



TOP EARLY LEARNING CENTERS

THE OPPORTUNITY PROJECT

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In This Issue

- TOP North One Year Later
- Library Follow Up
- Assessment Results
- 2009 Planning



"As a kindergarten teacher, I know that Pre-K education is imperative for a student's academic success. Over the past few years the bar has been raised on what is expected from our students. The TOP program helps in bridging the gap and providing students with early success."

- Melissa Young, USD 260

TOP NORTH one year later

Great things are happening at TOP North. The school's success in the 21st and Grove area saw enrollment rise to a high of 110 students in its first year. September 2008 enrollment set a new record of 121 children. With the addition of four new classrooms, the school will be licensed to serve an additional 58 children. Since opening in August 2006, the school has operated with seven classrooms, most of which are licensed for three to six year olds. The expansion project adds four classrooms to accommodate the increased demand for services for children ages one to four years. Brain synapse development for vision, hearing, language and higher cognitive function peaks at 15-25 months of age making young children very susceptible to optimum brain wiring. Like its sister school, TOP South, the new classrooms will provide the opportunity to work with younger children over the course of several years and have a more significant influence on their social and academic future. In addition to providing a quality pre-school experience to a larger number of children in the North-Central Wichita community, the increased capacity allows TOP families placement for younger family members, addressing parents' challenges to find high-quality care for younger siblings and transportation issues.

Center director, Jeannene Schweitzer, comes to TOP with a degree in early elementary education, a masters degree in science management, ECSE certification and more than 30 years teaching experience. Jeannene's also been active in numerous professional organizations and community boards throughout her career.

ENROLLMENT all time high

TOP North 121 students TOP South 179 students

Check It Out!

library & literacy

Meet Papa George and Little George, library puppets who greet TOP's enthusiastic students each time they visit their enchanted forest to remind them of library rules and appropriate behavior. The children now enjoy weekly visits to check out books and take part in literacy activities organized by a dedicated group of volunteers, most retired USD 260 teachers, lead by retired librarian Judy Greteman. The younger children explore books and enjoy a puppet show or storytime during their visits. The multi-sensory library gives students the opportunity to enhance language and literacy skills crucial to school readiness and academic success. Research shows that children's brains develop best when given the opportunity to imagine and explore, with 80 percent of that development occurring before the age of six.

Currently, the library has more than 2700 children's books and DVDs. Plans include adding resources for parents. In the most recent monthly meeting parents were introduced to Greteman and proper library procedure including reading books with their children and



"What I was most impressed by was the TOP kids' communication abilities." - Julie Bright, Kindergarten teacher, USD 260

"The children that I have had that have gone through the TOP program come into the classroom excited and prepared to learn. Not only are they where they need to be academically, but their social skills are at a level that gives them an advantage in all areas of their lives!" - Matthew Jacobs, Kindergarten teacher, USD 260



Planning For Their Future

goals & action plans 08-09

TOP administrators collaborated to determine a course of action for the upcoming year at the annual planning meeting in July. Major goals include to: continue to attract and retain the very best quality lead and assistant teachers; review and continue to improve the curriculum so the children achieve the very highest outcomes; manage wait lists so that every child possible can be enrolled; create ways to strengthen the bond between parents and schools to further involve parents in their child's education and support the goals of the school in their home environment. Action plans were completed and progress is already being made!

Getting Results

assessment outcomes

2008 Spring P3 & P4 assessment results show significant proficiency gains in key indicators for TOP North three & four-year-olds.

Indicator	% Proficient	% Gain
Demonstrates self-confidence	84	32
Shows some self-direction	73	34
Shows appreciation for books	22	81
Uses letter-like shapes to convey meaning	68	45
Recognizes simple patterns and duplicates them	66	43
Orders & compares objects based on a single attribute	60	40

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