

WORKFORCE WIRE



Volume 5 | Issue 58 | May 2026



HOT OFF THE WIRE

Liberty City Elementary School Principal Lamar Johnson (left) was named Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) 2026 Principal of the Year. Since becoming principal five years ago, the school has achieved an impressive turnaround from a “C” school to an “A” rating. Math proficiency rose from 28% to 72%, and ELA from 32% to 48%.

Dr. Andre Jackson (right) of Miami Jackson Senior High School won the top honor of Assistant Principal of the Year. When he arrived in 2022, Miami Jackson was a “C” school and is now a “B” school. Also during his tenure, the graduation rate increased from 80% to 96%.

Read more about their **EXCELLENCE** [here](#).

iLead

“iLead to amplify our community’s voice alongside our students, building changemakers who know their power and use it to make an impact.”

— Kristian Luciano

Social Studies Chair, Homestead Middle
2027 M-DCPS Rookie Teacher of the Year

BODY & MIND

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. Take action for your **SAFETY** and prevent heart disease today. Click [here](#) to watch a video from The Heart Truth® of the National Institutes of Health.



Open
PDF
for links!

To view all May observations, including Teacher Appreciation Month, Week and Day, click [here](#). As a reminder, all Miami-Dade County public schools, as well as Region and District offices, will be closed Monday, May 25 in observance of Memorial Day.

ABOVE & BEYOND

Leslie Trelles-Diaz is co-director of Falcon’s Nest Preschool at J.A. Ferguson Senior High. A 25+ year veteran educator, Ms. Trelles-Diaz teaches her high school students who are learning to teach the preschoolers enrolled at Falcon’s Nest. She is active in education-related community circles, a committed student mentor, and proud M-DCPS alumna. Ms. Trelles-Diaz is not the only educator in her family. Her two sisters are also veteran educators in the District – one a culinary arts instructor and the other a CAP advisor.





Innovation on the Menu

The District's 2nd Annual Food Show has been featured in Served Digizine, a national digital publication focused on child nutrition, school food service, and industry innovation. M-DCPS' Department of Food and Nutrition engaged nearly 600 students districtwide and 60 food vendors for students to taste and evaluate potential new menu items, directly informing the District's menu development process.

The third-party publication highlights M-DCPS' commitment to student-centered decision-making. Access the publication [here](#).



This video was made/produced by NatGen Network

Angie Kasselakis, MPA, RDN, SHRM-SCP
Food and Nutrition Officer
Miami Dade Public Schools

For example, she once suggested that pizza shouldn't be served with green beans because students weren't eating it. The district listened—and switched the side to corn, which quickly became more popular among students.

That kind of feedback has real impact. She's even seen participation increase at her school after menu changes were made based on student suggestions.

Her favorite item from the show? A sweet cheese pastry with strawberry sauce that she compared to strawberry cheesecake.

Food, Feedback, and Fun
The event also created opportunities for students to engage with vendors, discover new foods, and even learn creative skills like food photography.

One student talked enthusiastically about tasting crunchy dried edamame with umami flavor, describing it as similar to corn nuts.

Moments like these showed just how sophisticated student tastes have become—and how important it is for school menus to keep evolving.

A Program Built Around Listening
According to Miami-Dade Food and Nutrition Services Executive Director Angie Kasselakis, the most rewarding part of the event isn't just the food—it's hearing from the students themselves.

"The students say they appreciate that their voice is the forefront of their menu," she explained.

With more than 600 students participating, the energy throughout the food show proved

just how powerful student feedback can be.

The Future of School Meals
Events like the Miami-Dade Student Food Show demonstrate something important:

When students are given a voice in school meals, they don't just participate—they lead.

From voting on new menu items to shaping the direction of the district's meal program, these young leaders are helping ensure school food is delicious, nutritious, and something students actually want to eat.

And judging by the excitement at the event, the next generation of school meal leaders is already here.

Want more information on how we can highlight your association? Click here!



During the first 2026 NAF Quarterly Board of Directors Meeting at Hialeah Gardens Senior High

Leading in Choice

Our District leads the nation with a total of 60 NAF Distinguished career academies and three Model career academies. This year, M-DCPS reached this new achievement by adding nine new academies to its list of Distinguished NAF career academies.

This year's additions make 75% of the District's NAF academies now Distinguished, the highest proportion among large districts nationwide, that is, those with 15 or more academies.

Read more about it [here](#).

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