



WORKFORCE WIRE

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HOT OFF THE WIRE

The District has secured increased funding for security, mental health and a new minimum \$15 hourly rate for Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) employees.

As a result of Florida's new minimum wage law, the District revised salary schedules and all hourly employees will begin earning at least \$15 per hour as of October 1, 2022.

The budget also includes funds for additional School Resource Officers and equipment for the Miami-Dade Schools Police Department, as well as counseling and mental health services.

M-DCPS has been working diligently to improve access to and quality of its mental health resources since the Parkland tragedy in a neighboring Broward school on February 14, 2018. Currently, all M-DCPS employees enrolled in a school board sponsored Cigna health care plan have free access to behavioral healthcare providers at a zero-cost copay for services provided at non-hospital-based facilities.

iLead

"iLead with fairness, foresight, and consistency to guide my students from where they are to where they want to be. Listening compassionately allows me to gain trust and model leadership."

— Gabriela Goitía Vázquez
ELA & ESOL, Alonzo & Tracy Mourning SHS
2022 M-DCPS Rookie Teacher of the Year

BODY MIND

October is **National Breast Cancer Awareness Month**. **Breast cancer** is the second most common cancer in women, with 1 in 8 receiving a diagnosis in her lifetime. **All women** should know how their breasts normally look and feel and whether they are at higher-than-average risk for breast cancer. Women over the age of 20 should know how to self-examine for early detection. **Preventative practices include regular exercise, healthy eating, weight control, and alcohol and tobacco abstinence.** Talk to a health care provider about when you need to start getting **mammograms** or other screening tests.

World Mental Health Day is October 10. Visit yourmentalhealth.dadeschools.net for employee mental health resources.

ABOVE & BEYOND

Fatner Blaise is a 3rd grade teacher at Arcola Lake Elementary. He mentors new teachers, participates in school beautification, and makes every student feel like they are his favorite. Mr. Blaise is among the first at the school each day, assists with morning supervision, coordinates their annual Science Fair, and serves the school community as their resident Haitian-Creole translator and interpreter. Mr. Blaise is Arcola Lake's biggest cheerleader!



Remembering Michelle Vargas



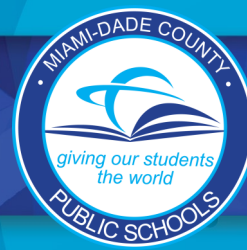
On Sunday, September 4, 2022, Michelle Vargas, a Special Education teacher at Cutler Bay Middle School, tragically passed away while saving her son from dangerous rip currents.

Ms. Vargas had been visiting El Salvador during the Labor Day weekend to celebrate her birthday and visit family. While swimming in the ocean, she noticed her 10-year-old son, who is on the Autism Spectrum and a strong swimmer, struggling against the current. Ms. Vargas quickly swam towards him to redirect him to family members swimming closer to shore when she herself was caught in the rip currents and went below the surface.

Ms. Vargas's sisters, one of which is also a teacher at Cutler Bay, traveled to El Salvador to return her son to the United States. A service was held on September 26 and the burial took place the following day.

Cutler Bay mourns the loss of a devoted educator who dedicated nearly 20 years to public and special education. The District joins Cutler Bay in its time of profound grief for Michelle Vargas.





A National Voice

The National Association of School Psychologists' (NASP) *Communique* newspaper published a piece by M-DCPS' own Frank Zenere, school psychologist and district coordinator, Student Services Crisis Management Program; emeritus member of the NASP National Emergency Assistance Team and a National Organization for Victim Assistance/ Florida Crisis Response Team responder.

At Uvalde, the 7th school shooting he has been called to, Mr. Zenere and his team met with over 800 individuals. Read the full news article [here](#).

Communique

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NASP
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

VIEWPOINT I Never Thought This Could Happen Here: A Reflection on Uvalde

BY FRANK ZENERE

By the time this article is published, the national coverage of the shooting at Robb Elementary may have disappeared from the headlines. That being said, I wanted to share my thoughts as a crisis responder to the tragedy. This is not intended to be a political article, nor is it an attempt to move the needle on the register of public opinion. It is simply a sharing of the heart, a professional and personal reflection of my time in Uvalde.

As a school psychologist and district coordinator of the Miami-Dade County Public Schools crisis management program, I have spent the last 30 years



responding to countless losses of students and staff members. It has been my occupational and life's mission to bring a measure of comfort and understanding to those experiencing loss and to enhance their ability to successfully navigate the grieving process. For the greater part of 25 years, I have also actively served as a volunteer crisis responder for the National Association of School Psychologists [CONTINUE ON PAGE 16]

RESEARCH-BASED PRACTICE

Interventions for Children of Incarcerated Parents Through the Lens of Development

BY MEGAN RIEGL, COLLEEN ARINI, SAMANTHA JEAN BAGWANDEN, & NILOPER NAQVI

Currently, the United States is ranked number one in the world in rates of incarceration (Wagner & Bertram, 2020). As of January 2020, 30% of adults in the United States were in prison or jails. One and a half million children younger than 18 have had parents incarcerated at some point in their life (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). In keeping with other racial disparities within the United States, the racial breakdown of people incarcerated is not proportional to the racial breakdown of the country, with Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) being five times more likely to be incarcerated compared to their White counterparts (Nellis, 2021). Overall, 64% of women in jails are women of color (Green et al., 2016), suggesting that men and women who identify or who are identified as BIPOC are being imprisoned at a greater rate than people who identify or who are identified as White.

Having an incarcerated parent is a risk factor for children of all ages (Fehlmann & Turney, 2021). Children with incarcerated parent face challenges such as lack of access to proper health care, and are at greater risk of a host of chronic health conditions (Fehlmann & Turney, 2021; Turney, 2017; Turney & Goodsell, 2018). Children whose parents are incarcerated are at greater risk for increased mental health issues (Fehlmann & Turney, 2021) and face social stigma (Luther, 2016). Incarceration of their parent impacts a family system through loss of social, emotional, and financial support (Fehlmann & Turney, 2021).

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Reading Methods for Students With Disabilities: The Case Law

BY PERRY A. ZIRKEL

The "Reading Wars" have not ended, revealing not only the lack of consensus in the field but also a continuing discrepancy between research and practice (e.g., Goldberg & Goldenberg, 2022; Preston, 2022). Although reading remains a priority in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

enact. For example, unlike the ESSA and state dyslexia laws, the IDEA clearly provides an individual right to sue, along with various specific rights and protections, including a due process hearing and attorney's fees for prevailing plaintiffs. In addition to long-standing issues of the appropriate reading methods, the

fixation of specific learning disabilities in the 2004 amendments of the IDEA (e.g., Zirkel, 2017), the qualified requirement in the 2004 IDEA amendments that the IEP's specification for specially designed instruction be based on "peer reviewed research" (e.g., Zirkel, 2022a), and the endorsement of particular interventions in the expanding state laws for students with dyslexia (e.g., Zirkel, 2022a).

The purpose of this article is to provide a synthesis of the judicial



Magnet Themes & Choices

MAGNET SCHOOLS 2023-24 Magnet Applications Start October 1, 2022

It's Magnet Season!

Magnet applications open October 1st. In this issue, we thank Magnet Lead teachers districtwide who manage recruitment, outreach activities, staff development, curriculum, and implementation of M-DCPS' more than 370 Magnet theme-based programs. We are humbled by the hard work, dedication and passion you invest in guiding parents and broadening our students' horizons.

Thank you, Magnet Lead Teachers of M-DCPS!

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