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## Magnet schoolteachers spending week training

By Sherry F. Pruitt

JONESBORO -- Faculty and support staff at the International Studies magnet elementary school are spending four days in Quality and Teaching Training this week at a computer lab in Jonesboro High School.

The Centers for Quality Teaching and Learning sends representatives to various states to instruct teachers on new initiatives.

The International Studies personnel will receive about 30 hours of customized training in the four days, said Principal Arthur Jackson.

Visual learners as children continue to visualize to learn as adults. As a related project on Thursday, Tamara McCulloch, director of instruction, read a book to the teachers titled, "Wilford Gordon McDonald Partridge," by Mem Fox. The teachers followed along in their own books, and some carried props supporting the text and images to the front of the room, a project they might do in their own classrooms.

The educators were introduced to educational theories and best practices, such as brain-based learning. Thursday's focus was on differentiated instruction and diversity -- "concrete images stimulating abstract and thought," McCulloch explained.

Jackson pointed out that elementary schools need to get away from the "one size fits all mode," while maintaining "menu options."

McCulloch said she was instructing the teachers Tuesday on "research-based instructional strategies and how those strategies apply to a variety of ages and content as teachers design instruction," with "the mission of the new **MAGNET SCHOOL**" always in focus.



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The instructor demonstrated "what instruction looks like," by "taking theory into practice."

Though this week's training is the first **MAGNET SCHOOL** session, in which McCulloch has been involved, she has previous experience with other types of training, she said.

The training will assist teachers in making connections with students, and students in turn will make connections with each other, as well as to the community, which help prepare them to be citizens of a community as they mature, added Jackson.

The researched-based study is aligned with 21st century skills, which are driven by industry, the principal explained.

Industry is trying to play more of an active role in education, McCulloch added.

"Kindergarten students are being prepared for problems in their adult life we haven't even identified as problems yet," she explained.

Jackson said he is trying to attract community partners to help support programs at International Studies. A couple of organizations that have committed to helping with curriculum materials and support include Curt Reed with AT&T and a local insurance agent.

"We really are establishing a professional learning community," Jackson stated.

McCulloch also is using the "each one teach one" approach with teachers in an effort to encourage the method for use with their elementary students.

For example, she took an electronic Neo education tool, made by AlphaSmart and taught one of the participants to use it. In that classroom strategy, she only taught one, but they all learned because as they learned, each one taught another, she explained.

Down the hall, one of McCulloch's co-workers was busy training high school teachers about the Perkins program and career technical academic alignment in an effort to develop a higher level of academics in a career tech environment with a focus on literacy and geometry.

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