

CONNECTION

A Newsletter for Miami-Dade County Public Schools Parents

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS RECEIVES RECORD 35 NATIONAL MAGNET SCHOOLS OF MERIT AWARDS

Thirty-five Magnet Schools in Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) have been recognized by Magnet Schools of America (MSA) for their commitment to high academic standards, curriculum innovation, successful desegregation/diversity efforts, specialized teaching staffs, and parent community involvement. No other school district has ever received such a high number of awards within a single school year, and for the second year in a row, M-DCPS out-performed all other school districts nationwide by a large margin.

This year, 18 Miami-Dade public schools were among the 94 schools nationwide to receive the coveted Magnet Schools of Excellence award. In the category for Magnet Schools of Distinction, the District had 17 schools among the 121 national winners.

MSA also has chosen Herbert A. Ammons Middle School as one of the top-performing magnet schools in the nation. Ammons Middle is one of five schools nationwide to be competing for the coveted Dr. Ronald P. Simpson Distinguished Merit Award. The award will be announced in May at the national MSA conference in Tulsa, Okla.

MAGNET SCHOOLS OF EXCELLENCE

Ada Merritt K-8 Center
Coral Reef Senior High School
Dr. Henry E. Perrine Academy of the Arts
Frank C. Martin K-8 Center
Herbert A. Ammons Middle School
Howard D. McMillan Middle School
iPrep Academy
Jose Marti MAST 6-12 Academy
MAST Academy
MAST @ Homestead
Miami Coral Park Senior High School
Norland Middle School
Phyllis Ruth Miller Elementary School
South Miami K-8 Center
Southwood Middle School
TERRA Environmental Research Institute
William J. Bryan Elementary School
Young Women's Preparatory Academy

MAGNET SCHOOLS OF DISTINCTION

Coconut Palm K-8 Academy
Design and Architecture Senior High
George Washington Carver Middle School
Hammocks Middle School
International Studies Preparatory Academy
Joella C. Good Elementary School
John F. Kennedy Middle School
Jorge Mas Canosa Middle School

Law Enforcement Officers Memorial High School
New World School of the Arts
Robert Russa Moton Elementary School
South Miami Senior High School
Shenandoah Middle School
Southside Elementary School
Southwest Miami Senior High School
Sunset Elementary
W. R. Thomas Middle School

NATIONAL TEACHER OF THE YEAR FINALIST, STATE PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR ARE M-DCPS EMPLOYEES

Two administrators from Miami-Dade County Public Schools won top honors for their superior leadership skills during the 8th Annual Commissioner's Summit for Principals. Dr. Pablo Ortiz, former principal of Miami Edison Senior High School, was named the Florida Outstanding Principal of the Year, and Dr. Denise Barrett-Johnson, assistant principal at Lake Stevens Middle School, was named Florida Outstanding Assistant Principal of the Year.

Commissioner of Education Tony Bennett presented Dr. Ortiz with a \$5,000 check and an additional \$1,000 for his school. Dr. Barrett-Johnson was presented with a check for \$2,500 and \$575 for her school.

Increasing student achievement was the primary focus of Dr. Ortiz's tenure at Miami Edison Senior High School, where he directed a cultural change involving students, teachers, staff, parents, and the community and led the most dramatic two-year turnaround of any school in Florida. Under his leadership, Miami Edison had its first Silver Knight Award recipient in almost 20 years and three students earned the Gates Millennium Scholarship Award. Dr. Ortiz currently serves as Assistant Superintendent, Education Transformation Office.

Dr. Barrett-Johnson has used her leadership skills to create a safe, positive, and academically enriching learning environment for her students. Over the past two years, she has worked to build a successful literacy program at Lake Stevens Middle School, which contributed to improving the school's rating to a "B." Her most noteworthy accomplishments as an assistant principal include creating literacy programs, social studies education, building family and community partnerships, and motivating faculty, staff, and students. She believes that education is a community effort requiring the investment and resources of all stakeholders.

Alexandre Lopes, M-DCPS and Florida's 2013 Teacher of the Year, was named one of four finalists for the National Teacher of the Year Award by the Council of Chief State School Officers. Lopes' philosophy is "It takes the senses to make learning make sense." The winner will be announced at a White House ceremony during National Recognition Week, April 21-26, 2013, in Washington, D.C.

M-DCPS HONORS PRINCIPAL, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR AT CEREMONY

M-DCPS honored its finest principals and assistant principals at an awards ceremony on April 9 at Jungle Island. Caridad Montano, who serves as principal of TERRA Environmental Research Institute, won top honors as the District's Principal of the Year.

Montano has led the first green high school in the district for the past six years. She has served for 20 years as an assistant principal and principal in schools throughout Miami-Dade. She has the unique distinction of being the first principal in the District charged with opening two new schools: Lamar Louise Curry Middle School and TERRA Environmental Research Institute.

Melissa Garcia of Miami Sunset Senior High School was recognized as Assistant Principal of the Year. Garcia has served as an Assistant Principal for 13 years. Originally from the state of Texas, Ms. Garcia has worked for M-DCPS since 1996.

The Principal of the Year received \$3,000 and the Assistant Principal received \$2,000. They will also receive gift baskets from event sponsors. Also recognized at the ceremony were Dawn M. Baglos of Dr. Michael Krop Senior High School, named Principal of the Year runner-up and Leonardo Mouriño of Shadowlawn Elementary School, named Assistant Principal of the Year runner-up.

The Dade Association of School Administrators (D.A.S.A.) also honored three administrators at the awards ceremony. Milagros Fornell, Iraida Mendez-Cartaya, and Penny Parham were rewarded for their extraordinary service to the school system.

Fornell serves as M-DCPS' Chief Academic Officer, a position to which she was promoted after holding numerous leadership positions within the district. Fornell's many achievements in her current role include the increase of participation and performance of M-DCPS students in Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment courses, as well as leading the team of writers for the Race to the Top District grant. A 23-year administrator, Mendez-Cartaya oversees intergovernmental relations on the local, state, federal and international levels for the school district as well as grants acquisition and management. Under her leadership, the dollar value of supplemental funding to the school district has increased substantially, to more than \$700 million. Parham is credited with making food service profitable for the first time in many years. Parham is the Administrative Director for the District's Department of Food & Nutrition.

UPCOMING SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

May 8	11:45 a.m.	Regular Meeting
June 19	11:45 a.m.	Regular Meeting
July 17	11:45 a.m.	Regular Meeting
July 25	6:00 p.m.	First Budget Public Hearing and Tentative Adoption of 2013-2014 Millage Levy and Annual Budget

DATES TO REMEMBER

Monday, May 27 – Observance of Memorial Day

Thursday, June 6 – Last Day of School

Friday, June 7 – Teacher Planning Day

M-DCPS NAMED A 2013 BEST COMMUNITY FOR MUSIC EDUCATION

M-DCPS was recently named a 2013 Best Community for Music Education by the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) Foundation. The NAMM Foundation is a nonprofit organization, which promotes and advances active participation in music. It supports philanthropy, scientific research and public service. More than 300 school districts and 60 schools across the country received this prestigious designation.

The Best Communities for Music Education Program recognizes schools and school districts that demonstrate a commitment to and support of music education in schools. The program surveys participants in several areas including music class participants, funding, graduation requirements, facilities, instruction time, relevant factors in the community's music education and support of the music program. Nearly 2,000 schools and school districts participated in this year's survey.

The M-DCPS Music Education Office provides the highest quality of music education. Music instruction is a part of the total instructional program for all students in elementary schools, and a significant part of the program for students with interests and/or ability at the secondary level. Since continuity of instruction is essential in the study of music, students are afforded access to music programs each year and sufficient time for instruction in the school day to be involved in music on a regular basis.

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