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## GLOBAL HIT MAKER, PRODUCER DJ KHALED STEPS IN AS PRINCIPAL FOR THE DAY AS GET SCHOOLED RECOGNIZES CAROL CITY MIDDLE SCHOOL'S FIRST PLACE FINISH IN ITS NATIONAL ATTENDANCE CHALLENGE

*Superintendent Carvalho and Sway Calloway join Get Schooled and DJ Khaled to celebrate school's eight percent increase in attendance and national title*

**Miami Gardens, FL – January 20, 2016 –** [Get Schooled](#), Miami-Dade County Public Schools

Superintendent Alberto M. Carvalho , Miami Gardens Mayor Oliver Gilbert III and [Comcast](#) joined DJ Khaled and Sway Calloway, Shade 45 radio host and MTV News Correspondent, at a special event today to recognize Carol City Middle School as the national champion in the [Get Schooled 2015 Fall Attendance Challenge](#). The school improved its attendance rate eight percent – more than any of the other 98 middle and high schools around country that participated in the competition. The Challenge is supported by the [Internet Essentials program from Comcast](#).

"We launched the iAttend M-DCPS initiative last September to continue the school district's proactive approach to addressing school absenteeism," said Superintendent of Schools Alberto M. Carvalho. "Carol City Middle School's achievement demonstrates that we are on the right path to ensuring students are in school every day and receiving the benefits of a full day of classroom instruction. Get Schooled was a great tool that motivated students to get to school regularly to get the education they need to succeed."

DJ Khaled, a Miami-based multi-platinum music producer and Miami Gardens restaurateur, served as the Celebrity Principal for the event. Mayor Oliver Gilbert III declared it "DJ Khaled Day" to recognize the importance of his civic leadership in Miami Gardens. Well known for his social media advice, Khaled also shared some words of wisdom with the students – just like he does when he offers his "major keys to success" to his more than two million followers on Snapchat.

"Learning matters. Showing up matters. The key is to do it every day," Khaled said. "Carol City Middle School students did just that and that's why we are here today."

"At Carol City Middle School, we are passionate about improving attendance," said Principal Sonia Romero. "We came together as a school to bring a focus on attendance improvement this year, in support of our District's *iAttend* initiative, and Get Schooled was a great tool that motivated our students to come to school every day to get the education they need to succeed."

During the Challenge, a group of Student Ambassadors at Carol City rallied their classmates to improve the attendance rate and kept everyone engaged in learning through online education games.

"Carol City Middle School boosted their attendance by an incredible eight percent and demonstrated to Miami and the country what is possible when schools and partners work together," said Marie Groark, Executive Director of Get Schooled. "We are excited to recognize their hard work and success."

Thirty-five middle and high schools from Miami-Dade County Public Schools participated in the National Get Schooled Challenge as part of i-Attend, the district's own initiative to fight absenteeism. More than 75 percent of the Miami-Dade schools in the Challenge improved their attendance rate, averaging a 1.6 percent increase. Nationally, over half of all participating schools reported an increase in attendance.

Attendance is a critical metric in school and student performance because it is one of the best predictors of high school graduation rates and college readiness rates. Despite its importance, a 2012 Johns Hopkins study estimated that 7.5 million students in the United States miss a month or more of school, putting them at risk for failing to learn key skills and potentially dropping out of high school.

The Challenge was made possible through the support of [Internet Essentials from Comcast](#), the nation's largest and most comprehensive high-speed Internet adoption program, which provides affordable high-speed Internet service and free digital literacy training to low-income families. Since it began in 2011, Internet Essentials has connected more than 500,000 families, or more than 2 million low-income Americans, to the power of the Internet at home, including more than 182,000 people in South Florida.

"Increasingly, Internet access plays a critical role in education success. Comcast is committed to connecting more low-income students to digital educational resources, like those offered from Get Schooled," said Derek Cooper, Vice President of Government Affairs & Community Investment for Comcast in Florida. "We are proud to have supported this national effort and excited for the students and staff at Carol City Middle School for their accomplishments."

Cooper also presented each of the six Student Ambassadors with a special gift from Comcast and the Internet Essentials program - a laptop and an Internet Essentials opportunity card good for six months of free high-speed Internet service through the program. Comcast also donated four more laptops and six-month Internet Essentials opportunity cards for the school to distribute to additional students it selects.

### **About Get Schooled**

Get Schooled is a non-profit organization that directly engages and motivates students to graduate from high school and succeed in college. Get Schooled is the premiere education brand for young people – linking students with high quality, cutting edge resources and tools they need to succeed. Get Schooled has developed a track record of success because it engages with young Americans using the media, technology and popular culture that is an integral part of their lives. Get Schooled's work is boosted by

partners like Viacom, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Comcast. For more details on Get Schooled, visit [www.getschooled.com](http://www.getschooled.com).

#### **About Internet Essentials**

Internet Essentials from Comcast is the nation's largest and most comprehensive broadband adoption program. It provides low-cost broadband service for \$9.95 a month plus tax; the option to purchase an Internet-ready computer for under \$150; and multiple options to access free digital literacy training in print, online and in-person. Eligible families must have at least one child eligible to participate in the National School Lunch Program, including public, parochial, private, and homeschooled students.

For more information or to apply for the program, visit [www.InternetEssentials.com](http://www.InternetEssentials.com) or call 1-855-846-8376, or, for Spanish, visit [www.es.InternetEssentials.com](http://www.es.InternetEssentials.com) or call 1-855-765-6995.

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