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NEWS RELEASE

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**Russell Elementary's Sandy Gamboa Named
Gifted Teacher of the Year**

HOUSTON COUNTY, GA – Sandy Gamboa, gifted teacher at Russell Elementary, was announced as the 2007-2008 Gervaise Wynn Perdue Gifted Teacher of the Year at the Dec. 11, 2007, Board of Education meeting. Gamboa was presented with cash awards and gifts valued at approximately \$800, to include \$655 in cash.

The Houston County Association for Gifted Children (HCAGC) presented her with \$555 and Martha Burke with the HEA Federal Credit Union presented a \$100 check. A gift basket worth more than \$140 contained gifts contributed by Ascension Design Group, Books are Fun, Front Porch Tea Room, Georgia Bob's Barbecue Company, Longhorn Steakhouse and Priester's Pecans.

Gamboa has worked as a FOCUS teacher in Houston County for six years, including four years at Russell Elementary. She was nominated for the award by Russell's Principal, Keith Lauritsen. "Sandy Gamboa has led our entire school, not just our gifted students, in the effort to differentiate instruction based on student learning styles," Lauritsen wrote in a nomination letter. "I have been quite impressed by her ability to interact with her students, fellow teachers and parents. She is fully committed to our school and is always willing to take on extra responsibilities. As a truly amazing teacher with a sincere drive to maximize student learning, Mrs. Gamboa is a tremendous asset to our school and our system."

Carmen Foskey, a sixth-grader at Huntington Middle School who was taught by Gamboa for five years, wrote, "Even before I entered her classroom she stepped in and took me under her wing. Mrs. Gamboa is one of my most memorable teachers. Even though I am no longer in her class, she still keeps an eye out on how my classmates and I are doing in school. She has left her handprint on my heart."

The Gifted Teacher of the Year must demonstrate commitment to teaching gifted students, serve as an advocate for gifted education and demonstrate evidence of leadership within the school and district. Publication of original research or articles is also highlighted. Several of Gamboa's articles have been published in education magazines such as Gifted Child Today.

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As the Houston County Gifted Teacher of the Year, Gamboa will automatically be nominated for the state-level award. Nominees must be:

- a member of HCAGC and the Georgia Association for Gifted Children (GAGC);
- a gifted program teacher for at least two years;
- presently teaching gifted students at least two periods of the school day; and, if selected,
- agree to attend the GAGC annual conference as a representative of Houston County.

Past Gifted Teacher of the Year winners include Scott Daniel (2006), Jan Kirchoff (2005), Janine Davis (2004) and Peggy McCall (2003). Daniel and McCall were also named the Georgia Gifted Teacher of the Year.

Gamboa may be contacted by e-mail at sgamboa@hcbe.net or by telephone at (478) 929-7830. Jan Jacobsen serves as director of gifted and AP programs. She may be contacted at either jjacobsen@hcbe.net or (478) 988-6200, ext. 10393.

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