



NJDOE News

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Statewide Summer Literacy Conference to Run Through Wednesday

More than 1,000 educators from throughout New Jersey are participating in the Department of Education's annual three-day Summer Literacy Conference, which began Monday in New Brunswick.

"Governor Corzine has made preparing our students for success in the competitive 21st century global economy one of his top priorities and the Department has responded by focusing its efforts first on early literacy and then on adolescent literacy development," said Commissioner of Education Lucille E. Davy.

"Children who can read and write on grade level by the third grade have an easier time learning other subjects and have more successful academic careers, so it is critical that all of our elementary school teachers understand the most effective methods of teaching literacy," the Commissioner said.

"Governor Corzine has committed funding in our budget for this conference, and I was pleased to see that we had to expand the capacity this time to accommodate all of those who wished to come," Commissioner Davy said. "I know that the educators here this week will gain valuable insights and information that they use in their home districts to improve student achievement."

The conference, sponsored by the DOE offices of Language Arts Literacy Education and Reading First, is being held at the Hyatt Regency, New Brunswick through Wednesday. The theme is *Keeping the Promise: A Renewed Commitment*.

Educators participating in the conference include school principals, superintendents, language arts literacy directors, coordinators, literacy coaches, reading specialists and teachers.

Conference presenters include many nationally and internationally-known experts in the field of literacy.

Dr. Robert Brooks, assistant clinical professor of psychology in the Department of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, delivered the keynote speech at Monday's session, "The Power of Mindsets: Nurturing Motivation and Resilience in Students." Dr. Brooks examined the characteristics of the mindset of teachers who touch both the minds and hearts of students.

Dr. Dorothy Strickland, the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Professor of Education at Rutgers and a member of the State Board of Education, will deliver today's keynote address, "Effective Intervention for Struggling Readers and Writers: Making it Happen Across the Curriculum." She will present a critical overview of school- and district-wide intervention policies and practices, such as reduced class size, preschool and family literacy programs, tutoring, and extended time models; discuss policies and practices at the classroom level that make a difference; and discuss responsible test preparation as a professional development effort to improve student achievement.

Dr. Pedro Noguera, a professor in the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development at New York University, will be the keynote speaker on the conference's final day. His topic, "Literacy and Empowerment," will explore disparities in student achievement and how they typically reflect inequality in learning opportunities and access to resources. He will discuss what schools and educators can do to improve the quality of literacy instruction students receive and present strategies that schools can take to ensure that all students receive the same learning opportunities.

Other session topics include: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension instruction, differentiated instruction, literacy coaching, literacy work stations, developing reading proficiency for English Language Learners, conferring with student writers, brain-based research, best literacy practices for adolescents, motivation, assessment and narrowing the achievement gap.

Reporters who wish to attend the conference should contact the DOE Office of Public Information at 609-292-

1126 to make arrangements in advance.