

CONNECTION

A NEWSLETTER FOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS PARENTS

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- UPDATED COVID-19 PROTOCOLS
- MAGNET APPLICATION PERIOD
- TPA LIVE

October 2021

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M-DCPS UPDATES COVID-19 PROTOCOLS



Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) continues to monitor local COVID-19 conditions when considering modifications to its existing health and safety protocols. These decisions are based on the latest data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Florida Department of Health (FLDOH), Miami-Dade County, and advice from the Ad Hoc Public Health and Medical Experts Task Force.

Current data trends suggest that our protocols have been effective in helping to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. The best evidence of the effectiveness of our protocols is the decrease in positive student

cases in our schools, which has consistently declined after the Labor Day peak. Since community conditions have vastly improved, the quarantine period for unvaccinated students in middle school was reduced starting Monday, October 11, 2021, to align with the current protocol for unvaccinated adults and high school students.

Unvaccinated students in middle school may return to school after 10 days since exposure without any COVID-19 testing, or with a negative PCR test administered on or after the fifth day since exposure, as long as they remain symptom-free.

M-DCPS will continue to follow the science, consult with our medical experts, and review our protocols on a weekly basis to identify opportunities for further relaxation, including adjustments to mask protocols in our facilities.

IMPORTANT DATES & INFORMATION

October 29
Teacher Planning Day –
No School

November 11
Veteran's Day

ENROLLMENT NOW OPEN FOR MORE THAN 370 MAGNET PROGRAMS



Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) is now accepting Magnet program applications for the 2022-2023 school year through January 15, 2022.

More than 370 Magnet programs for all grade levels will offer specialized courses with unique

thematic strands of study that focus on students' special interests, talents and abilities.

Through M-DCPS' Magnet programs, students prepare to thrive and excel in post-secondary education and in the workplace. Some of the available programs include Space and Oceanic

Exploration, Cybersecurity, Investing (using Bloomberg stock exchange terminals), Artificial Intelligence through Robotics, Gaming Design and Animation, Medicine, Nursing, Visual & Performing Arts, and International Studies just to name a few!

The Magnet application system can be accessed at miamimagnets.org and is available in multiple languages.

Follow Magnets on Twitter [@miamimagnets](https://twitter.com/miamimagnets) for magnet-related updates. For additional information, please call 305-995-1922 to speak with the Magnet staff.

PROMOTING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP



Values Matter Miami is a values-based educational initiative by Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS). It promotes and recognizes exemplary behavior that aligns with the District's nine core values: Honesty, Integrity, Cooperation, Kindness, Pursuit of Excellence, Fairness, Citizenship, Responsibility, and Respect. During October, Values Matter Miami focuses on Responsibility.

During this month, M-DCPS also celebrates Digital Citizenship Month and promotes social media responsibility for students, employees, and the community. In our schools, we continue to teach students about appropriate social media use and how to fully understand the positive and negative implications that come with utilizing these tools. In light of recent troubling TikTok challenges encouraging students to damage school property and assault staff, we ask families to join in our efforts in emphasizing the importance of acting responsibly on social media, keeping students safe online, and distinguishing reality when things are sometimes not what they seem.

As digital citizens, our students are encouraged to be image-conscious – that is, to be aware of all the

photos and videos they post and are tagged in. Online interactions leave a permanent trail, so it is important to remind students that college recruiters, potential employers, and parents check their social media presence. Anything they post online cannot be erased, even if they delete it.

Because parents play a pivotal role in a child's education, they must be equipped with the appropriate tools and resources to navigate social media and its continuous evolution effectively. Parents are also encouraged to talk with their children about digital citizenship. The Parent Academy hosts various webinars focused on digital literacy and online safety. For information on these webinars, please visit <https://parentacademymiami.com/>.



Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) has designated October as College Month. This new initiative was created by the College Assistance Program (CAP) to provide support and guidance to students and their families as they navigate the college application and financial aid process. A month-long series of virtual family workshops and fairs have been developed for families. All events have and will continue to be recorded. Students can inquire with their CAP advisors to find out how to view the sessions. Below you will find some useful college planning tips.

Narrow your list of colleges

Have your child meet with a counselor about their college choices, plan a college visit, and download college applications and financial aid forms.

Remember deadlines

Create a master list or calendar that includes college entrance exams, their fees, dates, and registration deadlines; college application due dates; required financial aid application forms

and their deadlines; other materials you will need such as recommendation letters, and transcripts.

Apply for FAFSA

The 2022-2023 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application period runs through June 30, 2022. The FAFSA application process is free and provides applicants with access to sources of financial aid. Families are encouraged to apply early as some colleges award their aid on a first-come, first-serve basis. When completing the FAFSA, families will need to provide personal and tax information. Families may complete the FAFSA online at fafsa.gov.

Request a fee waiver

Ask your child's counselor to help you request a fee waiver to assist with college application or college entrance exam fees.

Take College Entrance Exams

Your child should take the SAT or ACT. Remember to have their scores sent to the colleges they are applying to.

Gather Recommendation Letters

Have your child ask a teacher or counselor for letters of recommendation. Your child should provide their teacher or counselor an outline of their academic record and extracurricular activities. For each recommendation, provide a stamped and addressed envelope.

UPCOMING #COLLEGEMONTHMDCPS WEBINARS

Paying for College: Understanding Scholarships and Merit Aid

October 19, 2021
6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
<https://bit.ly/3lcPITt>

Transitioning to College for Students with Disabilities

October 21, 2021
6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
<https://bit.ly/3abHBe1>

NACAC Virtual College Fair

October 24, 2021
1:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
<https://bit.ly/3Fu7QuB>

Historically Black College and Universities (HBCU) Fair

October 26, 2021
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
<https://bit.ly/3AeWirw>

Post-Secondary Planning for Underclassmen

October 28, 2021
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
<https://bit.ly/3leZxLq>



Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) and Jackson Health System (JHS) have teamed up to share information with parents of newborns on the importance of high-quality education from an early age and to highlight programs that are available in the community.

As a result of this partnership, M-DCPS will be providing a care package that includes a “Future M-DCPS Grad” bib, hand sanitizer and information on various stimulating early learning programs to families having babies at Jackson – South Florida’s first designated Baby Friendly health system. JHS includes four hospitals where babies are delivered: The Women’s Hospital at Jackson Memorial, Jackson North Medical Center, Jackson South Medical Center and José Milton Memorial Hospital at Jackson West Medical Center.

Early learning programs focus on social-emotional, language and cognitive development and prepare young learners for school readiness. Research has demonstrated the critical importance of the first five years of a child’s life to brain development. The experiences and interactions children have in these early years help to establish the foundation for future learning.

What does M-DCPS offer by age?

- **Age 0-2: Early Head Start:** M-DCPS offers free infant and toddler programs for children from birth to age 2 from income-eligible families in select schools across Miami-Dade County through the Early Head Start program funded by Miami Dade County Community Action & Human Services Department (CAHSD) Head Start/Early Head Start. Families can apply online at headstart.dadeschools.net or in person at one of the schools offering the program. Applications are accepted year-round.
- **Age 3: Head Start:** The M-DCPS Head Start program, funded by Miami Dade County CAHSD Head Start/Early Head Start provides full-day education health, nutrition, and family engagement services to children beginning at age 3. Income-eligible families can apply online at headstart.dadeschools.net or in person at one of the schools offering the program. Applications are accepted year-round.
- **Age 3: Inclusion/Reverse Mainstream Program:** The Department of Early Childhood Programs offers placement for 3-year-old children in their Pre-K special education inclusion and reverse mainstream programs across the District. This program provides a free, full-day opportunity for qualifying students to serve as role models.
- **Age 4: Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Program:** The Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Program (VPK) is a free educational program designed

to prepare 4- and 5-year-olds for kindergarten and build the foundation for their academic success. M-DCPS VPK programs can be found in over 200 public schools across Miami-Dade County.

JHS’ Baby-Friendly designation is a highly coveted support standard of care, promoted by the World Health Organization and United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). The program recognizes healthcare facilities that give mothers the information, confidence, and skills necessary to successfully initiate and continue breastfeeding or feeding their babies formula safely. It also encourages new moms and babies to stay together in the same room from the moment of birth and promotes skin-to-skin contact as much as possible.

UHealth Jackson Urgent Care Centers are the first in Florida to be designated Autism Friendly by the University of Miami-Nova Southeastern University Center for Autism & Related Disabilities (UM-NSU CARD). This designation means that staff—at all five locations—have been specially trained and all of centers have a specially-designated sensory-friendly exam room to give all patients the opportunity to experience healthcare in a safe and controlled environment.

For more information, visit the M-DCPS Department of Early Childhood Programs website at <https://earlychildhood.dadeschools.net> or call 305-995-7632. Attached is a flier listing available programs by age group.

For more information about Jackson Health System’s maternity services visit JacksonMaternity.org.



The Parent Academy (TPA) is a no-cost, year-round parent engagement initiative that helps parents become full partners in their children’s education. The Parent Academy debuted in August 2005 and is one of Miami-Dade County Public Schools’ greatest sources of information and vital resources for families. Its mission is to motivate parents and encourage them to become active partners in supporting their children’s education. The four main goals of the department are to educate, engage, empower, and encourage families to reach their full potential.

The Parent Academy launched TPA LIVE (Learning In Virtual

Environments) this school year, a series of interactive online workshops in three languages (English, Spanish, and Haitian-Creole). TPA LIVE aims to support family engagement practices with additional opportunities to strengthen families’ capacity to support their children’s achievement and success by connecting them with available District and community resources.

Weekly virtual workshops are offered on various high-interest topics such as Parent Portal, social-emotional learning, homework help, online safety, magnet schools, mindfulness, challenging behaviors, helping your child focus, gifted learners, test anxiety, adolescence and more. Tuesday’s sessions are conducted in English, Wednesday Haitian-Creole, and Thursday Spanish. Families can learn more and register for these live webinars by visiting ParentAcademyMiami.com. Resources and prerecorded webinars for families also available on The Parent Academy website.

PARENT E-TIPS

Practicing Safety Online

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

SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

October 20

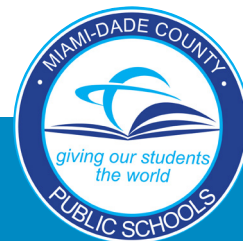
11:00 a.m.
Regular Meeting

November 16

10:00 a.m.
Organization Meeting

November 17

11:00 a.m.
Regular Meeting



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

SOCIAL MEDIA



@MDCPS
@EscuelasMDCPS
@MiamiSup



@MiamiSchools
@AlbertoMCarvalho1



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