



APPRENTICESHIP

INSIDER

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2026 Apprenticeship Impact Event: Strengthening Families, Workforce & Community



In celebration of 2026 National Apprenticeship Week, the Office of Postsecondary Career & Technical Education (OPCTE) hosted the 2026 Apprenticeship Impact Event: Strengthening Families, Workforce & Community on April 28, 2026, at Robert Morgan Technical College. The event brought together more than 150 attendees for an evening showcasing apprentices, their families, and the powerful impact apprenticeship programs have on strengthening careers, businesses, and communities across Miami-Dade County.

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2026 Apprenticeship Impact Event: Strengthening Families, Workforce & Community



The evening began with welcoming remarks from Dr. José L. Dotres, Superintendent of Schools, who set the tone by emphasizing the importance of apprenticeship opportunities in preparing a skilled workforce and creating pathways to economic mobility. Guests also heard from three featured speakers who highlighted apprenticeship from workforce, employer, and apprentice perspectives: Mr. Rick Beasley, Executive Director of CareerSource South Florida, who spoke on workforce development and economic impact; Mr. Greg Echerri, Area Service Manager for United Rentals, who shared the employer perspective on investing in apprenticeship talent; and Mr. Shawn King, a former apprentice turned successful business owner of King Fleet Services, who inspired attendees



by sharing his apprenticeship journey and career success.



A special highlight of the evening was the Apprenticeship Pinning Ceremony, recognizing both apprenticeship completers and current apprentices for their dedication, growth, and commitment to their careers. As family members, employer partners, and community leaders looked on, the ceremony served as a meaningful reminder of the life-changing opportunities apprenticeship provides and the collective effort required to build a stronger workforce and brighter future for our community. ■



Miami EdTech Live Podcast: “The Growth Blueprint: Building Miami’s Apprenticeship Talent Pipeline”

Miami EdTech Live Podcast: “The Growth Blueprint: Building Miami’s Apprenticeship Talent Pipeline”



As part of 2026 National Apprenticeship Week, Mr. René Mantilla, Assistant Superintendent for the Office of Postsecondary Career & Technical Education, and Ms. Maria Gutierrez, Executive Director, joined Mr. Carlos Gonzalez , Founder/CEO of GoSprout, on The Growth Blueprint - Episode 6, titled “Why Employers, Schools, and Communities Must Work Together.” The live podcast discussion highlighted how Miami-Dade County Public Schools is building apprenticeship pathways that are employer-driven, community-centered, and focused on creating real economic mobility for students and adult learners.

“The beautiful part about apprenticeship is that there is no cost to the student — while earning a paycheck, apprentices also gain the education, technical skills, and hands-on experience needed for long-term career success.”

-René Mantilla

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*Welcoming our
New ATR*

GABRIELA SABLON

We are pleased to welcome Ms. Gabriela Sablon as the new Apprenticeship Training Representative (ATR) with the Florida Department of Education, supporting apprenticeship programs throughout our region. Gabriela brings extensive experience in program coordination, community outreach, customer service, and operations management, along with a strong commitment to collaboration and supporting workforce initiatives.

Most recently, Ms. Sablon served as a Program Coordinator with the Alliance for Aging, where she managed community partnerships, coordinated programs, and supported outreach efforts. Her experience in program coordination, stakeholder engagement, community outreach, and relationship building, combined with her strong organizational and customer service background, brings valuable expertise to the continued support and expansion of apprenticeship initiatives. We are excited to welcome Gabriela and look forward to working together to continue expanding apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities for students, employers, and communities across South Florida. ■

Parent Academy Livestream: “Building Careers & Communities Through Apprenticeships”

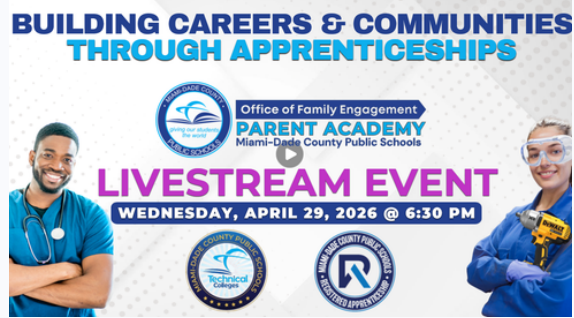
Parent Academy Livestream Reaches More Than 3,000 Viewers

As part of 2026 National Apprenticeship Week, Miami-Dade County Public Schools hosted a special Parent Academy livestream, “Building Careers & Communities Through Apprenticeships,” on April 29, 2026, engaging more than 3,000 viewers in an important conversation about apprenticeship opportunities and their impact on students, families, employers, and the local economy.

The livestream featured Dr. José L. Dotres, Superintendent of Schools, Mr. René Mantilla, Assistant Superintendent for the Office of Postsecondary Career & Technical Education, and Mr. Juan Aleman, Corporate Service Director for Bomnin Auto Group, one of M-DCPS’ leading apprenticeship employer partners. Throughout the discussion, panelists highlighted how apprenticeship programs are creating meaningful pathways for students to gain hands-on experience, develop skills in high-demand industries, and earn while they learn — all while avoiding unnecessary student debt and maintaining opportunities to pursue higher education in the future.

Superintendent Dotres emphasized the district’s commitment to ensuring every student has access to a pathway that leads to success, whether through college, a career, or both. He shared how apprenticeships are helping redefine success by providing students and families with high-quality career options that strengthen economic mobility while helping employers develop a workforce trained to meet real industry needs.

A particularly powerful moment came as Mr. Aleman shared his personal career



journey, explaining that traditional college was not the right path for him and that he instead pursued a hands-on career working in the automotive industry. His story served as a reminder that there are many pathways to success and demonstrated how dedication, skill development, and career-focused opportunities can lead to leadership and long-term professional growth. Aleman also highlighted Bomnin Auto Group’s strong commitment to investing in apprentices and creating meaningful opportunities for the next generation of skilled automotive professionals.

The livestream reinforced a shared message: when schools, employers, and communities work together, apprenticeship becomes a powerful tool for building stronger futures for students, supporting families, and strengthening the workforce and economy of South Florida. ■

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Miami EdTech Live Podcast : “The Growth Blueprint: Building Miami’s Apprenticeship Talent Pipeline”

During the conversation, Mantilla and Gutierrez shared how M-DCPS has expanded apprenticeship opportunities through strong employer partnerships, workforce-aligned training, and innovative approaches to talent development. Topics included the importance of listening to employer workforce needs, creating pathways for underserved communities, integrating emerging technologies, and building long-term talent pipelines that strengthen both businesses and local communities. One of the key messages reinforced throughout the discussion was the power of apprenticeship to provide students with a debt-free, earn-while-you-learn pathway to high-demand careers. ■

BOMNIN AUTOMOTIVE

Bomnin Auto Group: First Graduating Apprenticeship Cohort



On April 17, 2026, Bomnin Auto Group celebrated an important milestone as the first cohort of apprentices completed the Automotive Service Technology Apprenticeship Program delivered in partnership with Miami-Dade County Public Schools. A total of five apprentices successfully completed the program, marking a major step forward in expanding employer-driven apprenticeship opportunities in the automotive industry.

The completion of this inaugural cohort reflects Bomnin Auto Group's strong commitment to workforce development and investing in talent from within. Through the apprenticeship model, participants gained valuable hands-on training in a real dealership environment while receiving related technical instruction designed to strengthen both technical skills and career readiness. By combining paid on-the-job learning with classroom instruction, apprentices were able to build industry expertise while advancing toward long-term career opportunities.

Building on the success of this first cohort, Bomnin Auto Group plans to expand apprenticeship opportunities even further by

opening a second on-site apprenticeship program in Doral within the next few months, increasing access to hands-on training and career opportunities for future automotive technicians.

This milestone highlights the continued growth of M-DCPS apprenticeship partnerships and the power of collaboration between education and industry. As one of the district's leading employer partners, Bomnin Auto Group continues to play an important role in creating meaningful career pathways that help students and adult learners gain skills, earn wages, and build successful futures in high-demand fields. ■





Leading the Way with NC3 Upskilling



As part of Miami-Dade County Public Schools' commitment to supporting both apprentices and employer partners, apprenticeship employers have access to a variety of added benefits designed to strengthen workforce development beyond the apprenticeship program itself. One of these benefits includes the opportunity to upskill current employees through industry-recognized certifications and microcredentials of value, helping employers strengthen the skills of their existing workforce while remaining aligned to evolving industry demands.

While many of these certifications are already embedded into M-DCPS apprenticeship programs, there may still be experienced employees within a company who never had the opportunity to receive this specialized training or earn these credentials. Providing incumbent workers with access to industry-recognized certifications helps close skill gaps, strengthens technical expertise, supports employee advancement, and creates a more highly skilled workforce overall. To address this need, M-DCPS offers apprenticeship employer partners opportunities to participate in targeted upskilling trainings aligned to industry needs.

What Makes the NC3 Snap-On Digital Multimeter Certification Valuable?



At first glance, many technicians believe they already know how to use a digital multimeter. However, the reality is that while many may understand the basics, there are often gaps in proper technique, interpretation, safety, and advanced troubleshooting that can impact efficiency and accuracy in the field.

The NC3 Snap-on Digital Multimeter Certification goes beyond simply turning on a meter and taking a reading. Participants strengthen their understanding of meter functions, symbols, electrical measurement principles, troubleshooting strategies, and proper testing procedures using industry-standard Snap-on diagnostic equipment. The training reinforces best practices for diagnosing electrical systems safely and accurately — skills that are increasingly critical in today's highly technical automotive, diesel, transportation, HVAC, and equipment industries.

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"Most technicians think they already know how to use a multimeter, and many do know the basics. But this certification helps sharpen those skills, reinforces proper testing procedures, and improves troubleshooting accuracy. Even experienced technicians walked away learning something new."

— Frank Portuondo, Instructor



National Apprenticeship Week Forum



Workforce leaders, employers, education partners, and community stakeholders gathered at The Beacon Council on April 28, 2026, for a special National Apprenticeship Week Forum and Panel Discussion hosted by CareerSource South Florida. The event focused on the growing importance of apprenticeship as a workforce strategy for addressing talent shortages, strengthening local industries, and expanding economic opportunity throughout South Florida.

Representing Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Mr. René Mantilla, Assistant Superintendent for the Office of Postsecondary Career & Technical Education, served as a featured panelist, sharing how M-DCPS continues to expand apprenticeship opportunities through strong employer partnerships, workforce-driven program design, and career pathways aligned to local labor market demands.

Throughout the discussion, panelists emphasized the importance of collaboration between schools, employers, workforce boards, and community organizations in developing talent pipelines that meet the needs of today's workforce. Apprenticeship was highlighted as a proven model that provides students and adult learners with hands-on experience, industry-recognized training, and meaningful pathways to long-term career success.

The forum also reinforced the strong partnership between M-DCPS and CareerSource South Florida in identifying workforce needs, engaging employers, and expanding apprenticeship opportunities in high-demand industries. Through continued collaboration, both organizations remain committed to strengthening South Florida's workforce and creating opportunities that benefit students, families, employers, and the broader community. ■

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United Rentals: Leading the Way with NC3 Upskilling



For experienced technicians, the certification serves as a valuable refresher while introducing updated techniques and reinforcing industry standards. For employers, it helps ensure greater consistency, improved diagnostic accuracy, and a workforce equipped with validated, industry-recognized skills.

United Rentals Is Leading the Way!

United Rentals is leading the way as the first M-DCPS apprenticeship employer partner to upskill incumbent workers through NC3. Through two one-day training sessions, 27 employees successfully earned the NC3 Snap-on Digital Multimeter Certification, strengthening their technical skills and reinforcing United Rentals' commitment to continuous employee growth and professional development. This effort reflects the strong partnership between M-DCPS and industry, ensuring both apprentices and incumbent workers have access to high-quality training that supports long-term workforce success. ■

Diesel Advisory Committee Update



Industry partners, instructors, and workforce stakeholders came together on April 15, 2026, at Robert Morgan Technical College for the latest Diesel Advisory Committee Meeting, focused on strengthening diesel workforce pathways and ensuring apprenticeship and career technical education programs remain aligned to industry needs.

The meeting provided an opportunity for employer partners to share feedback on workforce trends, emerging technologies, skill gaps, and hiring demands within the diesel and heavy equipment industries. Discussions also focused on strengthening alignment between classroom instruction, hands-on training, and employer expectations to better prepare students and apprentices for successful careers in the field.

M-DCPS continues to value the expertise and input of industry partners, whose collaboration plays a critical role in shaping high-quality, workforce-driven programs. Through advisory committees like this, apprenticeship and career technical education programs remain responsive to the evolving needs of employers while creating stronger pathways to employment for students and adult learners. ■

Growing New Apprenticeship Opportunities

Miami-Dade County Public Schools continues to expand apprenticeship opportunities to better meet workforce needs and create additional pathways to high-demand careers. As part of this continued growth, the district recently received approval for a new Heating & Air Conditioning Technician & Installer Apprenticeship Program, a four-year apprenticeship designed to prepare participants for careers in one of South Florida's most in-demand skilled trades sectors.

Building on this momentum, M-DCPS is actively developing several additional apprenticeship programs to expand opportunities across multiple industries. Programs currently in development or planned for submission include Electrician, Plumbing, CDL-B, and the district's first apprenticeship in Culinary Arts. Additional apprenticeship opportunities are also being explored in response to workforce demand and employer feedback.

These new apprenticeship pathways reflect M-DCPS' ongoing commitment to working closely with employers to design workforce-driven programs that address real talent shortages while creating meaningful, earn-while-you-learn opportunities for students and adult learners. By expanding into high-demand sectors, M-DCPS continues to strengthen talent pipelines that support local industries, families, and communities throughout South Florida. ■

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APPRENTICESHIP

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Strong industries are built on strong pipelines. When we invest in people early & intentionally, everyone benefits —students, employers, and our community.

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Federal and State Laws

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida adheres to a policy of nondiscrimination in employment and educational programs/activities and strives affirmatively to provide equal opportunity for all as required by:

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 - prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended - prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, or national origin.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 - prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender.

Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA) as amended - prohibits discrimination on the basis of age with respect to individuals who are at least 40.

The Equal Pay Act of 1963 as amended - prohibits gender discrimination in payment of wages to women and men performing substantially equal work in the same establishment.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 - prohibits discrimination against the disabled.

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) - prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in employment, public service, public accommodations and telecommunications.

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) - requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to "eligible" employees for certain family and medical reasons.

The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 - prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.

Florida Educational Equity Act (FEEA) - prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, gender, national origin, marital status, or handicap against a student or employee.

Florida Civil Rights Act of 1992 - secures for all individuals within the state freedom from discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap, or marital status.

Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) - prohibits discrimination against employees or applicants because of genetic information.

Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act of 2002 – no public school shall deny equal access to, or a fair opportunity for groups to meet on school premises or in school facilities before or after school hours, or discriminate against any group officially affiliated with Boy Scouts of America or any other youth or community group listed in Title 36 (as a patriotic society).

Veterans are provided re-employment rights in accordance with P.L. 93-508 (Federal Law) and Section 295.07 (Florida Statutes), which stipulate categorical preferences for employment.

In Addition:

School Board Policies 1362, 3362, 4362, and 5517 - Prohibit harassment and/or discrimination against students, employees, or applicants on the basis of sex, race, color, ethnic or national origin, religion, marital status, disability, genetic information, age, political beliefs, sexual orientation, gender, gender identification, social and family background, linguistic preference, pregnancy, citizenship status, and any other legally prohibited basis. Retaliation for engaging in a protected activity is also prohibited.

For additional information contact:

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