Janismarie Oberle is excited to take over as the new aftershool instructor at Phillips County Family Education Services.

“Hopefully we can make a positive impact in their lives,” said Oberle, noting what a great opportunity the afterschool center is for the kids.

The free, educational-based program, which is grant funded, meets at Phillips County Event Center Monday through Thursday from a little before 4 p.m. until 5:15 p.m. (It follows the school calendar.)

Holyoke elementary students in grades K-3 have the opportunity to ride the school bus to the fairgrounds after school.

Oberle said they spend some time on the playground and eating snacks, followed by around 30 minutes of homework time.

Janismarie Oberle, pictured at left in the middle row, looks forward to her time with the kids as the new Phillips County Family Education Services afterschool program instructor. Oberle and assistant Linda Kurtzer, pictured at right, offer the free afterschool center Monday-Thursday at Phillips County Event Center.

—Enterprise photo

“This year we are really focusing on doing homework,” she said. She encouraged kids to bring all their homework with them and even AR books they are reading.

Oberle and assistant Linda Kurtzer split up two age groups into two classrooms so they can work with them a little more easily.

After homework time, the group gets to hear from someone in the community who wants to introduce the kids to their talent, trade or occupation. “I want to open kids up to realize what kind of community we live in,” said Oberle.

Oberle has had previous experience working with kids, including some time volunteering at the afterschool center last year.

She moved to the area from Denver 17 years ago. Various jobs over the years have included being an aide at the school, working at Eastern Colorado Services for the Developmentally Disabled, teaching art to down syndrome kids and volunteering at vacation Bible school.

Oberle said the PCFES afterschool program began in January 2009, and some of the kids have attended regularly from the beginning. She’s excited about being a part of it because it’s a safe environment where kids can go until their parents are off work.

It is one of three programs offered by PCFES, with classes also being held for ESL and GED.

If anyone would like to sign up their child for the afterschool center or would like to volunteer to share their talent or occupation with the kids, please call PCFES at 854-2595.

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