

IBM's Transition to Teaching Participants get a first hand view of a classroom

(April 26, 2007) --- Six IBMers in Georgia will complete their first year participating with IBM's innovative Transition to Teaching Program by entering a classroom. IBM has taken a leadership position in recognizing the critical needs in all states to provide math and science teachers by providing a pathway to employees who want to become teachers. Across the U.S. there is a critical shortage of math and science teachers in K-12 schools. It's estimated more than 260,000 secondary math and science teachers are needed by 2009. In Georgia, they expect to need to hire some 2000 math and science teachers next year.

Working with The Educator Workforce Recruitment, Research and Development Division of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission and the Oconee Regional Educational Services Agency, the IBM employees will experience a day in a classroom at Russell Elementary School in Smyrna, GA on Thursday, May 3, 2007.

This visit will help the initial group of Georgia IBM employees to gain better understanding of what occurs in early education. Most of the employees have elected to prepare to teach middle school or high school, and this glimpse of elementary education will provide insight into what occurs in the early classroom. The IBM student teachers will join the Russell Elementary Space Team, a group of fourth and fifth grade students who are studying various aspects of science that relate to the NASA space program. They will watch the kids in action in a specially designed space station as they carry out the responsibilities of astronauts and Mission Control. Afterwards, they will meet with students from grades K-5 in an After School Program for interviews and discussion.

The IBM employees are enrolled in a pre-employment learning opportunity and, when they transition from IBM into the teaching profession, will complete an alternate route to a clear renewable Georgia teaching certificate. The initial certification that will be attained after the required certification tests are passed will make them considered "highly qualified" under the conditions of the Federal No Child Left Behind Act. IBM employees who complete the Transition to Teaching Program will either complete their training through The Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program® (Georgia TAPP) or through the Test Based Option with One Year Supervised Practicum program. The GATAPP is a classroom-based teacher preparation option for individuals who have the basic qualifications to teach early childhood, middle-grades, secondary or P-12 education but have not completed a teacher preparation program.

The programs are not intended to replace regular college teacher education programs. Instead, Georgia provides alternative options for individuals who hold a bachelor's degree or higher but who did not complete teacher education requirements as part of their degree programs. Georgia TAPP seeks to equip teacher-candidates with the skills to ensure a reasonable expectation of initial success in their classrooms, and to put in place a supervised internship/induction program that will help them move toward subsequent mastery of teaching. The Test Based Option with One Year Supervised Practicum is an acceleration option in which the candidate has passed both content and pedagogy tests and then participates in a structured on the job practicum.

IBM's Transition to Teaching program began as a pilot in 2006. Transition to Teaching provides financial and other support to help employees choose teaching as a second career. Nearly one-

hundred IBM employees nationwide became members of the Class of 2006 -- the first Transition to Teaching class. These employees are currently participating in on-line course work and in more traditional courses and mentoring while continuing to work at IBM. Those enrolled in traditional teacher preparation programs will student teach for up to four months to meet state certification requirements. Georgia IBM employees pursuing alternative routes to certification will begin teaching without the student teaching requirement and will participate in a structured on the job assessment during their first year of teaching. Both programs are measured on identical standards.

Transition to Teaching offers customized certification programs, including both traditional and online courses, so that employees with bachelor's degrees or credentials in math, science and related fields can more easily complete the preparation to become K-12 teachers. IBM created the Transition to Teaching pilot as a way of addressing the growing math and science teacher shortage in the United States.

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For more information on the Transition to Teaching program, visit IBM's Community Relations home page:
<http://www.ibm.com/ibm/ibmgives/>

For more information about the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program (GATAPP), visit:
<http://www.gapsc.com/GATAPP/home.asp>

