

CONNECTION

A NEWSLETTER FOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS PARENTS

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We want to hear from you! Provide feedback via our Community Survey at <http://belltimes.dadeschools.net/>.

FROM DEVASTATION TO DOUBLE MAJOR. MENTORS AT THE MIAMI MUSIC PROJECT COMPOSE BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR STUDENTS



Starina was born and spent most of her childhood in Haiti. At just nine years old, her home was reduced to rubble from the 2010 Haiti Earthquake. Her family had nowhere to go and spent their nights sleeping in the front yard. Two weeks later, Starina was strapped to the floor of a military airplane with her little sister,

leaving their parents behind to live with relatives in Florida. When the family reunited months later, their lives were in disarray. They were dealing with post-traumatic stress, constantly moving, and in and out of jobs. Despite these challenges, Starina found her only constant: THE CELLO.

Miami Music Project partnered with Miami-Dade County Public Schools and opened its program chapter in the Little Haiti neighborhood in 2011. Starina was one of the first kids to join and realized music was the one stable thing she could rely on. Being mentored in the Miami Music Project gave her a voice, newfound confidence, and the determination to push forward

through the many obstacles she faced. She made quick progress and advanced through to the top levels of the program, including playing in the orchestra.

Last year, Starina graduated from high school and enrolled at DePauw University, where she is a double major in Music and Biology.

"MIAMI MUSIC PROJECT HAS BEEN ONE OF MY MAIN SOURCES OF SELF-IMPROVEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT. I CAN STRONGLY SAY THAT I AM A BETTER PERSON BECAUSE OF THIS PROGRAM!"

- STARINA D'HAITI

MENTORING PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY FOR MEN AND WOMEN TO BE A POSITIVE ADULT ROLE MODEL IN A CHILD'S LIFE



Kavough Jernigan, Political Science Student at Florida A&M University.

My matriculation to college has been a long journey, one that makes me very proud. I am the first one of my siblings to attend a university and complete my degree in less than four years. I have maintained a 3.4 GPA over three years here on the campus of FAMU. I have joined many organizations and held leadership positions ranging from Administrative Secretary to Vice President.

I am thankful that I have made it this far and accomplished this much, but without the assistance of my mentor and Take Stock in

Children, I would not have been able to afford a college degree. Like many other individuals to come before, the scholarship that was given to me allowed me to pursue my college degree without much worry about financial aid. I encourage everyone to pursue a college education. Foundations like Take Stock in Children Mentoring Program give students like me the opportunity to seek higher education. Use these organizations to achieve your educational goals like I did.

DEVOTING AT LEAST ONE HOUR A WEEK AS A MENTOR SENDS A CHILD THE MESSAGE THAT SHE OR HE IS IMPORTANT IN THIS WORLD.

PARENT E-TIPS

Primary:

Teach Your Child How to Balance School & Activities

<http://bit.ly/39K7JLL>

Secondary:

Help Your Teen Overcome Fear of College Entrance Exams

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

IMPORTANT DATES & INFORMATION

February 17

All Presidents Day

March 23 - 27

Spring Recess

SAVE THE DATE! NATIONAL COLLEGE FAIR COMES TO MIAMI, FEB. 23, 2020. PRE-REGISTER ONLINE NOW!



Representatives from nearly 200 colleges and universities will be at the 2020 Miami National College Fair on Sunday, Feb. 23, 2020, to meet with students and parents on subjects such as financial aid, college planning, admission and testing requirements. The Fair, which has free admission,

will be held from 12 - 4 p.m., at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Miami Airport & Convention Center, 777 N.W. 72nd Ave., Miami, FL 33126. Parking is \$5, cash only.

Select informational sessions will be presented in Spanish and Haitian-Creole. A Counseling Center will also be available to allow students and their parents the opportunity to talk with trained professionals regarding college preparation, admissions and scholarships.

Requesting information from multiple colleges/universities at the College Fair just got easier. By pre-registering, students can print a bar-coded confirmation to be used at the Fair as an electronic ID. Students can pre-register at www.gotomyncf.com.

The National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) and Miami-Dade County Public Schools are sponsors of the event. School Board Chair Perla Tabares Hantman is co-chair of the local committee of the National College Fair. This is her 23rd consecutive year as co-chair. Every year NACAC sponsors fairs in more than 50 cities across the country attracting 650,000 students and parents.

For more information, contact the College Fair hotline at 305-995-1739 or visit www.nacacnet.org.

Follow the event on social media at [#collegefairmiami](https://twitter.com/collegefairmiami).

M-DCPS IMPROVES UPON ITS HISTORIC HIGH-LEVEL GRADUATION RATE



- Economically Disadvantaged students improved by .3 percentage points to 84.9 percent surpassing the state rate of 82.9 percent.

Miami-Dade's graduation rates for White, Hispanic, SWD and Economically Disadvantaged students exceeded those of the state. This is a remarkable achievement for a graduating class that is being measured on the more rigorous Grade 10 FSA ELA assessment.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools' (M-DCPS) graduation rate has reached an all-time high of 85.6 percent for the 2018-2019 academic year, a .2 percentage point increase from the 85.4 percent the prior year. This rate marks the highest graduation rate M-DCPS has achieved since the Florida Department of Education began tracking graduation statistics with modern methods in the late 1990s. If charter schools are removed from the calculation, the graduation rate for schools managed by the District is 89.2 percent.

Since 2006-2007, the District's graduation rate has increased

almost 27 percentage points from 58.7 percent to 85.6 percent in 2018-19. Following are some highlights of the District's performance:

- Hispanic students improved by .6 percentage points to 86.7 percent surpassing the state rate of 85.9.
- White students improved by .7 percentage points to 91.8 percent surpassing the state rate of 90.2 percent.
- The District's graduation rate for Students with Disabilities (SWD) improved by 2.5 percentage points to 82.2 percent surpassing the state rate of 80.6 percent.

SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

February 12

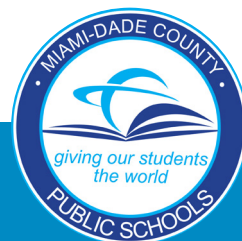
11 a.m.
Regular Meeting

March 11

10 a.m.
Instructional Material
Public Hearing

March 18

11 a.m.
Regular Meeting



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