

# CONNECTION

A NEWSLETTER FOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS PARENTS

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August 2019

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# A RATED SCHOOL DISTRICT

**#AcceleratingExcellence2020**

## KEEPING PARENTS INFORMED

### DADESCHOOLS MOBILE APP

ACCURATE AND UP-TO-DATE PARENT CONTACT INFORMATION



M-DCPS has the ability to communicate quickly and effectively with parents through automated messages – voice, email, push notification (via the Dadeschools mobile app) and text.

Accurate and up-to-date parent contact information is critical to receiving important outreach and EMERGENCY messages

from the District and your child's school. Make sure you OPT IN to automated messaging from your child's school and the District. When you OPT OUT, you are disconnected from important District, school news and information. You may update contact information in person at your child's school.

## IMPORTANT DATES & INFORMATION

September 2  
Labor Day  
September 30  
Teacher Planning Day  
October 9  
Teacher Planning Day  
October 25  
Teacher Planning Day

## SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

Sept. 4  
11 a.m.  
Regular Meeting  
6 p.m.  
Second Budget Public Hearing  
Oct. 2  
11 a.m.  
Regular Meeting

**WELCOME BACK!**

## Open House

M-DCPS will hold Open Houses beginning Monday, September 9 through Thursday, September 26. Please contact your child's school to confirm your Open House date. Attend Open House to meet your child's teacher(s), learn about your child's classes and academic programs, and homework policy and expectations. Remember that daily attendance plays a pivotal role in academic achievement and your support is key to your child's success.



### ACCELERATING EXCELLENCE: M-DCPS UNVEILS BOLD PROGRAMS FOR 2019-2020

M-DCPS students, parents and employees will begin the school year with more than 130 new programs and initiatives designed to continue the innovation, academic rigor, parental engagement, and increased efficiencies in operations, for which M-DCPS has garnered national

recognition. As in past years, emphasis was also placed on pushing boundaries related to green and sustainability initiatives. A number of these initiatives address specific School Board member priorities, and most are being undertaken with the use of supplemental funding and/or existing resources or leveraged community partnerships.

Learn more at <http://news.dadeschools.net/cmnc/new/29158>



# FORTIFYFL

### SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING WITH FORTIFYFL

FortifyFL is a suspicious activity reporting tool that allows you to instantly relay information to appropriate law enforcement agencies and school officials. Students can provide a description of the threat, share pictures and videos and optionally submit their contact information.

FortifyFL automatically routes your tip report to the appropriate law enforcement agencies and school officials. FortifyFL is available on the Dadeschools mobile app and can also be downloaded from the Apple App Store and Google Play Store. It can also be accessed from the [Dadeschools.net](http://Dadeschools.net) homepage, as well as the student, parent, and employee portal pages. A link to FortifyFL is available on each school site information page.



## SEPTEMBER

# ATTENDANCE AWARENESS MONTH

### IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

As you prepare for a successful new year, let's focus on student attendance. September is Attendance Awareness Month and we would like to highlight some important information and tips to improve attendance. First, here are a few facts:

- More than half of the students who miss 2-4 days by September, will go on to miss nearly a month of school for the year.
- Missing only two days of school per month can negatively impact academic performance.
- Poor attendance can influence whether kids read proficiently by grade 3; and by 6th grade, poor attendance becomes the leading indicator that a student will drop out of high school.
- Excused and unexcused absences have the same negative impact on

student academic progress and performance.

- When a student improves attendance, there is an increased chance of graduating.

Lastly, these are simple tips that will guarantee improved student attendance:

- Work with your child(ren) to establish a basic bedtime routine. No matter the age or grade, creating and sticking with a routine will help your child develop habits that promote good attendance. For example, get everything ready the night before. This includes school uniforms and pre-packing backpacks. Don't forget to review documents that require parental/guardian signatures the night before.
- Don't allow your child(ren) to stay home unless s/he is truly sick. Children may dramatize an illness. This could be a sign of anxiety issues or an attempt at getting attention,

seek guidance/assistance to address other underlying issues.

- Develop a "PLAN B" for who will assist you and your family in getting your child(ren) to/from school. For example: you are sick, you must be at work early or you have to work late.
- Ask for the Miami-Dade County Public Schools 2019-2020 School Calendar. Avoid scheduling medical/dental appointments, family vacations, or non-school related activities during the school year.
- If your family is experiencing setbacks/tough times due to car trouble, loss of employment, family death/illness, and any unfortunate situation that may impact how your family functions on a daily basis, please reach out to your child's principal for help. The school can connect you to various resources.

Source: <http://www.attendanceworks.org/facts-stats-school-attendancegov/>

If you are feeling  
sad, lonely, anxious...

**HELP IS ALL  
AROUND YOU!**



M-DCPS  
DEPARTMENT OF  
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

## IN M-DCPS...MENTAL WELLNESS MATTERS!

The Department of Mental Health Services is kicking off its second year by ensuring that parents, students and the community are fully aware of the services available - In Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS)...Mental Wellness Matters!

Ten additional mental health coordinators are being hired, bringing the total to 40, to provide greater opportunities to identify students who may need a mental health screening or assessment. In addition, school and community-based services will continue to be coordinated for students and

families to improve the socio-emotional well-being of students and maximize their personal successes.

M-DCPS' continued partnership with The Children's Trust and the 12 newly contracted mental health agencies will provide an expanded platform of services to meet the needs of all students. Such services include individual screenings/assessments, counseling, group counseling, family counseling, substance abuse disorders, parent/teacher collaboration and case management.

Students who enroll for the first time must disclose pre-existing mental health services to school authorities to ensure that schools

can continue to provide the support and services that are necessary.

All schools will continue to actively involve their Threat Assessment and Mental Health teams, in order to discuss and assess those students who may be in need of mental health services and to guide them to appropriate school and community resources. In collaboration with the Office of Academics and Transformation, the new, required Florida Department of Education 5-hour Mental and Emotional Education for students in grades 6-12 will be rolled out this year.

If you have concerns about your child, or signs you have seen in a student who is going through challenging situations, notify a School Administrator, Counselor, Social Worker, Mental Health Coordinator or someone from the Mental Health Team to share your concerns. Parents can also call the department's assistance line at (305) 995-7100 and access the department's website at <http://mentalhealthservices.dadeschools.net>.

## SOCIAL MEDIA



@MDCPS  
@MiamiSup



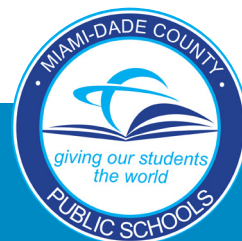
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[www.dadeschools.net](http://www.dadeschools.net)

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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