

## Public schools, accelerator program unite to address the teacher shortage

BY ABRAHAM GALVAN

Miami-Dade Public Schools is joining forces with the nonprofit Achieve Miami's Teacher Acceleration Program (TAP) to address critical teacher shortages.

Through a memorandum of understanding signing, the county is committing to placing TAP teachers in area schools. Last year, 50 TAP program graduates were placed in schools, and this year 105 students are already participating in the program.

In February, Achieve Miami's TAP expanded by launching its program at Miami Dade College and Florida International University for the spring 2024 semester. The expansion of TAP follows the program's pilot at the University of Miami. With the program now in place at Miami Dade College, any adult with a four-year degree can enroll in TAP for the first time.

"What I'm most excited about right now is the celebration of the



*'This program provides an opportunity for you to prepare before you enter the classroom.'*

**Jose Dotres**

intersection of the public and private sector, gathering our greatest universities right here in Miami," said Leslie Miller Saiontz, founder

and president of Achieve Miami.

The growth of TAP comes as classrooms in Florida and across the US contend with a talent shortage that has left hundreds of thousands of students without a full-time teacher. TAP's mission is solving the shortage by creating a pipeline to a career in education and recruiting a new generation of teachers, Ms. Miller Saiontz added.

TAP fills vacant teaching positions in Miami by equipping candidates with the required skills to become teachers. Participants take a one-semester course, followed by a six-week paid summer internship, earn a certificate to teach, and begin instructing in a Miami-Dade County Public School.

"This program provides an opportunity for you to prepare before you enter the classroom. I would have probably entered in this program because I was a career changer," said Jose Dotres, Miami-Dade Public Schools superintendent.