

# CONNECTION

A Newsletter for Miami-Dade County Public Schools Parents

## M-DCPS MAGNET SCHOOLS ARE NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) is accepting applications for Magnet Programs until January 15, 2015. Here are the 12 most important things you need to know about the application process:

1. The fastest way to apply is online at [www.dadeschools.net](http://www.dadeschools.net) via the Parent Portal by clicking on the magnet application link. Online applications are processed instantly into the application system.

2. If your child currently attends a private school or is entering the school system for the first time, you will need to print out and complete the paper application available at [www.miamimagnets.org](http://www.miamimagnets.org). Just write "No ID" in the area that asks for your child's ID; a temporary ID will be assigned to your child and the application will be processed.

Paper applications can be mailed to or dropped off at:  
Miami-Dade County Public Schools  
Attention: School Choice & Parental Options – Applications  
1450 NE 2nd Ave., Suite 352  
Miami, FL 33132

3. Students can apply for a spot at up to five programs at five different schools. You cannot select more than one program in a single school.

4. To be eligible for a magnet program, students must have a 2.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) in core academic areas. Some programs, such as International Baccalaureate, require a 2.5 GPA.

5. Individual schools have different requirements, such as recommendations, specific subjects students must have completed prior to applying, auditions, interviews, or minimum grades. You must contact the school as soon as you apply to request each school's requirements.

6. In all schools, except the Visual and Performing Arts (VPA) magnet schools, the selection process is done by a random selection of the eligible applicants. VPA magnet schools require auditions and students are selected as a result of their auditions.

7. Qualifying students belonging to an active military family and applicants who are siblings of a student who is currently enrolled and will be attending the same magnet school next year, will receive priority designation if a spot is available.

8. Students who do not live in Miami-Dade County can still apply to Magnet Programs as long as they meet all the requirements.

9. Any application received after January 15, 2015 will not be accepted. In addition, applications that fail to complete individual school requirements by the deadline will be voided.

10. Parents are notified of the results of the random selection process on or about March 15. If you have any questions on the results, you must contact the individual schools directly.

11. All selections are final. You may be selected to multiple schools during the random selection process. It will then be your choice which school you choose for your child to attend.

12. Students are not required to attend, but cannot change programs once accepted, so it is important to make the selections carefully before submitting the application online or in printed form.

For more information, please visit [www.miamimagnets.org](http://www.miamimagnets.org).

## FOUR MIAMI-DADE PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS TOP PRESTIGIOUS BEST PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS LIST

Miami-Dade County Public Schools has the distinction of having four high schools in the top 10 best public high schools in Florida as ranked by [niche.com](http://niche.com). Nearly 15,000 high schools were evaluated based on 4.6 million opinions from 280,000 students and parents. A high ranking indicates that the school has a diverse, high-achieving student body who rate their experience very highly.

The Miami-Dade County public schools in the top 10 include:

- #1 School for Advanced Studies-South
- #3 Coral Reef Senior High School
- #5 New World School of the Arts
- #10 Design & Architecture Senior High School

Four other Miami-Dade public schools made the top 25. They include School for Advanced Studies-Wolfson (#11), MAST Academy (#13), School for Advanced Studies-North (#16) and School for Advanced Studies-Homestead (#25).

## UPCOMING SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

December 10	11:00 a.m.	Regular Meeting
January 14	11:00 a.m.	Regular Meeting
February 11	11:00 a.m.	Regular Meeting

## MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ELIMINATES 24 TESTS

Miami-Dade County Public Schools will administer 24 fewer tests this year, following a preliminary review of the District's testing program. The Miami-Dade School Board and Superintendent Alberto M. Carvalho recently addressed concerns over the amount of testing students are faced with each year by calling for a comprehensive review of Florida's testing program. After conducting an internal review to identify redundancy in state required/endorsed exams traditionally administered in Miami-Dade, Superintendent Carvalho has authorized adjustments to the District's testing calendar that will result in fewer tests and up to 260 minutes of additional class time – depending on a student's grade level. All adjustments were made within the parameters of state and federal requirements and existing resources. Superintendent Carvalho recently penned a position paper calling for reasonableness in assessment practices and statewide accountability.

The review has resulted in the following changes to the testing calendar:

-In addition to District Baseline assessments that were decommissioned earlier this school year, separate Fall and Winter administrations of the Interim Assessments have been cancelled.

-Instead, one Mid-Year Assessment (MYA) will be administered.

-English Language Arts and Mathematics MYAs will be administered before Winter Break.

-Science and Social Studies MYAs will be administered beginning in January.

-Grades K-8 FAIR-FS has been cancelled for the second and third administration periods (AP2 and AP3).

-i-Ready, a diagnostic assessment that is already in use, will be administered to fulfill progress monitoring requirements in grades 3-8.

-i-Ready unlike FAIR-FS in grades K-2, is a computer based diagnostic that does not require one-on-one teacher/student administration.

-Grades 9 – 12 FAIR-FS administration will remain as originally scheduled.

-To students, this represents less time spent testing, and more time available for instruction.

### DATES TO REMEMBER

December 22 - January 2 - Winter Recess

January 16 - Teacher Planning Day

January 19 - Observation of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday



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## MIAMI NORTHWESTERN PRINCIPAL HONORED WITH THE 2014 LEONARD MILLER PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP AWARD BY THE COUNCIL FOR EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

Miami Northwestern Senior High School Principal Wallace Aristide was chosen as one of three Gold Medallion Winners and was honored with the 2014 Leonard Miller Principal Leadership Award by the Council for Educational Change. Mr. Aristide was presented with \$5,000 for being one of three winners and with an additional \$5,000 for being a recipient of the Principal Leadership Award.

Mr. Aristide is one of three principals recognized state-wide for outstanding contributions in the field of education. Each year, the Council awards upon a deserving principal \$10,000 as the winner of the Leadership Award while recognizing Gold Medallion Finalists for their excellence in leadership.

Since assuming the leadership of Miami Northwestern, Principal Aristide has been responsible for the following school accomplishments: moving the school labeled "F" for 14 years to an "A"; increasing the annual graduation rate from 55 percent to 82 percent; increasing the number of Advanced Placement classes from 4 to 14; adding dual enrollment classes; and created "The Educational Effect," the first university-community school project in Miami-Dade County.

To apply for the Leonard Miller Principal Leadership Award, principals need to have participated in Council programs; described how they have achieved academic success as an instructional leader; and demonstrated how they have engaged staff, parents, and the community in support of these efforts.

The Council for Educational Change is a nonprofit charitable organization established by the South Florida Annenberg Challenge whose purpose is to increase the quality of education in our state.

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