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PRISM HELPS NORTHEAST PARENTS WITH NEW, FREE EDUCATION GUIDES

[Atlanta, March 23, 2006] -- For parents of students in Clarke, Jackson and Oconee County schools who are struggling to make sense of the alphabet soup that often accompanies having a school-age child, the Partnership for Science and Mathematics Reform (PRISM) is offering help. PRISM, which aims to increase achievement in science and math statewide, now has both downloadable and printed Parent Guides available which provide parents with valuable information, resources and terms they should know in order to help their children be successful in school.

Individual Guides for each of three school levels: elementary, middle and high school can be downloaded at www.mathsciencesuccess.org. These Guides are short, easy-to-read brochures; among the helpful information they offer is a "Terms You Need to Know" section, a listing of important benchmarks within each school year, other hints for parents and a list of resourceful education web sites. For example, the elementary school version spells out the meaning of AYP (Average Yearly Progress reports); CRCT (Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests); EIP (Early Intervention Program) and GKAP (Georgia Kindergarten Assessment Program), among other acronyms. Parents may hear of these acronyms in PTA newsletters or in letters sent home regarding testing, but may not get enough information about these programs to understand how can impact each child.

“PRISM knows that being a parent and helping your child succeed isn’t always easy,” said Rosalind Barnes, Public Awareness Director for PRISM. “By creating these Parent Guides, we’re hoping to help parents understand terms and programs so that they can have a greater positive impact on their children’s academic success. If parents know and understand that there are Early Intervention Programs, for example, they can go to their child’s school when there is a problem and request the help their child needs.”

The printed Parent Guide, which encompasses all three school phases, will be available both online for downloading, and in counselor’s offices of Clarke, Jackson and Oconee County participating PRISM schools beginning this week. Each of these schools has teachers who participate in the PRISM Lead Teacher program and each has already received a banner declaring it a PRISM partner school as well as posters that highlight PRISM’s winning formula: **math + science = success**.

The Parent Guide, posters and banners are all part of PRISM’s public awareness campaign – **math + science = success** – which began rolling out in late January.

“PRISM’s goal is to close achievement gaps in science and mathematics and the objective of the public awareness campaign is to ensure that parents know that their support is critical to helping close these gaps,” said Ms. Barnes. “Parents themselves don’t have to have advanced math and science skills, but it’s important that they know good resources for school and homework help and how to help their children prepare for college and career. Parental support is important as soon as children start school.”

To download either the individual Parent Guides or the pocket guide encompassing all school ages, parents should visit www.mathsciencesuccess.org. Parents of students attending schools participating with PRISM in Northeast Georgia can visit their school counselor’s office to obtain the printed pocket guide. A list of Northeast area schools participating in PRISM is found under the Schools link at www.mathsciencesuccess.org.

About PRISM

The Partnership for Reform in Science and Mathematics (PRISM) is a five-year initiative funded by the National Science Foundation and administered by the University System of Georgia with the primary purpose of improving student achievement in science and mathematics at all levels of education throughout Georgia. PRISM is working actively in four diverse regions of the state with partners at the university and P-12 level in each region. For more information about PRISM, visit www.gaprism.org.

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