

THE ESOL EDGE FOR TEACHERS

September, 2007 English for Speakers of Other Languages, Duval County Public Schools

The Start of Another ESOL Year

It was good to see so many of you at DuPont Middle School for the beginning-of-school inservice....many new faces among all the familiar ones; reading coaches and content teachers as well as the ESOL staff.

Dr. Edwidge Bryant, whom many of you know from her ESOL work at UNF and local schools, spoke on, "The World of Words: Multicultural Strategies to Enhance Vocabulary Acquisition". By the end of 90 minutes most of the audience were able to not only pronounce words in Haitian Creole but could even follow simple directions. Dr. Bryant gave a spelling test, not to show us how little we knew, but to demonstrate why we (and our students) make the mistakes we do! Amazing how old speech patterns interfere with the new...

Pat Grant, ESOL District Resource Teacher and Refugee Advocate, reminded everyone that proper scheduling guidelines must be followed in assigning reading classes. Non-speakers or low-level speakers are usually better served in Developmental Language Arts rather than Intensive Reading. At schools with low ELL populations, Developmental and IR may be offered during the same period by the same teacher. When asked about textbooks, Grant said that there are ESOL textbooks that must be used in ESOL classrooms in addition to the regular grade-level Language Arts/English texts. Elementary schools have *Into English*, middle grades have *High Point*, and high schools are to be using *New Interchange* and *Northstar*. She stressed that these materials are not optional and, if additional copies are needed, the textbook office should be contacted.

Bilingual dictionaries can be used during the FCAT and should be used all year so that ELLs will be familiar with them. Tell the ESOL office what your school needs so the needed languages can be ordered. Once the dictionaries arrive, they should be inventoried as part of the ESOL-provided materials. The teachers and staff in the ESOL office are here to help you and your students. The number is 390-2202. Do call.

TransACT Registration

TransAct is a resource provided by the DCPS for ESOL contacts and teachers. It has translations of documents in over 20 languages to send to parents whose first language is not English. These include not only information required by the government, such as the 'Home Language Survey' and the 'Notice to obtain written parental consent for military or college recruiters'. You will also find field trip forms and notification of parent-teacher meetings.

Any Duval County employee with a dreamsbeginhere e-mail account may access the TransACT translation library of documents online.

Follow these steps:

- Log on to www.transact.com
- Click on "subscribe" at the top right
- Click on "subscribe now as new visitor"
- You will create a customer account.
- Select the state (FL) Select the county (Duval)
- Click on "Duval Co Public School District"
- DCBS already has an account. So click "here" to register
- Fill in all fields on the new user registration form (use the dreamsbeginhere email only)
- Create an easy password that you won't forget
- Click "register" to submit
- Follow the links to open TransACT again and sign on

*For those already registered but have forgotten how to access it, go to the login screen. Your user name is the complete email address (educationcentral or dreamsbeginhere). For help with password, click on "forgot your password".

**If you registered using educationcentral previously, you must go in and change your username to the dreamsbeginhere address.

Jacksonville's National Board Certified ESOL Teachers

Maridell Bagnal, Kelley Bullard, Sandi Meritt, Linda Rogers, and Jerrie Tomlinson are the National Board Certified ESOL teachers in Duval County.

The National Board certification process is not simple. It may take as long as three years to complete. Candidates must submit 4 portfolios and demonstrate content knowledge in their certificate area. However, Sandi Meritt, the first teacher in Duval County to receive the ESOL certification says, "The National Board process allows a teacher to analyze and reflect on his/her teaching in a way that encourages the teacher to grow professionally. National Board includes a critical look at both teaching and student learning. It is a great opportunity to examine one's teaching and strive to improve to meet National Board standards."

In order to apply for National Board Certification, you must have a bachelor's degree; complete three full years of teaching/counseling experience; possess a valid state teaching/counseling license.

To get more information, go to

www.nbpts.org.

Refugees from Burundi and Burma



During the August inservice, Antonella Makic of Lutheran Social Services reported that refugees from Burundi and Myanmar (Burma) have begun arriving in Jacksonville. You may already have the children in your classes. Both of these groups of people have lived through war, deprivation, and years in refugee camps.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR), at present 140,000 Burmese refugees are housed in the camps along the border between Burma and Thailand. Nearly all the refugees have fled fighting and oppression in Myanmar over the past 11 years.

In 1972, Burundian refugees fled to neighboring countries to escape ethnic violence which killed an estimated 200,000 people. They have been in refugee camps in Tanzania and other neighboring countries since then.

Ms. Makic suggested several websites for more information about these and other refugee groups.

www.unhcr.org Provides basic facts, news and statistics about refugee populations worldwide.

www.refugees.org The U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) - includes news articles from across the globe.

www.lirs.org Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service - includes a glossary of terms and acronyms, books, manuals and reports.

www.cal.org The Center for Applied Linguistics includes material on refugee education and integration.

www.culturalorientation.net The Cultural Orientation Resource Center has publications (many online) on culture profiles, refugee backgrounders, phrasebooks and videos.

Cuts in Professional Development

Due to budget cuts this year, a new policy limits TDE to 2 days a year. However, the ESOL staff is in the process of planning an inservice for new ESOL contacts and other interested school personnel. Para training is also pending. They will be held in September at the Schultz Center. You will be informed as soon as the dates are set.

District personnel are available to come out to your school during early release time to conduct training on ESOL issues such as compliance and audit preparation, ESOL classroom strategies, red folders and record keeping.) If your school is interested, contact Pat Grant (309-2327; grantp@dreamsbeginhere.org).

The ESOL Parent Leadership Council Thanks YOU!

Every year we ask for your help telling parents about PLC meetings, and every year you come through. Once again, West Riverside and Crown Point are hosting the meetings on the 11th and 20th of September. **Thank you all!**

The new **ESOL Edge for Parents** will be sent out to all of your ESOL families in a few weeks. Before that, please, share any news about your students' projects, successes and activities. Pictures are always great!

Please, call or write Elaine Gerger at the ESOL office.

390-2202 or 390-2485

gergerl@educationcentral.org

Brenda's Corner

Another exciting school year begins! I regret being unable to attend the ESOL inservice during Preplanning, but was assigned other responsibilities on that date. All reports are that it was an interesting day, beginning with Dr. Bryant's opening address. I will be making school visits, at least two days each week and hope to visit you in your classroom.

We want to welcome all the new ESOL teachers. You have joined a terrific team! We will do all we can to provide additional support for the challenges that lie ahead.

This is a year of expanded initiatives that include the development of Duval County's first Dual Language Program, Sheltered Instruction Protocol Training (SIOP) for content teachers, research into Newcomer Programs for students with Limited Formal Schooling, and new ESOL-specific professional development opportunities delivered by national experts. All of these should help us reach the goals of having less retention of ELLs, higher graduation rates and improved performance on high stakes tests.

Together, we take our students from where they are currently performing, teach them English so that they may become academically successful, nurture their desire to achieve, and advocate for them to have the best possible school experience!

Have a great school year!

Brenda Drinkwater