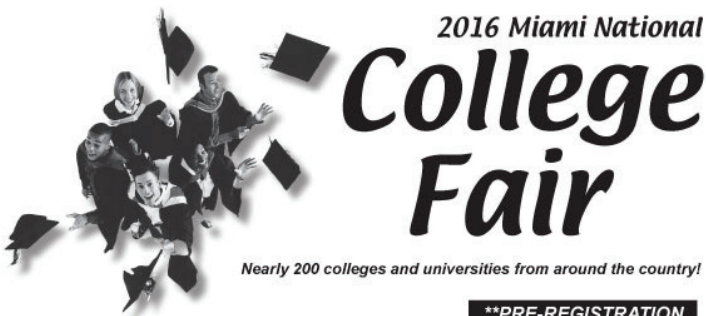


DIVISION OF ACADEMICS • DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

**NATIONAL COLLEGE FAIR COMES TO MIAMI, FEB. 21
PRE-REGISTER ONLINE NOW!**

Representatives from nearly 200 colleges and universities will be at the 2016 National College Fair in Miami, 12 p.m. to 4 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 21, at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Miami Airport & Convention Center, 777 N.W. 72nd Ave. The free fair allows students, parents and other members of the public to meet with college representatives and get their questions answered. Free information sessions on financial aid, college planning, admission, and testing requirements will also be offered. Counseling and computer centers will allow students to access career interest surveys and information about college preparation, admissions and scholarships.

Students and their families may pre-register at www.gotomyncf.com. For more information, contact the College Fair hotline at 305-995-1739 or visit www.nacacnet.org.



Nearly 200 colleges and universities from around the country!

****PRE-REGISTRATION**

Requesting information from multiple colleges/universities at the College Fair just got easier. By pre-registering, students can print a bar-coded confirmation to be used at the fair as an electronic ID. No more filling out information cards! Pre-register at www.gotomyncf.com.

Sunday, February 21, 2016

12:00 p.m. (noon) - 4:00 p.m.
Doubletree Miami Mart Airport Hotel & Convention Center
777 N.W. 72 Ave., Miami, FL 33126
(just off S.R. 836 and Milam Dairy Road)

FREE Admission and FREE Information Sessions
Parking fee: \$5.00

For more information, call
305-995-1739
Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
or visit www.nacacnet.org

If you have a disability that requires accommodation, you may call the number listed above or call the Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) at 305-995-2400.

#collegefairmiami

Sponsored by
Miami-Dade County Public Schools
NACAC National Association for College Admission Counseling



SCHOOL BOARD APPROVES 2016-2017 SCHOOL CALENDAR

The Miami-Dade County School Board approved the 2016-2017 School Calendar with a start date of August 22, 2016 for students. For more information visit, www.dadeschools.net/calendars/.



**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2016-2017 SCHOOL CALENDAR
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY**

| July 2016 | | | | | August 2016 | | | | | September 2016 | | | | |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|---------------|----|----|----|----|----------------|----|----|----|----|
| M | T | W | T | F | M | T | W | T | F | M | T | W | T | F |
| | | | | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 3 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| October 2016 | | | | | November 2016 | | | | | December 2016 | | | | |
| M | T | W | T | F | M | T | W | T | F | M | T | W | T | F |
| | | | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| January 2017 | | | | | February 2017 | | | | | March 2017 | | | | |
| M | T | W | T | F | M | T | W | T | F | M | T | W | T | F |
| | | | | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 27 | 28 | | | | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |
| 30 | 31 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| April 2017 | | | | | May 2017 | | | | | June 2017 | | | | |
| M | T | W | T | F | M | T | W | T | F | M | T | W | T | F |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |

- New Teachers Report
- Teacher Planning Day
- Teacher Planning Day No Opt
- Legal Holiday
- Recess Day
- Beg/End of Grading Period
- Secondary Early Release
- End of 1st QTR Secondary Early Release

Days in Grading Period
1-45
2-45
3-42
4-48

For information on employee opt days, please refer to back of calendar.

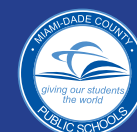
The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida

- Perla Tabares Hantman, Chair
- Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall, Vice Chair
- Susie V. Castillo
- Dr. Lawrence S. Feldman
- Dr. Wilbert "Tee" Holloway
- Dr. Martin Karp
- Lubby Navarro
- Raquel A. Regalado
- Dr. Marta Pérez Wurtz

Alberto M. Carvalho
Superintendent of Schools

Logan Schroeder-Stephens
Student Advisor to the School Board

Produced by the Office of Communications
Daisy Gonzalez-Diego
Chief Communications Officer



UPCOMING SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

February 3 11:00 a.m. Regular Meeting
March 9 11:00 a.m. Regular Meeting

DATES TO REMEMBER

February 5 - Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day
February 15 - All Presidents' Day
February 16 - Teacher Planning Day
March 21 - 25 - Spring Recess