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**MIAMI CITY BALLET AND MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
LAUNCH YEAR-ROUND DANCE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM “BALLET BUS”**

**New Program Provides Miami-Dade County Children with Full Scholarships to
Miami City Ballet School, Transportation, Dance Attire and World-Class Instruction**

Official Announcement Takes Place March 18, 2015

MIAMI BEACH, FL – (March 18, 2015) – Miami City Ballet, in partnership with Miami-Dade County Public Schools and the office of the Superintendent of Schools **Alberto M. Carvalho**, announces the launch of **Ballet Bus**, a year-round dance scholarship program reaching deep into the Miami-Dade County community to provide arts education and access to students from all backgrounds. The pilot year of the program will target 30 children from District Title I Schools with both talent and need – and provide a long-term investment in each child.

Superintendent Carvalho will announce the launch of **Ballet Bus** at the Meeting of the School Board of Miami-Dade County, Wednesday, March 18, 2015 at 5pm.

This nine-month, 34-week program will provide 30 local children, ages 7-10, with everything they need to succeed and excel in one of the nation’s premier dance training academies, including:

- Fully subsidized tuition at Miami City Ballet School
- Transportation from public school to Miami City Ballet School.
- Dance attire and equipment
- Family support and counseling
- Invaluable opportunities to engage with critically acclaimed teachers and artists

“Creative activities are the building blocks of a sound learning foundation,” said **Superintendent Carvalho**. “We could not be more thrilled about our partnership with Miami City Ballet and the tremendous impact this collaboration will have on students. Through Ballet Bus, students will be immersed in the professional standards of performing arts as they continue to develop skills that are fundamentally important to their success in the classroom and beyond.”

Scholarship students will be completely integrated into the Miami City Ballet School student body, and each student will be evaluated annually with the opportunity to move on to the next level of study. This long-term investment in each child will have a transformative impact on that young person’s future.

“Ballet changed my life from the age of five, and it continues to do so, to this day. We want to transform and inspire young people in our community in meaningful and lasting ways through the power of the performing arts, and specifically classical ballet,” said MCB Artistic Director and Chairman of Miami City Ballet School **Lourdes Lopez**. “We are thrilled to partner with Superintendent Carvalho and Miami-Dade County Public Schools, reaching deep into our community to provide arts education and access to students from all backgrounds – providing them with everything they need to succeed.”

Darleen Callaghan, Miami City Ballet School Director said, “It has always been my dream to offer scholarships, transportation, and opportunity to children in our community who would not otherwise have the resources to train at a professional ballet school. To give them the chance to experience the benefits of dance training and to carry those life skills into their adult lives would truly be impactful. This is what Ballet Bus can offer these children.”

Ballet Bus is structured around proven studies demonstrating that early exposure to the performing arts enhances young people’s academic achievement, social development and likelihood of graduation. The mission of this new collaborative program is to provide skills-based training, personal development and hope to children in our community who are most in need. The program is based on both merit and need – identifying talent and potential, and fostering a nurturing and supportive environment to encourage natural ability through classical training.

The first **Ballet Bus** classes are scheduled to begin with the commencement of the 2015-16 academic year of the Miami-Dade Schools. Details on participation will be announced soon.

For more information on Miami City Ballet and Miami City Ballet School, visit miamicityballet.org.

About Miami City Ballet:

Hailed by *The New York Times* as “one of America’s most beloved dance companies,” Miami City Ballet is led by Artistic Director Lourdes Lopez. The Company has 50 dancers and a repertoire of nearly 100 ballets. The Company performs for 120,000 patrons annually during its South Florida home season in Miami, Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach and Naples, and tours to top theaters domestically and internationally. Among the Company’s notable achievements have been critically acclaimed seasons in Paris and New York City and the nationally televised PBS THIRTEEN special: *Great Performances - Dance In America: Miami City Ballet Dances Balanchine and Tharp*.

Miami City Ballet School is the official school of Miami City Ballet, an elite pre-professional ballet training academy with a vibrant community division serving 1,500 students and granting \$500,000 in scholarships annually.

Miami City Ballet is headquartered in Miami Beach, Florida at the Ophelia & Juan Js. Roca Center, a facility designed by renowned architectural firm Arquitectonica.

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The Company is sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture. Miami-Dade County support is provided by Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners with additional support provided by the City of Miami Beach, Cultural Affairs program, and the Cultural Arts Council. Palm Beach County support is provided in part by the Board of County Commissioners, the Tourist Development Council and the Cultural Council of Palm Beach County. Broward County funding is provided in part by the Broward County Board of County Commissioners as recommended by the Broward Cultural Council and Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau. **Miami City Ballet** is a registered trademark of Miami City Ballet, Inc.