

## **Dragon's Wagon Preschool to start 32nd year Sept. 4**

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

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Dragon's Wagon Preschool will kick off its 32nd year Tuesday, Sept. 4 at their Phillips County Event Center location.

Director Marcia Walter said there are a couple of open spaces, and those interested in enrolling their child should call the preschool at 854-2999.

The preschool is state licensed and must adhere to regulations for enrollment which limit teacher-student ratio per daily session. Therefore it must enroll on a first-come, first-served basis.

Children ages 3 through pre-K who are not enrolled in kindergarten are eligible to enroll in the nonprofit, nonsectarian, nonpolitical preschool.

While Walter serves as the director of Dragon's Wagon, Joan Owens is assistant director and aides are Amy Marner and Emma Mackay.

The High Scope curriculum, an approved Colorado Department of Education curriculum, is used at the preschool and is highly regarded by Walter.

There will be two classrooms again this year, with 16 children in each during each session. Walter noted this allows teachers to meet Colorado Preschool Program (CPP) guidelines and serve the needs of the community.

Walter said the curriculum will be consistent for both classrooms in every session.

Preschool classes will be held Monday through Thursday with morning sessions from 9-11:30 a.m. and afternoon sessions from 1-3:30 p.m. Fridays will be staff inservice days.

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The Dragon's Wagon program consists of mixed-age groupings, which Walter said can be very beneficial. She cited the following benefits:

—provides a more normalized setting for early socialization and education.

—enhances opportunities for peer modeling and cooperative learning.

—gives parents more freedom with scheduling sessions for their child.

On Tuesday, Aug. 28 at 7 p.m., there will be a mandatory parents' meeting in Heginbotham Hall in the Event Center.

Registration and enrollment forms, tuition payment procedures, parent handbook, daily schedule and the preschool's philosophy, curriculum and policies will be discussed with parents at that time.

Children will be able to visit the preschool during registration day Thursday, Aug. 30. Those who have children with last names starting with A-H will attend registration from 9-10 a.m.; I-P, 10-11 a.m.; Q-Z, 11 a.m.-noon; and those unable to go at their scheduled time should attend from noon-1 p.m.

Dragon's Wagon works closely with Northeast Colorado BOCES to assess children who may have special needs. Assessments are made in areas of speech and language, motor and cognitive development, with speech and occupational therapy provided on site if necessary.

Financial assistance information is available upon request by contacting the preschool at 854-2999.

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Members of the Dragon's Wagon advisory board are president Tracy Steggs, vice-president Brooke Dirks, secretary Andrea Schlachter, co-treasurers Kristie Pelle and Misty Hielscher, financial aide and GIFT Kari Sandquist and members Deb Williamson, Rena Schneller and Cecilia Márquez.

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