

**Florida Council of Instructional Technology Leaders
Instructional Technology Leadership Award:
Innovative Principal of the Year
Nomination Form**

District Name: Orange County Public Schools

NOMINATING FCITL MEMBER CONTACT INFORMATION

Name of Nominating FCITL Member: George Perreault
(must be voting member)

FCITL Member's E-mail Address: perreag@ocps.net

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Superintendent's Name: Mr. Ronald Blocker

PRINCIPAL NOMINEE CONTACT INFORMATION

Name of Principal Nominee: Katherine (Kate) Clark

Principal's E-mail Address: clarkk@ocps.net

School Name: Ocoee Middle School

School Address: 3000 South Bluford Avenue, Ocoee, FL 34761

School Phone #: (407) 877.5035

School Fax #: ()

NOMINATION INFORMATION

Please provide the information that best reflects why this nominee should be selected to receive the FCITL Instructional Technology Leadership Award: Innovative Principal of the Year.

Recommended information to be highlighted:

- Principal's Background Information (number of years in current position, number of years in education, educational experience, etc.)
- School Background/Demographics
- School and Principal's Instructional Technology Accomplishments: (focusing on how nominee has provided leadership to make a positive impact on student achievement using instructional technology).

All information provided needs to be limited to two pages and sent as an attachment in Word format. Completed nomination forms and digital videos are due to Gary Evans (gary@audioenhancement.com) by December 3, 2004. Only electronic submissions will be accepted.

Principal's Background Information

Dr. Katherine C. Clark is originally from Pennsylvania and attended Villanova University and Pennsylvania State University where she earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Exceptional Education. She moved to Florida in 1975 and completed her Master's Degree at University of Central Florida in 1978 in Specific Learning Disabilities. Kate completed her Doctoral degree from UCF in Educational Leadership with a dissertation in Teacher Induction in 2001.

Kate has taught in the classroom, or been an administrator at every level including Pre-K through post-secondary in her 30 years with Orange County Public Schools. Kate has been featured in numerous national publications for her vision and leadership in technology education. Kate has received several recognitions in the past few years including being named one of the Top 25 Education Technology Advocates in the country and her school was named a 2004 Microsoft Center of Innovation.

School Background and Demographics

Ocoee Middle School, which is a part of the Orange County Public Schools in Florida, has a student population of over 1630.

Composed of students in grades 6-8, Ocoee Middle School tends to the needs of a variety of learners. The bilingual program provides assistance for students needing instruction in Spanish. The school also accommodates a large number of Exceptional Education students.

The school is multi-racial, with 54% Caucasian, 21% Hispanic and 20% Black students. 40% of students qualify for a free or reduced lunch, and the mobility rate has been on average, 30%.

School and Principal's Instructional Technology Accomplishments

Kate Clark is an educator who will always be working to change instruction in the public schools; however, she wouldn't categorize herself as a technology principal. For Kate, technology is an integral part of the school curriculum rather than an extra piece of equipment.

Kate was a leader on the design team within the SMART Schools program that was created from Florida state legislation. The program was developed as an incentive for school districts to build innovative and efficient schools. The overriding concept behind the initiative was to design and construct a school within a specified cost

As part of the SMART Schools initiative, Kate looked at the technology needs of students as well as their optimal learning spaces. Her team quickly understood that by making smart decisions on the design and construction of the school, they could use the savings they realized to build a high-tech facility that would offer students numerous opportunities for optimizing their school and learning experience. Through the efforts of Kate and her team, Ocoee Middle School became the state's demonstration school, showcasing groundbreaking advances in design and learning, including:

- Enabling students to have direct access to a computer or other technologies without having to search them out or wait in line or go to a lab.
- Using technology to enhance communication between staff, the district, teachers, students, and parents.
- Using technology for staff development activities to ensure all teachers and staff integrate technology into their work rather than seeing it as another piece of equipment they have to manage.

- Encouraging students to use technology to do research and improve their higher-level thinking and creativity skills. This includes providing the technology that enables students to meet on a project even when they're not physically in the same room.
- Providing listening and visual aids that work with students rather than making them conform to a format that doesn't work for them. This includes providing audio enhancements and wireless microphones to every teacher, as well as equipping every classroom with LCD projects to ensure that students can see the screen no matter where they're sitting.
- Pioneering the Schools Interoperability Framework (SIF) as one of the original four national showcase sites for this initiative.

As the first public school in the nation to provide Tablet PCs to students, Ocoee became involved in a national pilot with Microsoft, HP, and Holt, Rinehart and Winston, to provide a Tablet PC to a 150-member team of students and teachers at the 7th grade. The students didn't use textbooks because all of their learning resources were online. Ocoee has also partnered with Florida State University to conduct preliminary research on teaching and learning.

Kate is a strong advocate of full and open communications between teachers, students, and parents and in order to facilitate one of her key mandates, Ocoee provides a school-to-home communication portal through K12Planet (Chancery Software) – students and parents can view homework assignments, grades, attendance records, personal notes from the teacher, information on student behavior, and more. The school has also used a filtered email program that allows teachers to communicate individually with students and parents, by either class period or course.

While Kate is a strong advocate and promoter of technology in schools and classrooms, she's also a realist. She knows that technology must be supported with extensive training in order to be fully utilized and implemented within the classroom. She strives to provide the same type of environment to the teachers that are learning new technologies as she expects them to provide to their students—rich and meaningful.

Kate expects the school of the future to be more flexible and defined less by boundaries than it is by “opportunities.” She believes learning “environments” will give students the opportunity to move through the information in their time. And she sees technology providing the means for students to learn from their peers, their teachers, and many other resources that may not be available today. That said, Kate sees herself doing the same thing she's doing today – making learning a better and more meaningful experience for the students in her care.

Kate Clark is passionate about integrating technology into the curriculum and feels that it is an essential educational tool. Her vision includes the expectation that students will thrive in the fast-paced, high-tech world of the future based on the educational opportunities they have today.