

# CONNECTION

A NEWSLETTER FOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS PARENTS

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## MAGNET SCHOOLS

APPLICATION PERIOD  
**NOW OPEN!**

October 1<sup>st</sup> - January 15<sup>th</sup>



Apply to our award-winning Magnet programs and be part of a legacy of choice and innovation. <https://yourchoicemiami.org>

## ATTENTION PARENTS: #ITSNOJOKEMDCPS

M-DCPS continues to monitor and respond to any and all reported threats that may impact schools or school functions. While we strongly encourage the reporting of any suspicious activity, we recognize the simultaneous need to continue educating students and parents about the severe consequences associated with making threats to do harm of any kind – whether these threats are intended as a hoax or credible in nature. In just the first eight weeks of school, M-DCPS has received 24 threats and arrested six students. Social media threats disrupt the schools' educational environment and interfere with police officers' ability to protect

schools from real dangers, drain law enforcement resources, cost taxpayers' money, and increase stress levels, anxiety and absenteeism.

This is not unique to Miami-Dade. National media outlets regularly report on threats made to schools and other community locations across the country, many of which are ultimately deemed non-credible. However, some represent real potential for tragedy. Threats – whether real or intended as a prank – require the mobilization of significant resources, potentially endangering lives, and, therefore, carry with them often life-altering repercussions for the perpetrator

of the threat. Even a prank threat against a school or public place is considered a federal crime. It can lead to an arrest and a felony record.

In the coming weeks, the District will build upon a variety of existing initiatives to further educate and broadly disseminate information aimed at eliminating these disruptive actions taken by students who often speak and act before they think. We are encouraging parents to speak to their children about the seriousness of written and verbal communications and the consequences that may result from irresponsible and possibly criminal behavior.

# COMING SOON! FUTURE BOUND MIAMI



Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS), in collaboration with a number of partners, is launching Future Bound Miami, a county-wide universal Children's Savings Account (CSA) program that will be implemented in phases. This initiative will be the first of its kind in the state of Florida and will eventually become the largest CSA program in the country. This year, parents/guardians of M-DCPS students attending kindergarten in City of Miami schools can start saving for their child's future with a free Future Bound Miami savings account that they will be able to access once they graduate from high school. Participation is free. All you have to do is activate the account between November 4, 2019 and December

6, 2019. More detailed information on how to open an account will be sent to qualifying families prior to the activation period.

Future Bound Miami wants every child to succeed and be college-ready. Research shows that having just \$1 in a college savings account makes you three times more likely to go to college and four times more likely to graduate. Universal children's savings accounts put post-secondary education within reach by enabling students and families to build savings and raise educational expectations.

This initiative is made possible through partnerships with Catalyst Miami, The Children's Trust, United Way of Miami-Dade, The Miami Foundation, The Children's Movement, City of Miami, South Florida Educational Federal Credit Union, Sant La Haitian Neighborhood Center and Health Foundation of Florida.

## PARENT E-TIPS

**Primary:**  
**Exercise is important**  
<http://bit.ly/2OBfeMQ>

**Secondary:**  
**Apply the appropriate consequences**  
<http://bit.ly/2OCUnJc>

## IMPORTANT DATES & INFORMATION

**October 25**  
Teacher Planning Day

**November 4**  
Teacher Planning Day

**November 11**  
Veterans Day

## APPLY FOR FAFSA TODAY!



The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the form that students need to complete to get financial aid from the federal government to assist with paying for college. Completing the FAFSA is the most important thing a student can do to obtain financial aid and anyone planning to go to college in the next academic school year should fill it out. The FAFSA application period opens on October 1st of each

year. Completing and submitting the FAFSA is free and quick, and gives applicants access to the largest source of financial aid to pay for college. In addition, many states and colleges use FAFSA data to determine eligibility for state and school aid, and some private financial aid providers may use FAFSA data to determine qualification for their aid.

The FAFSA asks students for information about their finances and their family's finances, including specific tax return information. Students will need to have their parent's assistance while completing the form. It is a good idea to complete

the FAFSA as early as possible, as some financial aid is distributed on a first-come, first-serve basis. Eighty-seven percent of first year college students in the state of Florida receive some form of financial aid. The easiest way to complete and submit the FAFSA is online at <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa>. When filling out the FAFSA electronically, you will be asked to create a Federal Student Aid ID (FSA ID) to use to sign the electronic form. Since a parent also has to sign off on the FAFSA, they will also need to create an FSA ID. Please feel free to use our [FAFSA Checklist](#) as you prepare to complete this important application.

# CALLING ALL STUDENT PROGRAMMERS!

BE PART OF THE  
Miami-Dade County Public Schools

# CODING CHALLENGE

# \$10,000\*

\*IN CASH PRIZES WILL BE AWARDED TO THE WINNERS.  
For more details visit:  
<http://codingchallenge.dadeschools.net>



M-DCPS will begin accepting proposals from students for real-life application concepts starting on Monday, November 18, 2019. The “Dadeschools Coding Challenge” has been developed by Information Technology Services for middle and senior high school students to design, create, pilot and manage a real-life application (app) that will allow their peers to view and keep track of their community service hours. The app also will

allow school administration staff to view, approve or deny all hours submitted by students. The designers of the first-place winning app will receive a \$7,000 prize; second place will receive \$3,000. There are six phases to the challenge, which ends in the spring of 2020. To see the other phases and for more information, visit <http://codingchallenge.dadeschools.net/>.

## NOVEMBER IS FAMILY ENGAGEMENT MONTH



This November, join us in honoring families throughout M-DCPS as we celebrate Family Engagement Month. When schools work together with families to support learning, children are inclined to succeed not just in school, but throughout life. A child’s education is a shared responsibility between schools and families. Next month, schools are encouraged to highlight these partnerships in meaningful ways. The Office of Community

Engagement will be sharing ways that families can get involved in their education each day during the month of November. For tools and resources on planning a family engagement recognition event at your school, as well as resources for increasing family engagement, visit <https://www.engagemiamidade.net/family-engagement-month>. Find us on twitter @mdcpscommunity to follow along as we showcase our amazing schools and families!

## FALL into Healthy Habits as Seasons Change

- When the seasons change and temperatures shift, you may be more likely to encounter certain viruses, including the flu and the common cold.
- Practice healthy habits. Your immune system will be ready to fight colds if you eat a balanced diet, get plenty of sleep, keep your body fit through regular exercise. A great prevention tip is hand washing.
- Influenza (flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by flu viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness. The best way to prevent the flu is to get a vaccine each fall.
- Families of children with chronic health conditions, such as asthma, seizures, and diabetes should meet with school staff to ensure all medical plans, supplies, and support are specified and managed by your child’s school.

## Stay Informed! Stay Connected!



Miami-Dade County Public Schools wants to ensure that you continue to receive emergency information from your child’s school and the District through text messaging. In order to opt in, you must text “Y” to 67587. If you do not respond, you will not be considered opted-in and will miss out on timely notifications.





On September 19th, 2019 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced some alarming figures: 530 people in this country have confirmed or suspected cases of lung injury from vaping tobacco, THC, or some combination of the two. The number of cases had increased from 380 reported just the week before. Even more sobering news: seven of these patients have died. One 18-year-old patient, a high school athlete, was described by doctors as “having the lungs of a 70-year-old”.

According to the CDC, e-cigarettes are the most commonly used tobacco product among youth. In 2016, more than two million U.S. middle and senior high school students used e-cigarettes. Youth and young adults use e-cigarettes due to curiosity, taste, including the flavors available in e-cigarettes, and the belief that e-cigarettes are less harmful. According to federal

health officials, nicotine is highly addictive, and vaping is leading more adolescents to try cigarettes.

The Miami-Dade School Board wisely took a stand against smoking years ago, a move that has helped protect the health and lives of countless of young people and employees. Our School Board policy not only forbids using tobacco and its derivatives, but also devices that imitate smoking. Miami-Dade County Public Schools’ (M-DCPS) ongoing commitment to raising awareness about the health risks of vaping are evident through the E(liminate) Cigs Anti-Vaping Campaign. M-DCPS partnered with the Florida Department of Health and developed this outreach campaign to educate students, parents/guardians, employees, and community members on the dangers of e-cigarettes, which also included a student pledge against vaping. During this initiative,

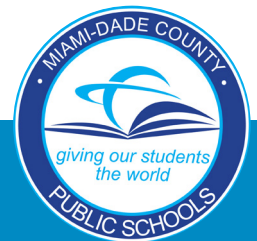
## SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

**Nov. 20**  
10 a.m.  
Organization Meeting  
11 a.m.  
Regular Meeting

**Dec. 11**  
11 a.m.  
Regular Meeting

students also organized Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) clubs to empower and bring awareness to their peers about the tactics of Big Tobacco companies and the dangers of using tobacco products. On Monday, September 30, 2019, students and advisors participated in the 2019-2020 Annual SWAT Training day.

It is important that our community supports these efforts, to ensure our students are healthy and ready to learn. With your help, we will continue to provide students the eye-opening facts about vaping, so they can take a stand against it.



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

Stay connected with Miami-Dade County Public Schools. Make sure you follow us on social media for the latest news and updates regarding the school district. #MDCPSConnects

## SOCIAL MEDIA

 @MDCPS  
@EscuelasMDCPS  
@MiamiSup

 @MiamiSchools  
@AlbertoMCarvalho1

 @MiamiSchools  
@MiamiSup

 @MiamiSchools

**The School Board of  
Miami-Dade County,  
Florida**

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