

# CONNECTION

A NEWSLETTER FOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS PARENTS

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December 2019

Volume 12 | Issue #58 |

# Happy Holidays!



*May you and your family enjoy the holiday season.*

## EXPLORING LATER START TIMES FOR SCHOOLS



The Miami-Dade School Board voted to explore options for creating a bell schedule that will both consider the health needs of all students while increasing transportation access to high-demand choice programs across Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS).

Sleep is a vital, often neglected, component of every person's overall health and well-being. However, for adolescents the medical community at large has declared a public health crisis of epidemic proportions.

Adolescent sleep needs are driven by a temporary biological shift in sleep onset and wake times that occurs concurrently with the onset of puberty and ends in early adulthood. Early school start times run counter to this biological condition and can contribute substantially to adolescent sleep deprivation.

Currently, M-DCPS start times run from 7:20 a.m. for high schools, to 9:10 a.m. for middle schools. Elementary schools have two start times: 8:20 a.m. for Pre-K to first grade; and 8:35 a.m. for elementary and K-8 Centers. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools start no earlier than 8:30 a.m.

Potential bell schedule alternatives will include options for starting

all grade levels no earlier than 8 a.m. and allow for expanded transportation operations.

District staff has solicited feedback through small focus groups of parents, school leaders, and teachers on viable alternatives. More input will be solicited from several stakeholder groups through various vehicles, including surveys, additional focus groups and town hall meetings.

The Superintendent will bring a recommendation to the Board by spring 2020 for potential implementation for the 2020-2021 academic year.

For more information, visit [belltimes.dadeschools.net](http://belltimes.dadeschools.net)

# SAVE THE DATE! 5TH ANNUAL SUPERINTENDENT'S 5K CHALLENGE

## SUPERINTENDENT'S CHALLENGE 5k

RACE FOR EDUCATION

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**MARCH 7, 2020**



The Foundation for New Education Initiatives (FNEI) and Superintendent Alberto M. Carvalho will team up once again to host the 5th Annual Race for Education benefiting local public schools on Saturday, March 7, 2020 at 7:30 a.m. FNEI will donate a percentage of race proceeds to participating schools based on the number of participants each school team registers.

Registration is now open at: [www.giveourstudentstheworld.org](http://www.giveourstudentstheworld.org). The 5K (3.1 miles) course starts and finishes at the Maurice A. Ferré

Park on Biscayne Boulevard. The route heads eastbound on the MacArthur Causeway, then loops around onto Watson Island before heading back.

Adults may register as a Runner/Walker with a \$30.00 + \$2.50 registration fee. Students have three options to choose from: 5K, 1-mile Run, and the Kid's Dash for children ages 2-9. Registration for each student option is \$10.00 + \$2.00 registration fee. Prices increase after February 29, 2020.

## PARENT E-TIPS

### Primary:

Keep in Touch with Teachers

<http://bit.ly/2OBTbnJ>

### Secondary:

Help Your Teen Overcome Fear of College Entrance Exams

<http://bit.ly/2XA3z3n>

## IMPORTANT DATES & INFORMATION

**December 23 – January 3**  
Winter Recess

**January 15**  
Deadline for Magnet Applications

**January 20**  
Observance of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday

## HANTMAN, GALLON CHOSEN TO LEAD MIAMI-DADE SCHOOL BOARD



## SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

**January 15**  
11 a.m.  
Regular Meeting

**February 12**  
11 a.m.  
Regular Meeting

Perla Tabares Hantman has been re-elected as Chair of the Miami-Dade County School Board for the 2019-2020 school year. Ms. Hantman, who represents District 4, was originally elected to the School Board in 1996.

Ms. Hantman will serve for an

unprecedented 12th time as Chair. She is the first Hispanic woman to serve as Chair, and has previously served from 1999-2001, then each consecutive year from 2010-2015 and again from 2017 to 2019.

Dr. Steve Gallon III was elected as Vice Chair. Dr. Gallon, who represents District 1, was first elected to the School Board in 2016. This is his first time as Vice Chair.



During the holiday season, a time of giving and celebration, we must remember the less fortunate in our community, and that it is the perfect time to lend a hand. Unfortunately, homelessness continues to be a reality for more than 1,100 individuals who are living on the streets of Miami, and the approximately 10,000 students experiencing unstable housing in Miami-Dade County. In just four years, homelessness among the elderly has doubled to more than 700 men and women. And it is important to note that nearly 60 percent of people who are homeless are not mentally ill or on drugs. They just fell on hard times.

Project UP-START, the Homeless Education Program of Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS), assists schools with the identification, enrollment, and attendance of students living with unstable housing. This program

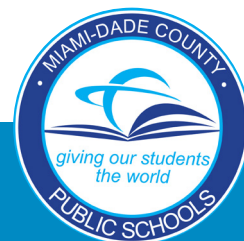
serves children and youth who have been displaced from their homes by ensuring that they are assisted with school placement, registration, transportation services, an after-school tutorial program at select homeless shelters, and support for post-secondary education. Project UP-START works in collaboration with the Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust to promote homeless awareness activities for students, school-based personnel, and community groups. The core of the program is to prevent children and youth who are in transition from being stigmatized, separated, segregated, or isolated on the basis of their status of where they sleep at night. Multiple efforts have been developed to ensure the equity of all Project UP-START students. Additionally, Project UP-START has a Homeless Education Campaign through a Sensitivity, Awareness, and Prevention curriculum, which was developed in collaboration with the Homeless Trust to provide students with a sense of pride and respect to all.

During the month of November, M-DCPS, in collaboration with the Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust, observed National Homeless

Awareness Month. Schools were encouraged to participate in a Homeless Awareness Rally on November 7th which was Homeless Awareness Day, as well as activities such as a "Bench Meet Up" to remind people how hard living on the streets can be physically or hanging "Socks on a String" as a visual reminder that the individuals in our community are in need of your help for the basics that make life livable.

So how can the community help? Drives are a great way to support our program. Project UP-START is always accepting non-expired non-perishable food (cereal, granola/nutrition bars), new kitchenware, new school supplies, toiletries, new clothing, new undergarment and socks, new toys and children's books, especially during the holiday season.

If you have additional ideas on how you can help, contact Project UP-START at (305) 995-7318, via email at [projectupstart@dadeschools.net](mailto:projectupstart@dadeschools.net) or follow them on social media @ProjectUPSTART.



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

## SOCIAL MEDIA



@MDCPS  
@EscuelasMDCPS  
@MiamiSup



@MiamiSchools  
@AlbertoMCarvalho1



@MiamiSchools  
@MiamiSup



@MiamiSchools

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

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Miami-Dade County,  
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