

ARCHDIOCESE OF MIAMI OFFICE OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

PRINCIPAL NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 16, 2025



UPCOMING DATES:

- Oct. 25:** Catechetical Conference (Archbishop McCarthy HS)
- Oct 30:** Elementary AP Meeting (Sts. Peter and Paul)
- Nov. 1:** All Saints Day
- Nov. 2-8:** National Vocations Awareness Week
- Nov. 7:** Early Dismissal (PD)
- Nov. 11:** Veterans’ Day (no school)

A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Principals,

I hope the second quarter is off to a great start!

We continue to work hard on preparations for the Student Information System (SIS) transition at the end of the school year. As discussed at our last Principals’ Meeting, far more information will be sent to principals as we go through the year. This will include dates and topics for trainings for various educators. In recent weeks, we have worked with PowerSchool to answer a number of questions about our current SIS and how data will be transferred into PowerSchool. It is our goal to make this process as seamless as possible, automating the data transfer and minimizing a lot of low-level data entry.

I know principals (and other employees) have many questions about PowerSchool. I encourage you to continue to be patient as we get organized for this transition. The **attached** Timeline may be helpful in understanding how and when certain steps will be taken in this process. Feel free to contact me with any questions.

Jim Rigg, Ph.D.
Secretary of Education
Superintendent of Catholic Schools

ALL SCHOOLS MASS – CHANGE OF DATE

Please note that the date of the annual All Schools Mass has been changed due to scheduling issues. The Mass will take place on Monday, January 26, 2026 (vs. Jan. 28). Please mark this change in your calendar.

In addition, we have confirmed that the day of the annual Principals’ Retreat will be on Thursday, Feb. 12, 2026. More information about both of these events will be distributed closer to each date.

DILEXIT NOS - FROM DR. EDWARDS

Principals and Campus Ministers:

As announced this past weekend by The Holy See, Pope Leo XIV's first apostolic exhortation, *Dilexi Te* (I Have Loved You), builds on Pope Francis' encyclical *Dilexit Nos* (He Loved Us), emphasizing God’s preferential love for the poor and the Catholic Church’s mission to care for them.

Continuing the spiritual legacy of Pope Francis and signed on the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi (October 4), *Dilexi Te* calls every believer to rediscover the joy and holiness found in closeness to the poor, those who suffer, and to all who are on the margins of life. Furthermore, *Dilexi Te* calls believers to be cognizant of the spiritual poverty that afflicts the world today.

In both definitions of poverty (physical need and spiritual), Pope Leo emphasizes poverty as an opportunity of divine encounter, of hope, and of unity--our salvation is bound up with the lives of the poor, and through them, the Church is renewed.

I encourage you to share this document with your faculties and students. Portions may be read and discussed in Theology classes, English, Health, Social Studies and Sociology classes. It may also be an excellent source for faculty study, retreat development, personal reflection, and certainly curriculum permeation.

Below, I have provided a link for access to the document. Please, I encourage you to fold *Dilexi Te* into the life of your school and to continue studying, serving and praying for the needs of all; especially the poor, the scorned, the sick, homeless, abused, needy and marginalized among us. The Lord hears the cry of the poor - - - so must we. God bless.

[Apostolic Exhortation Dilexi te of the Holy Father Leo XIV on Love for the Poor \(4 October 2025\)](#)

EMBRACING COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION: THE VALUE PROPOSITION AT ITS BEST

Schools and systems in every state as well as institutions of higher education have begun to embrace competency-based education. This approach involves awarding of credit and diplomas based on a student's mastery of skills rather than seat time and written assessments alone. The approach recognizes that learning takes place in and outside of the classroom and laboratory. The result is an instructional approach that is more personalized and student-centered - - - based on a student's demonstrated mastery of knowledge. Note the following resources:

[Teachers Need PD to Make Competency-Based Learning Work. What That Looks Like](#)

[What Is Standards-Based Grading, and How Does It Work?](#)

<https://jayhawkflex.ku.edu/what-competency-based-education-cbe>

Bushway, D., Dodge, L., & Long, C. (2018). A Leader's Guide to Competency-Based Education. Stylus Publishing, Sterling, Virigina.

This is a timely research and discussion topic, especially for secondary educators.

FAITH FORWARD CONFERENCE – SAVE THE DATE:

The Faith Forward Conference is returning to Belen Jesuit on March 20, 2026! Please see the **attached** Save the Date flyer for more information.

FCC: TERRA NOVA NEXT ASSESSMENT ORDERS SPRING 2026:

Please remember to submit your TerraNova Next Assessment Orders for Spring 2026 if you have not done so. **The submission deadline is October 23, 2025. Please keep the order form in its original Excel format and do not submit it as a PDF or Google Doc.** Please copy our Diocesan Assessment Coordinator, Dr. LaTonya White (lwhite@theadom.org) when submitting your orders to fccorders@datarecognitioncorp.com.

The ***Teacher's Guide to TerraNova NEXT*** is an OPTIONAL resource and may be found under the Ancillary Materials section on the order form. Once purchased, the guide is accessed digitally from the DRC portal by the User that is assigned to the license (one user per license agreement). You may also call Customer Service at 800-538-9547 to place your order if you did not include it on the order form.

FEDERAL PROGRAMS UPDATE:

As you may recall, the Archdiocese operates a pooled fund process for Titles I, II, and IV. Given this pooling process, the OCS will complete any progress monitoring forms and surveys requested by the LEAs on behalf of our schools, **unless** otherwise instructed by our office to complete them individually.

Title II-A Professional Development Requests

Please continue using the following links to request professional development. Schools in Broward County should request PD in the PSW per usual in addition to the ADOM form below. Remember to submit timely requests (30-60 days prior to request) to allow providers with adequate time to fulfill your request.

[PD Request Form SY 25-26: Catapult Learning](#)

[PD Request Form SY 25-26: FACTS](#)

Title IV Requests (Miami-Dade)

This is a new process and schools will submit Title IV Grant Requests to the OCS using this link: [Title IV-A Grant Request 25-26](#). You may recall this information was shared in a previous email. Once the request is received in our office, we will submit the request on your behalf to the district. We may contact you for supporting evidence as needed. If you have a designated Title I Coordinator or other designee, please inform them of this process and share this link. We do ask for your patience as this is a new process for the district as well as ADOM. Please contact Dr. LaTonya White (lwhite@theadom.org) if you need assistance with the process.

Title IV Requests (Broward)

Schools in Broward County will continue submitting Title IV requests individually to the district at this time. Schools should have received an email this week with your school's Allocation Award Amount for the 25-26 SY. This amount should cover the iReady diagnostic costs for your school. The OCS has already submitted Purchase Orders for the diagnostic to the district. You will need to submit purchase orders for any purchases above the i-Ready diagnostic.

FRIENDZY AND ADOM (Elementary Schools):

Several schools have inquired about implementing Friendzy ([Home | Friendzy](#)) and the Launch Well program. We have an opportunity to purchase Launch Well plus three volumes of Friendzy for schools in Broward and Miami-Dade using pooled Title IV funding. If you would like to **opt-in**, please complete the **short survey** below by next **Friday, October 24**. This is time sensitive, and we kindly ask you to respect the timeline.

[Friendzy + Broward](#)

[Friendzy + Miami-Dade-Monroe](#)



HEART OF CHRISTMAS PROGRAM:

It is that time of year again for the Heart of Christmas program, which is designed to assist individuals and/or families in need by providing them with a gift card during the Christmas Season. The recipients are selected by the Archbishop at the recommendation of a pastor, principal or a director of an Archdiocesan program or entity.

The application is only available online. It must be completed by the parish, school or archdiocesan program—not by the family/individual that is being nominated. Given the overwhelming need for assistance, **please limit the number of applications to no more than 7 from each parish, school or program**. Since there are many in need, we cannot guarantee that we can assist every family through this program, so please do **not** notify the family until it has been confirmed that they have been selected as a recipient.

To complete the application, please visit: [2025 Heart of Christmas Application](#).

ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, November 28, 2025. The online application will automatically close on that day and time.

Please note:

- All applications **require** pastor, principal or archdiocesan program director (i.e. the person in charge) approvals.
- Employees of the Archdiocese of Miami or any of its entities are **not** eligible.
- Late submissions will not be considered.
- You will be notified by December 5th as to whether your application(s) has/have been approved.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Katie Blanco at kblanco@theadom.org.

STEP UP SCHOLARSHIPS – SCHOLARSHIP RENEWALS:

Please refer to the **attached** documents for:

- Full Renewal Checklist (every 3 years)
- Standard Renewal Checklist