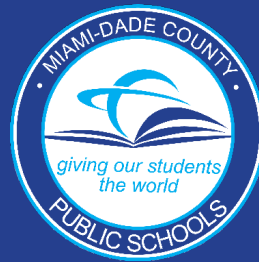


Parent Resource Guide

2013-2014

Connecting you to
Miami-Dade County Public Schools



Miami-Dade County Public Schools
www.dadeschools.net

Welcome!



Parental involvement is at the heart of student achievement, and you play a pivotal role in the education of your children. We want you to know that we appreciate your involvement and encourage your continued partnership as we enrich the academic experience for our students.

To help you continue on this path, Miami-Dade County Public Schools has created this Parent Resource Guide—a “one-stop” source with helpful tips and information to guide you as you advocate for your child. On the following pages, you will find useful information on helping your child in school, becoming active with parent organizations such as the PTA/PTSA, and understanding standardized tests.

Refer to a section below for the information you need.

- A. Pre-Kindergarten & Elementary School
- B. Middle School
- C. Senior High School
- D. Parent/Family Involvement
- E. Testing & Accountability
- F. Student Health
- G. Special Education
- H. School Choice
- I. Other Important Information

We wish you and your child the best for a great school year!



A. Pre-Kindergarten & Elementary School



- Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten.....A-1
- WLRN Ready to Learn Service.....A-2
- If Your Child is Ready for More Challenging School Work.....A-3
- If You Would Like Your Child to Learn a Second Language.....A-4
- If Your Child is Retained in Grade 3.....A-5
- What Your Child Should Learn in Grades K-5.....A-7
- Standardized Tests Your Child Will Take in Elementary School.....A-8

Pre-Kindergarten Programs



The Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten program helps Florida children develop the skills they need to become good readers and successful students. Every Florida child who is four years old by September 1, 2013 is eligible to attend the program in the fall of 2013. Registration takes place in the spring, and admission is by lottery. For more information about Voluntary Pre-K, call the Early Learning Coalition, which administers the program, at 305-644-4046 or visit www.vpkhelp.org or www.elcmdm.org. For information about other pre-kindergarten programs, contact your neighborhood elementary school.

WLRN Ready to Learn



WLRN Ready To Learn (RTL) is an early childhood education program that builds on the popularity of award-winning PBS children's programs and increases their educational value by training parents and teachers how to use public television as a tool for teaching children basic skills so they can be ready to learn when they enter school.

WLRN-TV Channel 17 has a full weekday schedule of award winning PBS children's programs such as Sesame Street, Sid the Science Kid, Super Why, Clifford the Big Red Dog, and Curious George from 6:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. These popular series are complimented by online resources and community engagement activities.

Contact WLRN Education Services at 305-995-1717 for more information about WLRN's children's programming schedule and community workshops for teachers and parents.

If Your 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. Students with high academic potential are eligible for these programs, both of which require referral.

If You Would Like Your 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.

If Your Child is Retained in Grade 3



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. According to state law, schools may no longer automatically promote grade 3 students to grade 4 if they score at Level 1 on the FCAT 2.0 Reading 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.

In some cases, a child who receives a score of Level 1 on the FCAT 2.0 Reading portion 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 FCAT 2.0; 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.

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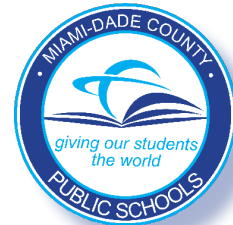
If Your Child is Retained in Grade 3, continued



- 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, through a student portfolio, that they are reading on grade level as shown by demonstrating mastery of the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards in Reading equal to at least a Level 2 performance on the FCAT 2.0.
- 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.

In Grades K-5, Your Child Should Learn to:



- 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.
- 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.

Standardized Tests Your Child Will Take in Elementary School in 2013-2014



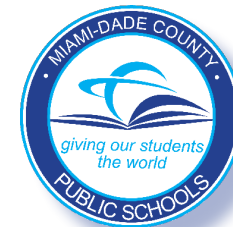
	GRADES TESTED	PURPOSE OF TEST
Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS) Administered within the first 30 school days	K	Assesses all new kindergarteners for school readiness with two instruments. The Early Childhood Observation System (ECHOS) monitors the skills, knowledge and behaviors a student demonstrates or needs to develop. The Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading (FAIR) measure Letter Naming and Phonemic Awareness, which are included in the VPK Education Standards. These data are used to calculate a student's Probability of Success in Reading score to measure the growth and development of early literacy skills.
Alternative Assessment for Grade 3 Promotion, Reading July	All retained students in grade 3	Retained grade 3 students who receive at least the minimum state-required score are eligible for promotion to grade 4.
Interim Assessment in Reading, Mathematics and Science Baseline, Fall, Winter	3-5 (Reading and Mathematics) 5 (Science)	Assists teachers in determining students' areas of strength and weakness. Schools that must submit progress reports to the State are required to administer the assessments in all three administrations; other schools may choose to administer the assessment.
Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading (FAIR) Fall/Winter/Spring	K-3 4-5 Selected students	Monitors students' progress in reading to determine the need for remedial instruction.
Mid-Year Promotion Test, Reading November	Eligible retained grade 3 students	Eligible retained grade 3 students who receive at least the required minimum raw score are eligible for promotion to grade 4.
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) January-March	4 Selected grades and schools	Timed tests in selected subjects (English, mathematics, reading, science, writing, U.S. history, geography, civics, and the arts) that measure and compare student progress across the nation. Individual student reports are not provided.
Grade 3 Reading Student Portfolio January-May	3	A classroom assessment tool consisting of passages and questions designed to gather information on students' proficiency on the fourteen reading benchmarks assessed on the FCAT 2.0.
FCAT 2.0 Writing February	4	Students are asked to write in order to explain or to tell a story. Students have 60 minutes to plan and produce a written response to an assigned topic or prompt. The writing prompt is scored holistically based on a rubric with scores ranging from a low of one (1) to a high of six (6).
Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) 2.0 April	3-5 5 (Science only)	The FCAT 2.0 tests in Reading, Mathematics, and Science (grade 5 only) are standardized, criterion-referenced tests. The tests assess student achievement on selected benchmarks, as defined by the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS).
Stanford Achievement Test - Tenth Edition, Reading and Mathematics (SAT-10) April	K-2	The SAT-10 is a standardized, norm-referenced achievement test that utilizes a multiple choice format. Students take a Reading Comprehension and Mathematics Problem Solving subtest. The SAT provides achievement data that can be used to compare local students' performance with the performance of students in the nation.
Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment (CELLA) March-April	Eligible K-5 students	The CELLA is a criterion-referenced test administered to measure the growth of students classified as English Language Learners (ELLs) in mastering skills in English in four domains: reading, writing, listening, and speaking.
Alternatives Standardized Reading Assessment (ASRA) May-June	Eligible grade 3 students	Eligible grade 3 students who receive at least the required minimum raw score are eligible for promotion to grade 4.

B. Middle School



- Middle School Course Requirements for 2013-2014.....B-1
- What Your Child Should Learn in Grades 6-8.....B-2
- If Your Child is Ready for More Advanced Classes.....B-3
- Online Classes Through the Florida Virtual Schools.....B-4
- Standardized Tests Your Child Will Take in Middle School.....B-5

Middle School Course Requirements for 2012-2013



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

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

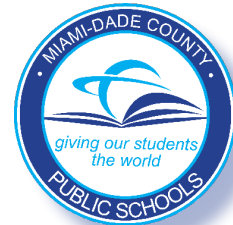
In addition, one course in career education planning must be completed in grade 7 or 8. It may be a stand-alone course or instruction integrated into an existing course or courses. This course will result in an electronic Personal Education Plan (ePEP) that must be signed by the student, the student's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

For each year in which the student scores at Level 1 or 2 on FCAT 2.0 Reading, the student must complete an intensive reading course the following year. For each year in which a student scores at Level 1 or Level 2 on FCAT Mathematics, the student must receive remediation the following year, which may be integrated into the student's required mathematics course.

Social Studies: Beginning academic year 2013-14, 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.

In Grades 6-8, Your Child Should Learn to:



- 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 integers, fractions, decimals, percentages, and other types of numeric expressions in mathematics.
- 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.

If Your Child is Ready for More Advanced Classes

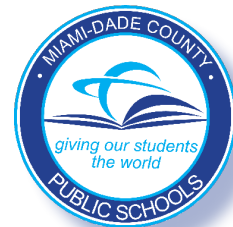


Advanced classes are available to students in grades 6, 7, and 8. These classes, offered in the areas of foreign languages, language arts, mathematics, science, and social sciences, provide students with a more rigorous and detailed curriculum. While there are no grade-point-average bonus points for advanced classes, students enrolled in these courses are prepared for honors classes at the middle and senior high school level. 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 middle school students. These classes provide students with a more rigorous and detailed high-school-level curriculum. Honors courses generate credit that can be used towards high school graduation and may generate additional grade-point-average points. In middle schools, the only subjects on 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.

Online Classes

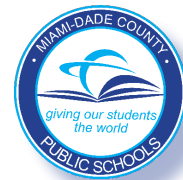


Students who are home-schooled, unable to attend school, or wish to earn additional middle or high school credits outside of their regular school setting can take courses online through the **Florida Virtual School (FLVS)**. This free, accredited, online program delivers courses over the Internet and 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.

Virtual Learning Labs (VLLS) are settings in the school that allow students to take an online course as part of a student's regular school day. VLLs are available in most high schools. Courses are taught by Florida certified teachers of contracted providers. For more information, contact the guidance office at the your child's school.

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.

Standardized Tests Your Child Will Take in Middle School in 2013-2014



NAME OF TEST AND MONTH GIVEN	GRADES TESTED	PURPOSE OF TEST
Interim Assessment in Reading, Mathematics and Science Baseline/Fall/Winter	6-8 (Reading and mathematics) 8 (Science)	Assists teachers in determining students' areas of strength and weakness. Schools that must submit progress reports to the State are required to administer the assessments in all three administrations; other schools may choose to administer the assessments.
Florida Assessments for Instruction in English (FAIR) Baseline, Fall, winter	6-8 Selected students	Monitors students' progress in reading to determine the need for remedial instruction.
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) January-March	8 Selected grades and schools	Timed tests in selected subjects (English, mathematics, reading, science, writing, U.S. history, geography, civics, and the arts) that measure and compare student progress across the nation. Individual student reports are not provided.
FCAT 2.0 Writing February	8	Students are asked to write in order to explain or to persuade. Students have 60 minutes to plan and produce a written response (an essay) to an assigned topic or prompt. The writing prompt is scored holistically based on a rubric with scores ranging from a low of one (1) to a high of six (6).
Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) 2.0 April	6-8 8 (Science only)	The FCAT 2.0 tests in Reading, Mathematics, and Science (grade 8 only) are standardized, criterion-referenced tests. The tests assesses student achievement on selected benchmarks, as defined by the Sunshine State Standards.
Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment (CELLA) March-April	6-8 Eligible students	The CELLA is a criterion-referenced test administered to measure the growth of students classified as English Language Learners (ELLs) in mastering skills in English in four domains: reading, writing, listening, and speaking.
Florida End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments Algebra 1 Biology 1 Geometry Civics May	6-8 Enrolled students	The Florida End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments are new computer-based, criterion-referenced assessments that measure the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards for specific high-school level courses, as outlined in the course description. The Algebra 1, Biology 1, Geometry, and Civics EOC assessment will be administered in the fall, winter, spring, and summer to eligible students in grades 6 through 12 on computers; exceptions will only be made for eligible students who require a paper-based accommodation. Beginning in the 2011-12 school year and beyond, middle school students, as well as students entering grade 9 and enrolled in Algebra 1 or an equivalent course, must earn a passing score on the EOC assessment in Algebra 1 to earn credit toward graduation. Going forward, all EOC assessments will constitute 30 percent of student's final course grades.

C. Senior High School



- What Your Child Should Learn in Senior High School.....C-1
- What Your Child Should Learn in Grades 9-12.....C-2
- High School Graduation Requirements for 2013-2014.....C-3
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What Your Child Should Learn in Senior High School



Every student in Florida is exposed to the same benchmarks within a grade level. The Florida Department of Education has created the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards, a list of learning goals for students in every grade. Schools must make sure that their teachers teach these skills in their classrooms.

In Grades 9-12, Your Child Should Learn to:



- 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.
- 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 to each other.
- Understand the negative consequences of and healthy alternatives to substance abuse, bullying, harassment, and other self-defeating behaviors.

High School Graduation Standard Diploma Requirements for 2013-2014



Subject	Number of Credits	Notes
English Language Arts (ELA)	4.0	The four credits must be in ELA I, II, III, and IV . Students must pass the 10 th grade FCAT 2.0 Reading in order to earn a standard high school diploma.
Mathematics	4.0	Students must earn one credit in Algebra I . Performance on the Algebra I End-of Course (EOC) assessment constitutes 30% of the student's final course grade. Students must pass the Algebra 1 End of Course (EOC) assessment in order to earn a standard high school diploma. Students must earn one credit in Geometry . Performance on the Geometry EOC assessment constitutes 30% of the student's final course grade. Industry certification courses that lead to college credit may substitute for up to two mathematics credits.
Science	3.0	A student must earn one credit in Biology I and two credits in equally rigorous courses. Two of the three credits must have a laboratory component. Performance on the Biology 1 EOC assessment constitutes 30% of the student's final course grade. Industry certification courses that lead to college credit may substitute for up to one science credit.
Social Science	3.0	A student must earn one credit in U.S. History , one credit in World History , one-half credit in Economics and one-half credit in American Government . Performance on the U.S. History EOC assessment constitutes 30% of the student's final course grade.
Performing/ Fine Arts, Speech and Debate or Practical Arts	1.0	
Physical Education	1.0	P.E. must include the integration of health.
General Electives	8	
Total Credits	24	

Additional information regarding graduation requirements:

- Students must earn a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale and meet all applicable graduation requirements to be awarded a standard high school diploma.
- At least one course within the 24 credits must be completed through online learning. A high school level online course taken in grade 6, 7, or 8 fulfills this requirement. This excludes a driver education course.

These are general requirements. The school counselor should be consulted for information regarding graduation requirements, courses, diploma designations, etc., as they pertain to your child.

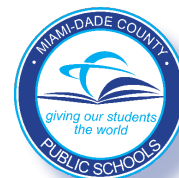
Senate Bill 1076 provides more information about graduation requirements and standard diploma designations.

Standardized Tests Your Child Will Take in Senior High School in 2013-2014, p. 1



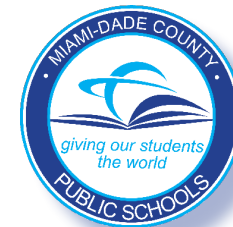
NAME OF TEST AND MONTH GIVEN	GRADES TESTED	PURPOSE OF TEST
Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) October	10 11 Interested students	Measures a student's academic abilities as compared to other students throughout the nation and provides information about a student's general academic development compared to those planning to attend college. Used to identify students who qualify for scholarships in the National Merit and National Hispanic Scholars programs. Also used to identify applicants for appointment to military academies.
Florida College Entry-Level Placement Test (FCLEPT) November-March	10-12 Interested students	Given to interested students on a voluntary basis to determine if they are ready for college-level work. The results are used to counsel students in their choice of colleges and/or careers. The FCLEPT is an untimed, standardized multiple-choice test taken on a computer. It consists of three subtests: reading comprehension, sentence skills and elementary algebra.
Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading (FAIR) Fall, Winter, Spring	9-12 Selected students	Monitors students' progress in reading to determine the need for remedial instruction.
Interim Assessment in Reading, Mathematics and Science Baseline/Fall/Winter	9-10 (Reading and mathematics) 10-11 (Science)	Assists teachers in determining students' areas of strength and weakness. Schools that must submit progress reports to the State are required to administer the assessments in all three administrations; other schools may choose to administer the assessments.
FCAT 2.0 Writing February	10	Students are asked to write in order to explain or to persuade. Students have 45 minutes to plan and produce a written response (an essay) to an assigned topic or prompt. The writing prompt is scored holistically based on a rubric with scores ranging from a low of one (1) to a high of six (6).
Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) 2.0 Reading Reading Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS) April	9-10	The FCAT 2.0 tests in Reading are standardized, criterion-referenced tests. The tests assesses student achievement on selected benchmarks, as defined by the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards.
FCAT 2.0 Retake Reading (Graduation Test) Fall/Spring	Eligible students in grades 10-13	The FCAT 2.0 graduation test is administered for the first time to all students in grade 10 in the Spring. Students in grades 11 and above who have not previously passed the FCAT 2.0 graduation test have further opportunities to participate in the retake administrations in the Fall and Spring of each school year.
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) January-March	12 - Selected grades and schools	Timed tests in selected subjects (English, mathematics, reading, science, writing, U.S. history, geography, civics, and the arts) that measure and compare student progress across the nation. Individual student reports are not provided.
Florida Competency Examination on Personal Fitness (FCEPF) December, May	Interested students in grades 10-12	Assesses mastery of the physical education course, Personal Fitness 1501300. A student can be exempted from the physical education requirement by making a "C" or better on the FCEPF and participating in two full seasons in an interscholastic sport at the junior varsity or varsity level.

Standardized Tests Your Child Will Take in Senior High School in 2013-2014, p. 2



NAME OF TEST AND MONTH GIVEN	GRADES TESTED	PURPOSE OF TEST
College Board Testing Program SAT I and SAT II Given a number of times during the year	Interested students in grades 10-12	The SAT I Reasoning Test consists of multiple-choice items in verbal and mathematics and an essay in writing. The SAT I is used in reviewing applications for admission to many colleges and universities. The SAT II Subject Tests cover specific subject areas. Students wishing to show their mastery of a particular subject may choose to take these tests as part of their college application process. There are registration deadlines and fees for all of the SAT tests.
American College Testing Program (ACT) Given a number of times during the year	Interested students in grades 10-12	Multiple-choice test in English, reading, mathematics and science reasoning. The ACT is used in reviewing applications for admission to many colleges and universities. There are registration deadlines and fees for this test.
Advanced Placement (AP) Examinations May	AP students in 9-12	Given to students enrolled in Advanced Placement courses. They measure achievement in the subject areas covered by the course taken. Many colleges will award college credit to a student who achieves a score of 3 or higher on an AP examination.
International Baccalaureate (IB) External Written Examinations May	IB students in grades 11-12	Given to students enrolled in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program. Students may take IB tests in literature, foreign language, social science, experimental science, mathematics and the arts.
Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment (CELLA) March - April	9-12	The CELLA is a criterion-referenced test administered to measure the growth of students classified as English Language Learners (ELLs) in mastering the skills in English in four domains: reading, writing, listening, and speaking.
Florida End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments Algebra 1 Biology 1 U.S. History May	9-12 Enrolled students Geometry	The Florida End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments are new computer-based criterion-referenced assessments that measure the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards for specific high-school level courses, as outlined in the course description. The Algebra 1, Biology 1, Geometry, and U.S. History EOC assessment will be administered in the fall, winter, spring, and summer to eligible students in grades 9 - 12 on computers, exceptions will be made for eligible students who require a paper-based accommodation. Beginning in 2011-2012 school year and beyond, middle school students as well as students entering grade 9 and enrolled in Algebra 1 or an equivalent course must earn a passing score on the EOC assessment in Algebra 1 to earn credit towards graduation. Going forward, all EOC assessments will constitute 30 percent of student's final course grades.
Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) fall	Selected students in grade 10	Timed tests in selected subjects (English, mathematics, reading, science, writing, U.S. history, geography, civics, and the arts) that measure and compare student progress across the nation. Individual student reports are not provided.

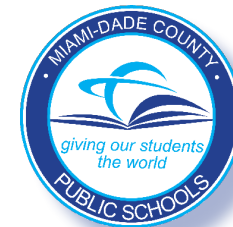
Three-year Graduation Option



Students may follow an accelerated three-year graduation option requiring only 18 credits to graduate. Students who wish to take this option can choose the College Preparatory Program or the Career Preparatory Program. These options require students to focus on core subjects and eliminate most elective courses. Students must still pass the Grade 10 FCAT in tenth grade and have an unweighted cumulative GPA of 3.5 for the College Preparatory Program or a 3.0 for the Career Preparatory Program on a 4.0 scale to be eligible for the accelerated graduation option.

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.

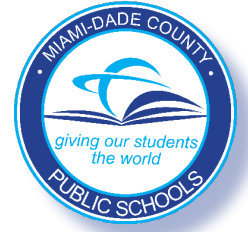
Online Classes



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.

If Your Child is Ready for More Advanced Classes



Students who desire a more challenging academic experience have a number of options available to them in high school, including Honors and Advanced Placement courses, the International Baccalaureate program, dual enrollment, and online classes.

More information about the following options is available on the pages indicated.

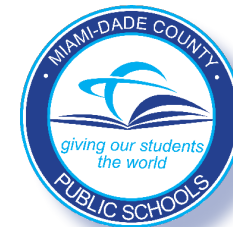
- Honors Classes.....C-9
- Advanced Placement (AP).....C-10
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Honors Classes



Senior high school students capable of handling a more rigorous curriculum that is presented at a faster pace are encouraged to enroll in honors classes. These courses, which give students the opportunity to explore the curriculum in greater depth, award students 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.

Advanced Placement (AP)



Advanced Placement (AP) classes are college-level courses that provide students with a rigorous and comprehensive curriculum. 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 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.

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 schools and colleges. AICE features courses written specifically as preparation for honors degree programs. It encourages high academic standards and provides an ideal basis for study at the college and university level. The AICE program is currently offered at the following schools: John I. Smith Elementary, Eugenia B. Thomas K-8, Jorge Mas Canosa Middle, Doral Middle, Howard D. McMillan Middle, W.R. Thomas Middle, Miami Lakes Ed. Center, G. Holmes Braddock Senior High, American Senior High, Ronald Reagan Senior High, and Keys Gate Charter.

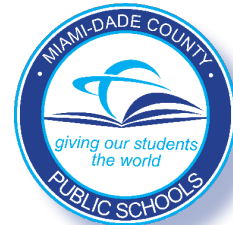
An AICE diploma is awarded on the basis of examination scores and coursework performance during six full-credit courses. The full AICE diploma ensures that all students follow a broad and balanced academic program. Advanced Subsidiary (AS) certificates listing subjects passed is issued to those students 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 are awarded two bonus points applied toward their weighted GPA.

International Baccalaureate (IB)



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, Coral Reef, John A. Ferguson, Miami Beach, North Miami, and South Dade. 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.

Dual Enrollment



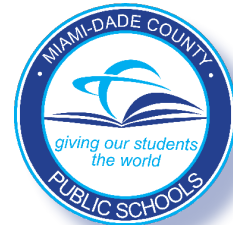
This state-sponsored program lets senior high school students take college courses and have the opportunity to earn both college and high school credit. Students who qualify may enroll in a college course, and the tuition and textbook cost is waived for the student. Because students may take these classes 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.

School for Advanced Studies (SAS)



This program is designed for grade 11 and 12 students seeking an academically challenging curriculum and a small-school environment, coupled with dual enrollment in the Miami Dade College system. Students must meet certain academic criteria to apply. SAS is located at four MDC campuses. 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>.

If You are Concerned Your Child May Not Graduate



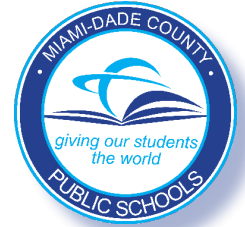
Many parents are concerned that their children will not receive a high school diploma because they did not pass required state graduation tests. Students who do not pass these assessments will be given several opportunities to pass the test in grades 11 and 12. Students can receive additional academic 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 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 FCAT graduation requirement. Students with disabilities who do not pass the FCAT or earn a standard diploma may choose to receive a special diploma or a certificate of completion. Students with disabilities who do not pass the FCAT or 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.

Concordant Scores by Year Student Entered Grade 9

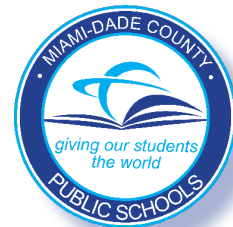


The table below compares the minimum passing scores for Florida state assessments (FCAT and FCAT 2.0) with the equivalent scores on national standardized college-readiness assessments (SAT and ACT). A high school student who does not meet the minimum state assessment scores may still meet standard-diploma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

	READING		MATHEMATICS
	2009-10 and prior	2010-11 and beyond	2009-10 and prior
FCAT	N/A	N/A	1889 (scale score of 300)
FCAT 2.0	241*	245	N/A
SAT	420	430	370
ACT	18	19	15

*Passing scale score was 300 for students entering Grade 9 in 2009-10 and prior, concordant to a scale score of 241 on the FCAT 2.0

Get Help Applying to College

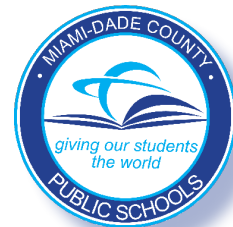


If your child wants to attend a college or university after graduation, you should start planning early in middle school. You and your child will want to explore what kind of college will be the best match for him/her, the college entrance tests required, and the types of financial aid and scholarships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

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.

Get Help Applying to College, continued



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.

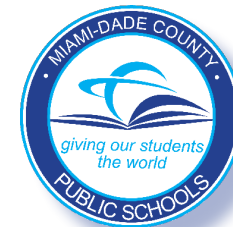
College Admissions

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.

Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program

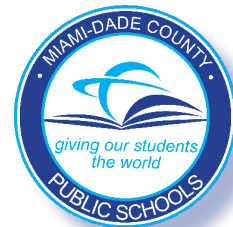
Florida offers three types of scholarships through the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, which is funded by the Florida Lottery. These are the Florida Academic Scholars Award, the Academic Top Scholar Award, the Florida Medallion Scholars Award, and the Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars 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.

D. Parent/Family Involvement



- Office of Parent Involvement.....D-1
- Neighborhood and Parent Resource Centers.....D-2
- The Parent Academy.....D-3
- Get to Know Your Child’s School and Teacher.....D-4
- Make Sure Your Child Attends Class.....D-5
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Office of Parent Involvement



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 Parental Involvement (OPI) 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 sponsors the Family and Community Involvement Advisory Committee, which makes recommendations on topics important to parents. Through the Parent Leadership Council, the Office also provides a unique opportunity for parents whose children are enrolled in ESOL instruction to make recommendations on that program.

Every good relationship is based on regular, meaningful, two-way communication. Parents are encouraged to call and visit their children's school, to call the **Region** that supervises their school or to contact the Office of Parental Involvement. If you have questions after reading this guide, call OPI at 305 995-1809, log on to <http://parents.dadeschools.net> or visit a Parent Resource Center.

Neighborhood and Parent Resource Centers



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 Parental Involvement 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 provide 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.

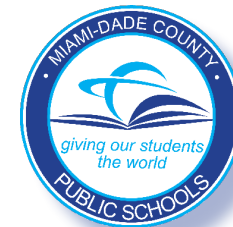
Services

- 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)
- Citizenship Preparation Assistance (NRC)
- SES Service Center (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) (PIRC) in the state

Locations

- Title I Neighborhood Resource Center – North
7900 N.W. 27th Avenue, Space F-9
Miami, Florida 33147
(Northside Shopping Centre, 130 South Ct.)
Phone: 305 694-7120
- Miami-Dade County Public Schools
Office of Parental Involvement
Parent Resource Center
1450 N.E. 2nd Avenue, Suite 226
Miami, Florida 33132
Phone: 305 995-1809
- Title I Neighborhood Resource Center – South
5555 S.W. 93rd Avenue, Portable #3
Miami, Florida 33165
(FDLRS Southside)
Phone: 305 274-7468
- Family Resource Center – Florida City
at The Farmworkers Association of Florida
450 Davis Parkway (336th Street)
Florida City, Florida 33034
Phone: 305-245-7288
- Redland Family Resource Center
at enFamilia Inc.
16090 S.W. 293rd Drive
Homestead, Florida 33033
Phone: 305-245-7288
- At individual schools

The Parent Academy

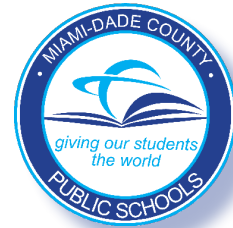


As a parent, you are your child's first teacher. That's why Miami-Dade County Public Schools created The Parent Academy, a free, year-round, parent engagement initiative designed to support community and family involvement across the district. The goal of The Parent Academy is to support parents in becoming 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 Website at www.theparentacademy.net to view the course directory, upcoming events, and links to helpful information. For more information call 305-995-2680.

Get to Know Your Child's School and Teacher

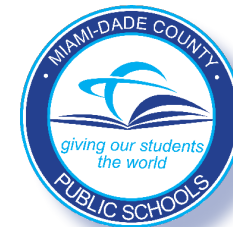


Whenever possible, spend time at your child's school and, even if you can't be physically present, communicate often with your child's teacher. A great way to stay in touch is through the Parent Portal. You'll need to obtain your Parent PIN number by visiting the school. Then you can register online at dadeschools.net/parents.asp. From then on you can access your child's classes, grades and attendance from any computer with Internet access. 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.

Sometimes it may seem that the principal or staff is too busy to answer your questions. Remember, it is your right to be part of your child's education. Be patient and be persistent until your questions are answered.

Make Sure Your Child Attends Class

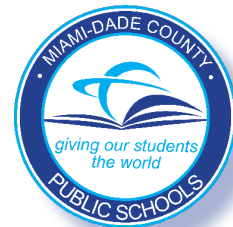


The importance of parents as teachers shall be recognized by parents and supported by the school. Schools will provide parents with the appropriate support and assistance needed in understanding and meeting the expectations of this role. Parents are expected to:

- 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.

For additional information, please visit www.dadeschools.net and view the iPromise Parent Contract.

Volunteer With Your Child's Class



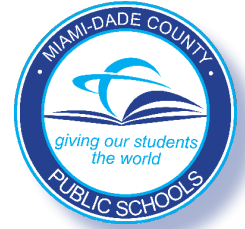
School Volunteers bring with them diverse skills and talents tailored to the needs of the students and community. As a School volunteer you work under the direction of the principal, doing important work side by side with employees, parents and students.

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. Click [here](#) and become a school volunteer.

For more information about the School Volunteer Program, call 305-995-2995 or visit community.dadeschools.net.

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?

Join the Local PTA or PTSA

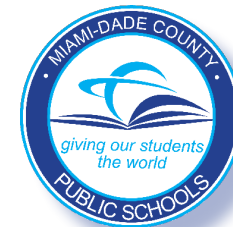


Each school has a Parent Teacher Association (PTA) or Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA). This local organization is connected to the Miami-Dade County Council of PTAs/PTSAs, which is connected to the Florida PTA. The PTA's mission is threefold:

- 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 pta305.com or floridapta.org.

Ask About Your EESAC



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 meetings.dadeschools.net/index.asp.

All EESAC minutes are posted at osi.dadeschools.net/viewbylawsminutesrosters.asp.

Find More Facts About Your 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 **oada.dadeschools.net**.

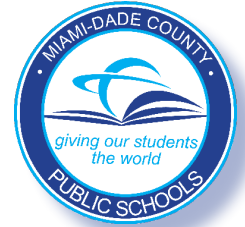
You may also ask your child's school directly for information on the professional qualifications of your child's classroom teacher(s) and/or paraprofessionals, including their licensing status, degree major, graduate degree(s) and the field of certification. By law, your child's school must make this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

Pursue Your 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://adulthood.dadeschools.net>.

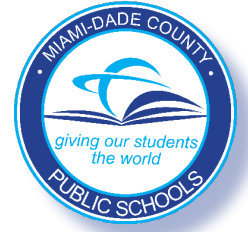
M-DCPS Committees with Parent Volunteers



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.	Tel. 305-995-7576
Attendance Boundary Committees (District, Joint, or School Site) Identifies schools for changes and conducts public hearings on proposed school boundaries.	Tel. 305-995-7415
District Wellness Advisory Committee Makes recommendations regarding the overall health and wellness of students and staff.	Tel. 305-995-0438
Diversity, Equity, and Excellence Advisory Committee (DEEAC) Reviews issues on maintaining a multicultural system.	Tel. 305-995-1403
Educational Excellence School Advisory Council Support Committee Reviews waivers and requests from school's EESAC.	Tel. 305-995-1405 http://osi.dadeschools.net
Ethics Advisory Committee Ensures the integrity of the Board's decision making processes.	Tel. 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.	Tel. 305-995-1233 http://parents.dadeschools.net
Miami-Dade Coalition for Community Education Committee Supports the expansion of community education.	Tel. 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.	Tel. 305-995-1265
Parent Leadership Council (PLC) Addresses the educational needs of English Language Learner students. Information and leadership training is available.	Tel. 305-995-1233
School Health Medical Advisory Committee Promotes the health and social well-being of all school-aged children and adolescents through public policy and advocacy.	Tel. 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.	Tel. 305-995-7285
Student Services Advisory Committee Reviews and makes recommendations on the counseling, career, substance education, and student development priorities in the District.	Tel. 305-995-7324
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.	Tel. 305-995-2027
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.	Tel. 305-995-1713
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.	Tel. 305-995-1713

Find Out What Your Child is Learning 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 Next Generation Sunshine State Standards, the list of learning goals that all teachers in Florida are required to follow. View the standards on the web at <http://etc.usf.edu/flstandards/index.html>.

You will receive two types of written reports on your child’s progress in school. See the following page for more information.

Student Progress Reports

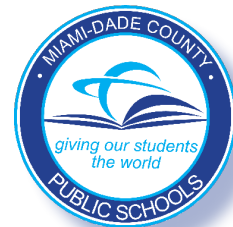


You will receive two types of written reports on your child's progress in school:

- 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.
- Your child's individual test score reports from standardized assessments or tests, such as the FCAT 2.0. 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, the FCAT 2.0 report will let you know if your child is meeting the Next Generation Sunshine State 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.

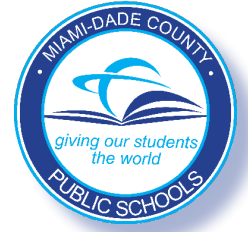
If Your Child Is Not Doing Well in School



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:

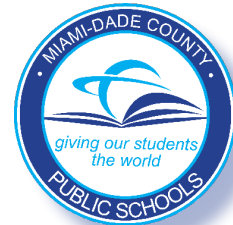
- Try not to become too emotional about your child's situation. Instead, focus on learning how you can best help your child make positive changes.
- Meet with your child's teacher and commit yourself to working together as a team.
- Work with your child's teacher and school to pinpoint exactly why your 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, School Psychologist) immediately.

E. Testing & Accountability



- FCAT 2.0 Reading, Mathematics, and Science.....E-1
- About the FCAT 2.0 Achievement Levels.....E-3
- Measuring Your Child’s School.....E-4
- How Can I Help My Child Do Well on the FCAT 2.0 and End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments?.....E-5
- Special Testing Accommodations.....E-6

FCAT 2.0 Reading, Mathematics, and Science



Grades/Students

Reading:	All students in grades 3-10
Mathematics:	All students in grades 3-8
Science:	All students in grades 5 and 8

Administered in April of each school year

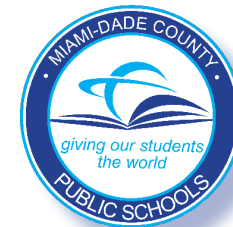
The FCAT 2.0 tests are standardized, criterion-referenced tests. The tests assess student achievement on selected benchmarks, which make up the state's standards in each academic subject area.

In the 2010-11 school year, the FCAT tests in Reading and Mathematics began the transition from the FCAT, which addresses the Sunshine State Standards (SSS), to the FCAT 2.0, which addresses the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS). Beginning in 2011-12, students in grade 10 will no longer take the FCAT Mathematics assessment; and students in grade 11 will no longer participate in FCAT Science assessments. It should be noted that FCAT 2.0 Science will be administered to students in grades 5 and 8 for the first time in the spring of 2012.

FCAT 2.0

The FCAT 2.0 measures student achievement of the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards. In 2011, FCAT 2.0 Reading in grades 3-10 and Mathematics in grades 3-8 were the first assessments to begin this transition.

FCAT 2.0 Reading, Mathematics, and Science, page 2



The FCAT 2.0 Reading tests will only consist of multiple-choice items at all grade levels of the test. The FCAT 2.0 Reading for grades 6 through 10 and Reading 2.0 retake are available only in computer-based format, with paper-based accommodations for eligible students.

The FCAT 2.0 Mathematics tests contain multiple-choice items at all grade levels of the test, with gridded-response items included in grades 5-8. Students in grades 7-8 use calculators on the Mathematics test. The FCAT 2.0 Mathematics for grades 5 and 6 is only available in computer-based format, with paper-based accommodations for eligible students.

The FCAT 2.0 Science tests consist of multiple-choice items at all grade levels of the test, and gridded-response items are included only in the grade 8 test. In addition, students in grade 8 use calculators on the Science test.

Results

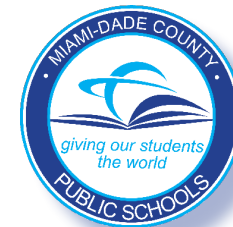
Student, school, district, and state results are reported in June. The score scales that are reported and which are also referred to as a developmental scores scales range from 140 to 302 for FCAT 2.0 Reading, from 140 to 298 for FCAT 2.0 Mathematics, and from 140 to 260 for Science. Achievement levels 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). State law requires that students in grade 3 score a Level 2 or higher in Reading in order to be promoted to grade 4.

Basis of Test: State Mandate

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

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

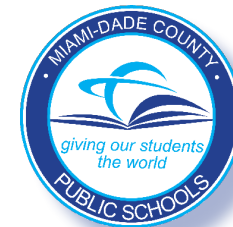
About the FCAT 2.0 Achievement Levels



One of the important indicators in the FCAT 2.0 Reading, Mathematics, and Science reports are 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. To find out more about the Progress Monitoring Plan, see page 75.

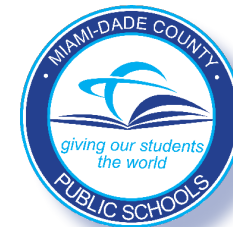
If your child’s Achievement Level scores increase from one year to the next, this clearly shows that your child has made progress. In some grade levels, your child might also be making progress by scoring at the same Achievement Level for two years in a row. To learn more about FCAT 2.0 Achievement Levels, turn to the next page.

Measuring Your Child's School



The State of Florida uses the Achievement Level scores 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 FCAT results in making decisions about students' needs for remediation or retention.

How Can I Help My Child Do Well on the FCAT 2.0 and End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments?



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

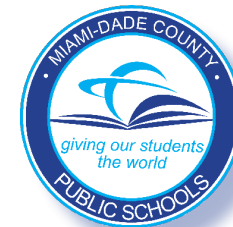
- Encourage your child to read a variety of fiction and non-fiction materials, including books, magazines, poetry, etc.
- Encourage your child to read at least 30 minutes a day without a break.
- Take your child to the library regularly to check out and read books and magazines.
- Ask your child to retell 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.

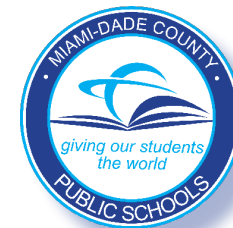
When assisting your child with preparation for an End-of-Course Assessment (EOC), consult the testing calendar on dadeschools.net to see when a course EOC assessment will take place, review course content with your child, and encourage your child to review course material for home-learning.

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.

F. Student Health



- Florida KidCare Health Insurance.....F-1
- Physical Fitness.....F-2
- Required Health Examinations.....F-3
- Immunizations.....F-4
- Immunization Guidelines for School Entry.....F-5
- Meningococcal Disease and Meningitis.....F-6

Florida KidCare: Children's Health Insurance Program



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 doctors 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 call The Parent Academy at 305-995-1207 or Florida KidCare at 1-888-540-5437 (toll free).

Physical Fitness

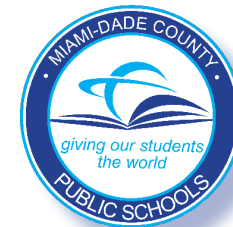


Children perform better in school when they are physically fit. However, many children are overweight due to poor diet and lack of regular exercise. Statistics show that the number of obese children has tripled in the last 20 years.

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.

Required Health Examinations



Even healthy, active children need regular health examinations. Every child must have an examination (including a tuberculosis risk assessment) by a physician 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.)

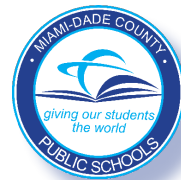
Immunizations



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). 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.

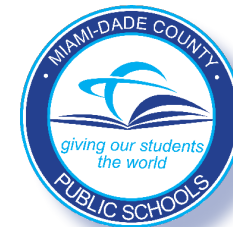
Immunization Guidelines for School Entry



The immunizations listed below are part of a broader immunization schedule that is recommended for all children by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control.

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 6-12 will be required to have one dose. All students in kindergarten and grades 1-5 will be required to have two doses of varicella. Varicella vaccine is not required if there is documented history of the disease.

Meningococcal Disease and Meningitis



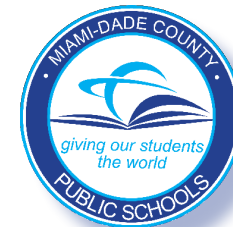
Meningitis is usually caused by viruses or bacteria and can affect people of any age. It can spread easily when large groups of people are in close contact.

Viral meningitis is often mistaken for the flu and can be spread in the same way. Bacterial meningitis is rare but much more serious, and can be life threatening. It most often affects infants, young children, and the elderly. Symptoms include sudden high fever, intense headache, stiff neck, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and rash. If your child has these symptoms, seek medical treatment immediately.

The risk of infection can be greatly reduced through meningococcal vaccination, which is available for children under the age of 18 through the Free Vaccines Program administered by the Department of Health.

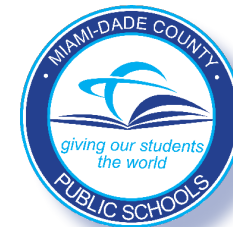
Please contact the Miami-Dade County Public Schools Division of Student Services, Comprehensive Health Services office at 305-995-1238 for more information.

G. Special Education



- Division of Special Education.....G-1
- What is “Response to Instruction/Intervention” (RtI)?.....G-2
- How Do I Request Assistance if I Think My Child May Need Special Education Services?.....G-3
- What is Local Education Agency (LEA)?.....G-4
- How Will I Be Notified About Upcoming IEP Meetings and How Do I Prepare for Them?.....G-5
- How Will I Know What Kind of Progress My Child is Making Toward His/Her IEP Goals?.....G-6
- What is a Section 504 Plan?.....G-7
- What Can I Do if I Disagree with Decisions Made at an IEP Meeting?.....G-8
- Where Can I Go for Early Intervention Services for My Infant or Toddler?.....G-9
- What Services are Available for Students Who Speak a Language Other than English?.....G-10
- Who Do I Contact if I Think My Child Needs Counseling Services?.....G-11
- Who Do I Contact About Schooling if My Child is Confined to the Home or Hospital?.....G-12
- What is the Florida Alternate Assessment (FAA)?.....G-13
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- What Kind of Waivers are Available for My Child?.....G-16

Division of Special Education



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
1500 Biscayne Boulevard, Suite #409
Miami, Florida 33132
305-995-2027
<http://ese.dadeschools.net/>

PARENT RESOURCE:

What is Exceptional Student Education for Students with Disabilities: <http://www.fldoe.org/ese/pdf/ESE2011.pdf>

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.

PARENT RESOURCE:

Parent Brochure on RtI: http://www.florida-rti.org/_docs/RtI-Parent-Brochure.pdf

How Do I Request Assistance if I Think My Child May Need Special Education Services?

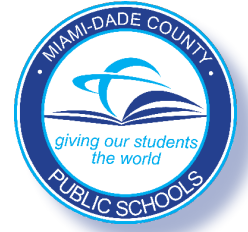


Parents are entitled to request a comprehensive evaluation of their child when a disability is suspected. For all but the most severe disabilities, the evaluation process will seek to determine the types of interventions that will help the child meet age and grade level standards and utilize those interventions 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 RESOURCE:

Evaluations for Special Education Services: <http://www.fldoe.org/ese/parent/pdf/idp.pdf>

What is a Local Education Agency (LEA)?



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 About Upcoming IEP Meetings and How Do I Prepare For Them?



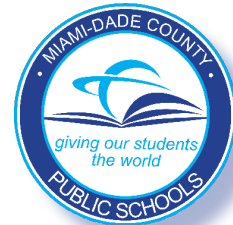
The State and IDEA emphasize the importance of parental involvement in developing, reviewing, and revising the IEP. The parent must receive a Notification of Meeting even when the student has reached the age of majority. To ensure that parents are given the opportunity to attend the meeting, the LEA must schedule a meeting at a mutually agreed upon time and place. For tips on how to prepare for IEP meetings contact FDLRS-South Parent Services staff at 305-274-3501 or 305-626-3970.

PARENT RESOURCE:

Getting Ready for Your Child's IEP Meeting:

<http://www.fldoe.org/ese/pdf/iep-card.pdf>

How Will I Know What Kind of 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 Ms. Terry Vaccaro, at 305-995-7015 or tvaccaro@dadeschools.net.

PARENT RESOURCE:

Section 504 Procedures for Students with Disabilities: 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.

PARENT RESOURCE:

Parent Resource Sheet: <http://forms.dadeschools.net/webpdf/6334.pdf>

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**

5555 S.W. 93rd Avenue
Miami, Florida 33165
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
- Laura Saunders Elementary School
505 S.W. 8th Street
Homestead, Florida 33030
305-247-3933

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.

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 Psychosocial Clinical Support Services at 305-995-7315 or visit our website at <http://psy.dadeschools.net>.

Who Do I Contact About Schooling if My Child is Confined to the Home or Hospital?



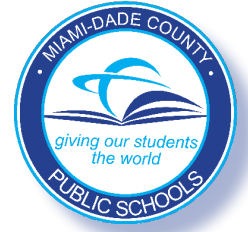
Hospital/Homebound Instructional Program (HHIP) is available for students who are confined to the home or hospital. Medical authorization signed by a licensed physician is required for participation in this most restrictive program. Based upon the IEP, instruction is provided either in the student's 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.

PARENT RESOURCE:

Hospital/Homebound Instructional Program 305-445-5188

What is the Florida Alternate Assessment (FAA)?



The FAA is the statewide assessment designed for those students with disabilities whose participation in the FCAT is not appropriate even with accommodations. The FAA measures student mastery of the Sunshine State 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 FCAT 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.

What is a Transition IEP Meeting?



The purpose of transition planning is to provide your child with the services and supports he or she needs to make a successful move into adult life. The IEP team identifies the services that will help your child make this transition. 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.

PARENT RESOURCE:

Transition website: <http://transition.dadeschools.net>

Transition Planning for Students

with Disabilities-A Guide for Families: <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 or special diploma 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.

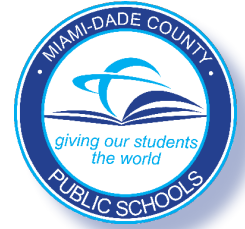
The State of Florida offers the following diploma options for students with disabilities:

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.

Special Diploma Option 1: A special diploma is available for students with disabilities who have been identified as eligible for special education services and have a current IEP. The special diploma is a viable option for students with disabilities who are not able to meet the requirements for a standard diploma.

Special Diploma Option 2: Special Diploma Option 2 is an employment based graduation option. This option allows eligible students to obtain a special diploma through demonstrated mastery of specified employment and community competencies.

What Kind of Waivers are Available for My Child?



Waiver of End of Course Results

Senate Bill 4 amended s. 1003.428 (8)(b)2, F. S., to state, “A student with a disability, as defined in s. 1007.02(2), F. S. for whom the IEP committee 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 as required in paragraph (4) (a).”

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 FCAT Graduation Requirement

The 2003 Legislature passed the Enhanced New Needed Opportunity for Better Life and Education for Students with Disabilities (ENNOBLES) Act (HB 1739). This law requires that 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. Based on this law, IEP teams may waive the required passing score for one or both sections of the FCAT under specific circumstances for eligible students with disabilities for the purpose of receiving a standard high school diploma.

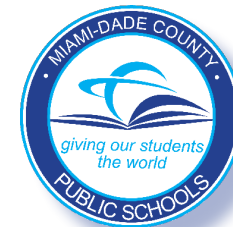
The decision to waive the FCAT is made by the IEP team. The IEP team meets to determine whether or not the FCAT accurately measures the student’s abilities, taking into consideration allowable accommodations. The team must review student information to determine if the student has mastered the Sunshine State Standards.

H. School Choice



- Magnet Programs and Schools.....H-1
- Controlled Open Enrollment Choice Elementary Schools.....H-2
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Magnet Programs and 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>.

Controlled Choice (Open Enrollment) 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.

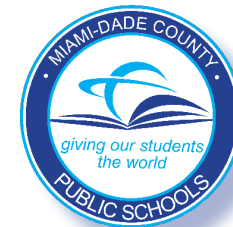
Process: Applications are available at each controlled choice school. Applications are completed and submitted at these offices. At this time, parents are advised whether additional documentation is needed.

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.

Bilingual 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>.

Satellite Learning Centers

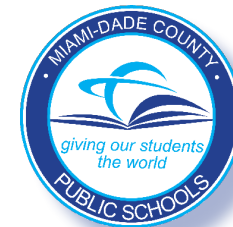


Currently, there are two public elementary schools built to serve parents who work at particular organizations:

- 1) The Assurant Group (at S.W. 196 Street, Miami)
- 2) Mount Sinai Hospital (on Alton Road in Miami Beach).

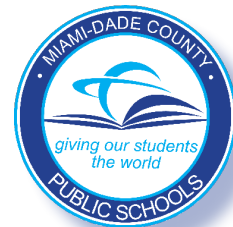
These schools are partnerships between the employer, which provides the facilities, and M-DCPS.

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>.

Charter Schools

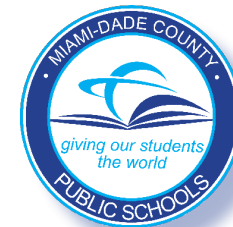


Charter schools are tuition-free, non-sectarian public schools that operate under a performance contract, or “charter,” with the school district. Charter schools are free from many of the rules and regulations created for traditional public schools. For example, they have the freedom to design their own curriculum and create different types of learning environments. In general, charter schools are smaller than traditional public schools and require parent participation as a condition of the student’s enrollment. Students attending charter schools still must take all state-required standardized tests, including the FCAT.

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 charterschools.dadeschools.net.

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.

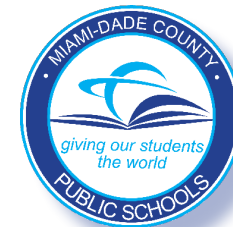
Parents/Guardians must complete an Opportunity Scholarship Program transfer application by the established deadline. Applications may be obtained at the school or at the Office of School Choice and Parental Options. For more information, call 305-995-1922; the Parent Hotline at 800-477-1636 or visit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

Transfers to Other Public Schools through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act



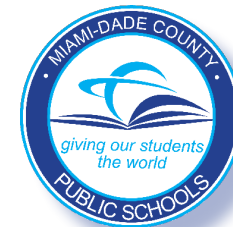
The state of Florida received a waiver from the Department of Education for compliance with certain portions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Therefore these transfers to other public schools are no longer available.

Home Schooling



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>.

Corporate Tax Credit Scholarships



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.

I. Other Important Information

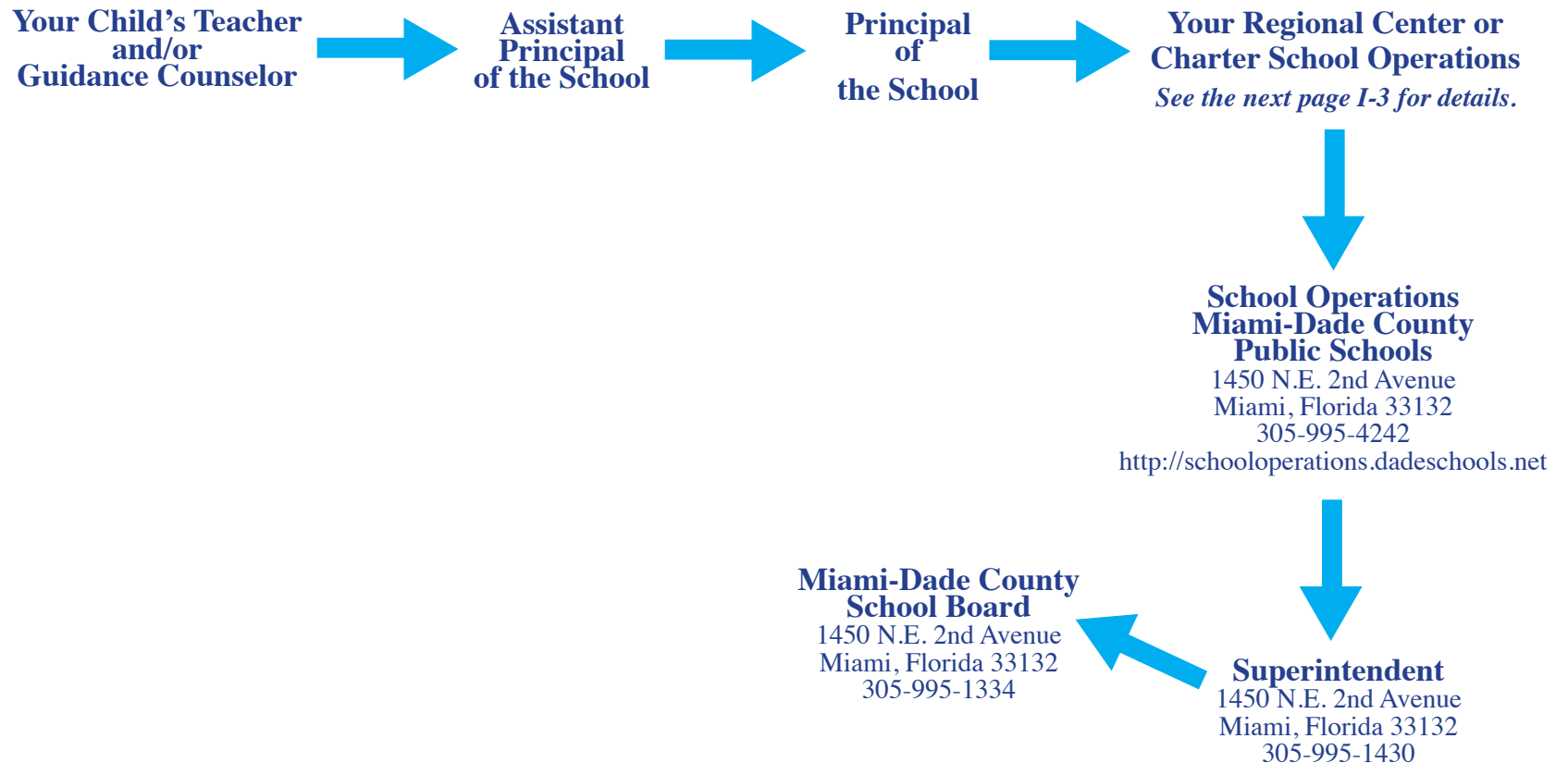


- M-DCPS Chain of Support.....I-1
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- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.....I-6
- Release of Student Information to the Military and Institutions of Higher Learning.....I-7
- Equal Access for English Language Learners.....I-8
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M-DCPS Chain of Support



If you need to discuss an issue of concern regarding your child, or make a request of your child's school, start by speaking with your child's teacher. If the teacher is unable to help you, you should then speak to the appropriate person in the “**chain of support**” below until you have received a response that is acceptable in resolving your concerns.



About the School Board

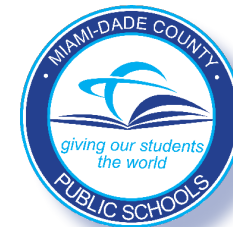


The School Board is a body of nine elected officials responsible for setting policies for the entire school district. The School Board does not usually deal with individual students, parents, or teachers, but focuses more on making the rules for running all of the schools in the county. It also appoints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

Your Local Region Offices



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

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

Central Region Office Annex
1080 LaBaron Drive
Miami Springs, FL 33166
305-889-3503 & 305-889-3501

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

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

Your Legal Rights



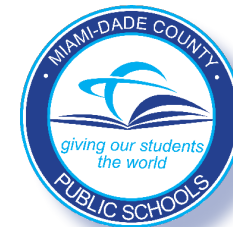
You have the right to ask the school to test your child free of charge if you think he/she might need special educational services, or if the services he/she is already receiving are not adequate. You have the right to request a free, independent evaluation of your child if you disagree with the results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

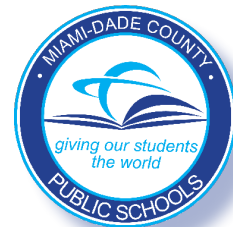
Other Legal Rights



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. You are protected by two important laws:

- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Release of Student Information to the Military and Institutions of Higher Learning
- Equal Access for English Language Learners (META Consent Decree)

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act



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 appeal's hearing is in your favor, the school must correct the records. If the appeal's hearing 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.

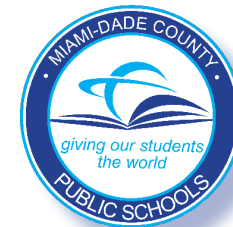
Release of Student Information to the Military and Institutions of Higher Learning



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 school. The Opt-Out Form may be copied, completed and submitted to your child's school at any time during the school year.

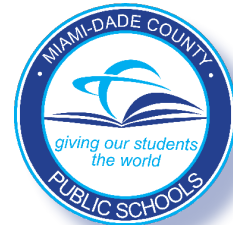
Military and college recruiters frequently visit schools. Miami-Dade County Public Schools discourages students from providing their contact information without seeking permission from their parents/guardians. Please engage in discussion with your child regarding this issue.

Equal Access for 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.

Is Your Family Experiencing Housing Difficulties?



In addition to the current economic crisis and other natural disasters, the number of families in need of assistance has increased greatly. The Homeless Assistance Program is a part of the Division of Student Services. There are several grants that support the programs and services provided to homeless students and their families.

If your family lives in any of the following situations:

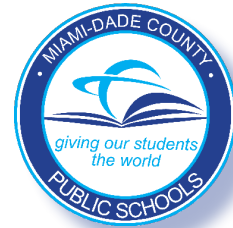
- In a shelter, motel, vehicle, or campground
- On the street
- In an abandoned building, trailer, or other inadequate accommodations, or
- Doubled up with friends or relatives because you cannot find or afford housing.

Then, your preschool-aged and school-aged children have certain rights or protections under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act. Your children have the right to:

- Go to school, no matter where you live or how long you have lived there.
- Continue in the school they attended before you became homeless or the school they last attended, if that is your choice and is feasible.
- Receive transportation to the school they attended before your family became homeless.
- Enroll in school without giving a permanent address.
- And more

Please contact the Miami-Dade County Public Schools Division of Student Services District Homeless student liaison at 305-995-7318.

M-DCPS Chain of Support



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.

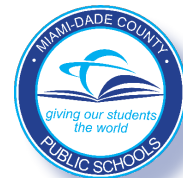
The Division of Student Services works with the School Support Services/School Liaison Officer of the United States Army Garrison-Miami to develop and maintain a strong child-centered partnership. Parents are encouraged to visit the U.S. Army child, Youth & School Services web site at www.cys-miami.webs.com.

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.

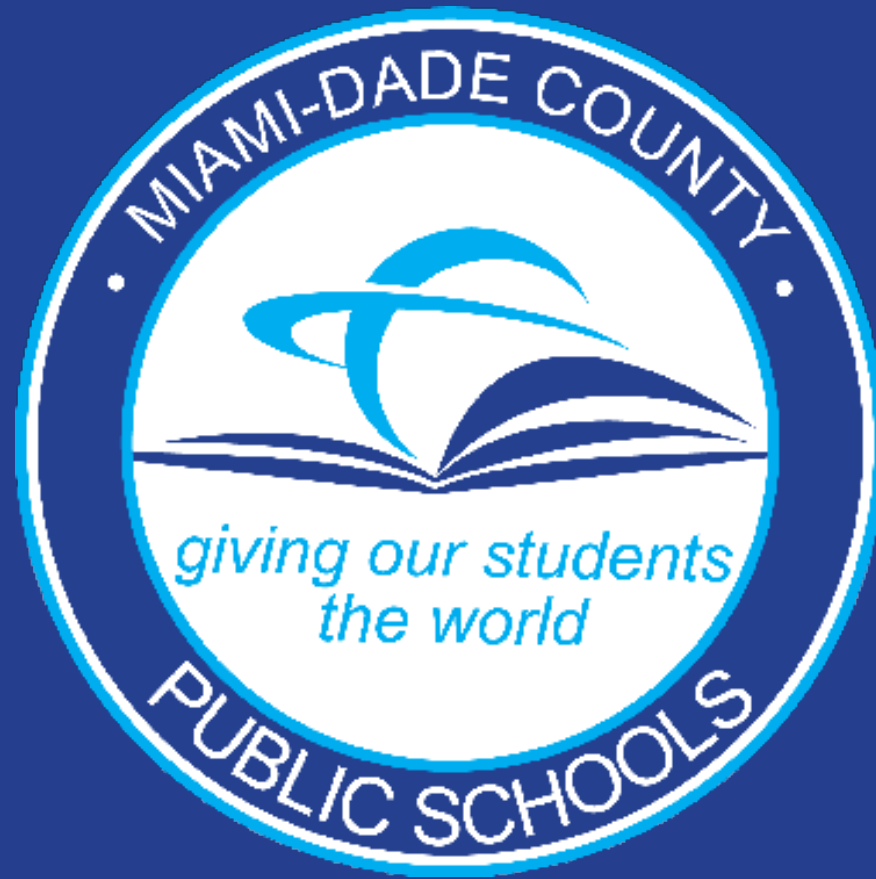
- The absences are to be preapproved by the school principal.
- Students shall have a reasonable amount of time to complete make-up work.
- Attendance Corrections form (FM-5556 Rev. 12-07) will be sent to Federal and State Compliance, via Self Service at selfservice.dadeschools.net, for processing.

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

Where to Find More Information



TO LEARN ABOUT	CONTACT
Adult & Career Technical Education	Career and Technical Education Programs for Adults – 305-558-8000 in English, Spanish, and Haitian-Creole – www.edworks.org
Advanced Academic Programs for all grades	Advanced Academic Programs – 305-995-1934 – advancedacademicprograms.dadeschools.net
After-school programs for middle school students	Adult & Career Technical Education 305-995-2304
Before- and After-School Care for elementary students	Community Education – 305817-0014 – communityed.dadeschools.net
Bilingual Parent Outreach Program (BPOP)	Workshops in Spanish and Haitian Creole – Division of Bilingual Education and World Languages – 305-995-1920 (for Haitian Creole, call 305-995-1286) – bilingual.dadeschools.net
Career Services for students	Specialized Programs – 305-995-1761 – http://careerpreparation.dadeschools.net
College Application help	The CAP Advisor at your child's school, ConnectEdu on the District's web portal, AND www.floridanext.com
Community Education Programs	Community Education – 305-817-0014 – communityed.dadeschools.net
Counseling and Academic Advisement	The school counselor or the Division of Student Services, 305-995-7583
Exceptional Student Education	305-995-2027 – ese.dadeschools.net
FCAT practice, educational games, and an online library, including FCAT Explorer	FCAT Explorer www.fcatexplorer.com
Free legal services for "vulnerable" members of our community	Legal Services of Greater Miami, Inc., 305-576-0080, www.lsgmi.org
Florida Bright Futures Program	The school counselor or the Division of Student Services, 305-995-7338 floridastudentfinancialaid.org/ssfad/bf
General information on Miami-Dade County Public Schools	305-995-1000 or TTY/Hearing Impaired: 305-995-2400 – www.dadeschools.net
Help for grade 12 students who have not passed the FCAT	12th Grade Options – www.12thgradeoptions.org
HOTLINE for help with problems at home	The Children's Trust: 211 Switchboard of Miami – Information and Referrals: 305-358-4357 Teen Link Hotline with taped informational messages: 305-358-1640 (TEEN) www.switchboardmiami.org
Mentoring opportunities for adults and teens	Take Stock in Children – 305-237-7367, 305-995-1439 or www.takestockinchildren.com
Online courses for credit for middle and high school students (free)	Florida Virtual School – 407-513-3587 or www.flvs.net
Parent involvement opportunities	Office of Parental Involvement and the District Parent Resource Center – 305-995-1809 or parents.dadeschools.net
Parent Portal	myportal.dadeschools.net/parent
Pre-Kindergarten programs	Florida's Voluntary Universal Pre-Kindergarten Program (VPK). Pre-application forms are available at www.vpkflorida.com . Information on local pre-kindergarten programs is available from the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe at 305-646-7220. www.vpkhelp.org
Public library locations (access to computers with free Internet connections)	305-375-2665 http://www.mdpls.org
School boundaries	305-883-5651 – its.dadeschools.net/technologydelivery/GIS/gis.asp
School information: Individual public schools (including charter schools)	Office of Strategic Planning osp.dadeschools.net . For a selection of detailed reports on individual schools, click on "Clearinghouse for Planning" on the left side of the page. Select a specific school or click on "Advanced Search Options" for selecting schools. Or call the office at 305-995-1403 or 305-995-1901.
Student educational records and information regarding the directory information opt-out process	Division of Student Services, 305-995-7338
Student health and immunizations	Comprehensive Health Office, 305-995-1235
Teenage parents	TAP – The Teenage Parent Program School Operations – Adult Education – 305-636-7356
Title I Program	Title I Parental Program – 305-995-1253
Tutoring for English Language Learner students	Tutoring Academy for ELL Students Division of Bilingual Education and World Languages – 305-756-7191 bilingual.dadeschools.net
Video Lending Library	WLRN Instruction Television (ITV) Video Library 786-275-0809 – wlrntv.dadeschools.net/vfl.htm
Volunteer opportunities	Office of Community Engagement – 305-995-1439 – community.dadeschools.net



**The 2013-2014 Parent Resource Guide
is available online at
www.dadeschools.net**