

2014 – 2015

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS GUIDE



PARENTS: Have questions? Get answers.

Compiled by the
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

305 -995-1265

www.engagemiamidade.net

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Section A – Family Engagement

How do I get to know my child’s teacher and the school?

Whenever possible, spend time at your child’s school and, even if you can’t be physically present, communicate often with your child’s teacher. Every good relationship is based on regular, meaningful, two-way communication. Parents are encouraged to follow the M-DCPS chain of support (see Section K below).

A great way to stay informed and involved in your child’s education is through the Parent Portal. The Parent Portal contains valuable student information including the Electronic Gradebook which monitors attendance and academic progress in each class. To access your child’s information, parent/guardians must obtain a Parent PIN number from the child’s school. The parent/guardian must provide a picture ID for verification and complete the “Parent Portal Identification” form (F-M7052E 10-06).

For Parent Portal account registration, visit:

<http://myportal.dadeschools.net/pdf/parentaccountregistrationguide.pdf>.

Find out when parent meetings are and try to attend. When there is an “Open House” or “Back to School Night,” be sure to go. Many schools print newsletters for parents with information on parent meetings and other school events. If your school has a newsletter, be sure to read it.

Become familiar with the school’s principal, assistant principals, school guidance counselors and staff members. Also, get to know your school’s Community Involvement Specialist (CIS). The CIS is often a parent just like you who has been hired to encourage communication between parents and the school. The CIS often speaks a second language.

We encourage families to visit: <http://www.engagemiamidade.net/#!/community-supporting-child/chnl> for resources to support their children and learn more about how they can become involved.

How do I guide my child to succeed in school?

The importance of parents as teachers shall be recognized by parents and supported by the school. Schools will provide parents with the appropriate support and assistance needed in understanding and meeting the expectations of this role. Parents are expected to:

- set guidelines and clear expectations of good behavior and academic performance;
- ensure that their children have a quiet place and time to read, study, and complete homework;
- discuss daily work assignments, progress reports, and report cards with their children;
- ensure that their children attend school on time every day and promptly report any absences or tardiness;
- communicate with the school through written and electronic messages, telephone, and/or conference meetings;
- ensure that their children have the materials needed to complete class work and home learning;
- take an active part in school activities, such as Back-to-School Night, PTA meetings, participating in workshops, and parent/student activities, etc.;
- keep their children healthy by ensuring that they get enough sleep, appropriate nutrition, and medical care;
- bring to the attention of appropriate school personnel any problem or condition that negatively affects their children, or other children in the school community;
- help their children develop a good self-image by providing care, discipline, support, interest, and concern;
- provide the school with current and accurate home, work, and emergency contact information; and
- foster in their children a positive attitude towards school and learning.

Additional information regarding [Resources -- Helping Your Child Succeed in School](http://www2.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/succeed/partx.htm) can be access at www2.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/succeed/partx.htm

How do I follow my child's progress in school?

Pay attention to what your child is learning in school. Look regularly at your child's homework assignments and samples of work he/she brings home. Ask your child's teacher for a copy of the "syllabus" or outline of the course of study for the year or grading period. Look at the schoolbooks that your child brings home. When you visit your child's school, look at the students' work on the classroom walls. Ask for materials for home learning activities.

You can also look at the new Florida Standards which is the list of learning goals that all teachers in Florida are required to follow. View the standards on the web at <http://www.cpalms.org/Public/>. In addition, you may view the new types of items that your child will see on the Florida Standards Assessment at <http://www.fsassessments.org/>.

There are two types of written reports on the child's progress in school:

- Your child's report card, which is issued every nine weeks. The report card includes grades of A to F for the different subjects your child is learning and for your child's conduct, numbers of 1 to 3 for your child's effort in each subject, and attendance information. For more information visit <http://reportcards.dadeschools.net>
- Your child's individual test score reports from standardized assessments. Each testing program provides a different type of individual report. The test reports you receive will provide explanations about the scores and about how your child is performing academically.

The most common types of reported scores: 1) describe how well your child performed in certain subject areas compared with other students who took the same test (such as a norm-referenced test); and 2) provide information about your child's performance compared with a standard or grade-level expectation. For example, Individual Student Reports for state assessments let you know if your child met the Florida Standards, and if he/she is making progress from year to year. Individual test score reports are typically available eight weeks after the test is taken and are provided to parents by the student's school.

For information on the Stanford Achievement Test visit <http://oada.dadeschools.net>

What can I do if my child is not doing well in school?

There are many possible reasons why your child is not doing well in school. It is up to you and your child's teacher to work together to figure out the best way to help your child do better. Here are a few tips for dealing with poor school performance:

- Try not to become too emotional about your child's situation. Instead, focus on learning how you can best help your child make positive changes.
- Meet with your child's teacher and commit yourself to working together as a team.
- Work with your child's teacher and school to pinpoint exactly why your child is not doing well and what services are available to help.
- If your child is experiencing behavioral or emotional issues, be sure to contact the school counseling professionals (School Counselor, School Social Worker, and School Psychologist) immediately.

You may consider other resources available online at www.mamiverse.com/child-not-doing-well-school-32255, or at www.answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=

How do I make the most of parent-teacher conferences?

If your child is experiencing difficulties, the teacher may contact you to schedule an individual conference. You may also ask for an individual conference at any time that you have a concern. To do so, call the school or write a note to the teacher, giving at least 48 hours' notice.

The following is a list of questions that you can select from to ask at your teacher-parent conference:

- How is my child doing in your class? What are my child's grades?
- Is my child in any special classes, groups, or programs? Why?
- How does my child's work compare to the work of other students?
- Is my child working up to his or her ability?
- What goals have you set for my child this year? Do you anticipate that my child will meet those goals?
- What programs are available if my child needs extra help?
- How can I support literacy in my home?
- Has my child missed any classes or failed to complete any assignments?
- Does my child participate in class discussions and activities?
- How well does my child get along with others? Have any incidents at school involved my child?
- What concerns do you have about my child's behavior or academic progress?
- Is there technology you'd recommend that can help support my child in self-directed learning?
- What can I do to help?
- Is there technology you'd recommend that can help support my child in self-directed learning?
- What are the most common barriers you see to academic progress in your classroom?
- What am I not asking but should be?
- How do I get in touch with you?

For more information on this topic you may visit www.parents.com/.../preparing-for-parent-teacher-conferences or at www.scholastic.com/.../guide-parent-teacher-conferences.

Are there resources available in my neighborhood to support my child?

The Title I Neighborhood Resource Centers (NRC) support families' community service/referral needs; assists with improving parental academic at-home-learning support for their children; provides information on M-DCPS available resources; and delivers Federal and State updates to families. A home learning and lending library; home-loan computers; and a designated computer lab, are all housed at the Title I NRC's. Additionally, a model Parent Resource Center has been established through a partnership with Miami-Dade County Public Schools' Office of Community Engagement and Title I Administration. The purpose of this center is to encourage parent/family school partnerships and to help strengthen parent-child interaction.

These centers are models for replication by schools and other community agencies. Staff at the Centers provides a monthly schedule of workshops, and professional development activities, as well as resource materials and support for families' efforts in assisting their children's academic learning. They offer a welcoming atmosphere for families, and as stated above, are available for a variety of purposes, including but not limited to those listed below.

Services

- Parent/Family Education, No Child Left Behind Information
- Home-Loan Computer and Technology Assistance, Lending Library
- Guidance for building home libraries
- State Elections Voter Registration (NRC)
- Title I Program Updates (NRC)
- Ethel Pruitt Computer Lab (NRC)
- Test Preparation (NRC)
- Dissemination of information about higher education opportunities
- Community Resources and Services
- Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) Updates
- Meeting space for parent organizations, conferences and seminars
- Dissemination of Parent Academy information including class offering and of the purpose and existence of both parent Information and Resource Center(s)

Locations

- Title I Neighborhood Resource Center - Gratigny
733 East 57th Street
Hialeah, FL 33013
(M-DCPS North Regional Center)
Phone: 305-593-6068
- Title I Neighborhood Resource Center – North
7900 N.W. 27th Avenue, Space F-9
Miami, Florida 33147
(Northside Shopping Centre, 130 South Court)
Phone: 305 694-7120
- Title I Neighborhood Resource Center – South
5555 S.W. 93rd Avenue, Portable #3
Miami, Florida 33165
(FDLRS Southside)
Phone: 305 274-7468
- Miami-Dade County Public Schools
Office of Community Engagement
Parent Resource Center
1450 N.E. 2nd Avenue, Suite 226
Miami, Florida 33132
Phone: 305 995-1809
- Family Resource Center
at enFamilia Inc.
16090 S.W. 293rd Drive
Homestead, Florida 33033
Phone: 305-245-7288
- At individual schools

What role can our family play in supporting my child?

At each step, from pre-kindergarten through high school graduation, parents should be full partners in learning, decision making and advocating for children. The Office of Community Engagement (OCE) builds and strengthens partnerships between parents, teachers and school administrators so that all students are successful.

The Office encourages participation in PTAs and is a resource for parents who wish to serve on school and District advisory committees. It also facilitates the Family and Community Involvement Advisory Committee, which makes recommendations on topics important to parents. We encourage families to visit: community.dadeschools.net for resources to support their children and learn more about how they can become involved.

Every good relationship is based on regular, meaningful, two-way communication. Parents are encouraged to follow the M-DCPS chain of support in Section I under Other Important Information. Visit <http://dadeschools.net/parents.asp> for additional resources.

How do I join the PTA or PTSA?

Each school has a Parent Teacher Association (PTA) or Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA). This local organization is connected to the Miami-Dade County Council of PTAs/PTSAs, which is connected to the Florida PTA. The PTA's mission is threefold:

- to support and speak on behalf of children and youth in the schools, in the community and before governmental bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children;
- to assist parents in developing the skills they need to raise, protect and prepare their children; and
- to encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools of our state.

For more information, call 305-995-1102 or visit www.pta305.com or www.floridapta.org.

How do I volunteer in my child's school?

School volunteers bring with them diverse skills and talents tailored to the needs of the students and community. As a school volunteer you work under the direction of the principal, doing important work side by side with employees, parents and students.

Before beginning services, all volunteers must register through the M-DCPS Parent or Community portal at www.dadeschools.net. In addition, all volunteers will receive a background check or may require fingerprinting depending on the type of volunteer activity.

As a school volunteer you are considered our partners in education. Help make a difference in our schools.

For more information about the School Volunteer Program, call 305-995-2995.

What is EESAC and how does it work?

By an act of the Florida Legislature, each school must have an Educational Excellence School Advisory Council (EESAC) composed of parents (elected by parents), teachers (elected by teachers), education support employee (elected by education support employees), a student (elected by students), the principal, and local business and community leaders appointed by the principal. A majority of the committee members must not be employed by the school district. All interested community members are encouraged to attend EESAC meetings even if they are not voting members of the council.

The EESAC shall assist in the preparation and evaluation of the School Improvement Plan (SIP), which addresses issues such as curriculum, budget, discipline, training, instructional materials, technology, staffing and student support services. The EESAC shall also assist in the preparation of the school's annual budget and plan.

Even if you do not wish to become an EESAC representative, you should get to know the parents who are. Ask them what issues the EESAC is discussing, find out where to get copies of the minutes and actions, and feel free to make comments and suggestions on the topics that concern you.

EESAC meetings are posted under the "School Meetings" link at <http://meetings.dadeschools.net/index.asp>.

All EESAC minutes are posted at <http://osi.dadeschools.net/viewbylawsminutesrosters.asp>.

For additional information visit: <http://osi.dadeschools.net/EESAC>, or call 305-995-2692.

How do I find more facts about my child's school?

Information about each M-DCPS school, such as data on student standardized test scores, qualifications of teachers, attendance rates, mobility rate (which measures how often students move in and out of the school), student membership, etc., is available through the following sources:

The Assessment, Research, and Data Analysis bureau provides reports with demographic and test data on individual public schools. For a selection of detailed reports, visit <http://oada.dadeschools.net>.

You may also ask your child's school directly for information on the professional qualifications of your child's classroom teacher(s) and/or paraprofessionals, including their licensing status, degree major, graduate degree(s) and the field of certification. By law, your child's school must make this information available to you.

What is the Parent Academy, and what do they offer to parents?

As a parent, you are your child's first teacher. That's why Miami-Dade County Public Schools created The Parent Academy, a free, year-round, parent engagement initiative designed to support community and family involvement across the district. The goal of The Parent Academy is to support parents in becoming more involved in their children's education. The Parent Academy helps educate parents about the importance of their roles, unites families with schools, and informs parents of their rights, responsibilities and the educational opportunities available to them.

In an effort to assist parents in becoming full partners in their children's education, The Parent Academy partners with local and national organizations to provide a wide range of free resources. The Parent Academy also provides parents with constructive parenting practices designed to support them help their children succeed at school and in life. The curriculum helps parents attain more skills, knowledge and confidence to champion their child's education. In addition, The Parent Academy provides classes and workshops for parents, organizes Family Learning Events and coordinates the availability of community resources for parents and students.

The Parent Academy pledges to enrich the lives of children by bridging the gap between home and school through the provision of valuable resources. Visit the web site at <http://theparentacademy.dadeschools.net/> to view the course directory, upcoming events, and links to helpful information. For more information call 305-995-2680.

Are there educational programs for me to pursue my own education?

Your children are always watching! There is no better way to teach your children the importance of education than to educate yourself. You are your child's first role model; you have the greatest impact on their lives. Miami-Dade County Public Schools is proud of its Adult and Career Technical Education Programs, designed to strengthen practical skills and prepare you for the career of your choice. Whatever your goals, our certified instructors can help you reach your full potential. You can contact the adult education office by logging in at <http://adulted.dadeschools.net>.

How can I become a voice for all parents at the District level?

Several District-level committees assist the School Board and the staff in an advisory capacity. Many of these committees are looking for parents who will serve. All of those listed below welcome the public to observe and participate in their meetings.

| COMMITTEE NAME | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---|--|
| District Athletic Advisory Committee Reviews and advises the board and Superintendent on matters regarding the Athletic Program, physical education, sports medicine, etc. | 305-995-7576 |
| Attendance Boundary Committees (District, Joint, or School Site) Identifies schools for changes and conducts public hearings on proposed school boundaries. | 305-995-7415 |
| District Wellness Advisory Committee Makes recommendations regarding the overall health and wellness of students and staff. | 305-995-7116 |
| Diversity, Equity, and Excellence Advisory Committee (DEEAC) Reviews issues on maintaining a multicultural system. | 305-995-1403 |
| Educational Excellence School Advisory Council Support Committee Reviews waivers and requests from school's EESAC. | 305-995-1520 |
| Ethics Advisory Committee Ensures the integrity of the Board's decision making processes. | 305-995-1304 |
| Family and Community Involvement Advisory Committee Brings together parents, community and business representatives, and staff to enhance opportunities for parental involvement in Miami-Dade County Public Schools. | 305-995-1265 |
| Miami-Dade Coalition for Community Education Committee Supports the expansion of community education. | 305-253-9920 x2194 or 305-817-0014 |
| Miami-Dade County Council PTA/PTSA The leadership organization for local schools' PTA/PTSA organizations. Many educational programs, information, and leadership training are available. | 305-995-1102 |
| Parent Leadership Council (PLC) Addresses the educational needs of English Language Learner students. Information and leadership training is available. | 305-995-2428 |
| School Health Medical Advisory Committee Promotes the health and social well-being of all school-aged children and adolescents through public policy and advocacy. | 305-995-1235 |
| School Site Planning and Construction Committee Makes recommendations to the School Board on the selection of sites where schools may be built. | 305-995-7285 |

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| <p>Student Services Advisory Committee Reviews and makes recommendations on the counseling, career, substance education, and student development priorities in the District.</p> | 305-995-7324 |
| <p>Superintendent's District Advisory Panel for Students with Disabilities Parents of students with educational challenges, citizens with an interest, and professionals in the field of ESE, as well as staff work together to gain understanding and to provide support for students with educational exceptionalities.</p> | 305-995-2027 |
| <p>Title I District Advisory Committee (DAC) Parents, Title I Community Involvement Specialists (CIS), Title I Administration, District staff, and community resource providers work together to survey and support the needs of families in schools implementing the Title I program. DAC also helps to develop the Title I District Parental Involvement policies and procedures.</p> | 305-995-1713 |
| <p>Title I Regional Centers Parent Advisory Council (PAC) Parents, CIS, Title I Administration and District staff work together to promote shared responsibility with parents for their children's learning. The PAC also provides training and information to parents of students in schools implementing the Title I program.</p> | 305-995-1713 |
| <p>Title I Migrant Education Program Parent Advisory Council (MPAC) Advises and supports the Title I Migrant Education Program (MEP) with planning and implementation of the MEP.</p> | 305-258-4115 |

Section B – Pre-Kindergarten & Grades K-5

What are the Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) Head Start and Early Head Start Programs?

The M-DCPS Head Start and Early Head Start are federally funded, comprehensive child development programs which serve children from birth to age five (5), pregnant women, and their families. Head Start services children three (3) to five (5) years of age. Early Head Start services pregnant women, infants and toddlers.

They are child-focused programs, and have the overall goal of increasing the social competence of young children from low-income families. Social competence is the child's everyday effectiveness in dealing with either his or her present environment and responsibilities later in school and life. It takes into account the interrelatedness of social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development. There is a maximum of 20 students in a Head Start class with a Teacher/Educator and an Assistant. Early Head Start classes have a maximum of eight (8) children with two (2) instructors.

Services are offered at 35 M-DCPS school locations throughout Miami-Dade County. You can find the Miami-Dade County Public School Head Start/Early Head Start locations at <http://headstart.dadeschools.net>.

The M-DCPS Head Start Program operates from 8:15 a.m.-3:05 p.m. and Early Head Start Program operates from 7:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Monday-Friday. Students follow the Miami-Dade County Public Schools' calendar; however the calendar for M-DCPS **Early Head Start** students will be extended until July 31.

Parents are responsible to provide transportation for their children. Children with special needs that require transportation, as specified in their individual educational plan, may be eligible for transportation services from one school to another.

Students in the M-DCPS Head Start/Early Head Start Program are provided nutritious breakfast, lunch and snack that is low in sugar and fat. The Head Start/Early Head Start Program requires that all children and staff eat in a family style setting and share the same menu. No outside food will be allowed.

If your child has an allergy to a specific food, parents should provide a note from the pediatrician specifying the special diet. A registered dietitian will adapt/modify the Head Start/Early Head Start menu to accommodate your child's specific allergies. All services are offered free of charge. Students, however may participate in the before care or aftercare program at the school for a nominal fee.

Do families have to qualify for the M-DCPS Head Start/Early Head Start?

Yes, Head Start and Early Head Start are federally funded programs for low-income families. All families must apply and qualify for the program(s).

Where can I get an M-DCPS Head Start/Early Head Start application?

M-DCPS Head Start/Early Head Start applications in English, Spanish and Haitian Creole can be found at <http://headstart.dadeschools.net>. You may also go to a M-DCPS school location that offers Head Start/Early Head Start programs and apply in person. A Head Start/Early Head Start parent outreach specialist at the school will assist you with the process.

You will need the following documents:

- A completed application
- Proof of income for the last 12 months
- Proof of residency in Miami-Dade County
- Proof of age for the child you are applying for
- Proof of special needs, if applicable
- Proof of special family circumstances (domestic violence, homelessness, etc.), if applicable

If I have custody of a child, can I apply for the M-DCPS Head Start/Early Head Start Program?

Yes, you will need to present a current copy of the court order authorizing you as the legal guardian.

How are families selected for the M-DCPS Head Start/Early Head Start Program?

Family applications are entered into a database that generates points based on each family's individual need and situation. A prioritization report is generated and families with the highest points are selected for the needed age group. Children with special needs who are income eligible are given priority.

If I am over income, can I still apply for the M-DCPS Head Start/Early Head Start Program?

Yes, anyone can apply for the M-DCPS Head Start/Early Head Start Program. At the time of application, you will need to write a letter stating why you should be considered for the program although you are over income. You will also need to bring copies of all documents that support your statement.

More information regarding the M-DCPS Head Start/Early Head Start Program may be available at <http://headstart.dadeschools.net/contacts.asp>.

Can my child participate in the Head Start Program offered at my neighborhood school and the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Program simultaneously?

Yes, some M-DCPS Head Start students are also VPK students. VPK funds are used to supplement Head Start funds in order to provide a full instructional day. However, students must meet the Head Start qualifications in order to participate in the M-DCPS Head Start Program. For additional information visit <http://earlychildhood.dadeschools.net>

Where can I go for early intervention services for my infant or toddler?

For screening and evaluation of infants and toddlers suspected of having a developmental delay or disability, at no cost to the family:

Birth through 3 years of age

Early Steps Program

- **North**
Miami Center for Child Development
1601 N.W. 12th Avenue, 2nd Floor
Miami, Florida 33136
305-243-5600
- **Southernmost Coast**
(Serving South Miami-Dade & Monroe)
Miami Children's Hospital
Palmetto Bay Center
17615 S.W. 97th Avenue
Miami, Florida 33157
786-268-2611

3 – 5 years of age

Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System-South

- **South**
6521 S. W. 62nd Avenue
Miami, Florida 33143
305-274-3501
- **North**
2201 N.W. 207th Street
Opa-locka, FL 33056
305-626-3970

<http://fdlrs-south.dadeschools.net>

M-DCPS Pre-K Diagnostic Teams

- Robert Renick Ed. Center
2201 N.W. 207th Street
Opa-locka, Florida 33056
305-474-5100
- Thena C. Crowder Early Childhood
Diagnostic & Special Education Center
757 N.W. 66th Street
Miami, Florida 33150
305-836-0012 ext. 2231
- J.R.E. Lee South SPED Center
6521 S.W. 62nd Avenue
Miami, Florida 33143
786-278-4752
- Caribbean Elementary School
11990 S.W. 200th Street
Miami, Florida 33177
305-233-7131 ext. 2142
- Center for International Education
900 N. E. 23rd Avenue
Homestead, Florida 33030
305-242-8432

What is the Florida Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Education Program?

Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) is a legislatively authorized program designed to prepare every four-year-old in Florida for kindergarten and build the foundation for their educational success. All eligible four-year-olds are entitled to participate in one of the VPK program options. The VPK program provides each child with a high quality educational experience that includes high literacy standards, accountability, appropriate curricula, substantial instructional periods, a manageable class size, a certified teacher and a highly qualified paraprofessional. Additional information is available at <http://earlychildhood.dadeschools.net>.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) offers the VPK Core Instructional Day from 8:20 a.m. to 11:20 a.m. The Pre-Kindergarten Enrichment Program extends the instructional day until 1:50 p.m. through Title I funds or parent fees. Enrollment is based on a maximum class size of 20 students (19 regular education and one (1) Special Education (SPED)) in the school year program, maintaining a ratio of 1 adult per 10 students at all times. Additionally, there is a VPK Summer Program being offered with maximum class size of 10 students, maintaining a ratio of 1 adult per 10 students at all times. For more details visit <http://ese.dadeschools.net>.

What are my VPK Parental Options?

The VPK program's mission is to ensure that all children are intellectually, emotionally, physically, and socially prepared to enter school ready to learn, fully recognizing the crucial role of parents as the child's first teacher. Parents have the right to select a VPK program option that best meets their family's needs. The options include:

- School-Year Program which includes 540 instructional hours; OR
- Summer Program which includes 300 instructional hours. Children may participate in the VPK program the summer immediately before the school year in which the child is eligible for kindergarten.

Parents' Rights

Parents have the right to:

- Select the VPK program options that meet their child's needs.
- Enroll in either a school-year or free summer VPK program.
- Select a VPK program that employs VPK instructors and meets minimum classroom requirements.
- Select a VPK program that follows approved curriculum and guidelines.

Parents' Responsibilities

Parents are responsible for:

- Date of birth verification requirements.
- Residential address verification requirements.
- Ensuring that their child participates in kindergarten screening.
- Providing transportation for their child.
- Complying with the school's attendance program and other program policies.

What are the requirements for VPK registration in Miami-Dade County Public Schools?

A child is eligible to be registered for pre-kindergarten if he/she attains the age of four(4) on or before September 1st of the current school year. Before a child can be admitted to pre-kindergarten in Miami-Dade County Public Schools, parents/guardians must provide or complete the following items:

A. Age and Legal Name Verification

Parents must provide one of the following:

1. Duly attested original birth certificate or birth card which must be original; a hospital certificate is not acceptable.
2. Duly attested Certificate of Baptism with a parent affidavit.
3. Insurance policy on the child's life in force for two years.
4. Bona fide bible record with parent affidavit.
5. Passport or Certificate of Arrival in the United States showing age of child.
6. Transcript of school records of at least four years prior, stating date of birth, if applicable.
7. Affidavit of age signed by parent and Certificate of Age signed by public health officer.

B. Proof of Address

Students in the program are assigned to attend school on the basis of the actual residence of the parent/guardian and in the attendance area of the school as approved by the School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida. Verification of residence should be presented by the parent/guardian at the time of registration. Parents must provide two of the following:

1. Broker's or attorney's statement of parents' purchase of residence or properly executed lease agreement.
2. Current Homestead Exemption Card.
3. Electric deposit receipt or electric bill, showing name and service address.

C. Health and Immunization Requirements

In accordance with the Florida Plan for School Health Services, all parents/guardians of pre-kindergarten through 12th grade students must submit documentation verifying that a student's health examination was performed within the 12-months period preceding initial entry into a Florida school. Parents must provide both completed forms:

1. Student Health Examination-DH 3040 (yellow form); health examination performed within one year prior to enrollment.
2. Florida Certificate of Immunization-DH 680 from a private doctor or local health provider. Part A, B, or C or a religious exemption form DH681. Schools should accept the DH680 form if printed on white, blue or any color paper. Forms may be completed by hand or printed from the Florida State Online Tracking System (Florida SHOTS).

Parents are encouraged to contact their health care provider to schedule an appointment for children affected by the school immunization requirements. Required immunizations are covered under most health insurance policies.

Children whose parents cannot afford to pay for vaccines may receive immunizations free of charge at all county health department centers. To make an appointment or to obtain more information, contact the Special Immunization Program (SIP) Office of the Department of Health at 786-845-0550. It is important to remember that no student will be admitted to school without presenting tangible documentation that immunization and health requirements have been met.

D. Home Language Survey

At the time of initial registration parents are asked to complete a Home Language Survey. Each student is assessed if there is a "Yes" response to any of the questions to determine if he/she is an English Language Learner (ELL). The law requires that students classified as ELL receive appropriate services in order to become proficient in English.

E. Student Data Card

In the event of an emergency, the school needs to contact parents as quickly as possible.

Parents are required to provide the following information:

1. Home, work, and cell phone numbers (must remain up to date).
2. An emergency contact in the event the school is unable to reach parents/guardians.
3. Identify those individuals who are authorized and not authorized to pick up their child from school.

For additional information visit <http://earlychildhood.dadeschools.net>.

How is the VPK student selection process conducted in Miami-Dade County Public Schools?

When a school has more eligible applicants than the 19 regular education slots available, the school must make their selections utilizing a lottery system. Each applicant is assigned a number for the lottery. Numbers are pulled until the maximum class size is reached. If the applicant's family has twins or triplets, the drawing of one name entitles all children to be eligible for enrollment. The exception would be if the number drawn is number 19 or the last one. In this case, only one of the twins or triplets will be allowed to enroll. When the maximum class size is reached, the school staff continues to draw numbers and records the numbers for the waiting list. Parents may choose to place their child on the waiting list at the school or parents can choose a private VPK provider. All parents should be notified in writing of their child's enrollment status within one week of the drawing. There is one (1) slot reserved for a VPK-SPED student assigned by the SPED Pre-K Office.

After the final selection, parents are required to complete/provide the following documents that must remain on file in each child's folder:

- Signed Financial Responsibility Form (for Fee-Based Programs)
- Signed Pre-Kindergarten Screening Consent Form
- Signed Copy of the Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) Certificate of Eligibility (COE)

For details on VPK registration procedures/guidelines visit

http://briefings.dadeschools.net/files/58237_2014-2015_VPK_Registration_Procedures-Guidelines_and_Fiscal_Documents_for_Fee-Supported_Non-Title_I_Programs.pdf.

What Curriculum is used in the VPK Program?

Miami-Dade County Public Schools Prekindergarten Program implements Scholastic Big Day for Pre-K curriculum. Big Day for Pre-K's approach to learning is grounded in cognitive research and builds on young children's knowledge and curiosity about the world around them. This comprehensive curriculum is designed to ensure that children acquire new knowledge, skills, and understanding each day through hands-on experiences, purposeful play, and teacher-led instruction. Big Day for Pre-K learning experiences integrate all domains, including:

- I. Social-Emotional Development
- II. Oral Language
- III. Literacy
- IV. Mathematics
- V. Science
- VI. Social Studies
- VII. Art
- VIII. Physical Development

How can I obtain a copy of a VPK Certificate of Eligibility?

Parents may choose to obtain the VPK Certificate of Eligibility (COE) at a new online site operated by the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe (ELCM-D/M). The COE is required to enroll your child in the VPK Education Program.

Steps for Accessing The COE Online:

1. Visit www.vpkhelp.org. The site is available 24 hours/7 days a week.
2. Click on the red button, "CLICK HERE to register your child for VPK."
3. Enter the child's last name.
4. Enter the child's nine(9)-Digit Social Security Number (SSN).
5. Follow the directions to complete the application for the COE.
6. Bring the COE to the school to finalize enrollment.

Steps for Obtaining the COE In Person:

1. Visit the new service centers located throughout the county.
2. Bring **photocopies** of the following documentation:
 - a. Proof you reside in Florida (e.g. utility bill, bank statement); and
 - b. Proof your child turns four **(4)** years of age by **September 1** (e.g. birth certificate, passport).
3. Bring the COE to the school to finalize enrollment.

Miami-Dade Service Center Locations:

North Service Center: Golden Glades Office Park, 1515 NW 167th Street, Suite 320, Miami Gardens, FL 33169

Central Service Center: United Way of Miami-Dade, Inc., 3250 SW 3rd Avenue, 1st Floor, Miami, FL 33129

South Service Center: The Centre at Cutler Bay Condominium, 18951 SW 106 Ave., Unit B-208, Miami, FL 33157

Miami-Dade Service Center Hours:

Monday: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Tuesday: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Thursday: 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Friday: Not open to the public
Saturday: 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. (Last Saturday of each month only)

For information call the Office of Early Childhood Programs at 305-995-7632 or visit <http://earlychildhood.dadeschools.net>.

What should I do if my elementary-age child is ready for more challenging school work?

If you believe that your child is ready for more challenging academic work or would enjoy before or after-school academic activities, ask your school's principal about the Advanced Academic Programs available at your school. These might include the Gifted or Teaching Enrichment Activities to Minorities (TEAM) programs.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) Teaching Enrichment Activities to Minorities (TEAM) program is designed to provide instruction in higher-order thinking skills to students in a self-contained elementary school classroom setting. The program is aimed at improving the learning and thinking skills of children and assisting them in becoming more successful in school. The goal of the TEAM program is to develop student's thinking skills, link critical thinking skills to all subject areas, and prepare students for possible placement into gifted and advanced program. The TEAM program aims to develop students' critical and creative thinking skills and develop strategies capable of revealing hidden talents in diverse students.

The Gifted Education Program (K-12) provides qualitatively different programs designed to meet the needs of gifted students. Gifted students are defined by State Board Education Rule 6A-6.03019 as those who have superior intellectual development and are capable of high performance. Eligibility under State Board Rule includes:

1. A documented need for the program,
2. A majority of gifted characteristics, and
3. An intelligence quotient in the superior range (two standard deviations or more above the mean on an individually administered standardized test of intelligence).

Additional eligibility criteria are available under Part B or the State Board Rule for limited English proficient students and students from low socio-economic families (as measured by free/reduced lunch).

The Gifted Education Program in M-DCPS emphasizes a quantitatively differentiated curriculum based on content, concepts, processes, and applications through products/projects in language arts, mathematics, science and/or social studies. Such a differentiated curriculum provides for in-depth consideration of topics and concepts beyond the requirements of regular courses, and therefore, is designated as an academically accelerated program.

Gifted students access the general curriculum and Florida Standards with emphasis on what the Educational Plan (EP) team determines will offer opportunities for growth for the gifted learner based on the student's strengths and present level of performance. The

curriculum for gifted students reflects Florida's academic standards through the implementation of the District's Pacing Guides and the Gifted Goals and Objectives identified in the students' EPs. These include, but are not limited to, the important concepts of: critical thinking, creative thinking, developing independence in learning, personal growth, leadership skills, research skills, and problem solving. There is a range of service delivery options available to meet each M-DCPS gifted student's special needs based on the student's Educational Plan (EP) and are provided with administrative support to assure adequate funds for materials and professional development.

For more information visit

<http://advancedacademicprograms.dadeschools.net/information.html>

Who should I ask to enroll my child to learn a second language?

If you believe that your child will benefit from learning a second language, ask your school's principal about the Extended Foreign Language programs available at your school. These might include Spanish for Spanish Speakers, Haitian-Creole for Haitian-Creole Speakers, or Spanish as a second language. Some schools offer dual-language programs in which students participate in literacy and content instruction in both English and the second language. These programs are offered in Spanish, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Haitian-Creole, or Chinese/Mandarin. All students are eligible for participation in these programs when entering kindergarten. At higher grades students with linguistic ability are eligible to participate.

For more information visit www.dadeschools.net or <http://drs.dadeschools.net>

What can I do if my child is retained in grade 3?

According to state law, schools may not automatically promote grade 3 students to grade 4 if they have not demonstrated proficiency in reading, by scoring above Level 1 on the state assessment. This law is not meant as a punishment of your child or you. It is aimed at giving your child the reading skills he/she needs to make adequate progress in school. If you learn that your child will be retained, it is important that you meet with his/her teacher to find out exactly what reading skills your child did not master and what the school will do to help your child catch up.

In some cases, a child who receives a score of Level 1 on the state assessment is allowed to go into grade 4. These cases include students who:

- Are English Language Learners and have had fewer than two years of instruction in an ESOL program.
- Have disabilities and whose IEP (Individual Educational Plan) indicates the student meets exemption criteria for State Assessments.
- Have disabilities and meet all of these criteria:
 - 1) they participated in the state assessment;
 - 2) they have an IEP or a Section 504 plan that reflects that they have received intensive remediation in reading for more than two years;
 - 3) they still demonstrate a deficiency in reading; and
 - 4) they were previously retained in kindergarten or grades 1, 2, or 3.
- Have received intensive remediation in reading for two or more years but still have a deficiency in reading and were previously retained in kindergarten or grades 1, 2, or 3 for a total of two years.
- Demonstrate reading proficiency through a student portfolio, by demonstrating mastery of the state standards.
- Demonstrate an acceptable level of performance on an alternative standardized reading assessment approved by the State Board of Education. Additionally, eligible retained grade 3 students have an opportunity to demonstrate reading proficiency before the end of the first semester.

Be sure to discuss your child's specific situation in detail with your child's teacher and, if appropriate, with the reading leader at your school. For additional information visit http://turnertech.dadeschools.net/docs/140410_Student_Progression_Plan_2013-014.pdf or call 305-995-1000.

What is my child required to be learning in grades K-5 for the 2014-2015 school year?

- Read independently for a sustained period of time.
- Write stories, poems, letters and simple reports using correct grammar.
- Edit his/her own writing – correcting spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- Read books, magazines, and stories and be able to explain what has been read.
- Make effective oral presentations.
- Use graphic organizers and other note-taking strategies.
- Read a map, graph, and table.
- Apply knowledge and skills learned in physical science, Earth and space science, and life science to real-world situations.
- Do hands-on projects in school such as creating simple models, charts, books, and science experiments.
- In science classrooms, use skills and strategies learned in reading, writing, and mathematics.
- Apply mathematics to the real world.
- Solve word problems using addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.
- Use reasoning about shapes (e.g., all squares are rectangles but not all rectangles are squares).
- Measure angles and find unknown angles in a diagram.
- Study about other countries.
- Study the history of Florida and the United States, including major ethnic/cultural groups.
- Understand the basic structure of the U.S. government.
- Understand the importance of civic and character education.
- Use computer applications for simple writing assignments.

Additional information can be available in the Student Progression Plan – Curriculum & Instruction – Miami-Dade County Public Schools <http://oat.dadeschools.net> .

Which tests is my child required to take in grades K-5 in the 2014-2015 school year?

Below are the links to the M-DCPS 2014-2015 testing calendar for grades preK-12. This calendar will be updated periodically as additional information is obtained about the District, state, national, and international tests administered to the students in Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

Link to the testing calendar:

<http://oada.dadeschools.net/TestingCalendar/TestingCalendar.asp>

Link to the printable testing calendar by **grade level**:

<http://oada.dadeschools.net/TestingCalendar/2014-15TestingCalendarbyGradeLevel.pdf>

Section C – Grades 6-8

Which courses is my child required to take in grades 6-8 for the 2014-2015 school year?

Course requirements for students in grades 6-8 are as follows: expected prosperous

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social studies
- A semester in physical education
- Electives

In addition, one course in career education planning must be completed in grade 7 or 8. It may be a stand-alone course or instruction integrated into an existing course or courses. This course will result in an electronic Personal Education Plan (ePEP) that must be signed by the student, the student's counselor, and the student's parent.

Students who are English Language Learners (ELL) will take language arts through ESOL for the language arts credit and developmental arts through ESOL each year. Development language arts may count as an elective.

If the student scored at Level 1 or 2 on FCAT 2.0 Reading in 2014, the student must complete an intensive reading course during the 2014-2015 school year. For each year in which a student scores at Level 1 or Level 2 on the Mathematics Florida Standards Assessment (MAFS), the student must receive remediation the following year, which may be integrated into the student's required mathematics course.

Social Studies: Beginning academic year 2014-15, all 7th-grade students must take the Civics End-of-Course (EOC) Assessment. Results of the Civics EOC will account for 30 percent of a student's course grade in 7th-grade civics. To assist your child for success on the 7th-grade Civics EOC, consult your child's civics teacher and discuss civics course material with your child.

In order to be promoted to grade 9, students must successfully complete a minimum of 15 of the 18 courses which include: three each in language arts and mathematics, three sciences, three social sciences, one integrated course in career education planning and four other courses.

Additional information is available in the Student Progression Plan – Curriculum & Instruction – Miami-Dade County Public Schools <http://oat.dadeschools.net>.

What is my child required to be learning in grades 6-8?

- Read independently for a sustained period of time.
- Read and understand different types of books and stories, including novels, nonfiction, plays, and poetry.
- Write reports and other documents using correct grammar and punctuation.
- Conduct research on assigned topics.
- Make effective oral presentations.
- Use graphic organizers and other note-taking strategies.
- Organize school papers and assignments; keep records of assignments.
- Study for tests.
- Understand the rules of the English language and apply them in writing.
- Use reasoning about relationships between shapes to determine area, surface area, and volume
- Use statistics to draw inferences and make comparisons (e.g., deciding which candidate likely to win an election based on a survey)
- Understand and apply the Pythagorean Theorem ($a^2 + b^2 = c^2$) to solve problems.
- Use measurements to solve mathematics problems that are related to real-world situations.
- Understand basic algebraic and geometric concepts.
- Do mathematics problems involving two- and three-dimensional shapes.
- Understand Earth, physical and biological science concepts and their applications in the real world.
- Conduct scientific experiments in class.
- Solve scientific problems using scientific processes.
- Read scientific news and articles for children
- Write to explain scientific thinking and understanding.
- Study the history of Florida, the nation, and the world, including major ethnic/cultural groups.
- Understand the structure of the U.S. government and the principles of American democracy.
- Understand the role of the citizen in American democracy.
- Develop basic knowledge of economic systems.
- Use maps and write reports about the geography of the world.
- Use a computer to write a report, create a graph, and make a chart.

Additional information is available in the Student Progression Plan – Curriculum & Instruction – Miami-Dade County Public Schools <http://oat.dadeschools.net> .

What can I do if my middle-school-age child is ready for advanced classes?

Advanced classes are available to students in grades 6, 7, and 8. These classes, offered in the areas of language arts, mathematics, science, social sciences and foreign languages, provide students with a more rigorous and challenging curriculum. While there are no grade-point-average bonus points for advanced classes, students enrolled in these courses are prepared for honors classes in Grades 6-12. Entrance into these classes is based on teacher/counselor recommendation or at the request of the parent and approval of the school.

Honors classes are senior high school-level courses available to students in Grades 6-8. These classes provide students with an accelerated and more rigorous curriculum that requires higher-level thinking skills. Honors courses generate credit that can be used towards high school graduation and generate additional grade-point-average points. In Grades 6-8, the only subjects in which courses are available at the honors level are foreign language, mathematics, and science. In high schools, all subject areas offer honors level courses.

Entrance into these classes is based on teacher/counselor recommendation or at the request of the parent and approval of the school. The *2014 Bulletin for AP Students and Parents* is also published in Spanish.

The information may be downloaded at www.collegeboard.org/apstudents. Free printed copies are available at www.collegeboard.org/freepubs. For additional information you may call 305-995-7302 or visit <http://advancedacademicprograms.dadeschools.net/programs.html>.

Which standardized tests is my child required to take in grades 6-8 for the 2014-2015 school year?

Below are the links to the M-DCPS 2014-2015 testing calendar for grades preK-12. This calendar will be updated periodically as additional information is obtained about the District, state, national, and international tests administered to the students in Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

Link to the testing calendar:

<http://oada.dadeschools.net/TestingCalendar/TestingCalendar.asp>

Link to the printable testing calendar by grade level:

<http://oada.dadeschools.net/TestingCalendar/2014-15TestingCalendarbyGradeLevel.pdf>

Section D – Grades 9-12

Which courses are required to graduate from high school?

Florida students entering grade 9 may choose from one of four options to earn a standard diploma. They are:

- 24-credit program
- 18-credit, Academically Challenging Curriculum to Enhance Learning (ACCEL) option
- An International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum
- An Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) curriculum

Students may earn one or more designations on their standard high school diploma – the scholar designation and the merit designation. For specific information on the graduation requirements depending on the school year your child entered grade 9, please visit: <http://oat.dadeschools.net/graduationrequirements.asp>.

Is there an accelerated graduation option?

Students may follow an accelerated three-year graduation option requiring only 18 credits to graduate, the Academically Challenging Curriculum to Enhance Learning or ACCEL option. These options require students to focus on core subjects and eliminate most elective courses. Students must meet the course and testing requirements for graduation and earn a 2.0 grade point average on a four point scale.

This program is not for everyone. Students must decide before the end of grade 9 whether to pursue this option. Parents and students should carefully consider all aspects with their school counselors before enrolling.

For more information of the 18-credit ACCEL graduation option visit <http://studentservices.ddeschools.net>.

What can I do if my high-school child is ready for advanced classes?

Students who desire a more challenging academic experience have a number of options available to them in high school, including:

- Honors Classes <http://dadeschools.net>
- Advanced Placement (AP) <http://atmourning.dadeschools.net>
- Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) <http://drs.dadeschools.net>
- International Baccalaureate (IB) <http://crhs.dadeschools.net>
- Dual Enrollment (DE) <http://mdo.dadeschools.net>
- School for Advanced Studies (SAS) <http://sas.dadeschools.net>
- Advanced Academics Academy (AAA) <http://atmourning.dadeschools.net>

Which courses are required to enroll my child in honors classes?

Senior high school students capable of handling an accelerated and more rigorous curriculum are encouraged to enroll in honors classes. These classes provide students with an accelerated and more rigorous curriculum that requires higher-level, critical thinking skills. These courses, which give students the opportunity to explore the curriculum in greater depth, award one-bonus point applied toward their weighted Grade Point Average (GPA). Students are selected to participate in honors classes based on academic performance and teacher recommendation.

Which requirements are needed to enroll my child in advanced placement (AP)?

Advanced Placement (AP) classes offer challenging, college-level course work for high school students. Although some students enroll in AP courses as early as grade 9, most students take AP courses in grades 10 through 12. Students are selected to participate in AP classes based on academic performance and teacher recommendation; however, motivated students who desire the challenge can request to be included in an AP course. Each May, students enrolled in AP classes take the AP exam given by The College Board and paid for by the District. All students who are enrolled in an AP course are expected to participate in the AP exam. Based on the number of AP courses taken by a student and the AP exam results, students may be awarded up to two semesters of college credit at the discretion of the university. Students in AP classes are awarded two bonus points applied toward their weighted GPA.

AP classes are available to high school students in language arts, mathematics, social science, science, technology, foreign language, and the arts. The number of AP classes available varies from school to school. Ask your school for details.

Which requirements are needed to earn an Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE)?

The Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) is an international pre-university curriculum and examination system for academically able students. It is a flexible, broad-based, two-year curriculum which is being offered worldwide in. AICE features courses written specifically as preparation for a Diploma Program. It encourages high academic standards and provides an ideal basis for study at the college and university level. The AICE program is offered in several of the M-DCPS elementary, middle, and senior high schools and is currently being expanded through an Associates Agreement with the Cambridge organization.

An AICE diploma is awarded on the basis of examination scores and coursework performance during seven full-credit courses. The full AICE diploma ensures that all students follow a broad and balanced academic program. Advanced Subsidiary (AS) certificates listing subjects passed is issued to those students who do not earn the full diploma. Within this framework, AICE offers an extremely flexible curriculum which can be tailored to students' interests, abilities and future plans. Students in AICE courses are awarded two bonus points applied toward their weighted GPA.

Which courses are required to earn an International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma?

This program is a demanding pre-university course of study that is intended for highly motivated students. The IB Diploma covers the last two years of high school and culminates in a series of international examinations in various subjects. It is offered at six Miami-Dade public senior high schools: Coral Gables Senior High School, Coral Reef Senior High School, John A. Ferguson Senior High School, Miami Beach Senior High School, North Miami Senior High School, and South Dade Senior High School. Based on the results of the final examinations, a student may be awarded up to two years of college credit. In addition, students in IB classes are awarded two bonus points applied toward their GPA. Students may apply to participate in one of the District's IB programs. Acceptance is based on academic performance and teacher recommendation.

Which courses are required to enroll in the Dual Enrollment Program?

Dual enrollment (DE) provides students the opportunity to enroll in college courses while still in high school. In Miami-Dade County Public Schools, DE is provided through Miami-Dade College (MDC), University of Florida (UF), and Florida International University (FIU). Students who qualify may enroll in a college course, and the tuition and textbook cost is waived for the student. Most students take dual enrollment courses on their high school campus during the school day and after school, in addition to the courses they are enrolled in at their high school. Upon completion of the course, the credit earned can be used towards fulfillment of a high school graduation requirement, and can also be used as college credit. In order to qualify for dual enrollment, students must be entering or be in grade 10, grade 11, or grade 12, must have a 3.0 unweighted grade point average (GPA), and meet all the criteria for admission to MDC, FIU, or UF.

This state-sponsored program lets senior high school students take college courses and have the opportunity to earn both college and high school credit. Students who qualify may enroll in a college course, and the tuition and textbook cost is waived for the student. Because students may take these classes on a college campus, students are responsible for their own transportation. Students in Dual Enrollment classes will be awarded two bonus points applied toward their weighted GPA.

Students must have completed grade 9 in order to participate in dual enrollment. In addition, students must have a 3.0 unweighted GPA and pass the Postsecondary Education Readiness Test or achieve the required minimum score on the SAT or ACT.

There are several options available to students interested in participating in dual enrollment courses. All M-DCPS students who meet the eligibility criteria may enroll in dual enrollment courses during the fall, spring, and summer terms at Miami Dade College, Florida International University, and the University of Florida. Additionally, several M-DCPS high schools offer dual enrollment courses on their high school campuses both during the school day and after school.

The School for Advanced Studies at Miami Dade College and the Advanced Academic Academy at Florida International University also offer students in grades 11 and 12 an opportunity to avail themselves of these courses and earn both a high school diploma and an associate of arts degree simultaneously.

What is the School for Advanced Studies (SAS) Program, and who is eligible to enroll?

The School for Advanced Studies (SAS) was founded in 1987 and is the oldest Dual Enrollment high school in the state. It is located on four campuses at Miami Dade College (North Campus, Kendall Campus, Wolfson Campus, and Homestead Campus). Each campus is designed for talented 11th and 12th grade students who are given the opportunity for acceleration and enrichment. The College provides classroom space and M-DCPS employs the teachers, counselors, and principal.

Each semester, students in these programs are enrolled in three or four College Dual Enrollment courses taught by MDC faculty, and three high school courses taught by M-DCPS faculty. Additionally, most of the students complete more than 75 hours of community service annually. Tuition and books are free. Other benefits include use of the campus libraries and computer labs, and one-on-one mentoring sessions with faculty members.

For more information, call SAS at the Kendall campus at 305-237-0510, the North campus at 305-237-1089, the Homestead campus at 305-237-5062, or the Wolfson (downtown) campus at 305-237-7270, or visit <http://sas.dadeschools.net>.

What is the Advanced Academics Academy (AAA) Program, and who is eligible to enroll?

The Advanced Academics Academy at FIU (AAA) is located on two campuses of Florida International University, the Modesto Maidique campus and the Biscayne Bay campus. Each campus is designed for talented 11th and 12th grade students who are given the opportunity for acceleration and enrichment. The University provides classroom space and M-DCPS employs the teachers, counselors, and principal.

Each semester, students in these programs are enrolled in three or four College Dual Enrollment courses taught by FIU faculty, and three high school courses taught by M-DCPS faculty. Additionally, most of the students complete more than 75 hours of community service annually. Tuition and books are free. Other benefits include use of the campus libraries and computer labs, and one-on-one mentoring sessions with faculty members.

May my child take online classes?

Students who are home-schooled, unable to attend school, or wish to earn additional middle or high school credits outside of their regular school setting can take courses online through the **Florida Virtual School (FLVS)**. This free, accredited, online program delivers courses over the Internet and provides communication with certified teachers on a regular basis via telephone, e-mail, online chats, instant messaging, and discussion forums. A student's full-time school may not deny access to courses offered by FLVS assuming that the selected course is appropriate for the student in terms of academic history, grade level and age. For more information, call 407-317-3326 or visit www.flvs.net.

Miami-Dade Online (MDO) Academy offers a full-time virtual program for eligible students in grades K-12. This virtual and interactive learning environment is student-centered and academically individualized to build educational capacity. MDO Academy teachers are Florida certified and communicate with students and teacher regularly via telephone, e-mail, and other methods of electronic communication. Additionally, MDO Academy offers a limited number of courses for students seeking a virtual course as part of the school day. For more information, call the MDO Academy office at 305-995-1915 or visit mdo.dadeschools.net.

What is my child required to be learning in grades 9-12?

Every student in Florida is exposed to the same benchmarks within a grade level. Science and social sciences continue to implement the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards, a list of learning goals for students in every grade. Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, Florida's schools will implement the Florida Standards, which include the Language Arts Florida Standards (LAFS) and the Mathematics Florida Standards (MAFS). Schools must make sure that their teachers teach these skills in their classrooms.

- Read and analyze increasingly complex types of literature.
- Conduct research from a variety of sources.
- Write papers and other documents with ease, using correct grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Make effective oral presentations.
- Use algebra and geometry to solve mathematical problems.
- Understand and be able to use data analysis.
- Interpret algebraic expressions and transform them purposefully to solve problems (e.g., in solving a problem about a loan with interest rate r and principal P , seeing the expression $P(1+r)$ as a product of P with a factor not depending on P)
- Prove theorems about triangles and other figures (e.g., that the angles in a triangle add to 180°)
- Understand concepts learned in biology, chemistry, and/or physics and their real-world applications.
- Understand the basic principles of atomic theory.
- Understand the properties of matter, energy, force, and motion.
- Understand how the earth was formed and how it is changing.
- Understand the solar system and what scientists know about the universe.
- Understand the make-up and genetic development of living things.
- Use scientific processes to solve problems.
- Understand how science, technology, and society relate to each other.
- Read scientific journals and articles.
- Write to explain scientific thinking and understanding.
- Understand and analyze the history of the United States and the world.
- Know the geography of the world and how people interact with the physical environment.
- Define personal political beliefs based on knowledge of American democracy and government.
- Understand how financial institutions work and how to manage money.
- Understand different economic systems in the world and how they relate.
- Understand the negative consequences of and healthy alternatives to substance abuse, bullying, harassment, and other self-defeating behaviors.

For details regarding course description please visit <http://outreach.dadeschools.net>

Which standardized tests is my child required to take in grades 9-12 for the 2014-2015 school year?

Below are the links to the M-DCPS 2014-2015 testing calendar for grades preK-12. This calendar will be updated periodically as additional information is obtained about the District, state, national, and international tests administered to the students in Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

Link to the testing calendar:

<http://oada.dadeschools.net/TestingCalendar/TestingCalendar.asp>

Link to the printable testing calendar by **grade level**:

<http://oada.dadeschools.net/TestingCalendar/2014-15TestingCalendarbyGradeLevel.pdf>

What minimum assessment scores are required for students to graduate?

The table below compares the minimum passing scores for Florida state assessments (FCAT 2.0 and Algebra 1 NGSSS EOC) with the equivalent scores on national standardized college-readiness assessments (SAT and ACT) and comparative score on the PERT Mathematics. A high school student who does not meet the minimum state assessment scores may still meet standard-diploma requirements with a concordant national assessment score.

| | Cohort Year (Year in which the student entered Grade 9) | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|--|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|---|-------------------|---------------------------|
| | 2010-2011 | | 2011-2012 | | 2012-2013 | | 2013-14 | | 2014-2015* | |
| | Reading | Mathematics | Reading | Mathematics | Reading | Mathematics | Reading | Mathematics | Reading | Mathematics |
| FCAT 2.0/FSA /EOC | Level 3, or 245 | Algebra 1 NGSSS EOC (30%) | Level 3, or 245 | Algebra 1 NGSSS EOC Level 3, or 399 | Level 3, or 245 | Algebra 1 NGSSS EOC Level 3, or 399 | FSA (ELA) Level 3 | Algebra 1 NGSSS EOC Level 3, or 399 and 30% | FSA (ELA) Level 3 | FSA Algebra 1 EOC Level 3 |
| ACT | 19 | n/a | 19 | n/a | 19 | n/a | 19 | n/a | TBD | n/a |
| SAT | 430 | n/a | 430 | n/a | 430 | n/a | 430 | n/a | TBD | n/a |
| PERT | n/a | n/a | n/a | 97 | n/a | 97 | n/a | 97 | n/a | TBD |

*A new FSA scale will be established for the ELA and EOC assessments in Fall 2015 that will be used in subsequent years to establish a passing score and Achievement Levels for cohort 2014-15 and beyond.

For more information visit <http://oada.dadeschools.net>.

What can I do if I am concerned my child may not graduate from high school?

Many parents are concerned that their children will not receive a high school diploma because they did not pass required state graduation tests. Students who do not pass these assessments will be given several opportunities to pass the test in grades 11 and 12. Students can receive additional academic help from their schools through the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act. **(See “If Your Child is Not Doing Well in School,” page D-15).**

Twelfth-grade students who have failed to earn a passing score on the state graduation tests and have attained the **SAT- or ACT-concordant scores or PERT Mathematics score applicable to their graduating class** shall satisfy the assessment requirement for a standard high school diploma.

If your child is in grade 12 and is not able to pass the required state graduation tests or earn passing concordant scores, you will want to explore other graduation options available to him/her, including receiving additional help and earning his/her GED. Students who do not pass the state assessments or earn passing concordant scores by the end of grade 12 may continue to take these tests each time they are offered through the adult education program or through the ACT/SAT programs.

In addition to the above-listed considerations, certain students with disabilities may be eligible for a waiver of the graduation test requirement. Students with disabilities who do not pass the applicable tests to earn a standard diploma may choose to receive a special diploma or a certificate of completion. Students with disabilities who do not pass the applicable tests to earn a standard diploma may also choose to continue in our public school educational programs through the end of the school year in which the student turns 22 years of age.

For more information visit

http://studentservices.dadeschools.net/guidance/grad_req.asp/.

How do I help my child apply to college?

If your child wants to attend a college or university after graduation, you should start planning early in middle school. You and your child will want to explore what kind of college will be the best match for him/her, the college entrance tests required, and the types of financial aid and scholarships available.

One of the best places to start learning more about applying to college is through the College Assistance Program (CAP) at your child's high school. Every M-DCPS high school has a CAP advisor or another member of the Student Services Team at the school who is responsible for helping students apply to college. The CAP advisor has information on colleges and universities located throughout the United States and internationally. The CAP advisor can help your child select a college, fill out applications and financial aid forms, and even visit colleges. You should meet with your child's school counselor if you have other concerns about the academic preparation for college and required courses for admissions. More information may be found by visiting: <http://studentservices.dadeschools.net/cap/index.asp>.

Florida's official online student advising system, ConnectEDU, accessible via the M-DCPS student portal, is an excellent source of information for M-DCPS students applying to college. You can also find more information on colleges and universities at your local and school library or online.

College Entrance Exams

Your child will need to take special tests called college entrance exams to apply to college. The two most important tests are the College Board SAT-I and the ACT Assessment. Most colleges and universities require applicants to take these tests. The testing organizations will schedule these tests during the year, but it is up to your child to register on time to take them.

College Admissions

There is a fee to take each test. The results of the tests are mailed to the colleges of your child's choice. In most cases, your child will need to submit college applications in his/her senior year. Some colleges offer the choice to apply for an "early decision." This requires a student to accept a college's offer of admission early in the school year. However, those students who qualify for free/reduced-priced meals may also qualify for a fee waiver. Please have your child see his/her College Assistance Program (CAP) adviser or school counselor for more information.

What is the Florida Bright Futures Program and how is my child eligible?

Florida offers three types of scholarships through the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, which is funded by the Florida Lottery. These are the Florida Academic Scholars Award, the Academic Top Scholar Award, the Florida Medallion Scholars Award, and the Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars Award. They can only be used at eligible public and private colleges and universities in Florida. Applicants must have a minimum GPA of between 3.0 and 3.5, as well as meet other academic and/or vocational requirements. For more information, contact your child's school guidance counselor, call the toll-free Bright Futures Hotline at 1-888-827-2004 or visit www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/SSFAD/bf.

Section E – Instructional Technology

How do I get more information about the usage of digital devices by students?

One of the overriding goals of the Digital Convergence Initiative is to maximize the learning potential of all students in an effort to prepare them for a successful future as 21st century citizens. In an effort to do so, Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) wants to provide students with the experience of using various mobile devices. The use of 1:1 devices will aid in developing independent, self-initiated learners; provide for collaboration and communication between students and teachers; and extend student learning beyond the classroom.

Mobile Device Project Goals:

- Create rigorous, relevant, student-centered learning environments that better prepare all students for the global community
- Engage learners with transformative instruction enhanced by collaboration, problem solving, critical thinking, communication, and technological literacy
- Ensure equity and access to digital tools and resources
- Strengthen 21st century skills necessary for future success

Curriculum Integration

Goals:

- **Authentic Connections:** the learning experience provides real world relevance and opportunity for students to apply their learning to create a product that has purpose and relevance
- **High Levels of Engagement:** students collaborate on tasks, process and/or solutions
- **Higher-Order Thinking:** the questions and tasks are designed to promote analyzing, evaluating, and creating
- **Technology Use:** devices are used in a seamless fashion to promote student learning, and students use self-selected digital resources to accomplish learning outcomes beyond traditional strategies

The district policies, procedures, and guidelines regarding personal devices (BYOD) are outlined in the Parent/Student Resource Guide at http://digital.dadeschools.net/parent_resources.asp. Additional requirements are at the discretion of each school and/or classroom teacher.

Will every student receive a device to take home?

In middle school, 7th Grade Civics classrooms will have carts of tablets for in school use. In high schools, 9th grade students enrolled in World History may check out a district own tablet if they are unable to bring their own mobile device to school.

What is included in the district loaned device?

Student using a district owned device will receive the HP ElitePad 900, charger, USB dongle, USB keyboard, and ruggedized case.

My child checked out a tablet and lost the charger or the tablet was stolen? Do I have to pay for the cost of the device or the charger?

Yes, parents are responsible for the replacement of lost/stolen devices and accessories. Please review your signed contract for repair costs. Contact school staff for additional information.

I found a tablet with the etched district logo. Where do I turn in the device?

Please contact the Instructional technology Department at 305-995-7603 report that you have found district equipment. Equipment can be dropped off at any school after notifying the district.

If you find an M-DCPS device with the district logo, you may turn it in to any M-DCPS school or M-DCPS district office.

For additional guidelines and procedures regarding the access and use of device please visit <http://digital.dadeschools.net>

Can my 9th grade child bring his/her own mobile device to school instead of checking a district tablet?

Yes, the District is encouraging students to bring their own device to school to access various digital instructional materials, online curriculum, and resources. Please see the District's Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) site, <http://wifi.dadeschools.net>, for more details on the minimum specifications. Students in 9th grade and other students enrolled in a World History course who are not able to bring their own device to school will be permitted to check out a tablet for school and home use.

Where can I buy the device for my child?

The District is in the process of developing a mechanism to allow parents to buy the HP Elite Pad 900 and HP HP210G1 at discounted rates. An announcement will be made when the program set up is completed.

Can my child charge the device at school?

It is expected that students charge their device at home and come to school with a fully charged tablet. Coming to school with a fully charged tablet is part of being prepared for school.

Where can I purchase insurance for my child's device?

While the District does not offer insurance directly M-DCPS has examined the need to insure mobile devices at a reasonable cost. The Worth Group has established an online portal to access coverage costs for a district HP ElitePad tablet or the HP 210G1 notebook with a zero deductible. Parents are eligible to insure district or personal devices. A quote for coverage can be found at <http://my.worthhavegroup.com/dadeschools.net>.

Section F – Testing & Accountability

What are the new Florida Standards Assessments (FSA) for English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics?

The “Florida Standards Assessments” (FSA), has been selected by the Florida Department of Education to replace the FCAT 2.0 exams beginning with the 2014-15 school year. The new assessment will measure each student’s progress and achievement on the Florida Standards.

The FSA will be administered in April-May of each school year as follows:

ELA: All students in grades 3-11
Mathematics: All students in grades 3-8

The following FSA assessments will be administered on the computer with the exception of Grades 3 and 4 that will be administered on paper and pencil:

- English Language Arts in Grades 3–11 to include Reading, Language, and Listening and a Writing component in Grades 4–11
- Mathematics in Grades 3–8

The new test will provide a more authentic assessment of the Florida Standards, because it will include more than multiple choice questions. Students will be asked to create graphs, interact with test content and write and respond in different ways than on traditional tests. New question types will assess students’ higher-order thinking skills in keeping with the higher expectations of the Florida Standards.

During the 2014-2015 baseline year, preliminary scores will be provided. The new FSA score scale and achievement levels will be available in 2015-2016.

Basis of Test: State Mandate
Website: <http://www.fsassessments.org/>
Local Contact: Student Assessment and Educational Testing
305-995-7520

What about the FCAT 2.0 Science?

The FCAT 2.0 Science tests are standardized, criterion-referenced tests, and is administered in April-May of each school year to all students in grades 5 and 8

The tests assess student achievement on selected benchmarks, which make up the state's standards in science. The FCAT 2.0 measures student achievement of the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS) for science, the current state-adopted standards. The test consists of multiple-choice items at all grade levels of the test. In addition, students in grade 8 use calculators on the Science test and a Periodic Table of the Elements.

Student, school, district, and state results are reported in June. The scale scores that are reported and which are also referred to as developmental scale scores range from 140 to 260 for Science. Achievement levels describe the level of success a student has achieved with the content assessed. Achievement levels are designated as Level 1 (lowest) to Level 5 (highest).

Basis of Test: State mandate

Website: <http://fcat.fldoe.org>

Local Contact: Student Assessment and Educational Testing
305-995-7520

What are End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments?

The EOC assessments are computer-based (CBT), criterion-referenced assessments that measure the Florida Standards or Next Generation Sunshine State Standards for specific high-school level courses, as outlined in the course description. Students with disabilities may participate in CBT administrations using paper-based accommodations as indicated on their Individual Educational Plan (IEP)s or Section 504 plans.

The EOC assessments were first introduced in May 2011, beginning with Algebra 1; Biology 1 and Geometry were added in 2012, US History in 2013, and Civics in 2014. The transition from EOCs that measure the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards to the new Florida Standards is occurring in Spring 2015.

In the first years of the EOC program the state-mandated use of student's scores changed, based on the student's high school cohort (year the student entered 9th grade). Beginning in the 2013-14 school year, students' EOC scores must constitute 30 percent of the final high school course grade for all courses with EOC requirements. In addition, students who started 9th grade in 2011-12 or later must pass the Algebra 1 EOC assessment to receive a standard high school diploma.

EOC assessments are administered in the Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer of each school year. All students enrolled in the following courses (or equivalent courses) must participate, other eligible students may participate (Algebra 1 retake or for credit acceleration):

Algebra 1, grades 6-12
Algebra 2, grades 6-12
Biology 1, grades 6-12

Geometry, grades 6-12
US History, grades 9-12
Civics, grades 6-8

Test results for the NGSSS Algebra 1 Retake, Biology 1, Civics, and US History EOC assessments are reported using developmental scale scores which can range from 325 to 475. In addition to the scale scores, results are also reported in terms of Achievement Levels, which can range from Level 1 (low) to Level 5 (high). Achievement Level 3 indicates satisfactory performance (passing score). In 2014-2015 preliminary scores on the FS EOC assessments (Algebra 1, Algebra 2, and Geometry) will be provided. The FS EOC scale scores and achievement levels will be available in 2015-2016.

Basis of Test: State Mandate
Website: <http://fcats.fldoe.org/eoc/>
Local Contact: Student Assessment and Educational Testing
305-995-7520

Where can I find the 2014-2015 testing calendar for grades PreK-12?

Below are the links to the M-DCPS 2014-2015 testing calendar for grades preK-12. This calendar will be updated periodically as additional information is obtained about the District, state, national, and international tests administered to the students in Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

Link to the testing calendar:

<http://oada.dadeschools.net/TestingCalendar/TestingCalendar.asp>

Link to the printable testing calendar by **grade level**:

<http://oada.dadeschools.net/TestingCalendar/2014-15TestingCalendarbyGradeLevel.pdf>

How can I help my child to do well on State Assessments?

You can help your child prepare for required state assessments by doing these simple activities at home:

- Encourage your child to read a variety of fiction and non-fiction materials, including books, magazines, poetry, etc.
- Encourage your child to read at least 30 minutes a day without a break.
- Take your child to the library regularly to check out and read books and magazines.
- Ask your child to retell stories and articles he/she has read.
- Ask your child “why” questions about what they have read. Ask him/her to compare and contrast stories and characters.
- Find ways for your child to practice writing at home, such as by writing notes to family members.
- Provide a quiet, comfortable place to study at home.
- Provide regular encouragement to your child, especially when he/she has done well.
- Provide your child computer access to take the computer-based practice tests (ePATs).

Right before the test, here are a few more things you can do as a parent:

- Keep a positive attitude toward the test.
- Help your child relax.
- Make sure that he/she has a good night’s rest.
- Give your child a good breakfast.
- Keep a normal routine at home.

When assisting your child with preparation for an End-of-Course Assessment (EOC), consult the testing calendar on dadeschools.net to see when a course EOC assessment will take place, review course content with your child, and encourage your child to review course material for home-learning.

For additional support visit www2.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/succeed/part9.htm

Can my child have special testing accommodations?

If your child is enrolled in a special education or English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program, he/she may be eligible for testing accommodations. Please check with your child's school for more information or visit <http://bilingual.dadeschools.net>.

What is the Florida Alternate Assessment (FAA)?

The FAA is the statewide assessment designed for those students with disabilities whose participation in the Florida Standards Assessment is not appropriate even with accommodations. The FSA measures student mastery of the Florida Standards Access Points at three levels: participatory, supported, and independent. For a student with disabilities to be administered the FAA, the student must meet State determined exemption criteria. Only students with significant cognitive disabilities meet exemption criteria and are eligible to participate in this alternate assessment.

The IEP team is responsible for determining whether students with disabilities are eligible to participate in alternate assessment based on the set criteria. Parents are encouraged to review their child's IEP to determine which statewide assessment will be administered to their child. Visit <http://oada.dadeschools.net>.

How do I know if my child's achievement level scores are high or low?

One of the important indicators on Individual Student Reports is the Achievement Level scores, which range from 1 to 5. Students who score at Levels 3, 4 or 5 are performing "at or above expectations." Students who score at Levels 1 and 2 are performing "below expectations" and need additional help at school. If your child has scored at Levels 1 or 2, you will need to meet with his/her teacher to discuss what should be done to help your child improve his/her Reading, Mathematics or Science performance. The school may be required to develop a Progress Monitoring Plan (PMP) for your child.

If your child's Achievement Level scores increase from one year to the next, this clearly shows that your child has made progress. In some grade levels, your child might also be making progress by scoring at the same Achievement Level for two years in a row.

For a guide to understanding your child's test scores visit:

<http://www.fldoe.org/accountability/assessments/k-12-student-assessment/fcat2.stml>

How is my child's school grade determined?

The State of Florida results from state assessments along with other information to determine what grade your child's school receives every year. The state looks at Achievement Levels of different groups of students attending the school. School districts are required by the state to consider FSA results in making decisions about students' needs for remediation or retention.

More information is available at <http://oada.dadeschools.net>.

Section G – Student Health

Are health examinations required for entry to school?

Even healthy, active children need regular health examinations. Every child must have an examination (including a tuberculosis risk assessment and follow-up if required) by a medical provider within the 12 months before entering the M-DCPS system. You may go to a private physician or neighborhood health center. Request that the medical provider complete the School Entry Health Exam (Form DH 3040). This form must be submitted to the school. It becomes part of your child's Cumulative School Health Record. (Students who transfer to M-DCPS from another Florida school system and have a completed form on file do not need to be re-examined.)

Which immunizations are required to enroll my child in school?

In addition to the health exam, all students entering the M-DCPS system must present a Certificate of Immunization filled out by the student's medical provider. The certificate of immunization will either be complete or temporary depending on the number and type of vaccines that the child has completed. Immunizations should be documented on a DH680 Florida Immunization certificate or a Florida Shots certificate of immunization. This form also becomes part of your child's permanent health record. The principal will track this temporary certification and your child may be removed from school if he/she is not immunized by the time it expires.

If you object to immunization for religious reasons, you must complete a Religious Exemption Certificate (Form DH 681) provided by the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County. Certain medical exemptions are also available from the student's medical provider. Students who are not immunized should be removed from school during any communicable disease epidemic. Turn to the next page for immunization guidelines for school entry.

For more information visit

http://comprehensivehealthservices.dadeschools.net/immune_require.asp or call the Comprehensive Health Services Department at 305-995-1235.

| TYPE | NOTES |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| DTP/DTaP | Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis or Diphtheria, Tetanus and acellular Pertussis. Five doses are required. However, if the fourth dose was given after the fourth birthday, a fifth dose is not required. |
| Hib and Pneumococcal Conjugate | Haemophilus influenza type b. Required for public preschool from two months through 59 months of age. The number required for Hib vaccination varies, depending on the child's age and type of vaccine received. |
| Tdap | Tetanus, Diphtheria, and acellular Pertussis. One Tdap is required for entrance to grades 7-12. |
| Polio | Four doses are required. However, if the third dose is given after the fourth birthday, only three doses are required. If the fourth dose is given before the fourth birthday, then a fifth dose is needed for entry into kindergarten. |
| MMR | Measles, Mumps, and Rubella. One dose is required for prekindergarten. Two doses are required for grades K-12. |
| Hepatitis B | Three doses are required. |
| Varicella | Also known as chickenpox. All students in prekindergarten and grades 7-12 will be required to have one dose. All students in kindergarten and grades 1-6 will be required to have two doses of varicella. Varicella vaccine is not required if there is documented history of the disease. |

How does the Florida KidCare - Children's Health Insurance Program work?

Florida KidCare is comprehensive quality health insurance for uninsured children from birth through age 18. Applying is easy and the monthly premium is based on household income and family size. Most families pay \$15 or \$20 each month or nothing at all. Many of our students may be eligible for health insurance through Florida KidCare, even if one or both parents are working.

Services covered include doctor's visits, check-ups and shots, prescriptions, mental health, hospital and surgery, vision and hearing, dental, and emergencies.

There are four programs in Florida KidCare: Medicaid, Healthy Kids, MediKids, and Children's Medical Services Network.

"Through a partnership with Florida KidCare, Miami-Dade County Public Schools is providing information about the program and application assistance in our schools. Families should speak with your school's Florida KidCare Liaison for application assistance and are also invited to call the KidCare helpline (305) 995-1207. The Parent Academy is also able to assist parents with the online enrollment in their offices.

Parents may also apply online at www.floridakidcare.org. When asked "how did you hear about us," provide the code: CK26.

For additional information, please visit <http://theparentacademy.net> or call 305-995-1207, or Florida KidCare at 1-888-540-5437 (toll free).

How can I support my child's physical fitness?

Children perform better in school when they are physically fit. However, many children are overweight due to poor diet and lack of regular exercise. Statistics show that the number of obese children has tripled in the last 20 years.

There are many ways to help your child improve his or her physical fitness. These include limiting time in front of the television, making healthy meals and snacks, and providing rewards and incentives for physical activity. Ask your school about after-school fitness programs and team sports opportunities. (Students are required to have a health examination and either school or football insurance before participating in athletics.)

Parents should enroll their children in physical education to ensure that they receive the recommended amount of daily physical activity. All students enrolled in physical education will receive a fitness report.

For more information visit

http://comprehensivehealthservices.dadeschools.net/immune_require.asp or call the Comprehensive Health Services Department at 305-995-1235.

What curriculum does Miami-Dade County Public Schools use to teach Abstinence, HIV/STD and Teen Pregnancy prevention?

Health Teacher K-12 and Health Smart (Available for the 20 HIV/STD Prevention Priority Schools)

For more information visit

http://comprehensivehealthservices.dadeschools.net/immune_require.asp or call the Comprehensive Health Services Department at 305-995-1235.

What does the HIV/STD Prevention Curriculum cover?

In compliance with Florida Law, F.S.233.067 and 233.0672, Miami-Dade County Public Schools provides abstinence-based comprehensive driven HIV/STD, Teen Pregnancy Prevention curriculum for students. The curriculum is designed to address HIV/STD, and Teen Pregnancy Prevention, which is medical accurate and developmentally appropriate in kindergarten through twelfth grade.

The role of parents is paramount in the education of children. The HIV/STD Prevention and Teen Pregnancy curriculum is intended to complement parents teaching, not to replace it. Therefore, parents are encouraged to discuss HIV, STDs and Teen Pregnancy prevention with their children. You may request assistance from the HIV/STD Prevention Program on addressing the subject of sexual health with your child.

For additional information visit <http://aidseducation.dadeschools.net>.

How can I get involved in the decision-making process for issues involving Abstinence, HIV/STD, Teen Pregnancy prevention and A Safe and Supportive Environment for students and staff?

Parental/caregiver engagement, community members and organizations may join the following committees to be involved in the decision making processes for issues involving Abstinence, HIV/STD, Teen Pregnancy prevention and A Safe and Supportive Environment for students and staff:

HIV/STD Prevention Program Partners Committee
HIV/STD Speakers Bureau
Material Review Committee (MRC)
School Health Medical Advisory Committee (SHMAC)

For additional information visit <http://aidseducation.dadeschools.net>.

Who can I contact if my child is being bullied?

Allegations of bullying/harassment are taken seriously by Miami-Dade County Public Schools. When concerned about bullying or harassment behaviors, contact your child's teacher immediately. You can verbally report your concerns and/or fill out the Bullying and Harassment Reporting Form, which can be found at the following link: <http://forms.dadeschools.net/webpdf/7229.pdf> . If the situation is not resolved successfully, you may ask your child's counselor to intervene. If the problem should continue to persist, notify the school's principal. You may also contact the Bullying/Harassment Hotline, staffed by the Division of Student Services staff at the District office. They can be reached at 305-995-CARE (2273). The Hotline is staffed from 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Information may be provided anonymously. All messages will be returned promptly. Additional information regarding bullying and harassment can be found at the following link: <http://studentservices.dadeschools.net/bullying/> .

My child recently suffered a loss (e.g., death of a family member, friend, teacher, pet) and is experiencing difficulty coping. Where can I find him support?

Dealing with loss is an important developmental process. Assistance can be found through your child's school counselor, who can provide support and guidance for children passing through the bereavement process. The Children's Bereavement Center also offers bereavement support services. They can be reached at 305-668-4902 or <http://childbereavement.org/> .

My child is having problems with anxiety and depression. Where can I find help?

Children experiencing mental or behavioral health concerns require prompt attention. Your child's school counselor is an excellent resource for providing support and resource recommendations. You may also choose to reach out to a community-based mental health center or private therapist. Literature review is available at <http://drs.dadeschools.net>. Switchboard of Miami is another resource that is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They can be reached at 305-358-HELP (4357). In life-threatening emergencies, 911 should be contacted immediately.

How do I find information regarding the School Counseling Program and services available for my child?

Our School Counseling website:

(http://studentservices.dadeschools.net/guidance/guid_services.asp) provides a variety of services and resources in support of our school counselors and the programs they deliver at their elementary, middle, K-8, and high school sites.

Section H – Special Education

Are there special education programs available for my child?

The Division of Exceptional Student Education ensures that eligible students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education consistent with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and State rules. The district is required to provide students with disabilities with appropriate programs and/or related services. These services are provided based on the individual needs of the student as documented on an Individual Educational Plan (IEP).

The next few pages will provide you with answers to frequently asked questions by parents of children with disabilities. We hope this information will guide you in supporting your child and actively participating in your child's education.

Division of Exceptional Student Education
1501 Biscayne Boulevard, Suite 409
Miami, Florida 33132
305-995-2037
<http://ese.dadeschools.net/>

Additional resources are available to parents regarding what is exceptional student education for students with disabilities at <http://www.fldoe.org/ese/pdf/ESE2011.pdf>.

How do I request assistance if I think my child may need special education services?

Parents are entitled to request a comprehensive evaluation of their child when a disability is suspected. For all but the most severe disabilities, the evaluation process will seek to determine the types of interventions that will help the child meet age and grade level standards and utilize those interventions during the evaluation. Record reviews, parent and teacher interviews, observations, and analysis of student assessment data are utilized in a four step problem solving process to develop interventions. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's school to request a meeting to discuss concerns.

Parent resources are available regarding student evaluation for special education services at <http://www.fldoe.org/ese/parent/pdf/idp.pdf>.

Are there special education service centers in my neighborhood?

SPED Service Centers strategically located throughout the district administer direct support services for schools within their corresponding areas. In particular, the four SPED Service Centers oversee: psycho-educational diagnosis, consultation and evaluation; student placement in special education or gifted programs; speech/language pathology evaluation and related support services; social/emotional/behavioral assessments; truancy prevention, etc.

SPED Service Center North
MacNorth
13813 N. W. 97th Avenue
Hialeah, Florida 33018
305-827-3025

SPED Service Center South Central
J R E Lee Educational Center
6521 S. W. 62nd Avenue
South Miami, Florida 33143
786-268-4757

SPED Service Center North Central
Westview Middle School Educational Center
1901 N. W. 127th Street
Miami, Florida 33167
786-413-3001

SPED Service Center South
Center for International Education
900 N. E. 23rd Avenue
Homestead, Florida 33030
305-242-8432

Online information is also available; please visit the Division of Special Education – Miami-Dade County Public Schools at <http://ese.dadeschools.net>.

What is “Response to Instruction/ Intervention” (RtI)?

Response to Intervention (RtI) is a process to assist all students. Schools use student assessment data to make sure that all children are progressing in both academics and behavior. Multiple Tiers (or levels of intensity) of both academic and behavioral supports are made available to groups or individual students based on data that the schools collect on a regular basis. Some students who need the most intensive level of support may be referred for possible eligibility determination for special education.

To request a brochure on RtI visit <http://www.florida-rti.org/docs/RtI-Parent-Brochure.pdf>

What is a Local Education Agency (LEA) and what role do they play?

The LEA is the IEP team participant who is responsible for making decisions on behalf of the district. He or she ensures that your child’s IEP meets compliance with State and federal regulations and is authorized to commit district resources. The signature of the LEA representative on the IEP ensures that the services specified on the document will be provided within the timeframes delineated in the IEP. Check with your child’s school to find out who is the designated LEA.

How will I be notified and get prepared for upcoming IEP meetings?

The State and IDEA emphasize the importance of parental involvement in developing, reviewing, and revising the IEP. The parent must receive a Notification of Meeting even when the student has reached the age of majority (i.e. 18 years old). To ensure that parents are given the opportunity to attend the meeting, the LEA must schedule a meeting at a mutually agreed upon time and place. For tips on how to prepare for IEP meetings contact the SPED Service Center corresponding to your child’s school.

Additional information is available on getting ready for IEP meeting at <http://www.fldoe.org/ese/pdf/iep-card.pdf>

How will I know the progress my child is making toward his/her IEP goals?

Updates on an eligible child's progress toward mastery of IEP goals will be provided concurrent with the issuance of report cards. The information that is communicated to you will reflect one of the following: mastery of the goal, adequate progress made, some progress made, or insufficient progress made. Contact your child's school to discuss concerns and to schedule an IEP meeting to review progress if necessary.

What is a Section 504 Plan?

A Section 504 plan describes the accommodations that the school will provide to support an eligible child's education. Your child may be entitled to Section 504 accommodations if s/he has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one (1) or more major life activities. Parents, teachers, and other staff members will meet to discuss all relevant information about your child to determine eligibility for Section 504. For more information on Section 504, feel free to contact Dr. Sue Buslinger-Clifford, at 305-995-1735 or sclifford@dadeschools.net.

For more information regarding Section 504 on procedures for students with disabilities visit http://ese.dadeschools.net/section_504/

What can I do if I disagree with decisions made at an IEP meeting?

Parents and schools have a "built-in" partnership, with the child as the primary focus. This partnership will grow when parents and school staff work together. Disagreements may happen, but when they are solved happily it makes the parent/school relationship stronger. Parents can also refer to the Notice of Procedural Safeguards for Parents of Students with Disabilities for formal ways to resolve disagreements. For additional information on resolving disagreements, feel free to contact one of the resources listed on the Parent Resources sheet. This sheet provides parents with information on organizations in the community that offer support for parents of students with disabilities.

To access the parent resource sheet form visit <http://forms.dadeschools.net/webpdf/6334.pdf>.

What is a transition IEP meeting?

The focus of transition at an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) conference is to develop a Transition IEP (TIEP) that promotes movement from school to post-school activities. It is at that time where all components, discussion, and decision-making of the TIEP should lead to and support the desired post-school outcome statement and begin to result in a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

The team includes you, your child, and teachers. When developing the IEP to be in effect when your child turns 16, the team may also include representatives of agencies that are likely to provide or pay for services. Agencies can only be invited with your consent or the consent of your son or daughter who has reached the age of majority.

To access information and resources on transition visit <http://transition.dadeschools.net>, and to access the transition planning for student with disabilities guide visit <http://www.fldoe.org/ese/pdf/Transition.pdf>

What kind of high school diploma will my child receive?

The diploma option is determined through the IEP process. A statement of whether your child is pursuing a course of study leading toward a standard diploma with scholar or merit designation must first be made during your child's 8th grade year or during the school year your child turns 14, whichever comes first. It must be readdressed at all subsequent IEP meetings.

The State of Florida offers the following diploma options for students with disabilities:

Standard Diploma: The standard diploma is earned by most students who graduate from Florida high schools. To do so, they must meet the graduation requirements set by the State of Florida and the local school districts.

There are two standard diploma designations: the scholar diploma and the merit diploma. In order to obtain a scholar designation students must satisfy standard diploma course credits and pass the statewide assessments unless waiver is granted. In order to obtain a merit designation, students must satisfy merit diploma course credits, pass alternate assessments, unless a waiver is granted and a portfolio demonstrates mastery of all required course standards. Additionally, they must attain one or more industry certifications from an established list.

Students who cannot meet the requirements for either diploma designation will receive a certificate of completion. All students who meet the standard high school diploma requirements may choose to defer receipt of a diploma.

To access information regarding admission and graduation requirements for students with disabilities visit <http://search.dadeschools.net/>.

What kinds of waivers are available for my child?

Waiver of End of Course Results

A student with a disability, for whom the IEP team determines that an end-of-course assessment cannot accurately measure the student's abilities, taking into consideration all allowable accommodations, shall have the end-of-course assessment results waived for the purpose of determining the student's course grade and credit.

The decision to waive the End-Of-Course assessment results is made by the IEP team. The IEP team meets to determine whether or not the End-Of-Course assessment accurately measures the student's abilities, taking into consideration allowable accommodations.

Waiver of Florida Standards Assessment(s) Graduation Requirement

School districts provide instruction to prepare students with disabilities to demonstrate proficiency in the skills and competencies necessary for successful grade-to-grade progression and high school graduation. IEP teams may waive the required passing score for Florida Standards Assessment(s) (or alternate assessments) under specific circumstances for eligible students with disabilities for the purpose of receiving a standard scholar or merit designation high school diploma.

The decision to waive the Florida Standards Assessment(s) (or alternate assessments) is made by the IEP team. The IEP team meets to determine whether or not the Florida Standards Assessment(s) accurately measures the student's abilities, taking into consideration allowable accommodations. The team must review student information to determine if the student has mastered the Florida Standards.

To access information regarding admission and graduation requirements for students with disabilities visit <http://search.dadeschools.net/>.

What services are available for students who speak a language other than English?

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL K-12), established in the early 1960s, is a required program for students whose home language is other than English and who are classified as less than independent in English. It is a Language Arts program that incorporates all aspects of Language Arts instruction, content, and language development.

The current policies and procedures assure the appropriate identification and placement of **English Language Learner (ELL)** students of special education. The Division of Bilingual Education and World Languages monitors schools to ensure the appropriate identification and placement of all ELL students.

For additional information visit the Division of Bilingual Education and World Languages at <http://bilingual.dadeschools.net>.

Who do I contact about schooling if my child is confined to the home or hospital?

Hospital/Homebound Instructional Program (HHIP) is available for students who are confined to the home or hospital. A specific medical authorization form signed by a licensed physician is required for placement in this most restrictive program. Based upon the Individual Education Plan (IEP), instruction is provided either in the student's home/hospital room or through tele-class (class conducted via telephone and/or computer). Parents and students must sign an agreement which specifies their responsibilities during enrollment in this program.

Referral to the HHIP can be made by the student's doctor, hospital personnel, teacher, counselor, or parent. Eligibility requirements include medical certification that the student is expected to be absent from school a minimum of fifteen (15) consecutive days.

To contact support for Hospital/Homebound Instructional Program please call 305-514-5400 or visit www.dadeschools.net.

Who do I contact if I think my child needs counseling services?

There are counseling professionals available at each school to assist students and parents/guardians with issues regarding academic, personal/social and behavioral concerns. These counseling professionals include: School Guidance Counselors, School Social Workers, TRUST Specialists, and School Psychologists. If you are interested in counseling services, please contact one of the identified counseling professionals at your child's school.

If you require further information on these services, please call the Division of Psychological Services at 305-995-1735 or visit our website at <http://psy.dadeschools.net>.

Section I – Title I

What is Title I?

Title I is a federal grant that provides supplemental funding to school Districts with high percentages of economically disadvantaged students. The overall purpose of Title I is to provide supplemental funding to assist students in meeting the State Department of Education’s challenging performance standards and have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education.

How does a school qualify and receive funds for the Title I Program?

Schools qualify for Title I funding (annually) based on the percentage of students enrolled in the school that are receiving free or reduced priced meals.

The federal government provides funding to the State Department of Education to be allocated to qualifying school districts. School districts then allocate funding to respective qualifying schools.

How do I find out if my child’s school receives Title I funding and how are funds used?

To find out if your child’s school is implementing the Title I Program during the 2014-2015 school year, please [click here](#).

Title I funds may be used to provide supplemental services, resources, materials and supplies to support high academic standards which may include, but aren’t limited to:

- Smaller classes or special instructional services;
- Additional teachers and aides;
- Opportunities for additional professional development for school staff;
- Extra time for teaching Title I students the skills they need;
- A variety of supplementary teaching methods; and
- Additional teaching materials which supplement regular instruction.

How do parents get involved in the Title I Program?

You may become an active and joint participant in the District Title I Program, and the school's Title I Program by:

- Serving as a role model; showing your child that you support their education.
- Assuring that you are aware of your child's educational progress; thereby demonstrating how important that progress is to you.
- Teaching your child that your input at the school is appreciated and that you support its efforts.
- Volunteering at your child's school.
- Attending parent-teacher conferences.
- Communicating with your student's teacher(s) regularly.
- Attending the school's Open House and Title I Annual Meeting.
- Actively participating in the development and review process of the school's Title I Parental Involvement Plan (PIP) and the school's Title I School-Parent Compact, both annually.
- Contacting the Community Involvement Specialist (CIS) at your child's school for additional Title I program details. If your child's school does not have a CIS, see the Principal for information.
- Becoming a Title I District Advisory Council (DAC) and Title I Parent Advisory Council (PAC) representative at your child's school. (All elected positions.)
- Attending the Title I DAC General meetings.
- Attending the Title I DAC Executive Board (elected membership) meetings.
- Supporting the Title I Challenging Higher Education for Students in our Schools (CHESS) Program. (At selected school sites.)
- Reading the Title I *DAC Talk, News for Title I Parents* (newsletter); and the *Title I Quarterly Parent Bulletin* with your family and child. Both are distributed to your child's school for parents.

What are the Title I District Parent Involvement Plan (PIP), and the Title I School-Level PIP?

The Title I District PIP is jointly developed annually with input from all Title I Program stakeholders in the district and community. It is translated into Spanish and Haitian Creole; distributed to schools implementing the Title I Program; made available to parents during Title I meetings; placed on the Title I webpage; and in the Title I funded Neighborhood Resource Centers.

The School-level PIP is developed annually at the school site with school staff, parents, and other stakeholders. It is made available to parents (and stakeholders) in the school's Parent Resource Center or Parent Area; the school's Main Office; at schools parent meetings; and school's website.

What is the Title I Parent-School Compact?

Each school implementing the Title I Program designs a Parent-School Compact annually which includes the academic based goals and responsibilities of both the parents and students. The Compact is used to support a high quality education for all students. It is developed with input from the parents and distributed to all parents. The Compact is revisited during the school year by selected school staff and parents of all students in kindergarten through fifth grade to further support students' academic progress.

What services are available to students attending private schools and how are they delivered?

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS), Title I Administration supports learning experiences that ensure all students have sufficient opportunities to develop learning, thinking and life skills that lead to success at the next level by providing supplementary instructional services, to Title I eligible students that attend non-public schools, through contracts with private agencies that deliver services directly to students. The Third-Party Contractor provides all equipment, materials and supplies, as well as professional

development and parental involvement activities necessary in order to deliver remedial basic skills instruction to students failing or at-risk of failing, as required under Title I regulations.

The services to non-public schools supplement the regular school program by providing for intensive tutorial services to students residing in the attendance boundary of a public school implementing the Title I program and who are academically needy. The intensive tutorial services focus on reading, writing and mathematics using direct instruction, supplemental materials, and technology-based programs. Instructional objectives are based on agreed upon standards developed in consultation between the District and private school representatives. Lessons are coordinated by certified teachers, meeting the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Highly Qualified requirements, and are aligned with lessons taught in the regular classroom to ensure that services are supplemental to those received by students. Services are delivered in small group instruction with a maximum of 10:1 student/teacher ratio.

Services follow a lesson delivery structure, including review of previous lessons, discussion of background knowledge and connection to classroom activities, and general skills reinforcement. Appropriate text and manipulatives are selected to meet the individual needs and learning modalities of students, thereby ensuring they have opportunities to learn. Ongoing evaluations contribute to the customization (differentiated instruction) of lesson delivery. Lessons build upon success, and student performance is carefully monitored in order to pace instructional delivery and content.

Are parents also benefiting from the Title I program at private schools? If so, how?

Parent involvement activities are provided based on school/parent surveys. Teachers support parental involvement through participation in the annual parent meetings, student progress reports, parent conferences and parent compacts. Quarterly meetings are provided for parents including information regarding topics such as learning differences and effective parent involvement.

What type of professional development is provided to teachers at Title I schools?

Professional Development (PD) activities are provided to teachers of students participating in the Title I Program. The PD activities are based on a comprehensive needs assessment and data analysis of standardized test scores, student academic performance, and overall success towards mutually agreed upon standards that were developed through the ongoing timely and meaningful consultation between private school and District representatives.

What services do you provide to farmworkers/migrant or their children?

For our Farmworker/Migrant Families we provide many services from workshops to helping students in the afternoon with an extended school program. Here are the services as follows:

- **Migrant Early Childhood Learning Program (MECLP)**
The MECLP provides services to eligible migrant preschool children at selected Migrant Housing Centers. Sites in the two main Migrant Housing Centers: Redland and South Dade, provide instruction for migrant three and four year old children. The MECLP offers the developmentally appropriate Scholastic Pre-Kindergarten curriculum, food services, and health screenings and extended day-care for these students. The MECLP addresses the needs of the whole child as children are involved in hands-on experiences with people, objects, ideas and events.
- **Parental Involvement Component**
Parent participation in workshops, parent-teacher conferences and other school/community activities are infused to include parents as partners in their children's educational process.
- **Extended School Day Program (ESP)**
Services are offered at migrant housing centers. Participants in the ESP receive highly qualified Instruction/Tutoring by state certified educators and trained professional staff. The primary goals are to enhance learning according to standards set by Miami- Dade County Public Schools curriculum, and Florida Sunshine State Standards. Accomplishing these requirements are met through the usage of developmentally appropriate interventions that inspire students' participation at ESP sites. ESP services for elementary students include Florida Standards assessment tutorial, subject instruction, homework assistance, SES opportunities,

Boy/Girl Scouts, team sports, nutrition education, field trips, cultural activities, guest speakers, arts and crafts and technology-based instruction. Secondary students receive Florida Standards assessment tutorial, homework assistance, peer/individualize counseling, technology-based instruction and SES opportunities.

- **Supportive Services**

Services include guidance, psychological, social, health, dental, vision, nutrition, outreach, advocacy, at-risk, transportation, and needs assessment services.

- **Migrant Summer Program (MSP)**

The services are offered at the main migrant housing centers through the Pre-K Program, Migrant Summer Reading Camp Program, Meals Program, Secondary Services Program, and Identification and Recruitment activities. Focus will be on serving Pre-K, 3rd graders, 8th graders, and 10-12th graders.

Services provided at school-sites:

- **Migrant Achievement Resources (MAR)**

Educational and support services designed to meet the needs of migrant student in Grades K-5 are offered at selected elementary schools and K-8 Learning Centers. MAR offers supplemental tutoring and technology-based instruction to eligible Priority for Service (PFS) students. MAR staff provides supplemental instruction based on current curriculum implemented by school personnel. MAR staff articulates with appropriate classroom teachers to ensure consistent curriculum. In addition, MAR staff monitors student attendance, provides educational referrals, expedites student record transfers, assists with conduct issues and organizes cultural activities.

- **Migrant Academic Planning and Achievement (MAPA Middle)**

A selection of services tailored to meet the needs of migrant students in grades 6-8 are offered at selected middle school and K-8 centers. The Teacher/Advocate customizes services through the selection of several available models which include: Tutorial, Attendance, Counseling, Educational Blueprint, and Career Awareness with opportunities designed to teach students how to foster and maintain a positive attitude toward education and life-long learning.

- **Migrant Academic Planning and Achievement (MAPA High)**

A selection of services tailored to meet the needs of migrant students in grades 9-12 are offered at selected secondary schools. The Teacher/Advocate customizes services through the selection of several available models which include: Go out and Lead (GOAL), Career Awareness, Tutorial, Attendance, and Counseling with opportunities designed to teach students how to foster and maintain a positive

attitude toward education and life-long learning. Cultural activities, educational technology, effective use of the internet, school attendance monitoring, adult/vocational education referrals are provided through MAPA. MAPA staff assists with Identification and Recruitment, and complete Migrant Student Information Exchange (MSIX). Also, support services referrals, parental involvement activities are provided. Scholarships information, college/university tours, FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), assistance and participation in Mini-Corp Club and Close-Up Program are provided by MAPA staff. All migrant student graduates are invited to participate in the Migrant Student Recognition Program.

Services are provided at the following non-school sites:

- **Redland Center**
 - Migrant Early Childhood Learning Program
 - Parental Involvement Practices and Workshops
 - Extended School Program
 - Supportive Services
 - Migrant Summer Program
- **South Dade Center**
 - Migrant Early Childhood Learning Program
 - Parental Involvement Practices and Workshops
 - Extended School Program
 - Supportive Services
 - Migrant Summer Program
- **Goulds Center**
 - Parental Involvement Practices and Workshops
 - Supportive Services
- **Harvest Center**
 - Parental Involvement Practices and Workshops

What other types of services/agencies offer assistance to migrant/farmworkers?

- CHI-Medical Referrals
- FDLRS-The Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources System (FDLRS) provides diagnostic, instructional, and technology support services to district exceptional education programs and families of students with disabilities.
- Metro-Dade Police Department- Christmas Toy Distribution
- Kiwanis-Christmas Toy Distribution
- Kids4Kids-Bookbag and School Supplies Distribution
- Carlton Elementary-Bookbag and School Supplies Distribution
- Heiken Foundation –Children’s Vision Program
- En Familia
- COFFO
- Centro Campesino
- RCMA

Section J – School Choice

What are magnet programs in schools?

If your child has a special interest or talent, you might want to look into a magnet program or school. Magnet programs and schools offer high-quality instruction and innovative educational programs that foster student diversity, academic excellence, school-to-career pathways, and real-world learning. There are 100 magnet programs/schools in Miami-Dade County, offering over 375 unique areas of study K through 12. Magnet programs address the following themes of study:

- Careers and Professions
- International Education
- Mathematics, Science & Technology
- VPrep (Virtual Offerings)
- Visual & Performing Arts
- Liberal Arts

For your child to be accepted into a magnet program, you must submit an application to the school between October 1 and January 15. Some magnet programs also require students to have a strong academic record, talent, and interest in the selected theme. For more information, call the office of School Choice and Parental Options at 305-995-1922 or visit <http://www.miamimagnets.org>.

How to Complete the Online Magnet Application-
http://ehandbooks.dadeschools.net/user_guides/54/index.html

What is controlled choice (Open enrollment) in elementary schools?

The Controlled Choice Program offers parents an opportunity to indicate their preference for school assignments within a controlled choice attendance boundary. Each of the district's 3 controlled choice schools (Coral Gables Elementary, G.W. Carver Elementary, and Sunset Elementary) offer an enhanced curriculum focused on a specified academic theme. This option applies only to parents who reside within the designated attendance boundary. Priority in student assignment is given based on siblings (who are currently enrolled) and proximity to the selected school.

Application Guidelines: Eligibility: Students must reside within the designated controlled choice boundary of school selected. Applications are accepted between grades K-5.

Timelines: Application period begins March 15th, annually. Contact appropriate Region or school for specific dates.

Process: Applications are available at each controlled choice school. Applications are completed and submitted at these offices. At this time, parents are advised whether additional documentation is needed.

Student assignment is determined by computerized random selection twice yearly, in May and July, based on seat availability per school and grade level. Additionally, the following weighted factors are considered:

- *siblings with proximity to school;
- *siblings with no proximity;
- *proximity with no siblings; or
- *no siblings or proximity

***Sibling priority is applied to those students who have a sibling currently attending the school. All students that apply through this process will receive a school assignment. Parents will receive a letter, via U.S. mail, notifying them of school assignment.

For more information, call the office of School Choice and Parental Options at 305-995-1922 or visit <http://www.miamimagnets.org>.

Is my child eligible to participate in Dual Language programs?

Dual language programs, offered at a number of elementary, middle and senior high schools, feature instruction in English and a second language such as Spanish, French, German, Portuguese, Italian, Haitian-Creole, Mandarin, and Chinese.

Dual language programs fall under three basic models:

- 1) The elementary Bilingual School Organization (BISO)
- 2) The Extended Foreign Language (EFL) program, and
- 3) The International Studies (IS) program in grades K-12.

The BISO model is offered to all students in selected neighborhood schools. The EFL model is offered as a choice in all neighborhood schools. In the BISO program, approximately 60 percent of instruction is in English and 40 percent in the target language. The Extended Foreign Language program offers 60 minutes of Spanish Language Arts daily, for a total of 300 minutes weekly. The IS model, part of the magnet schools programs, offers up to three hours of daily instruction in the target language, and is implemented in collaboration with the local consulates of the respective foreign governments. For more information on schools with dual language programs, contact the Division of Bilingual Education and World Languages at 305-995-2428 or visit <http://bilingual.dadeschools.net>.

What are Satellite Learning Centers?

Currently, there are two public elementary schools built to serve parents who work at particular organizations:

- 1) The Assurant Group
11195 S.W. 196 Street
Miami, FL 33157

- 2) Mount Sinai Hospital
4300 Alton Road
Miami Beach, FL 33140

These schools are partnerships between the employer, which provides the facilities, and M-DCPS.

What are high school academies?

High school students may enroll in academy programs at 25 high schools that are affiliated with the National Academy Foundation (NAF). These “schools within schools” focus on Engineering, Finance, Hospitality and Tourism, Information Technology, and Health Sciences. NAF Academies represent business/school partnerships that prepare young people for college and careers through a combination of school-based curricula and work-based learning experiences. For more information, call 305-995-1922 or visit <http://www.yourchoicemiami.org/index.php?/index/department/6>.

What is a Charter School?

Charter schools are tuition-free, non-sectarian public schools that operate under a performance contract, or “charter,” with the school district. Charter schools are free from many of the rules and regulations created for traditional public schools. For example, they have the freedom to design their own curriculum and create different types of learning environments. Students attending charter schools still must take all state-required standardized tests.

Every charter school is different. Most are operated by groups consisting of teachers, principals, parents, organizations, colleges, or universities. However, there are charter schools governed by municipalities which afford the residents’ children first preference for enrollment. Charter schools also differ in regards to daily management. Many charter schools have outsourced day-to-day management and operations to management companies known as Education Service Providers (ESP); others have chosen internal resources or a hybrid of outsourced and internal resources to meet daily operational needs.

Academically charter schools vary as well. Though most charter schools offer a comprehensive educational program, similar to that of traditional schools, some offer special and/or innovative academic programs. Some of these programs include, but are not limited to: autism, language immersion, math and Greek, dropout prevention and course recovery, single gender, and special education. For addresses and contact information, call 305-995-1403 or visit <http://charterschools.dadeschools.net>.

Where do I find information about opportunity scholarships?

If your child's school has received a grade of "F" or three consecutive grades of "D", you may choose to send your child to an eligible "C" or higher-graded public school that has space available.

To qualify for an Opportunity Scholarship, your child must either: 1) have attended the low-performing school 2) be currently attending another public school, and have been assigned to the low-performing school for the next school year; or 3) assigned to attend the low-performing school.

Parents/Guardians must complete an Opportunity Scholarship Program transfer application by the established deadline. Applications may be obtained at the school or at the Office of School Choice and Parental Options. For more information, call 305-995-1922; the Parent Hotline at 800-477-1636 or visit www.floridaschoolchoice.org/Information/OSP.

What do I need to transfer my child to other public school through the elementary and secondary education Act?

The state of Florida received a waiver from the Department of Education for compliance with certain portions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Therefore, these transfers to other public schools are no longer available.

What is a Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship?

Parents of limited means may qualify to receive a scholarship to a participating private school under the Corporate Tax Credit Program. For information, call 800-447-1636 or visit <http://gafla.dadeschools.net>.

What do I need to home-school my child?

The Florida Home Education Program is designed to assist parents who choose to educate their children at home. Parents can use either the Miami-Dade County Public Schools Competency Based Curriculum or another curriculum that they have acquired on their own. Parents must first notify the District Superintendent by letter within 30 days of the intent to enroll their child in the Home Education Program. For information on home schooling and a registration form, call the Home Education office at 305-883-5323 or visit <http://attendanceservices.dadeschools.net/homeschool.asp>.

What is the John McKay Scholarship program for students with disabilities?

The John McKay Scholarship Program provides the option to attend a public school other than the one to which the student is assigned or provides a scholarship to a private school of choice for students with disabilities. Eligible students must have a valid Individual Education Plan (IEP) or a Section 504 Plan (504) written in accordance with rules of the State Board of Education. It is a parental choice program that enables parents of students with disabilities to have the choice to transfer from their current public schools to other participating public schools or select participating private schools and apply for their child's admission.

A student with a valid IEP or 504 plan is eligible for the John McKay Scholarship Program if the student spent the prior school year in attendance at a Florida public school. Prior school year means that the student was enrolled and reported by a school district for funding during the preceding October and February Fulltime Equivalency (FTE) surveys; however, military dependents transferring to a Florida school from out of state are exempt from this prior year requirement.

Parents must apply for the program prior to withdrawing their child from a public school. Please visit the Florida Department for Education website at www.floridaschoolchoice.org for additional information and to file an online intent to participate in the scholarship program.

What is the Florida Personal Learning Scholarship Account Program for students with disabilities?

A parent of a student with a disability may request and receive from the state of Florida a personal learning scholarship account to better meet the individual educational needs of his/her child if:

The student:

- Is a resident of this state
- Is eligible to enroll in kindergarten through grade 12
- Has a disability as defined in the program definitions. These disabilities include: Autism, Cerebral palsy, Down Syndrome, an Intellectual Disability, Prader-Willi Syndrome, Spina Bifida, or Williams Syndrome.
- Is the subject of an IEP written in accordance with the rules of the State Board of Education, or has received a diagnosis of an eligible disability from a licensed physician or psychologist.

The parent has to apply to an eligible SFO to participate in the program by February 1st before the school year in which the student will participate or an alternative date set by the SFO for any vacant funded slots. The SFO must notify the district and FLDOE of the parent's intent upon receipt of the parent's request.

To learn more about what is the Personal Learning Scholarship Account Program visit <http://outreach.dadeschools.net>.

Section K – Transportation

When is transportation provided for public school students?

Florida Statutes and Rules of the Florida State Board of Education establish when students are eligible for transportation on public school buses: Students who are attending their designated home/residence school **and** who live more than two (2) miles from the school will generally be eligible for transportation. However, this rule **does not** apply to students in magnet/school choice programs or to most other students who are attending a school other than their designated home/residence school. Special needs students shall receive transportation in accordance with the provisions of the student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP) or “504” Plan. However, this **does not** apply to students who have been enrolled in magnet/school choice programs. All such students will receive transportation on the same basis as regular education students, regardless of what may be included in an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or “504” Plan.

Find additional information regarding student transportation at <http://dot.dadeschools.net>.

How far can my child be required to walk to his/her bus stop?

Per Rule 6A-3.001 of the Florida State Board of Education, students may be required to walk up to one and one-half (1½) miles from their home to their assigned bus stop. The Miami-Dade County Public Schools Department of Transportation makes every effort to keep walk distances between student’s homes and their bus stops as short as possible and practical.

Find additional information regarding student transportation at <http://dot.dadeschools.net>.

How can I find information on my child's school bus assignment?

At the beginning of the school year, in August, the school district mails a post card to every family with a student enrolled in Miami-Dade County Public Schools. If the student is eligible for transportation on a public school bus this post card will have information on the student's bus assignment.

Bus assignment information for students enrolled in Miami-Dade County Public Schools is also posted on the district's web site on the internet. To access the information first go to www.dadeschools.net and then log on to the **Parent Portal**. The top of the Parent Portal screen has a link (click on BUS INFO) to the student's bus assignment information.

Is my child's bus assignment available on the M-DCPS' Parent Portal?

Bus assignment information on the **Parent Portal** is updated every night. Parents are encouraged to periodically check the information on the Parent Portal so they will always have the most current information on their child's bus transportation.

Parents who are not able to access the Parent Portal should call their child's **school** for assistance. All schools have access to the district's transportation routing system, and should be able to answer most questions concerning a student's eligibility for transportation and bus assignment.

Find additional information regarding student transportation at <http://dot.dadeschools.net>.

Who should I contact if I have a question or a concern about my child's transportation?

Parents should always contact their child's **school**, when they have a question or a concern about their child's transportation. If needed, the school will get in touch with the appropriate staff at the Department of Transportation to make sure the question or concern is properly responded to. This will help to ensure that all questions and concerns are answered as promptly as possible.

For additional information regarding the responsibilities of parents/guardians of students who are transported at public expense and bus safety rules, visit <http://dot.dadeschools.net>.

Section L – Food and Nutrition

What are the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs as administered by Dade County Public Schools?

The National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs as administered by Dade County Public Schools provides free and reduced priced meals for children unable to pay the full price. For more information visit <http://nutrition.dadeschools.net>.

Who is eligible to receive free/reduced meals in school?

Miami-Dade County Public Schools take part in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs and offer a choice of healthy meals every school day. Students from households that meet Federal Guidelines are eligible for free lunch or reduced price lunch (\$0.40). Breakfast is free to all students. To apply for free or reduced price lunch, complete the application, sign it, and return it to the school where your youngest child attends. The application is available at <https://freeandreducedmealapp.dadeschools.net/instructions.aspx>

Where do I get an application for free/reduced priced meals?

Parents/guardians may apply for free/reduced priced meals electronically by visiting www.nutrition.dadeschools.net.

If you have any questions or need help in filling out the application form, please do not hesitate to CALL YOUR SCHOOL FOR ASSISTANCE. You will be notified when the application is approved or denied. For additional support call 786-275-0400.

Is there a supplemental nutrition assistance program and temporary assistance for needy families?

Children who are members of currently certified SNAP/TANF households may submit applications with abbreviated information (skip sections 2, 4, 6 & 7 of free/reduced application). Free meal benefits will be extended to all children in a household when the application lists a SNAP/TANF number. The application is available at <https://freeandreducedmealapp.dadeschools.net/instructions.aspx>.

How can this program be available to military families?

Privatized military housing allowance is excluded from income eligibility determinations. For the purpose of determining household size, deployed service members are considered a part of the household. Families should include the names of the deployed service members on their application. Report only that portion of the deployed service members income made available to them or on their behalf to the family. The determining official would count the service member as part of the household in establishing a child's eligibility for free and reduced price meals. For additional information visit <http://nutrition.dadeschools.net/mealservices.html>.

Can I pay for my child's lunch in advance?

Miami Dade County Public School's Department of Food and Nutrition has started a program to allow parents/guardians the convenience to pay on-line via the internet or by telephone for their child's/children meals with a credit or debit card. The parent/guardians will create a lunch account on-line for the child and will be able to access the following: a. View the account balance; b. Schedule automatic payments; c. Receive low-balance e-mail reminders; d. View a report of daily spending and cafeteria purchases. Parents must register and create an account at www.paypams.com.

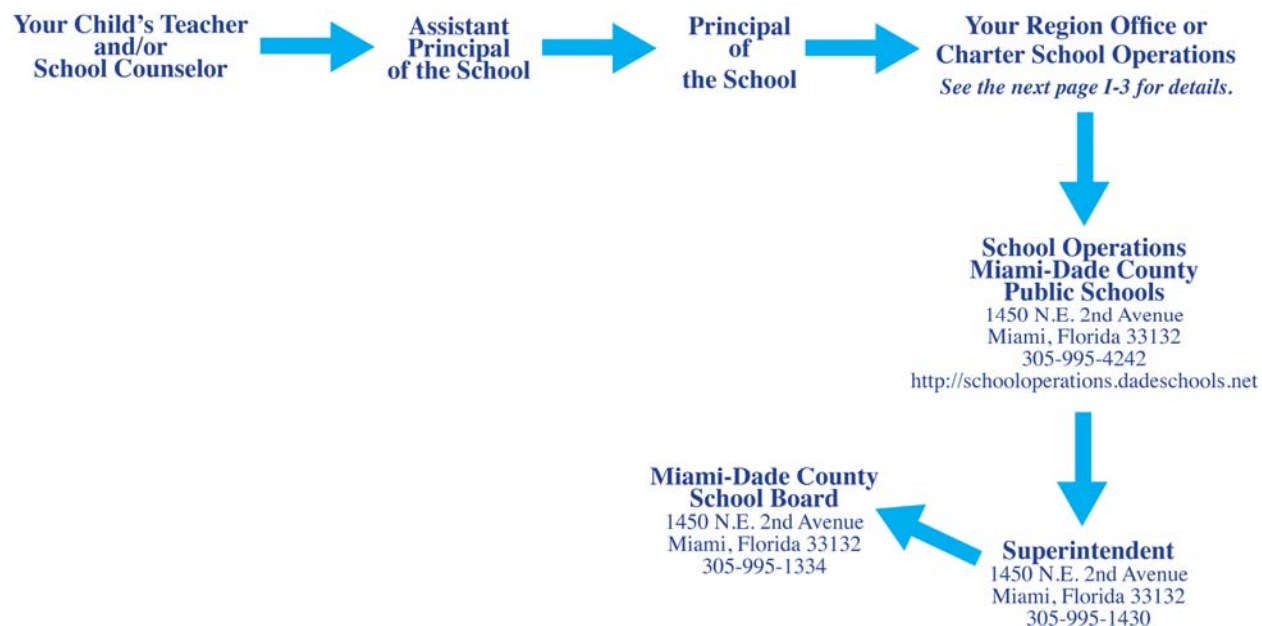
Can my child eat breakfast in school?

Miami-Dade County Elementary Schools offer breakfast from 7:30 a.m. to 8:15 a.m., Middle Schools from 8:00 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. and High Schools from 6:30 a.m. to 7:15 a.m. All schools in M-DCPS offer a breakfast at **no charge** to all M-DCPS Students. The breakfast at no charge is not dependent on the student receiving free/reduced meals at lunch. If good breakfast eating habits are encouraged early in life, then it will ensure good eating habits for a lifetime. For more information visit the Department of Food and Nutrition at <http://nutrition.dadeschools.net/brkfstpgm.html>.

Section M – Your Legal Rights and Other Support Services

How do I find a resolution to my concern?

M-DCPS Chain of Support



For additional support and guidance on family involvement/engagement please visit <http://parents.dadeschools.net>.

How do the Region offices support schools, parents and students?

The public school system is divided into five regions, with an assistant superintendent assigned to each. The regional offices are called Regional Centers. Each Regional Center along with the Charter School Operations office is designed to provide outreach and services to families whose children attend schools in that area.

If you do not know in which Regional Center your child's school is located call 305-995-4242 or visit www.dadeschools.net and select, in the left bar, "Schools," and then, in the pull-down bar, select "School Information." On the page that appears, select the type of school (elementary, middle, senior, etc.).

North Region Office

733 East 57 Street
Hialeah, FL 33013
305-572-2800 • Fax: 305-572-2801

Central Region Office

5005 N.W. 112 Avenue
Doral, FL 33178
305-499-5050 • Fax: 305 499-5051

South Region Office

(housed at Robert Morgan Educational Center)
18180 S.W. 122 Avenue
Miami, FL 33177
305-252-3041 • Fax: 305-251-2198

Education Transformation Office (ETO)

(housed at School Board Administration Building)
1450 N.E. 2 Avenue, Room 925
Miami, FL 33132
305-995-3091 • Fax: 305-523-0649

Central Region Office Annex

1080 LaBaron Drive
Miami Springs, FL 33166
305-889-3503 & 305-889-3501

Charter School Operations

1450 N.E. Second Avenue, Room 806
Miami, FL 33132
305-995-1403

What is the School Board of M-DCPS?

The School Board is a body of nine elected officials responsible for setting policies for the entire school district. The School Board does not usually deal with individual students, parents, or teachers, but focuses more on making the rules for running all of the schools in the county. It also appoints the District Superintendent.

School Board members are elected by their voting districts. School Board meetings are open to the public. They are usually held in the School Board Administration Building auditorium at 1450 N.E. 2nd Avenue, Miami, FL 33132, once a month on Wednesdays starting at 1:00 p.m. The public hearing begins at approximately 6:30 p.m. The Board meetings are broadcast live on television on WLRN-Channel 17 and on the radio at WLRN-FM 91.3. For information about making a request to speak on a particular issue on the School Board's agenda, contact the Citizens Information Center at 305-995-1128 or <http://cic.dadeschools.net/schoolboardmeetings.asp>.

You may speak at a public hearing if you wish to address an issue under consideration by the board, make your local School Board member aware of important information concerning schools in his/her district, or appeal a recommendation for expulsion made regarding your child that you did not agree with. To view information on School Board rulings, current meeting agendas, or School Board Rules visit <http://www2.dadeschools.net/schoolboard/default.asp>.

What are my legal rights?

You have the right to ask the school to test your child free of charge if you think he/she might need special educational services, or if the services he/she is already receiving are not adequate. You have the right to request a free, independent evaluation of your child if you disagree with the results of the school's tests.

You have the right to receive copies of your child's school records.

You have the right to participate in the development of your child's Individual Educational Plan (IEP) or English Language Learner (ELL) Plan.

You have the right to be represented by an attorney or advocate if you disagree with the educational program provided to your child.

For additional information visit www.dadeschools.net.

Are there other legal rights under federal law?

You and your child have certain rights under federal law that concern access to information about your child, freedom of speech and special education programs, including:

- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) <http://adulthood.dadeschools.net>
- Release of Student Information to the Military and Institutions of Higher Learning www.dadeschools.net
- Equal Access for English Language Learners (META Consent Decree) <http://outreach.dadeschools.net>.

What is the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)?

This law allows parents and students over the age of 18 to inspect and review the student's school records. You must first submit a written request to the school principal identifying the records you wish to review. You may ask for copies of the records and the school may charge you a fee for copies.

If you find something that is inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of your child, you have the right to ask in writing that it be changed with an explanation of why it should be changed.

If the school refuses to change a record, you may request a hearing. If the request is denied at the school level, you may appeal the decision to the Region Center Superintendent. If the request is denied at the region level, you may appeal the decision to the District Director, Division of Student Services.

If the hearing results in a ruling in your favor, the school must correct the records. If the hearing result upholds the school's decision, you may prepare a statement as to why you believe the record is wrong and this written statement will be added to your child's records.

It is important to know that standardized achievement test information for your child is provided through individual score reports such as the FCAT Student Reports. However, you cannot view secure test materials such as your child's test booklet.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) <http://adulthood.dadeschools.net>

What is required to release student information to the Military and Institutions of Higher Learning under the Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act?

The release of directory information to the military services and institutions of higher learning is a stipulation under the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act and the U.S. Patriot Act. You are notified annually of this provision and are provided an opportunity to restrict the release of such information by completing and returning the Directory Information Opt-Out Form to your child's high school. The Opt-Out Form may be copied, completed and submitted to your child's high school at any time during the school year.

Military and college recruiters frequently visit schools. Miami-Dade County Public Schools discourages students from providing their contact information without seeking permission from their parents/guardians. Please engage in discussion with your child regarding this issue.

Release of Student Information to the Military and Institutions of Higher Learning
www.dadeschools.net

How does M-DCPS support military-connected families?

Miami-Dade County Public Schools is committed to supporting the unique challenges of military-connected families.

The goal is to:

- Identify strategies to ease the transitioning of military-connected children
- Remove barriers to educational success imposed on children of military families
- Remain abreast of trends and issues impacting military students and families through membership in the Military Child Education Coalition.

In compliance with mandates of the 2003, SB 2802-Military Child Education, Miami-Dade County Public Schools worked in partnership with the U.S. Army Garrison-Miami and the U.S. Southern Command to develop a Local Action Plan. The plan addresses issues of the timely transfer of records, systems to ease student transition, practices that foster access to extracurricular programs, and procedures to lessen the adverse impact of moves.

The Division of Student Services works with the School Support Services/School Liaison Officer of the United States Army Garrison-Miami to develop and maintain a strong child-centered partnership. Parents are encouraged to visit the U.S. Army child, Youth & School Services web site at www.cys-miami.webs.com.

Also, in an effort to ease the burden of our students who have parents who may be deployed, schools will allow up to a total of five days of excused absences each academic year to allow families time together.

- The absences are to be preapproved by the school principal.
- Students shall have a reasonable amount of time to complete make-up work.
- Attendance Corrections form (FM-5556 Rev. 02-13) will be sent to Federal and State Compliance, via Self Service at selfservice.dadeschools.net, for processing.

Please contact the Miami-Dade County Public Schools Division of Student Services at 305-995-7324 or visit our web site at <http://studentservices.dadeschools.net/MFA>.

What does the META Consent Decree provide for students identified as English Language Learners?

All “English Language Learners” in Florida schools are entitled to equal access to programs and services, under the META Consent Decree resulting from a 1990 court ruling. The decree also mandates specialized training for the teachers who service the ELL students, the way ELL students are initially screened and identified as well as, how their progress is monitored. Contact your child’s school for more information.

For additional information visit <http://outreach.dadeschools.net>