



Walla Walla Public Schools Classroom Close-Up



TEACHER NAME: Laurie Hersey

PROGRAM: Developmental Preschool

Position: Teacher

YEARS IN DISTRICT: 25 years

Q. What services does the Developmental Preschool program provide?

A. We have two classes in the morning which are typically three and 4-year-old students and two classes in the afternoon which are four and 5-year-old students. We are trying to help them catch up, so they are ready to enter either another special education program or go on to kindergarten. We work on developmental skills, such as staying on task, following directions, and self help skills. We also address beginning academics, such as matching colors, shapes, and identifying other students in the classroom.

Q. How many students are you able to serve?

A. The maximum number of students we can serve in a classroom is 12. We have three adults in the class to help support the students. Our afternoon classes are currently full and we are close to being full in our morning classes.

Q. How do students qualify for the program?

A. We have a child find program in the community. All of the hospitals and doctors, WIC program staff and school-based health center staff know about our preschool program. Doctors who are examining a child may notice a delay and they will contact me for an evaluation. Most of the students in the developmental preschool program have multiple delays, including motor skills, speech, cognitive abilities and adaptive skills.

Q. What are other ways to learn about the program?

A. It's important for us to do outreach to let people know about this program. For example, if a child doesn't receive a well-child check the doctor is not able to provide them a referral to our program. So it's up to all of us to help provide that information so people know these services are available.

Over 

Laurie Hersey

The parents are just getting started with their school years. It's exciting for them to see their kids make gains. I find most of our parents are really good at following up with what we work on at school.



MORE COMMENTS FROM LAURIE:

I have taught preschool through high school in a variety of special education programs and I have to say I've seen more progress with the preschool students. They are sponges for information and learning at this age.

We also do family-style meals so students learn to use their utensils, how to pour and dish the food for themselves. It also teaches patience and builds language skills.



I am married and have a teenage son. I'm originally from the Lewiston area. We have dogs, horses and cattle. I have an administrative degree from Eastern Washington University.