

### EXAMPLES OF COLLABORATIVE PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

#### Ogden Community Schools: The Ogden Early Learning Center

- ❖ **Services are provided for three- to five-year-olds.**
  - The preschool is licensed by the Department of Human Services for 33 children, based on the physical size of the classroom. Primarily four-year-olds are served in the program, but there are a few three- and occasionally a five-year-old. The district has chosen to follow staffing guidelines for three-year-olds (1:8) in order to have a program of high quality. The maximum number of slots available is 17. Children need to be income-eligible to qualify. The district uses empowerment guidelines of 200 percent poverty level for income eligibility.
  - The preschool opened in 2001. It is a full-day program that operates five days per week. The program operates 160 days out of the district's 180 days. Professional development is provided by Drake University Head Start as well as the Ogden School District.
  - Since opening, there are 32 children who remain in the district. Of those 32 children, 29 are proficient or *better* on ITBS and DIBELS.
- ❖ **The program utilizes blended funding.**
  - Drake University Head Start funds approximately two-sevenths of the program costs. Community empowerment funds approximately one-seventh of the program costs.
  - The Ogden School Board is very committed to early childhood and fund the remainder of the program costs out of district funds; the current cost of one slot is \$2,391. The income guidelines are waived for students with special education needs.
- ❖ **Services are provided by Head Start.**
  - Head Start purchases seven of the 17 slots based on the cost per slot. Head Start provides nursing services for all the children enrolled, as well as the services of a family advocate for all of the students in the program.
  - Head Start assumes responsibility for the enrollment and recruiting for all 17 of the children. There is a toll-free number that can be called to begin the application process. The program follows the Head Start Performance Standards.
- ❖ **There is flexibility within the program.**
  - The program begins in the fall with 15 of the 17 slots filled. One slot is held in case there is a kindergarten-age child found that would benefit from a preschool experience before starting kindergarten. A second slot is held in case a family moves into the district with a preschool child who has an individualized education program (IEP).
  - Accommodations are made in filling the 17 slots if a child who has an IEP has more significant needs. For example, a child with special needs may utilize three slots and another may utilize two slots because of the increased need for assistance and modifications in the classroom. The result is that the total number of children is lowered and the teacher/child ratio is increased, maintaining a high quality preschool program for all children.

For more information on the Ogden Early Learning Center, contact principal Rick Gustafson at (515) 275-2795 or [rgustafson@ogden.k12.ia.us](mailto:rgustafson@ogden.k12.ia.us)

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