



Once again, Miami-Dade County Public Schools' (M-DCPS) ongoing tradition of achievement has garnered national recognition. M-DCPS is proud to share highlights and initiatives that have strengthened the educational experience for all students.



## Academic Excellence

### HISTORIC GRADUATION RATE IMPROVES:

Graduation rate (excluding charters) increased to 89.2 percent for the 2018-2019 academic year, the highest documented rate the school district has achieved.

### TWO-TIME A-RATED SCHOOL DISTRICT:

Once again, M-DCPS has received a district-wide grade of "A". For the third year in a row, there are zero "F" rated traditional schools and 99% of schools are rated A, B, or C.

### OUTSTANDING SCORES ON NATIONAL ASSESSMENT:

Outperforming other large urban school districts, fourth-grade students ranked #1 in both Reading and Mathematics in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) exams, known as the Nation's Report Card.

### NATIONALLY-RECOGNIZED MAGNET PROGRAMS:

For the ninth straight year, M-DCPS received more National Magnet Schools of America Merit Awards than any other district. In total, M-DCPS received 67 awards.

### INCREASE IN AP EXAM PASSING RATES AND ENROLLMENT:

Students demonstrated an overall passing rate of 57 percent, an increase of two percent from 2018. During the past 10 years, M-DCPS has seen a dramatic increase in the participation and performance of students in AP courses.

### CAREER ACADEMIES OUTPERFORM ALL SCHOOL DISTRICTS:

Twenty-nine academies were identified by the National Academy Foundation (NAF) network as Distinguished, the highest level of achievement, more than any district in the nation.

### BEST HIGH SCHOOLS:

M-DCPS led Florida once again with 133 schools on U.S. News & World Report's 2020 Best High Schools rankings, including four high schools among the top 100 in the nation, and nine in the top 20 for the state.



## Initiatives

### VALUES MATTER MIAMI PARTNERSHIP:

In an effort to further encourage respect, tolerance, and empathy among students, M-DCPS joined forces with the Miami Dolphins to expand Values Matter Miami, designed to teach and celebrate core values as a way to create kind and inclusive school communities. Initiatives included a district-wide student football cleat design competition and monthly student recognitions.

### EXPANSION OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES:

Hired 35 additional licensed and certified mental health coordinators and trained thousands of educators, bus drivers, parents and community members to ensure students have access services.

### IT'S NO JOKE CAMPAIGN:

Joined the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office and the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice to raise awareness about the consequences associated with making statements of any kind that imply an intent to harm others – whether credible or intended as a hoax.

### UNIVERSAL CHILDREN'S SAVINGS ACCOUNT PROGRAM:

In an effort to promote saving habits, M-DCPS partnered with Future Bound Miami to launch a program for kindergarteners in the City of Miami that establishes a free savings account for students.

### VIRTUAL PARENT ACADEMY:

The Parent Academy created a mobile application and expanded its offerings through a virtual campus, providing parents with additional resources and workshops to support their children.

### ASPEN CHALLENGE:

Engaged high school students in identifying real-world problems and leveraging their knowledge, passion and creativity to develop innovative solutions to large-scale issues currently facing our society.



## School Safety

### SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT:

Miami-Dade Schools Police Department (MDSPD) officers received enhanced training to expand their capacity to problem solve, think proactively, and communicate effectively with youth and the public-at-large. These trainings covered several topics including ethics, cultural diversity, implicit bias, fair and impartial policing, procedural justice and crisis intervention.

### ONGOING MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS:

To create trusting and long-lasting relationships between youth and police in our community, MDSPD School Resources Officers participated as mentors in the Big Brothers Big Sisters "Bigs in Blue" initiative and the 5000 Role Models of Excellence program.

# Inspirational Educators

## TEACHER OF THE YEAR:

Vanessa M. Valle, an English Language Arts teacher at Hialeah Gardens Senior High School, was named the 2021 Francisco R. Walker Miami-Dade County Teacher of the Year. Kalyn Lee, a teacher at Miami Carol City Senior High School, is the 2020 Rookie Teacher of the Year.

## PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR:

Rafael A. Villalobos, the charismatic and innovative leader of John A. Ferguson Senior High, who has helped shape the lives of thousands of students for more than 20 years, was named the 2020 Principal of the Year. Lamar Johnson, an assistant principal at Jesse J. McCrary, Jr. Elementary, was named Assistant Principal of the Year.

## MAGNET SCHOOLS OF AMERICA TOP EDUCATORS:

Lisa S. Noffo, Principal of Medical Academy for Science and Technology (MAST@Homestead) was named the Region III Magnet Principal of the Year. Wayne Worthley, Agriscience teacher at Redland Middle School, has been selected as the Region III Magnet Teacher of the Year for 2020.

## Accolades

### HIGHEST MAGNET HONORS:

M-DCPS leads nation with 28 Magnet schools awarded the Standards of Excellence National Certification status, with 14 schools earning the top level of "Demonstration."

### TOP NAF RECOGNITION:

Miami Lakes Educational Center's Academy of Information Technology (AOIT) was awarded the Sanford I. Weill Award for Excellence, the highest honor for career academies in the nation.

### HISTORIC STATE CHAMPIONSHIP WINS:

Three M-DCPS high schools, Booker T. Washington Senior High, Miami Central Senior High, and Miami Northwestern Senior High won state football championships. M-DCPS hosted a championship parade to celebrate the historic number of state football championships won in various classifications by a total of five high schools across Miami-Dade County.

## Sustainability Efforts

### REDUCING WASTE:

Eliminated plastic straws in cafeterias, resulting in the removal of over 40 million plastic straws in the waste stream annually.

### ENERGY REBATE PROGRAM:

Designed to promote energy savings on school campuses, \$280,000 was returned to schools from the energy savings achieved through this program.

### ENVIRONMENTALLY-FRIENDLY ATHLETIC FACILITIES:

As part of Super Bowl LIV (SBLIV), many organizations including Nike, Adidas, the Miami Dolphins and the SBLIV Host Committee helped with the renovation of Traz Powell Stadium and the upgrade of athletic fields and facilities at Miami Beach and Miami Edison Senior High, all done with environmentally friendly materials.

## General Obligation Bond

### MODERNIZING OUR SCHOOLS:

Since the passage of the General Obligation Bond, 229 main and 627 accelerated projects have been completed, totaling 856 projects. Total work completed or under contract has surpassed \$850 million.

### NEW & UPGRADED FACILITIES:

Significant projects such as Miami Palmetto Senior's Phase I, the José Milton Center for the Performing Arts at MAS @ Zelda Glazer 6-12, a Black Box Theatre at Norland Middle School, a new K-8 school in Doral, the phased renovation of the historically-significant Dorsey Technical College, and dozens of renovation/remodeling projects at existing schools have been completed.

## Fiscal Responsibility

### STRONG FINANCIAL RATING:

Moody's upgraded M-DCPS' credit rating from strong to very strong, based on the improvement of the District's finances over the last five fiscal years.

### FINANCIAL AWARDS:

For the 35th consecutive year, the School Board was awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), and for the 36th year, awarded the Association of School Business Officials (ASBO) International Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting. The Office of the Controller and the Office of Budget Management are the recipients of the GFOA's Award of Financial Reporting Achievement (AFRA) and Award for Best Practices in School Budgeting, respectively. These Certificates of Achievement are the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting, financial reporting and governmental budgeting.

## Notable Alumni

### HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES:

Five distinguished leaders were inducted to the 2020 Alumni Hall of Fame: Oscar winners for the movie Moonlight, Barry Jenkins, graduate of Miami Northwestern and Tarell Alvin McCraney; alumnus of New World School of the Arts; "Soul Man" and only Miamian in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Booker T. Washington graduate Sam Moore; Miami Beach Senior alumni, Stephen M. Ross, owner of the Miami Dolphins and Hard Rock Stadium; and Mitch Kaplan, owner of Miami's own Books & Books and founder of the Miami International Book Fair.



# Achievements During School Closures

Despite the historic challenges faced in the 2019-2020 school year due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) remained firm in its commitment to excellence, demonstrating that no matter the circumstances, M-DCPS is truly giving its students the world. Most notably, the shift from classrooms to virtual and online instruction happened almost overnight. Here are milestones achieved and different ways M-DCPS supported students and educators through this transition.

## DISTANCE LEARNING:

- Daily attendance rates during distance learning reached an impressive 93 percent, comparable to in-person attendance rates at the same time last year. The District distributed 119,000 devices, including more than 9,000 phones with Wi-Fi that were used as hotspots for connectivity. ITS assisted with the configuration and distribution of all devices used for distance learning and provided remote support to teachers, students, parents and school site personnel.
- The Distance Learning Help Desk assisted more than 16,000 teachers, students, and families.
- District-wide roll out of Microsoft Teams communication and collaboration platform. More than 230,000 teachers and students have used it since going live in March 2020.
- There were 52,688 views of more than 30 professional development offerings provided to support distance learning.
- The Office of Academics and Transformation has developed SOAR, Securing Opportunities for Academic Recovery, a strategic summer program to mitigate learning loss for the most fragile students. SOAR is comprised of three phases: recover, regain, and restart.

## MEAL DISTRIBUTIONS:

- Nearly four million meals were distributed since school closures. Feedings will continue during the summer.
- The District also partnered with individual donors, local organizations, and restaurateurs to provide thousands of additional meals to children and families. Since March 25, more than 50,000 hot meals have been delivered in the county's most fragile communities through the Family Meals On-the-Go program. More than \$1.1 million has been raised for this initiative.

## FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS & MAINTENANCE:

- The District's buildings have been "Closed for Instruction, but Open for Construction". Out of 66 ongoing projects, 30 of them have been expedited.
- Maintenance activities and sanitization continue at school sites across the District, with employees working in full force while following social distancing guidelines and utilizing personal protection equipment. Handwashing stations are in place at all construction sites and public health guidelines are being followed.

## FINANCIAL STABILITY:

- During COVID-19, the Budget Department has reacted quickly to ensure that all of the potential deficits were quickly identified and that everything that could be done to mitigate these losses was implemented as quickly as possible.

## ADVOCACY EFFORTS:

- Aggressive and swift action researching and identifying supplemental funding to secure \$135 million to support District operations and mitigate increased costs related to COVID-19.
- Continuous advocacy at the federal level to secure regulatory flexibility and federal funding to ensure the continuation of District operations and enhanced services throughout current global health crisis.

## SUPPORTING OUR WORKFORCE:

- The Office of Human Capital Management worked swiftly to transform all Professional Development offerings, seminars, and mentorships to virtual resources.
- The Miami-Dade Schools Police Department became the first law enforcement agency in Miami-Dade County to virtually train more than 200 personnel in Youth Crisis Intervention as well as conducted numerous other trainings.

## CLASS OF 2020:

- M-DCPS made every effort to celebrate and honor our Class of 2020 graduates while adhering to public health guidelines. Virtual high school graduation ceremonies were live streamed and aired on WLRN, as well as a robust social media and community-wide campaign during the month of May, including a Senior Recognition Day on May 20, 2020, to recognize the outstanding accomplishments of our graduates. All high schools participated in Districtwide Diploma Distribution Day in June.

## COMMUNICATION EFFORTS:

- A dedicated COVID-19 website developed and continuously updated with the latest information. The website included videos, flyers, information on school meal distribution events, distance learning updates and much more in three languages.
- Various communication tools/resources were utilized to ensure students, parents, employees and the community always received the most up-to-date information. These included automated messaging, social media, news releases and digital communication.



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