



Project GATE Gazette

A Warm Welcome from Ms. Ava Byrne, Deputy Superintendent, Professional Development

Welcome to the teaching profession. We are here to provide you with wonderful opportunities which will assist you in becoming a successful teacher in Miami-Dade County Public Schools. Increasing student achievement is one of our priorities, and we know that all of us need guidance and support in reaching our goals. **Project GATE** is one of our many new teacher support

opportunities designed with you in mind.

Take advantage of what we have to offer! Be an active participant in the development of your own skills as a teacher. Research is clear that both new teacher induction programs and mentoring partnerships keep new teachers teaching and improving. We know that support to you is

necessary and we are happy to have Project GATE available to you, to provide sustained professional learning that leads to becoming an effective teacher, coupled with the appointment of a mentee/mentor partnership.

I wish you a wonderfully productive year with your students.

Ava Byrne

Miami-Dade County
Public Schools

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Special points of Interest:

- ☉ Project G.A.T.E. Induction Program
- ☉ ESE Week Reception
- ☉ The Successes of Special Education Teachers
- ☉ Websites of Interests

A Warm Welcome from Dr. Denise M. Gudwin, Executive Director, Professional Development

Congratulations! You have just entered the best profession in the world. Teaching is the most rewarding career ever, although some days will be tough, some days will be fabulous, some days will be oh so frustrating, and some days will be exhilarating. Hang in there! Use your resources, make friends with some exemplary teachers at your school and at other schools, join as many professional organizations as you can, attend professional development courses that

we offer, and most importantly, love what you do.

You have a very important job. If you have a question, ask it. Above all, know that your students are the most important aspect of your day. Let the passion of teaching build, maintain your skills, and always strive to do better.

And how do you do that?! We can help you! Join PROJECT GATE, our mentoring program for beginning SPED

Teachers or special education teachers new to the district. You will make new friends, learn how to become an effective teacher, and get the support that all new teachers need. We have a group of dedicated teachers lined up ready to be your mentor.

"Inside every great teacher, there's an even better one waiting to come out." Harry Wong.

We look forward to working with you.

Denise

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Teaching is a
Master Piece

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: Project G.A.T.E. (Getting Assistance for Teaching Effectively) :
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Who?

Project GATE is calling all newly hired Special Education (SPED) Teachers; special education teachers who have recently changed programs (e.g., from Varying Exceptionalities to Profoundly Mentally Handicapped); or SPED teachers new to the district to participate in a Mentoring Program. (**SEE APPLICATION ON PAGE 6)

What?

Project GATE provides a systematic structure of support for beginning Special Education Teachers (SPED) or SPED teachers new to the district and involves those support systems (face-to-face, web-based communication, and classroom observations) used to assist them become competent and effective professionals in the classroom. Project GATE also helps develop an understanding of the local school, and community cultures.

When?

Please submit the application by September 21, 2006 (see page 6) by faxing to 305-995-2403.

Where?

Our first mandatory professional development session will be on Saturday, October 7 2006 at Florida International University, Graham University Center.

Why?

The goals of Project G.A.T.E. are to:

- o promote the well-being of special education teachers and reduce the isolation and stress that many teachers experience;
- o improve student achievement;
- o transmit the culture of the school and school system to new teachers, and;
- o increase the retention of special education (SPED) teachers in the classroom through support and coaching

The Success of Special Education Teachers

“My first year was much tougher than I expected. I had no curriculum, no support, no experienced special education teacher in the building, and no real experience at the district level... I would arrive before the sun came up and leave after dark. By November I called my mom one night just bawling on the phone to tell her I wanted to work at Belks or Winn Dixie- I didn't care. I was not going back to teach!” (Jessica, a new teacher, in Whitaker, 2000b, p. 28).

The first year is always challenging, but as you will come to know, teaching is truly the most rewarding career. Special Education Teachers are the teachers that Harry Wong calls “The Saints of Education,” because they possess the skill to bring order and structure while possessing tremendous patience, understanding, and capabilities to see all students as capable and worthy.

What can you expect your first year? I can vividly recall my first year in the classroom. I was faced with grades Kindergarten through third grade in a resource room setting. No, I did not have them all at one time, but yes, I did have grades K-2 at one time. Was it challenging? Absolutely! Did I think, what have I gotten myself into? Absolutely! But did I love every moment of it? ABSOLUTELY!! Oh, did I mention that my first year as a beginning teacher I was faced

“The first year is always challenging, but as you will come to know, teaching is truly the most rewarding career.”

with an advocate? Was I prepared from the University? As best as they could. I was blessed with having stellar professors, sufficient field experience and student teaching. But yet, it was not enough. What I soon realized was that I needed support and someone to whom to turn to at the school-site, as well as organizations that shared in my common vision - student achievement.

So, what did I do? I found one of the most talented teachers at my school-site and I was stuck to her like glue! I learned from her, I observed her classroom. When asked to select someone to sit on my PACES Professional Growth Team, I knew who I wanted. She was phenomenal! I knew I could come to her when I was having a challenging moment or moments. I knew I could turn to her for innovative ideas. The beauty of our exchange was that we both grew from this experience. She wanted my thoughts, a beginning teacher's thoughts, as to how she could make her lesson better, as if it could get any better. She was a general education teacher, and I, a special education teacher. This relationship developed into a strong friendship, an incredible working relationship, and a couple years later, an amazing inclusion co-teaching classroom. Even after leaving

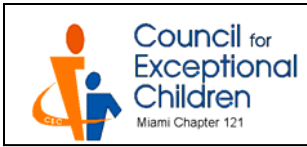
the classroom two years ago, we still call each other to bounce ideas.

I also continued my active role in local organizations, such as Dade Reading Council and the Council for Exceptional Children. As Rookie Teacher of the Year for my school and the Rookie Teacher of the Year for the Council for Exceptional Children, Miami Chapter 121, I was afforded with opportunities to network with other professionals and I grew from that experience. I urge you to join local organizations with which you share a common thread.

Become part of Project G.A.T.E. regardless of how well you think you are prepared from the university. All teachers need some form of support and assistance. Did you know that according to research, half of all special education teachers leave during the first five years? And According to Ingersoll (1999), teacher turnover is 13.2% within the first two years.

You have chosen an incredible career, do not let your first year challenges and hardship deter you from it. I wish you a successful first year. I know that you can do it, and we are here to help ensure that it is a success. I look forward to working with you.

Magda D. Salazar
Project GATE PD Specialist



The Council for Exceptional Children Miami Chapter 121

Invites you to come and enjoy a ***Complimentary***
Evening Celebrating ESE Week

ESE Week Reception
Wednesday, September 27, 2006
5:00-8:00 PM
Sheraton Mart Hotel
711 NW 72nd Avenue

*Complimentary
Stations of
Culinary Delights*



Exhibitors!

Come and review the latest
educational materials!

Bridging Differences Expands Horizons

RSVP by:

September 20, 2006

To:
Estelle Wild
8600 SW 120th Street
Miami, Florida 33156 Phone:
305-234-0054
Fax: 305-253-4978

Self-parking: \$5.00

Fax to: Estelle Wild at 305-253-4978

School: _____

Mail Code: _____

Contact Person: _____

E-mail address: _____

Phone: _____

Number Attending: _____

This newsletter is for YOU!

Future monthly issues will include:

- Success Stories of New Teachers
- Professional Development Opportunities
 - Inclusion 101
- Successful Classroom Strategies
 - Success Stories of Mentors
 - Information about SPED
 - Accommodations

Project GATE Gazette will be emailed to you monthly and will be available on our website very soon.

On behalf of the Office of Special Education, Alternative Outreach, and Psychological Services, we would like to welcome all newly hired M-DCPS teachers to the fourth largest school system in the nation! You have entered a most exciting profession, and we wish you a very productive and satisfying year.

**Ms. Brucie Ball, Assistant Superintendent
Office of Special Education, Alternative Outreach,
and Psychological Services**

**Mr. Will Gordillo, Administrative Director
Division of Special Education**

**Project GATE :
Getting Assistance for Teaching Effectively
is a joint venture between
Miami-Dade County Public Schools
and Florida International University's
Professional Development Partnership.**





Project G.A.T.E. Getting Assistance for Teaching Effectively

Special Education (SPED) Mentee Teachers Application

Yes, I am interested in participating as a mentee teacher for the Project GATE Mentoring Program.

Name: _____ Employee #: _____

School Name: _____ Work Loc. #: _____

School Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

What is your current teaching position? _____

Specify exceptionality, grade level, and subjects taught

What is your current teaching position? _____

How many years have you been teaching in Special Education?: _____

Have you been involved in any previous mentoring programs? If so, explain _____

In what areas would you be interested in receiving mentoring? _____

How did you complete your special education certification requirements? _____

Note: A professional development session for mentee teachers will be held on Saturday, October 7, 2006. Attendance at the session is mandatory.

Principal Authorization: _____ Contact Number: _____

Application Deadline: Thursday, September 21, 2006

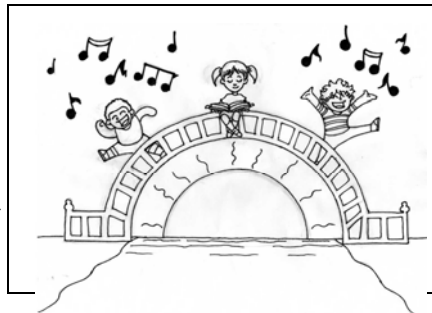
Please submit to Dr. Denise M. Gudwin, Executive Director, Professional Development

By fax to: 305-995-2403 OR by e-mail to: dgudwin@dadeschools.net

E.S.E. Week T-shirts & Polos for Sale!

Bridging Differences Expands Horizons

Back by popular demand!
Polos with embroidered
logo!



All shirts are white with embroidery
or print in vivid color! color!

Your support has funded summer
scholarships for hundreds of students with
disabilities.

Wear your T-Shirt or polo during ESE
Week: October 1-7, 2006.

Wear your ESE polo all year long!

Choose ONE pick-up location.

** Pick up locations **

- 📁 FDLRS-South: Flo Taber-Brown
- 📁 Cypress Elem.: Lourdes Camji
- 📁 Whispering Pines: Barbie Vinas
- 📁 So. Miami Elem.: Deanna DeCario
- 📁 Palmetto Senior: Terri Buria
- 📁 Meadowlane: Haydee Villanueva
- 📁 Myrtle Grove: Mildred Boveda
- 📁 Hialeah Gardens: Rachel Autler
- 📁 ESE Week Reception @ Sheraton
Mart (Wed., Sept. 27th ONLY.)

Don't be left out! We are only accepting pre-orders for t-shirts & polos !!

Please make checks payable to: CEC Chapter #121
Send to: Terri Buria, Palmetto Senior # 7431,
7460 SW 118th ST, Miami, FL 33156

Please Print	T-shirt	Size	Amount	Polo	Size	Amount
	Quantities			Quantities		
School: _____	_____	S	\$10.00	_____	S	\$20.00
Mail Code: _____	_____	M	\$10.00	_____	M	\$20.00
Contact Person: _____	_____	L	\$10.00	_____	L	\$20.00
Phone Number: _____	_____	XL	\$10.00	_____	XL	\$20.00
E-mail address: _____	_____	XXL	\$12.00	_____	XXL	\$22.00
	_____	XXXL	\$12.00			

My choice for pick up location is: _____

Name on check: _____ Check# _____ Total: _____

* The entire order will be delivered to the location of your choice, where you will be able to pick it up the week of Sept. 25th.

**Miami-Dade County
Public Schools**

Dr. Denise M. Gudwin
1450 NE Second Avenue
Suite 915
Miami, FL 33132
dgudwin@dadeschools.net
Phone: 305-995-2657

Ms. Magda D. Salazar
Project GATE PD Specialist
Mail Code: 9017
mssalazar@dadeschools.net
Phone: 305-523-0886



Networking for Novices
Sponsored by Dade Reading Council
Royal Palm Elementary
Wednesday, September 27, 2006
4:30-6:30 PM
Topic: Classroom Management

For more information: www.dadereading.com

Internet Resources

Council for Exceptional Children, Miami Chapter 121: <http://www.cecchapter121.com/>

Idea Practices: <http://www.ideapractices.org>

Florida Dept. of Education: <http://www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/pub-home.htm>

Minority Students in Special & Gifted Education: <http://www.nap.edu/books/0309074398/html>

International Reading Association: <http://www.ira.org>

Florida Reading Association: <http://flreads.org>

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC): <http://www.cec.sped.org>

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Division of Learning Disabilities:
<http://teachingld.org>

Forms Management: <http://ese.dadeschools.net/formpg.htm>

Florida Inclusion Network: <http://www.floridainclusionnetwork.com>

Web Interface for Special Educators (WISE): <http://wise.dadeschools.net>

Harry Wong and Rosemary Wong: <http://teachers.net/gazette/wong.html>
