

NEWS ALERT



Miami-Dade County Public Schools

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, March 20, 2020

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M-DCPS Recaps Week of Distance Learning and Addresses Spring Recess and Beyond

Faced with an unprecedented set of circumstances, due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), hundreds of thousands of Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) students, with the guidance of their teachers and the support of their parents and caregivers, completed the first week of distance learning.

Please click [here](#) to see Superintendent Carvalho's video message to students, families, and M-DCPS employees.

Instructional Delivery

Following Spring Recess, on March 30, distance learning at M-DCPS will resume, and parents and other caregivers are urged to continue to facilitate learning from home with the guidance of students' teachers. Upon immediate return to at-home learning, families can expect the same type of experience they had during the first week (March 16 – March 20).

M-DCPS is committed to ensuring the highest level of academic excellence, no matter the circumstances; and is currently developing the second phase of its distance learning plan, which will provide additional support and guidance to students and families. Information about phase 2 of the plan will be forthcoming.

Students and parents may continue to access the M-DCPS comprehensive Instructional Continuity Plan (ICP) by logging onto <http://icp.dadeschools.net/>. As part of the established plan, the District has also adapted content to be accessible for students with special needs and English Language Learners. Students can access their applications via the Student Portal.

An informational sheet on the frequently asked questions related to distance learning can be found at <http://covid19.dadeschools.net>.

The Distance Learning Helpline (305-995-HELP) has assisted more than 2,200 callers, and will resume operations following Spring Recess, Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

WLRN Educational Programming

M-DCPS and WLRN Public Media will be launching At-Home Learning, a new educational programming schedule on WLRN-TV that complements the school district's distance learning plan. The new weekday television schedule will begin airing on Monday, March 30th, 2020 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

(more)

M-DCPS Recaps / add one

At-Home Learning, free and accessible from any television, delivers age-appropriate educational programs through a familiar medium that supports the ICP. The new schedule includes specific blocks of time for Pre-K through 12th grade levels and cover subjects such as English language arts, social studies, science and math.

Program modifications will take place throughout the duration of school closures and will address a wide variety of content areas. Educators and parents will have access to supplemental lesson plans and curriculum materials to facilitate meaningful use of the content via <https://florida.pbslearningmedia.org/>.

Visit www.wlrn.org/athomelearning/ for more information about the modified broadcast schedule and available online resources.

Adult Education

M-DCPS is preparing to execute a distance learning plan beginning March 30 for adult, career and technical education, based on funding flexibility provided by the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE). All teachers and adult students can access instructional lessons and resource content through active, program-specific links provided via each adult education enter and technical college website.

Device Distribution and Connectivity

Since Friday, March 13, M-DCPS has provided students with nearly 56,000 devices to ensure all are able to participate in distance learning. While the deadline to exchange or receive a device at all school sites ended today; following Spring Recess, M-DCPS will continue to distribute devices at several high school locations in the north, central, and southern parts of the county. Students who are still in need of a device are asked to contact their principal for additional information.

The District will continue to collaborate with private and public sector partners to ensure geographic areas lacking Internet connectivity are addressed, eliminating any digital deserts that may exist. M-DCPS is currently working to add an additional hotline for teachers, students, and parents to specifically address connectivity issues.

In addition, Comcast continues to offer free Wi-Fi via Xfinity hotspots where Xfinity service is available for 60 days. This is in addition to the Internet Essentials Program, normally \$9.95 per month, which will provide an in-home modem and 60 days of free service for eligible low-income M-DCPS families.

Participation in this program is strongly recommended for those in need. More information about the free Internet service can be found at <http://distancelearning.dadeschools.net/>. Access to free Wi-Fi connections via hotspots should be limited to educational use or other essential health and safety functions. Comcast has also agreed to provide flexibility on late fees and payment options. Those struggling to pay for Internet service should contact 1-800-Comcast.

(more)

M-DCPS Recaps / add two

Magnet Program Notifications

Students who applied for admission to a magnet school/program will be notified on Monday, March 30. Students will receive an email with their application status or a postal letter if they applied by mail. More information can be found at miamimagnets.org/questions.

AP, IB, SAT Testing

Students who applied for Advanced Placement (AP) testing will be notified of their status on March 30. Students who applied for AP testing online will receive an email while those who applied through U.S. Postal Service will be contacted via mail. Beginning March 30, the 305-995-HELP line will also include dedicated staff to answer any questions. The child's school can also be contacted for additional information.

A decision will be made no later than March 27, 2020 regarding the May 2020 International Baccalaureate (IB) examination session and the options available for schools and students.

The College Board is canceling the May 2, 2020, SAT and SAT Subject Test administration. Make-up exams that were scheduled for March 28 are also canceled. Testing scheduled for June 6, 2020, has not been cancelled. The College Board and Khan Academy will continue to provide free online resources, including full-length practice tests and personalized learning tools.

Meal Distribution for Students and Families

During the first week of school closures, M-DCPS food service personnel distributed more than 200,000 hot to-go meals from all school sites.

During Spring Recess, the District has worked with non-profit organizations Farm Share, Feeding South Florida, and Share Your Heart to facilitate community feedings for the week. Links to the organizations' calendars and distribution sites may be found at covid19.dadeschools.net.

Beginning March 30, grab-and-go meals will continue to be distributed at 31 schools across the district, Monday through Friday from 4 p.m. – 7 p.m. These hours were chosen so as not to disrupt distance learning. The list of food distribution sites will be posted on the district's COVID-19 website in the coming days.

Sanitization of Schools

Teams of 20 to 30 custodians, supervised by master custodians, continue sanitizing schools daily. The teams have sanitized more than 49 schools in this first week, using hospital-grade germicides to clean floors, classrooms, cafeterias, gyms, all common areas and contact points; wiping and mopping down surfaces and fogging where needed. So far, 25,000 AC filters have been replaced. Crews are also utilizing specialized sprayers and foggers to assist in sanitization efforts.

Capital Improvement Projects

The school closures have allowed the District to accelerate the timeline of capital improvement projects at school sites.

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M-DCPS Recaps / add three

To date, 31 General Obligation Bond construction projects have been sped up, though the District does anticipate some challenges in the future related to the distribution chain of supplies in the private sector.

M-DCPS Employees

All M-DCPS employees, with the exception of a select number of essential personnel, will be on Spring Recess. Upon returning from recess on March 30, the entire workforce will be working remotely, with the exception of select personnel who may be called upon by their immediate supervisors to physically report for duty. Teachers and students can expect to continue as they have been this past week, engaging with one another through a variety of virtual means based upon the ICP.

The District will utilize all legally available means to compensate hourly employees. While these employees are not currently reporting to work, as part of established School Board Policy 8420, Emergency Closure of Schools, every effort will be made to provide these employees with opportunities to make up the hours not worked during the emergency at a later time.

Employees, retirees, and their dependents will have uninterrupted access to healthcare. Insurance coverage will continue, even if the ability to remit a premium is delayed. Once normal operations resume, arrangements will be made to collect outstanding premiums.

Employees enrolled in a District health plan will incur no out-of-pocket costs for COVID-19 testing, if it is medically necessary.

The CDC has advised of elevated travel advisory levels to several areas and issued specific guidance related to cruise ship travel. The District strongly recommends employees refrain from traveling to areas currently at Level 3 or Level 2, as well as defer travel via cruise ship. If employees choose to travel against these advisories, absences will be charged in accordance with established payroll procedures.

M-DCPS Facilitated Childcare for Health Workers

M-DCPS and the YMCA will continue to assist in the operation of childcare centers for children of essential medical personnel of Jackson Health and select University of Miami Health systems employees. Understanding the critical role these parents have for the health of our community, this service will continue through Spring Recess and beyond.

Federal Advocacy Efforts

The District continues advocating at the federal level for flexibility to provide meals for students and their families, expansion of Internet access, and funding to support the continuity of services and relief for employees affected by school closures. M-DCPS is also working to mitigate any potential budget reductions for this year and next.

Florida Department of Education Information

All K-12 schools and career and technical center campuses are to remain closed through April 15. All remaining assessments for school readiness, voluntary pre-kindergarten and K-12 assessments are cancelled.

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M-DCPS Recaps / add four

Requirements for graduation and promotion, and final course grades will be evaluated as though those assessments, which were cancelled, did not exist. In addition, school performance grades will not be calculated for the 2019-2020 academic year.

Eligibility for Florida Bright Futures scholarships shall be based on available data and results. Tests that were not available to be taken shall not be counted.

Unspent 2019-2020 funds from Reading Scholarship Accounts, the Reading Instruction Allocation, the Digital Classroom Allocation and the Teachers Classroom Supply Assistance Program as well as Title 2 funds will be redirected to help low-income students purchase digital devices and establish Internet services.

Unspent Safe Schools and Mental Health allocations will be redirected to virtual and telephonic mental health counseling services for students who need emotional support due to COVID-19.

All school readiness, voluntary prekindergarten, K-12, career and technical centers and state college programs are receiving full allocation of funding, enabling staff and contractors to be paid fully, through June 30, 2020, as though there was no disruption in education.

M-DCPS Telephone Resources

District Emergency Operations hotline: 305-995-3000 (available during Spring Recess, M-F from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.)

Mental Health Services Student/Parent Assistance Line: 305-995-7100 (available during Spring Recess, M-F from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.)

M-DCPS Employee Assistance Program: 305-995-7111 (available during Spring Recess, M-F from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

Instructional Learning Plan hotline: 305-995-HELP (4357) (will resume Monday March 30 from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. following Spring Recess)

M-DCPS Online Resources

<http://covid19.dadeschools.net/> - Provides continual updates on M-DCPS actions connected to the coronavirus outbreak.

<http://distancelearning.dadeschools.net/> - Includes information on free Comcast Internet as well as digital tools and tutorials for educators and students.

<http://icp.dadeschools.net/> - Provides the M-DCPS framework for distance learning for pre-K-12 students.

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M-DCPS Recaps / add five

The District will continue to monitor all developments in this evolving situation and will communicate via the links above, as well as through automated messaging, media announcements and social media.

For the most up-to-date information, please download the Dadeschools mobile app to your iPhone or Android device. Follow us on Twitter [@mdcps](#) and [@miamisup](#), on Instagram [@miamischools](#) and [@miamisup](#), and on Facebook at [MiamiSchools](#) and [AlbertoCarvalho](#)

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