

Second Annual

# Ready Schools Miami Learning Showcase



Hialeah Gardens Senior High  
Saturday, April 24, 2010  
8:30am - 3:00pm



session, the audience will have gained new strategies and techniques to use with students that will allow for optimal test taking thus, enhancing everyday learning.

*Keywords: Classroom culture, Strategies, Techniques*

## CULTURALLY SENSITIVE WAYS TO IMPROVE STUDENT PERFORMANCE

**Culture & Engagement:**  
**Shared Learning Session**  
**Room 3106**  
**Facilitator: Raquel Diaz**

**Enhancing Academic Achievement/Performance through Pictographs**

**Michele Alliance**, Teacher, North Miami Elementary, malliance@dadeschools.net

The purpose of my inquiry is to show that students can use shorter learning time and increase learning gains and achieve more with the use of pictographs. The study is about comparing two groups' results to see which one would do better with the use of pictures as a visual aid to increase vocabulary acquisition. Therefore, to enhance student's academic achievement/ performance and facilitate learning and proper spelling of the foreign language/French; I'm conducting a study using two groups of students. By using pictures, I will show that students learn vocabulary quicker than without them. Also, hands on activities will be introduced with the goal of higher achievement and better test scores.

**How to Instill Cultural Pride in Haitian American Students: It Is Related to School Culture**

**Elcy A. Mathurin**, CCHL Teacher, Florida City Elementary, emathurin@dadeschools.net

My goal is for students to develop pride in their culture. This will motivate students to appreciate their culture, to take a more active role in their learning. To do so, I will use a brainstorming activity, which will enable me to identify background knowledge of the students. I will have group discussions to allow students to recognize some cultural aspects of the Haitian culture; viewpoints, and their attitudes toward family, school, work and play. We will examine the role or success of some Haitian American members of the community to see what obstacles they had to overcome.

*Keywords: Cultural pride, School culture, Haiti, Haitian Americans, Pictographs, Academic performance*

## BRINGING OUT THE BEST IN BEHAVIOR

**Culture & Engagement: Shared Learning Session**  
**Room 3107**  
**Facilitator: Cintra Coolman**

**Positive Praise that Pays**

**Andrea Riley**, Teacher, Florida City Elementary, ariley@dadeschools.net

**Yolanda Surrency-Mitchell**, Teacher, Florida City Elementary, ysurrency@dadeschools.net

**Jacqueolyn Silva**, Teacher, Florida City Elementary, jsilva2@dadeschools.net

In order to implement a positive behavior incentive program we must identify the negative behavior and implement strategies to effectively correct these behaviors. The Behavior Incentive Program used in this school is very effective. Students have a precise understanding of the expectations and consequences of the program. The teachers use proactive interventions to model positive behaviors. These interventions are used to establish new behaviors and have the students to self-correct or prevent undesired behaviors.

**Frequent Flying Mentors**

**Qynata Henry**, 3rd grade teacher, Florida City Elementary, 267477@dadeschools.net

**Lawanda Harris-McCalla**, 3rd grade teacher, Florida City Elementary, 244142@dadeschools.net

**Kimberly Cure-Williams**, 2nd grade teacher, Florida City Elementary, cure-williams@dadeschools.net

**Selina Jones**, Behavior Management Teacher, Florida City Elementary, szjones@dadeschools.net

Lack of motivation and bad behavior have been two things that we have heard several teachers complain about at our school. After reading different articles about peer mentoring programs and its positive affects, and listening to different talk shows beg for more mentoring programs to be implemented, while praising how good it is for students we ask, "Will being a student mentor affect student behavior in our third and second grade classrooms?" We will turn frequent flyers who are struggling with behavior problems into mentors. In our presentation we will explain strategies used.

*Keyword: Behavior, Motivation, Mentors, Behavior Incentive Program*



The district encourages educators to have a cooperative learning setting in their classrooms. Many teachers feel that their students lose focus and socialize instead of learning. Some educators even feel they lose some control in their classrooms. Are these groups really effective? Can cooperative groups significantly improve reading skills in the primary grades? During our PowerPoint presentation, we will share some data collected that addresses these concerns.

### How Engaged Are They Really? A Closer Look at Student Engagement in Your Classroom

**Dominique St. Hilaire**, 2nd Grade Teacher, Edison Park Elementary, [dsthilaire@dadschools.net](mailto:dsthilaire@dadschools.net)

**Kerlyn Prada**, 7th Grade Science Teacher, Ruth K Broad/Bay Harbor K-8 Center, [kprada@dadeschools.net](mailto:kprada@dadeschools.net)

Teachers will reflect on and discuss their instructional practices. We will present a student engagement rubric so teachers can rate themselves and see where they fall in the spectrum of engagement. We will share strategies teachers can utilize to adopt a more student centered as opposed to teacher centered learning environment. Teachers will also have the opportunity to share what strategies they use that promote active learning.

*Keywords: School culture, Classroom management, Instructional practices, Cooperative learning, Reading*

### Building a Parent Learning Community, CIS Help Needed

**Culture & Engagement: Learning Clinic Session Room 3103**

**Facilitator: Michelle Toral**

**Belinda Penton**, CIS, Banyan Elementary, 285267@dadeschools.net

**Maria Campos**, CIS, EWF Stirrup Elementary, 233820@dadeschools.net

Community Involvement Specialists (CIS) have created agendas for 2 initial meetings in developing a parent learning community at their schools. Participants will experience a tuning protocol, assisting CIS presenters in assuring that their agendas/plan is "in-tune" with their goals, thus that the planned activities are aligned with the needs and interests of the parents they serve.

*Keywords: CIS, Parents, Learning communities, Protocols, Agendas*

### Visit Our Village!

**Culture & Engagement: Learning Clinic Session Room 3104**

**Facilitator: Yendi Sotolongo**

**Cecily Wright**, Reading Coach, Lakeview Elementary, [cwright@dadeschools.net](mailto:cwright@dadeschools.net)

**Kathleen Machado**, 3rd grade Math, Lakeview Elementary, [KMachado@dadeschools.net](mailto:KMachado@dadeschools.net)

**Jennifer Fonseca**, 4th/5th grade Reading, Lakeview Elementary, [JFonseca@dadeschools.net](mailto:JFonseca@dadeschools.net)

**Christina Gonzalez**, Pre-Kindergarten, Lakeview Elementary, [christinanunez@dadeschools.net](mailto:christinanunez@dadeschools.net)

Our session will provide participants with an opportunity to observe the culture they work in by looking at its rituals and practices through an objective lens. We will go through a series of questions, much like anthropologists use, to delve deeper into the issues at our schools that are most important to us. We will share our experiences and encourage our audience to be active participants in our village so that they can take it back to their own villages!

*Keywords: School culture, Community, Values, Beliefs*

### How will modifying the classroom culture calm testing pressures and increase testing confidence in students?

**Culture & Engagement: Learning Clinic Session Room 3105**

**Facilitator: Ofelia Lopez**

**Michelle Lopez**, 1st grade Teacher, Riverside Elementary, [MLopez24@dadeschools.net](mailto:MLopez24@dadeschools.net)

**Ofelia Lopez**, 2nd grade Teacher, Riverside Elementary, [Ofelia\\_Lopez@dadeschools.net](mailto:Ofelia_Lopez@dadeschools.net)

Our showcase will consist of demonstrating a PowerPoint presentation discussing the findings of our teacher inquiries. Two teachers, a first grade teacher and a second grade teacher, will explain why and how they each modified their classroom's culture to subside negative testing pressures placed on their students. Brain-learning strategies, reducing testing tension, and maximizing student overall performance will be some of the topics addressed in this presentation. By the end of the



## WORKING WITH CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Early Childhood: Shared Learning Session

Room: 3204

Facilitator: Kathleen Zaldivar

High Scope: Making it Possible for Children with Special Needs

**Amparo Morillas**, Teacher, United Cerebral Palsy, amparo.morillas@ucp.southflorida.org

**Laura Hernandez**, Teacher, United Cerebral Palsy, laura.hernandez@ucpsouthflorida.org

The main purpose of the presentation is to show the audience adaptations we have made to every section of the High Scope framework within a self contained classroom. The presentation will include a short introduction about the work we have done at our center, followed by a Power Point presentation that shows the audience how we assess needs of special children in the classroom, along with a display of students' supporting evidence.

How Can I Use Manipulatives to Be Most Effective with Minimal Play?

Early Childhood: Shared Learning Session

**Marian Borken**, Autistic Teacher, C D Wyche Elementary, mborken@dadeschools.net

Many of the traditional manipulatives are distracting, and many children see them as toys only. Some of these are Lego type counters, as well as little plastic animals, such as pigs, etc. I have found that alternate, sometimes very common, objects work better. While observing my Autistic students, I discovered that one picked common objects, and the others seemed to follow his lead.

*Keywords: Math, School culture, Classroom management, Special needs, Adaptations, Modifications*

## CULTURE & STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

## Work Session 3: 12:30-1:20

### Using Protocols to Pump New Life into Faculty Meetings

Culture & Engagement: Learning Clinic Session  
Room 3101

Facilitator: Magdi Castañeda

**Mary Alonso**, Principal, Benjamin Franklin Elementary, malonso@dadeschools.net

**Roxana Herrera**, Principal, Palm Springs Elementary, RHerrera@dadeschools.net

Participants will experience examples of different protocols that can be used to engage in professional conversations that can help establish the groundwork for school inquiry.

*Keywords: Protocols, Professional conversation, School inquiry*

### INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES THAT MAXIMIZE STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Culture & Engagement:  
Shared Learning Session  
Room 3102

Facilitator: Dominique St. Hillaire

Cooperatively Learning or Cooperatively Socializing?

**Xochilt Campos**, 1st Grade Teacher, Palm Springs Elementary campos@dadeschools.net

**Carlos Huguet**, ESE Teacher, Palm Springs Elementary, CAHuguet@dadeschools.net

**Cindy Miel**, Kindergarten Teacher, Palm Springs Elementary, ms\_miel@dadeschools.net

**Josanna Morales**, Kindergarten Teacher, Palm Springs Elementary, moralesj@dadeschools.net



We will provide information to all stakeholders regarding the influence that Ready Schools Miami has had at our schools. As partner principals, our schools and we have been provided with a variety of opportunities to enhance our professionalism and that of our staff. This has led to the improvement of School Culture and Instructional Practices at our schools.

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## The 'Anatomy' of School Culture

**Culture & Engagement: Learning Clinic Session**  
**Room 3106**  
**Facilitator: Jill Daceus**

**John D. Pace**, Assistant Principal, Norland Elementary, [jdpace@dadeschools.net](mailto:jdpace@dadeschools.net)

**Elisa P. Smith**, 5th Grade Teacher, Norland Elementary, [epsmith@dadeschools.net](mailto:epsmith@dadeschools.net)

**Ruth Williams**, 1st Grade Teacher, Norland Elementary, [Rwilliams07@dadeschools.net](mailto:Rwilliams07@dadeschools.net)

We will present findings from discussions within our learning community about school culture. We will engage participants through the use of several protocols directly geared for our participants. These exercises will prompt discussion on how the "culture" of faculty, staff and students affects our school.

*Keywords: School culture, Protocols, Instructional leadership, Professional development*

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## Investigation & Justification: Successful FCAT Strategies

**Culture & Engagement: Learning Clinic Session**  
**Room 3107**  
**Facilitator: Cintra Coolman**

**Byron Brown**, 2nd Grade Teacher, Aventura Waterways K-8, [BJBrown@dadeschools.net](mailto:BJBrown@dadeschools.net)

**Tunisha Bridges**, 3rd Grade Teacher, Aventura Waterways K-8, [tbridges2@dadeschools.net](mailto:tbridges2@dadeschools.net)

**Kathy Ferguson**, 3rd Grade Teacher, Aventura Waterways K-8, [kburch@dadeschools.net](mailto:kburch@dadeschools.net)

**Michelle Viego**, 3rd Grade Teacher, Aventura Waterways K-8, [mviego@dadeschools.net](mailto:mviego@dadeschools.net)

Third grade can be a challenging year for students, parents and educators in the state of Florida. It is the first year the FCAT (Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test) is administered. We as third grade teachers have developed an interactive and engaging method of teaching our students to become critical thinkers and problem-solvers. We train them to be "Reading Detectives." Come and experience a motivating and educating course of how we prepare our students for the FCAT!

*Keywords: Professional Development, Teaching FCAT strategies*

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## Vertical is the way to go!

**Culture & Engagement: Learning Clinic Session**  
**Room 3108**  
**Facilitator: Maria Torra**

**Olga Fernandez**, 5th Grade Educator, Bowman Foster Ashe Elementary, [ofernandez@dadeschools.net](mailto:ofernandez@dadeschools.net)

**Caroline Zabala**, 5th Grade Educator, Bowman Foster Ashe Elementary, [czabalabfa@dadeschools.net](mailto:czabalabfa@dadeschools.net)

**Nora Garcia**, Bilingual Educator, Bowman Foster Ashe Elementary, [noragarcia@dadeschools.net](mailto:noragarcia@dadeschools.net)

**Elizabeth Lozano**, Reading Coach, Kendale Lakes Elementary, [lozanoelizabeth@dadeschools.net](mailto:lozanoelizabeth@dadeschools.net)

**Zeny Ulloa**, 1st Grade General Ed. Teacher, Kendale Lakes Elementary, [zulloa@dadeschools.net](mailto:zulloa@dadeschools.net)

This presentation will provide a clear understanding of what Vertical Teams are and their purpose in the learning environment. Our team members will discuss and demonstrate how this process can facilitate the staff with an infinite amount of information.

*Keywords: Professional learning communities, Professional development*





**Yvonne Valdes**, Teacher of the Gifted, Coral Park Elementary, yvaldes@dadeschools.net

**Lazaro Valdes**, 4th Grade Teacher, Coral Park Elementary, l.valdes@dadeschools.net

The team will describe how allowing students more Opportunities to Respond (OTR), a research based method, increases on-task behavior; thus resulting in a decrease in the number of times a teacher has to stop instructing in order to redirect student behavior and/or discipline students. The group will also illustrate how OTR is applicable to a continuum of students: SPED, General Ed., and Gifted students.

**How will a teacher-led group with struggling students increase their focus on specific tasks and how will this affect their problem solving skills?**

**Vicki James**, Teacher, Riverside Elementary, vmjames@dadeschools.net

I will present the data reflecting my students' academic progress made on district interims and benchmark tests. However, my focus, for a lack of a better word, will be on the change in students' focus or lack of. I will share anecdotes that reflect on the focus of students during small group instruction. I will also share the different strategies that were used to maintain the students' focus in small group.

*Keywords: Teacher-led grouping, Classroom management, On-task behavior, Positive reinforcement*

## Building Student Motivation

**Culture & Engagement:  
Shared Learning Session  
Room 3104  
Facilitator: Yendi Sotolongo**

**Ready...Set...Motivate!**

**Maribel Desrouleaux**, ESE Teacher, Greynolds Park Elementary, maribeljd@dadeschools.net

**Annelle Julien-Cavé**, 4th Grade Reading/ Language Arts Teacher, Greynolds Park Elementary, mrscave@dadeschools.net

**Marthe Jackson**, 4th Grade Math/Science/Social Studies Teacher, Greynolds Park Elementary, proverb31woman@dadeschools.net

Educators often have students who have the ability to do very well in class, but lack motivation. After interviewing a student and his parent, we created and implemented several motivation strategies. What impact did the motivation strategies have on our student? Findings will be shared.

### Buddies Work Best

**Edmee Lago**, 2nd Grade Teacher, Florida City Elementary School, edmeelago@dadeschools.net

**Judy Flores**, 2nd Grade (Gifted) Teacher, Florida City Elementary, jflores@dadeschools.net

Our action research is going to be based on a buddy system. In this buddy system my low performing students will be paired up with a student from the second-grade gifted classroom (Ms. Flores). The highlight of our action research will be to see how peer mentoring in academics can influence a low performing student to actually become more involved in the classroom. Our ultimate goal would be for my low performing students to find themselves ready and wanting to be a mentor themselves and for the gifted students to a chance to share what they learn and become more confident in the classroom.

*Keywords: Buddy system, Student learning, Motivation, Reading, Mathematics*

## Ready, Set, Go; Ready Schools in Action

**Culture & Engagement: Learning Clinic Session  
Room 3105  
Facilitator: Ofelia Lopez**

**Gloria Arazoza**, Principal, Florida City Elementary, garazoza@dadeschools.net

**Rene Baly**, Principal, Redondo Elementary, rbaly@dadeschools.net

**Deborah Wilson**, Principal, Comstock Elementary, dwilson@dadeschools.net

**Maria Nunez**, Principal, Coral Park Elementary, mnunez@dadeschools.net

**Debra Dubin**, Principal, North Miami Elementary, ddubin@dadeschools.net

**Eduardo Rivas**, Principal, Greynolds Park Elementary, erivas@dadeschools.net



**YOU CAN DO THIS!!**

**Culture & Engagement: Learning Clinic Session  
Room 3101**

**Facilitator: Kerlyn Prada**

**Nora Janvier**, ESE/ VE Teacher, Edison Park Elementary,  
Noja518@dadeschools.net

**Bonita Howard**, 4th Grade Teacher, Dr. Henry Mack/West  
Little River, Bolhoward@dadeschools.net

**Lavonia Martin**, Reading Coach, Dr. Henry Mack/West  
Little River, L\_martin@dadeschools.net

**Duna Belvilus**, Kindergarten Teacher, Toussaint L'ouverture  
Elementary, DBelvilus@dadeschools.net

**Alyson K. Somers**, Kindergarten Teacher, Dr. Henry Mack/  
West Little River, 230249@dadeschools.net

In this presentation, participants will share and discuss methods, tools, tips, and strategies for effective classroom management. Presenters will utilize dialogue, visual aids, role-playing, and real talk about what works in the classroom and beyond to really make classrooms operate efficiently in the interests of student achievement and maintaining teacher sanity. By the end of the session, participants will have developed an initial framework for a strategic classroom management action plan which may be utilized for immediate or future use in their instructional practice and the belief that Yes; You Can Do This!

*Keywords: Classroom management, Student achievement, Instructional practice*

**Partnering with Parents**

**Culture & Engagement:**

**Shared Learning Session**

**Room 3102**

**Facilitator: Dominique St. Hillaire**

**Educate Parents As Reading Partners**

**Suzelle Etienne**, 1st Grade Teacher, Lillie C. Evans  
Elementary, suzelle@dadeschools.net

**Nancy Sale**, Kindergarten Teacher, Lillie C. Evans  
Elementary, nancysale@dadeschools.net

**Maria Lacamoire**, Reading Coach, Lillie C. Evans  
Elementary, mlacamoire@dadeschools.net

Through a PowerPoint presentation the audience will understand the significant roles parents play as reading

partners. Through weekly after school learning clinics, (funded through a grant) parents are educated on the critical areas of reading skills that are necessary in developing their child's reading ability. These skills are reinforced through make and take activities that the parent can and then implement at home. During these sessions, parents are given a tool kit bag that contains resources such as books, supplies, white boards, sentence strips, and sight word cards. Each learning clinic is designed to target a specific area and need that is critical to reading success.

**Coffee Talk – Informing Parents of Each Grade Level's Expectations**

**Iliana Leiva**, Teacher, Ethel K. Beckham Elementary,  
ileiva@dadeschools.net

**Yamile Castillo**, Teacher, Ethel K. Beckham Elementary,  
ymcastillo@dadeschools.net

**Beatriz Zarraluqui**, Teacher, Ethel K. Beckham Elementary,  
bmzarraluqui@dadeschools.net

**Marisol Lirio**, Teacher, Ethel K. Beckham Elementary,  
marisantos@dadeschools.net

During the "Coffee Talk" meetings, teachers share with parents by grade level what is expected of his/her child in terms of performance on standardized assessments, general responsibilities, instructional technology programs available, attendance and homework policies, and any other information specific to the grade level. The audience will learn strategies to attract parents to attend parent workshops as well as specific information shared at each grade level meeting, kindergarten through fifth grade. All participants will receive a chance to enter a raffle to win a gift certificate to Starbucks. Refreshments will be served.

*Keywords: Parent involvement, Student readiness, Empowering parents, Reading*

**Strategies to Develop Student Focus**

**Culture & Engagement:**

**Shared Learning Session**

**Room 3103**

**Facilitator: Michelle Toral**

**Does Opportunities to Respond (OTR)  
Improve On-Task Behavior?**

Share learning session

**Stephanie Acosta**, Special Education Teacher, Coral Park  
Elementary, sacosta28@dadeschools.net



## TAKING A DIFFERENT PATH: OVERCOMING BULLYING AND DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION

**Culture & Engagement: Shared Learning Session  
Room 3108**

**Facilitator: Maria Torra**

### Bullying

**Kajuanza Baker**, 5th Grade Teacher, Florida City Elementary, 266265@dadeschools.net

**Anita Fernandez**, 5th Grade Teacher, Florida City Elementary, afernan@dadeschools.net,

**Mariela Garcia**, 5th Grade Teacher, Florida City Elementary, garciamariela@dadeschools.net

**Ramiro Zamudio**, 5th Grade Teacher, Florida City Elementary, rzamudio@dadeschools.net

One of the major problems in our school is bullying. Many staff members have observed bullying incidences throughout the school and may be unsure of how to handle the problem. Throughout this research project, we will investigate the core problem and implement strategies within student activities that focus on bullying and violence prevention. We will also analyze our results in order to determine the impact we've made on our students.

### Improving Instruction through the Use of Differentiated Instruction

**Jackson Nicolas**, Teacher, Lillie C. Evans, Jnico002@dadeschools.net

I will share with audience my attempt to clear the air about what differentiated instruction really means in the classroom. I will explain my efforts to elaborate on this subject with fellow teachers at my current schools as well as other sites.

*Keywords: Differentiated instruction, Skills, Data assessments, Behavior, Bullying*

## FURTHER TECHNIQUES TO DEVELOP READING COMPREHENSION

**Literacy: Shared Learning Session  
Room 3110**

**Facilitator: Ximena Sperling**

**How can implementing different strategies and/or techniques improve reading comprehension for English Language Learners?**

**Nichole Bhagwandin**, 2nd Grade teacher, Redondo Elementary, nicholeedwards@dadeschools.net

**Suzanne Lapp**, 1st Grade Teacher, Redondo Elementary, 284171@daeschools.net

**Ximena Sperling**, 1st Grade Teacher, Redondo Elementary, ximenaherrera@dadeschools.net

English Language Learners often struggle with reading comprehension. Their lack of English proficiency challenges their teachers to incorporate a variety of techniques to enhance student reading comprehension. Through the use of graphic organizers, intensive

vocabulary instruction, and daily fluency coaching, we hope to enlighten other teachers to reach struggling learners.

### Creating Mental Pictures to Aid in Comprehension

**Jill Daceus**, 3rd grade Math and Science Teacher, Florida City Elementary, jfortna@dadeschools.net

As I read a story, I picture what is happening; the events, the setting, and the characters. As I do math, I picture the word problem and then attempt to solve it. My students are reading, but never picturing what they are reading. The purpose of this action research project is to see what visualization strategies I might implement to strengthen my students' comprehension level. I seek to have them apply these strategies to all subjects. I am hoping to find that when explicitly modeled and taught visualization skills, that their own visualization skills will sharpen thus creating greater understanding of their reading and their reading process.

*Keywords: Visualization, Comprehension, Fluency, Vocabulary*