

B R A I N C H I L D

Haitian Students Entering Florida Schools Have Help with Brainchild

MIAMI, Florida — March 23, 2010 — Florida schools are seeing significant numbers of Haitian students file through their doors and some of the schools, like Miami-Killian High School in Miami are better equipped to help those students than others.

Miami-Killian High School has resources on hand to help Haitian students feel some sense of control despite the upheaval in their lives and the language barrier that exists in a new country. The

school has dozens of Study Buddy hand-held learning devices on hand which are manufactured by a Florida-based company called Brainchild (www.brainchild.com).



Study Buddies look like small game devices but they are used by students to reinforce instruction in mathematics, language arts, math and science. And, for the Haitian students, Study Buddies already come with content in their native language, Haitian Creole.

“It is so wonderful to hand one of our new students a learning device that already has content in their native language,” said Sheryl Place, ESOL director at Miami-Killian High School. “These students have been through so much that it is just a comfort for them to see some lessons and resources in a familiar language. Technology is a great equalizer. They know about cell phones and they know about gaming devices. The Study Buddy is familiar and it speaks their language.”

Every student's performance on the state's assessment, the FCAT (Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test), is critical. For new students, landing in a new school *and* right into a testing environment can be overwhelming especially after the earthquake and trauma of recent events in Haiti.

"There may be nothing else that these students can control in their lives at the moment but when you hand them a Study Buddy, you can almost see their shoulders relax. At least they can control this one thing and spend a little time learning without having to adapt to English," adds Ms. Place.

Study Buddies are complemented by a web-based assessment and instructional resource also by Brainchild called *Achiever!*. With *Achiever!*, students can practice for the FCAT without pressure while seeing how well they can handle English in a testing situation. They can refer to the Study Buddy in English, Spanish or Creole to explain concepts or continue working on problems until they understand the concept and are more comfortable with the English version of the questions.

"We find that our Haitian students have very good academic skills but they need help bridging the language barrier," adds Ms. Place. "Study Buddies allow them to go into their own world for a while and practice and build their confidence."

About Brainchild

Brainchild, Corp. is a Florida-based company that provides standards-based online assessment, instruction and reporting tools that help students reach and exceed learning objectives. In addition to its Achiever! series built individually for each state, Brainchild manufactures the Study Buddy, the first handheld tutor that was created exclusively for K-12 public schools and is being used by over 1 million students per day. Call or click for more information: 800-811-2724 or www.brainchild.com.

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