



MIAMI LIGHTHOUSE FOR THE BLIND ADOPTS NEW NAME FOR ITS SCHOOL REFLECTING FOUR YEARS OF EDUCATIONAL GROWTH AND DIVERSITY

Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired has renamed its school, now known as Miami Lighthouse Academy LLC, to reflect the expansion of its classes during the past four years to include pre-school through first-grade students. Second-grade classes will be added in August 2021. The school was previously called the Miami Lighthouse Learning Center for Children™.

In a multifaceted educational approach to serving students who are blind, the Miami Lighthouse Academy LLC is one component within Miami Lighthouse's Children's Programs. Other offerings include Early Intervention for Blind Babies, and services for elementary and middle-school children during the summer, school holidays and Saturdays.

The Miami Lighthouse Academy LLC has been designed as a safe, child-oriented environment with a wide array of tactile experiences through which toddlers and young children can learn about the world around them in an engaging and fun way.

A 30,000-square-foot expansion to the current 115,000-square-foot school facility will open in August and provide the Miami Lighthouse Academy LLC with sufficient space to house its growing programs for children.

"We began the 2016 schoolyear with a school devoted to preschoolers, quickly expanded to add a kindergarten program and more recently introduced first-grade classes," said Miami Lighthouse President and CEO Virginia Jacko. "With the addition of a second grade, the Miami Lighthouse Academy will be able to provide all of our

students with the skills they will need to progress into the Miami-Dade County Public Schools system.”

The Miami Lighthouse Academy provides the community with a first-of-its-kind pre-kindergarten experience. Blind and visually impaired children from communities throughout Miami-Dade attend alongside sighted classmates from the surrounding Brickell neighborhood. Miami Lighthouse introduced this unique pilot project, in partnership with Miami-Dade County Public Schools and the Early Learning Coalition. Kindergarten and First-grade classes are composed entirely of blind and visually impaired students who learn an enhanced level of academic, sensory and social skills. The new second grade will expand upon that process.

For nearly a century, Miami Lighthouse for the Blind has been working to build a more inclusive society for the blind and visually impaired. Our innovative programming removes barriers to education, jobs and critical eye care and unlocks the power of the internet and technology. No one’s potential should be defined by ability, age, zip code, income, race or ethnicity. Our program offerings reflect the diversity of the communities we serve and their unique needs. Approximately 90% of the constituents we serve are low income from underserved populations.

Miami Lighthouse for the Blind is located at 601 Southwest 8th Avenue. For more information about Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and the Miami Lighthouse Academy, visit MiamiLighthouse.org, or call 305-856-2288.