Rossville

Background

Preschool students with disabilities from the Rossville area have been served in district early childhood special education (ECSE) classrooms, at home, in child care settings, and at private preschools since 1981. Students were sometimes bused to other district schools.

As best practices in early childhood special education encouraged inclusion of role models in ECSE classrooms, the district classrooms reflected this change.

Long range planning for early childhood education began in August of 2001 with the formation of a strategic planning committee. Committee members included parents and professional staff from each of the district's communities.

In 2003, The Kaw Valley School District applied for and received a state grant for four-year-old at-risk children. All eight (8) students were bused to one district location for preschool.

Three years later, in 2006, the Kaw Valley Board of Education voted to establish universal pre-schools at each elementary school location. Informational meetings for parents and patrons were conducted during the spring with the plan to screen, enroll, staff, and create space for two additional classrooms by August 2006.

The two larger preschools, including one at Rossville Elementary, were filled to capacity, necessitating an additional classroom for each by August 2007. Rossville's preschool served 54 three and four-year old students: nine (9) who qualified for state four-year old at-risk funds, and eight (8) with special needs. Resources to fund the program were provided through proportionate special education categorical aid reimbursement and state at-risk funding. The growth of the program exceeded projections and expectations.

Rossville schools have a history of partnering with other agencies and organizations. In 1998, an after-school child-care program was established at Rossville Grade School with start-up funds from the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services. It continues to provide after school care for school age children. Grants from the Kansas Health Foundation have provided summer enhancement activities for elementary through high school aged children in Rossville.

KHF has also provided a grant administered through the non-profit Rossville Community Foundation for serving youth in the Rossville community. The high school leadership group supported by this fund provides mentoring to elementary school students including the preschool room. Rossville Elementary School personnel have been involved with a grant opportunity through Kansas Action for Children and KHF to develop a local leadership summit aimed at informing business, school, governmental, and parental leaders of the economic and societal benefits of early childhood education.

Partners

Kaw Valley School District, Community Action Head Start

Program Goal

Rossville will expand and enhance the Rossville Preschool Program by adding two classrooms, which integrate current school district services with Head Start, serving 32 children. (Total = 32)