

No Parent Left Behind

by Dr. Leslie Rosenfeld

Don't expect this to be a typical school year for you or your children. Instead, expect this year to bring lots of involvement in your child's education and academic success through the new Miami Beach Parent Academy.

A component of the City's Education Compact, the new academy is modeled after Miami-Dade County Public Schools' own parent academy. The program is available to all Miami Beach families, not just those in the public school system, free of charge.

The new academy helps parents and guardians keep track of and be involved in their children's education through different resources and training, provided in partnership with the City of Miami Beach's Education Compact.

"The academy is providing families with resources and information about ways they can support their children's education within our City," said Barbara Biggart, with the academy.

In order to get parents involved, the City's Education Compact began offering workshops in September about the different components of the academy. Topics and training included the use of the Parent Portal and the City's free WiFi connection, among others. The workshops were done at Miami Beach High, North Beach Elementary, Nautilus Middle and Treasure Island Elementary.

Stuart Barasch, father of ninth-grade and eleventh-grade students Jacob and Mollie Barasch, of Miami Beach High School, was at one of the workshops.

"Since the workshop, I've been successful in gaining access to the portal, which I could not do before," said Barasch. Through the portal, parents get access to supplemental educational services, free lunch information, and they can even track down their children's school attendance.

"Learning how to take advantage 24/7 of the school district's web based learning resources, parents have become more technologically savvy –they have also opened up channels of communication at home to better equip themselves to help their children succeed," said Biggart.

During the workshops, parents also have a chance to learn more about what the City of Miami Beach is doing to support local education through the Education Compact.

Upcoming parent workshops will include topics such as the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program initiative, preparing for the FCAT, anti-bullying prevention, academic skill building, Internet safety, food and nutrition, resume writing, managing stress and many others.

Please visit <http://theparentacademy.dadeschools.net/>, or www.miamibeachfl.gov and click on education, to learn more about the Miami Beach Parent Academy and upcoming workshop.