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# Stratford Middle School Welcomes New AIP Class

When Jan Gillespie's students moved this year from Glen Crest School (District 89) to Stratford Middle School, she was asked to go with them to teach District 93's new Assisted Instructional Program (AIP) class. She is enthusiastic about how the transition to a new school with the same teacher has impacted the students.

"It is phenomenal for them to have continuity with their teacher. We are with our students for 3 years, so staying with them has helped make it much easier for them to transition and for us to establish the new program," said Mrs. Gillespie, who holds master's degrees in both teaching and speech pathology.

Stratford's regular education students are getting to know the AIP students in Related Arts (music and art) classes, and the newcomers enjoy being greeted in hallways and the cafeteria. Their teacher calls such interaction an "awesome opportunity" for her students.

Jan Gillespie's goal is that her students will gain as much functional independence as possible at Stratford. To this end she works with them in academic areas including reading, math, science, social studies, coins and time. "It will take longer, but I am confident our students will learn a lot here," she said.



*Jan Gillespie works with a child in the new AIP class at Stratford Middle School.*

## Hadley GIP Teacher Creates Yearbooks



*A visit to the class by Hunter Hillenmeyer of the Chicago Bears was captured in a photo for the yearbook.*

Four years ago Kristin Garcia began a tradition of creating yearbooks for her Guided Instructional Program students at Hadley Middle School (District 41). Now the youngsters look forward to those yearbooks with great anticipation.

A camera is always at hand as students engage in various activities, learn about the community and discuss social skills. Yearbook pages are filled with photos culled from hundreds taken over the course of the year, as well as individual pages for each student and a class photo.

Students enjoy looking through yearbooks filled with memories and try to find pictures of themselves and their friends. The books become treasured keepsakes, and "we always make time for signing them on the last day of school," said Kristin Garcia.

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