



PRESS RELEASE May 26, 2023

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Dade County Schools' first NASA HUNCH Center of Excellence

Dade County Students have pioneered new programs for NASA HUNCH and have become a national model for the platform. "The NASA HUNCH mission is to empower and inspire students through a Project Based Learning program where high school students learn 21st-century skills and have the opportunity to launch their careers through the participation in the design and fabrication of real-world valued products for NASA" [NASA HUNCH](#)

Dade County Schools' NASA HUNCH firsts include:

- Stratasys 450mc - Industrial level 3D Printer at a middle school
- NASA HUNCH Academy - Serving kids in grades 3 through 5
- Bio-Health Pathway – including Health Science Students
- The first designated 3D print center for NASA HUNCH
- The first NASA HUNCH Center of Excellence in the Nation
- Graphic Arts Pathway -Designing the Center of Excellence Patch, which will be used across the Nation.

The technology provided by the NASA HUNCH program also supports programs including GreenPower USA (students modify, design, and 3D print parts for their race cars, which won first place at the Talladega Superspeedway Race recently) with SolidWorks design software and Stratasys' 3D printers.

The NASA HUNCH program provides a unique approach to STEM/STEAM education, and students in Dade County Schools are making a name for themselves by leading the Nation in this program that supports astronauts in space. For 5 years Dade County High and Middle School students have designed and used the industrial level 3D printers and material donated by NASA HUNCH to print equipment for astronauts to use on the International Space Station.

Students study the equipment needs of astronauts to live in space for long periods of time and consider the effects of zero gravity as they design and print each part.

Dade County continues to excel in the NASA HUNCH program by being the first in the nation to include grades 3 through 5 in the design program. The Founder and Co-Founder of NASA HUNCH, Stacy Hale and Robert Zeek have visited this pilot program and have decided to mirror its curriculum across the Nation.

Additionally, in 2021 healthcare students at Dade County High School piloted a program that encourages students to look at health and wellness issues for astronauts who reside on the space station for long periods of time. This pilot has now become a National model for other schools in the NASA HUNCH program. Students decided to focus on the mental health of astronauts as they created scent capsules containing pleasant smells that remind them of home. Dade County students placed in the Nation's top ten with this leading concept at the Johnson Space Station in Houston, TX. While there, Dade County students met Victor Glover, pilot of NASA's Artemis II mission, who was impressed with the student's identification of the mental health problems encountered in space and their solution to the issue. Students are working on a custom kit for Mr. Glover to take on his next mission.

The Dade County School District is located in Trenton, GA, and serves approximately 2000 students in 2 elementary schools, 1 middle school, and 1 high school. It employs over 300 staff members with an operating budget of over \$20,000,000. The mission of Dade County Schools is to "ensure that every student has the opportunity to become independent, hard-working, life-long learners capable of succeeding in a changing society through:

- **D**edicated teachers & staff
- **C**ommunity & parent involvement
- **S**afe & orderly learning environments
- **S**trong leadership committed to excellence

For more information about the Dade County Schools and the NASA HUNCH partnership, please contact Ms. Shenea Hill, Director of Career & Technology Innovation at 706-657-6491 or email at sheneahill@dadecs.org.