

WORKFORCE WIRE

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Vivian Ventura, Teacher of the Year



Nikolas Venegas, Rookie Teacher of the Year



HOT OFF THE WIRE

Vivian Ventura, an orchestra teacher at Southwood Middle School, has been named the **2026 Francisco R. Walker Miami-Dade County Teacher of the Year**. A 20-year veteran teacher at Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS), Ms. Ventura's greatest joy is watching students with no musical knowledge blossom into budding skilled musicians and serve their community through music.

The **2025 Rookie Teacher of the Year** is **Nikolas Venegas**, a first-grade teacher at Avocado Elementary School. His classroom is a dynamic, immersive space where he employs inquiry-based learning and hands-on activities to spark conversations and wonder in his students.

iLead

"iLead with excellence by inspiring others, setting high standards, fostering collaboration, and consistently delivering exceptional results with integrity and innovation."

— LaKeshia Wilson-Rochelle
Administrative Director
5000 Role Models of Excellence Project

BODY & MIND



"Prioritize yourself. You are your longest commitment."

— Wynn,
your wellness buddy



National School Counseling/Student Services Week is February 3-7. Thank you, counselors and student service providers! • All Miami-Dade County public schools, as well as Region and District offices, will be closed Monday, February 17 in observance of Presidents' Day.

ABOVE & BEYOND



Yajaira Cunningham is a Community Liaison Specialist at South Dade Technical College. Described as a Success Maker by her administrators, she involves herself in every aspect of school life to ensure student achievement. From Opportunity Fairs to monthly workshops, Ms. Cunningham has conceived and spearheaded a range of innovative spaces and events to prepare South Dade's career and technical education students for lifelong career success.



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M-DCPS
YOUR BEST CHOICE



95.2%

2024 GRADUATION RATE

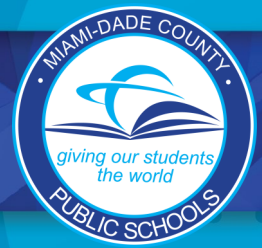
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



EXCELLENCE

M-DCPS
YOUR BEST CHOICE





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Celebrating Innovation

M-DCPS joins our nation in celebrating **Black History Month 2025** and its theme of **African Americans and Labor**, with a special focus on “key moments, themes, and events in Black history and culture,” especially some of the glass-ceiling-shattering African-American figures that have named and shaped our schools.

STEM - George Washington Carver, agricultural scientist and researcher • **Public Service** - Dr. Frederica S. Wilson, education, job, housing and security champion • **International & Advanced Studies** - Christina M. Eve, promoter of higher education among Black youth • **Health Sciences** - Charles R. Drew, blood preservation, banking and donation pioneer • **Fine Arts** - Maya Angelou, poet, essayist, civil rights activist, recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom • **Early Childhood & Education** - Nathan B. Young, educational administrator, inspector and representative • **Business & Finance** - Jesse J. McCrary, Jr., advocacy attorney for the economically disadvantaged • **Arts & Multimedia** - Marvin Dunn, author on race and ethnic relations in the 20th and 21st centuries.



(l.r) MDSPD Motor Unit Sargeant Victor Fonseca, Officer Manuel Alvarez, Officer Steve Barthelemy and Officer Luis Suarez.

Safety, but Faster

Did you know the Miami-Dade Schools Police Department (MDSPD) has a Motor Unit? Established in 2021, the Motor Unit patrols high-traffic school zones and enforcement zones to protect our students, families, and employees. Beyond enforcement, Motor Unit officers assist with school security, providing a visible presence to deter offenses in and around our schools. They participate in community outreach, educating students during career days and the community on road safety.



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