

CONNECTION

A Newsletter for Miami-Dade County Public Schools Parents



MIAMI-DADE STUDENTS CONTINUE TO SHINE ON NATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Miami-Dade County Public Schools students continue to turn in remarkable achievement, as revealed by National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results released recently. More than 6,300 students in 143 Miami-Dade County schools participated in this year's grades 4 and 8 NAEP administration.

"As the gold standard of comparative student achievement, the NAEP--the Nation's Report Card--reveals that the most compelling performance belongs uniquely to Miami-Dade," said Superintendent Alberto M. Carvalho. "In all tested areas, M-DCPS bucked national and state trends outperforming large American cities.

"Following a number of school district achievements, including our 2012 Broad Prize win, the College Board's Advanced Placement district of the year in 2013, and Magnet Schools of America's District of Distinction award in 2013, this leading NAEP performance naturally bodes well for our students, for our teachers, and the economic positioning of our community," Carvalho said.

"The Miami-Dade County public schools simply hit the new NAEP test results out of the park," said Michael Casserly, Executive Director, Council of the Great City Schools. "The school district's gains were among the fastest in the country of any major city and were across the board, even as state and national numbers were trending downward. A big tip of the hat for the progress the school system is making with its children."

With a disproportionately high population of English Language Learners, M-DCPS demonstrated remarkable performance in Reading in comparison to the nation and other large urban districts. Miami-Dade's eighth-grade students ranked #1 in the nation in Reading; fourth graders ranked #2 in the nation. M-DCPS was the only Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) district to show significant growth from 2013 to 2015 in Grade 8 Reading.

In M-DCPS's fourth year of participation in the national assessment, Miami-Dade Hispanic students continued to outpace their counterparts nationwide in both Reading and Mathematics and at both tested grade levels, with significantly higher mean scale scores than the national public school sample, large city schools, and Florida. Among the assessment's 21 participating TUDA districts, Miami-Dade continued to shine.

Miami-Dade's grade 4 Mathematics achievement also improved significantly from 2013 to 2015, surpassing public schools nationwide. Additionally, M-DCPS's Black fourth grade students scored significantly higher than their counterparts nationally in Mathematics.

Despite a significant nationwide decline in grade 8 Mathematics, Miami-Dade's students maintained their levels of performance.

DON'T MISS OUT! OPEN ENROLLMENT FOR OUR 375 MAGNET PROGRAMS RUNS THROUGH JAN. 15

M-DCPS has opened its enrollment period for magnet programs across the school district. Applications will continue being accepted right up through Friday, January 15, 2016.

Teachers and students will be able to enjoy new and innovative magnet programs that were created for the 2015-2016 school year. True to our District's motto "Giving our students the world," the now more than 375 magnet program offerings are personalized to meet students' interests, talents and individualized needs. These offerings include 16 new magnet programs in 12 schools in the areas of Sciences, Mathematics, Multimedia Entertainment Technology, Legal Studies, and Visual Arts.

This year, we also launched a new magnet application system that can be accessed at www.miamimagnets.org which is available in multiple languages. This new tool simplifies the application process, increases parental access to information and enhances communication throughout the process, as well as includes how-to video guides. For additional information, please call 305-995-1922 or visit our website: www.miamimagnets.org.

EDUCATING OUR STUDENTS ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA RESPONSIBILITY

Social media is rapidly changing the way we communicate and interact with one another. This new, evolving medium is making it possible to connect online immediately with friends, family, and colleagues here and abroad, creating virtual communities that provide a space for the exchange of ideas, news, and information.

In Miami-Dade County Public Schools, we teach and encourage students to use social media responsibly and with integrity. We accomplish this through our digital citizenship curriculum and through various student workshops and forums that stress the importance of exercising good judgment when using social media and other networking sites. Using social media responsibly is important because its impact is far-reaching, and as we know, our digital footprint follows us forever.

While social media can be used in ways that are fun, exciting, and instructional, there is the perpetual concern about the inappropriate use of social media. Given the sometimes objectionable activity on social networking sites, it is important to dialogue with your child about the effective and appropriate uses of social media. Please remind them to never post confidential information about themselves or harmful, disparaging comments about others. Safety, responsibility, and ethical behavior are the values that should define social media participation and activity.

Let's continue to encourage our children to take full advantage of this great resource and to do it in ways that foster and demonstrate conscientious and respectable behavior. Thank you for partnering with us on this important issue.

M-DCPS INCREASES AP EXAM PASSING RATES, ENROLLMENT

Results are in and for the 5th year in a row, M-DCPS continues to increase Advanced Placement exam passing rates, while also increasing AP enrollment. More than 26,000 M-DCPS students participated in May 2015 AP exams, showing an overall passing rate of 48.6 percent, with a 2.6 percent increase over the previous year.

Through the AP Program, students have the opportunity to enroll in advanced courses of study and earn college credit and/or AP credit while still enrolled in high school. Taking AP classes that earn college credit can help offset the cost of college, saving students and families thousands of dollars in tuition fees. M-DCPS offers 35 AP courses including art, government, history, languages, literature, math, music, and science.

Additional highlights from M-DCPS results include:

- The total number of AP course offerings in M-DCPS has increased by 34 percent over the past 7 years, from 838 in 2008 to 1,125 in 2015.
- Current Miami-Dade AP enrollment data shows an increase of 65 percent from 17,049 in 2008 to 28,136 in 2015.
- The total number of AP examinations taken increased by 58 percent from 30,434 in May 2008 to 48,068 in May 2015.
- The total number of 3, 4, and 5 scores (of all tests taken) increased by 84 percent from 12,118 in May 2008 to 22,341 in 2015.
- While participation has increased, the performance of M-DCPS students on AP exams has also increased. In 2008, 40 percent of students scored a 3 or higher on the AP exam and in 2015, 48.6 percent of students scored a 3 or higher, an increase of almost nine percentage points.
- Among the Hispanic subgroup, the percent of students scoring a 3 or higher has increased by over nine percentage points, to 50.1 percent in 2015. Among the African-American subgroup, the percent of students scoring a 3 or higher has increased by over 11 percentage points, from 18 percent in 2008 to 29.2 percent in 2015.
- The College Board's 2015 AP Report to the Nation indicates:
 - Miami-Dade was FIRST in the nation in the number of individual Hispanic students scoring 3+ on AP Exams (9,206), and FIRST in the nation in number of AP Exams with scores 3+ taken by Hispanic students (13,678); and
 - Miami-Dade ranked sixth in the nation (and 2nd in Florida) in the number of individual African-American students scoring 3+ on AP Exams (762), and sixth in the nation in number of AP Exams with scores 3+ taken by African-American students (1,104).
- In 2014, M-DCPS was recognized by the College Board as the AP District of the Year for Expanding Opportunity and Improving Performance of AP Students.

For additional information and school-specific AP Exam results, please visit the website for Assessment, Research, and Data Analysis at <http://oada.dadeschools.net/>.

DATES TO REMEMBER

- November 11- Observation of Veterans Day
- November 25 - Teacher Planning Day
- November 26 - Thanksgiving
- November 27 - Recess Day

SUPERINTENDENT CARVALHO APPOINTED TO NATIONAL ASSESSMENT GOVERNING BOARD BY EDUCATION SECRETARY DUNCAN

M-DCPS Superintendent Alberto M. Carvalho has been appointed to serve a four-year term on the National Assessment Governing Board, U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan recently announced. Carvalho will serve in the category of "local school superintendent."

Carvalho will work with a group of governors, state legislators, school officials, educators, researchers, business representatives, and members of the general public to help set policy for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), known as The Nation's Report Card. NAEP is the country's largest nationally representative assessment of student achievement in various subjects, including mathematics, reading, writing and science.

Carvalho joins the Board as it is overseeing several major developments. They include the first-ever Technology and Engineering Literacy assessment with results that will be released in spring 2016; a move to computer-based NAEP assessments; and a comprehensive plan to expand outreach efforts and partnerships to better inform audiences nationwide about NAEP resources and data.

The 26-member Governing Board oversees NAEP, which makes objective information on student performance available to policymakers and the public at the national, state and local levels. The Board also serves an important role in evaluating the condition and progress of American education since 1969.

UPCOMING SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

November 17	10:00 a.m.	Organization Meeting
November 18	11:00 a.m.	Regular Meeting
December 2	11:00 a.m.	Regular Meeting

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida

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Alberto M. Carvalho
Superintendent of Schools

Logan Schroeder-Stephens
Student Advisor to the School Board

Produced by the Office of Communications
Daisy Gonzalez-Diego
Chief Communications Officer

