

SPRD earns quality designation for preschool

Sisters Park & Recreation District Community Preschool has received the Star Designation from the Governor's Office for outstanding quality in childcare. The rating was achieved by participating in the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), a program designed to raise the quality and consistency of childcare across the state. Through this program the SPRD Community Preschool is now ranked within the top 6 percent of childcare centers across Oregon.

Lead teachers Valerie Selig and Carissa Gascon have worked diligently for over two years participating in training programs, implementing changes, and spending hours on non-school days documenting the work they do. The quality rating is a symbol of excellence where the community preschool program exceeded essential standards for quality in the areas of learning and development, health and safety, personnel qualifications, family partnerships, and administration and business practices.

"We are thrilled with the Star Designation," said Selig. "We have worked so hard to make this program stand out and help provide a positive learning environment for our Sisters kids, ages 5 and under. It feels great to be recognized."

The QRIS program is designed to give early childhood educators support with program goals and give

parents a tool to ensure they are finding a high quality program for their children. Research shows that children in high quality care have higher levels of success when they enter school, continue to do well in school, and have higher earning potential as adults. High quality settings demonstrate better development of language skills, cognitive functioning, social skills and emotional well-being.

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NeighborImpact Child Care Resources works with childcare programs across three Central Oregon counties — Deschutes, Crook and Jefferson — assisting staff with materials, training, and developmental screenings to assist with programs aiming for the QRIS designation.

"This program and its staff have worked so hard to receive this designation," said Kate Eastman, quality

improvement specialist at NeighborImpact. "This teaching team truly is a gem in Sisters. They jump on everything — college classes, additional curriculum, activities for the students — any chance they get to better their program for their students they take it."

There are still spaces available in both the 3- and 4-year-old "grasshopper" class as well as the 4- and 5-year-old "dragonfly" class through the SPRD Community Preschool. Classes are available on a first-come/first-served basis and are run out of Sisters Elementary School.

"Being housed in the elementary school allows for an easy transition into the school," says Selig. "We love to see children that have been through our program walk in



PHOTO PROVIDED

SPRD preschoolers enjoy Clifford the Big Red Dog Day.

the first day of school already knowing many of the basic principals at Sisters Elementary. Add to that, our recent Star ranking — I am very proud to be a part of this program."

For more information

about the SPRD Community Preschool or to register your child visit www.SistersRecreation.com or call 541-549-2091. For additional resources regarding the QRIS please contact Neighbor Impact at 541-323-6513.

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