



Focus on Finance: District 7's preschool programs

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EDWARDSVILLE - Today's *Focus on Finance* will feature District 7's preschool programs. We are proud of the high quality early childhood programming the district has been providing to its youngest students for nearly 20 years.

District 7's preschool programs serve 160 three and four year old children in either half day or full-day programming. All preschool classrooms are located at Goshen Elementary School and follow the District 7 school calendar.

Learning in the preschool classroom is guided and reinforced by six teachers who are degreed and certified in Early Childhood Education, eleven program assistants, one parent educator, one secretary, and certified staff members who provide speech and language services, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and social work to students requiring those services.

District 7's preschool curriculum correlates vertically with our elementary curriculum and is aligned with the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards, providing a natural transition to Kindergarten.



Hands-on activities in language and literacy, math, science, and social studies engage young children as they learn. Music, art, drama, and imaginative play experiences, as well as health/wellness and fitness activities are also embedded into the daily program.

Throughout the day, District 7 preschool teachers collect data on each child, utilizing authentic assessments and observations. This information allows teachers to plan small group and individualized instruction so that all children are successful and well-prepared for Kindergarten.

Parents receive comprehensive reports on their child's accomplishments throughout the year and may participate in home-visits, giving the parent a private time to discuss goals for their child, their child's progress, and any concerns they may have.

The District 7 Preschool Program is comprised of three separate programs:

- **Preschool Academy**, a full-day, tuition-based classroom
- **Preschool for All**, a half day classroom funded by the Illinois State Board of Education through a competitive grant process. This classroom is free to eligible students
- **Early Childhood Special Education**, a half day program for students with identified disabilities

The preschool parent educator provides families with answers to their parenting questions. Topics covered in workshops and home visits include information on

childhood nutrition, discipline, sleep-issues, conflict, and childhood stress. Families can meet with the parent educator in the privacy of their own home, at their child's school, or through many of the parent workshops and parent/child interaction sessions offered throughout the school year.

The District 7 preschool program also offers a "Developmental Check-up" to all three and four-year-old children living in the Edwardsville School District. This is a free service to families who would like to have a better understanding of their child's preschool readiness. Cognitive skills, motor skills, and language skills are all assessed in this one-hour play-based screening. Vision and hearing screenings are also conducted. Children do not have to attend one of the District 7 preschool programs to access this service.

Since the inception of the award, District 7's preschool programs have earned the "Gold Circle of Quality," the Illinois State Board of Education's highest honor. The Gold Circle of Quality recognizes programs that exceed specific quality benchmarks on learning environment, instructional quality, and all program administrative standards, such as staff/child ratios, staff qualifications, and professional development. This distinction ranks District 7 preschool programs in the top 10% of programs across the State of Illinois.

Next week's ***Focus on Finance*** will feature the District's special education programming. Thank you for your support of District 7 schools.