



Kim Kearbey

Walla Walla Public Schools Classroom Close-Up



TEACHER NAME: Kim Kearbey

SCHOOL: Berney Elementary

Position: Kindergarten teacher

YEARS IN DISTRICT: 12 years

Q. Why does the book in a bag program help get parents involved?

A. Students take home a grade level story reader book each day. These books help students become more confident in their reading and this activity also includes the family. The intent is for an adult family member to read the book with their child. This allows parents to see areas their child is struggling in and they can help them make improvements. It is amazing the progress students make. We usually start this program in January and their reading just takes off.

Q. How does "choice time" support their learning?

A. Choice time allows students to choose a hands-on activity after they have completed their classroom assignment. Pattern blocks and math games are some of the choices. The students see this as play, but it is actually reinforcing the academic skills we are working on. Everybody likes to be rewarded and look forward to something. Kids can explore freely and pick the activity of their choice.

Q. Why is it so important for children to be successful in kindergarten?

A. This is my 12th year teaching kindergarten at Berney School. I have learned if students are excited about kindergarten and excited about learning, they tend to continue this pattern throughout their school years. Kids who don't get off to a good start in kindergarten may fall behind. It is my job to make sure they are getting the academic skills and are progressing at the rate needed to be successful.

Q. How does the full day kindergarten help?

A. Our state standards have been changing dramatically and continue to change. I felt when I was teaching a half day program, I was always rushed to get the curricula covered. It is not just play, snack and nap time. We are focused on reading, writing and arithmetic. By switching to full day kindergarten, I have more time to meet state standards and address each student's individual needs.

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MOMENTS & MEMORIES FROM
KIM'S CLASS:



COMMENTS FROM KIM...

Our kindergarten team recently decided to try the Response to Intervention (RtI) model for our reading groups. We split up all three classes and are implementing RtI to determine which interventions are needed for each student.

I believe in getting parents involved. I have an open door policy and always encourage parents to volunteer in the classroom.



We do family projects. We did a leprechaun trap in celebration of St. Patrick's Day. These types of projects are a way to get the entire family involved and help students take ownership in the project.