

Program Descriptions

Early Childhood Family Education - ECFE provides opportunities for all families with children between the ages of birth to pre-kindergarten. ECFE offers a variety of classes and events that support families and promote positive parent involvement and positive home-school connections. ECFE also has a consistent connection with local Daycare Providers, Belle Plaine Public Library, Title I and Scott County Public Health to provide services for district families. This program works closely with Early Childhood Screening, Early Childhood Special Education, Preschool Pals and School Readiness. This program is based on a sliding fee scale and is for children birth to pre-kindergarten and their parents.

Early Childhood Special Education - ECSE provides information and support to families who have a child with developmental needs or diagnosed disabilities including communication, cognitive, social emotional, motor and self help skills. This program works closely with Help Me Grow, Follow Along, Early Childhood Screening and integrates into Belle Plaine Preschool Pals and ECFE classes. All services for ECSE are free for children and families from birth to Kindergarten.

Early Childhood Screening - This program used to be called Pre-School Screening. This term is no longer used by the State of MN, and is misleading to parents. It implies that children need this to get into preschool or Kindergarten. This is not the case.

Early Childhood Screening checks children's development and provides parents with district and community resources. Early Childhood Screening sends postcards to every family listed in Infinite Campus 1-2 years before their child(ren) are eligible for Kindergarten to inform the parents that it is time to bring their child in for screening. Early Childhood Screening also contacts families through Early Childhood Family Education, Belle Plaine Preschool Pals, other community preschools, and community daycares. Referrals are directed to Early Childhood Special Education or School Readiness as needed. Early Childhood Screening is required by the State of Minnesota and is best completed between 3 and 4 years of age.

Belle Plaine Preschool Pals - Preschool Pals provides independent classes for children that turn 3 or 4 by September 1. Children in the 3 year old program work on social skills as well as the skills that are scaffolded to the 4 year old program. Children in the 4 year old program focus on literacy, math and social skills to prepare for kindergarten. This program has just been rated 4 stars by Parent Aware and allows families that qualify to apply for scholarship money. Belle Plaine Preschool Pals works closely with Early Childhood Special Education, Early Childhood Screening, School Readiness and Early Childhood Family Education. This program is a fee based program.

Parent Aware - Parent Aware is a rating system that helps parents locate preschool programs that go

above and beyond to prepare children for school. Belle Plaine Preschool Pals has been awarded the top rating of 4 stars. To see what the stars mean you can go to <http://parentawareratings.org/stars-defined>. With the four star rating we are able to offer qualifying families an option to apply for Parent Aware scholarships, which are for children that are 3 or 4 years old and want to register with Belle Plaine Preschool Pals. Parents are required to fill out an application and prove their income by providing Free/Reduced Lunch acceptance letter or other county service acceptance letter or providing 2 paycheck stubs. We got all the materials together this year and helped the families complete the application process. It is unknown at this time if any of our families have been granted a scholarship. Applications were being reviewed beginning November 11 and families are notified directly. This process is new this year for us and we are still learning the steps. Sheri will be following up with all families that she helped apply. Think Small (state determined Grant Holder) collects the application materials and grants the scholarships. Parent Aware scholarships are only available to 4 star rated programs.

School Readiness - This program was once called Learning Readiness, but MDE now calls it School Readiness. School Readiness used to be the Discovery Days program, but with the merger of the former Discovery Days and Tiger Kids we were able to open it up a bit to provide more options for qualifying preschool families. School Readiness is basically a program that allows children that are 3 or 4 whose families just miss the financial cut off for Parent Aware assistance, just fall outside of qualifying for ECSE services, have medical issues or have unique family circumstances and are in need of some tuition assistance for the Belle Plaine Preschool Pals. Families requesting School Readiness assistance must fill out an application and a free/reduced lunch form. These two items are used to determine scholarship amounts. Anyone who receives School Readiness assistance commits to completing parent involvement components. This includes attending parent/child classes, completing take-home skill building backpacks or totes and attend their child's parent teacher conference. School Readiness scholarships can give up to a 50% reduction on tuition. The remaining part of the fee is paid by the parent. Anyone needing further assistance are encouraged to apply for Parent Aware scholarships.

Help Me Grow - Help Me Grow is a state program that allows families to seek out resources for development information. The Help Me Grow Website also allows families to make referrals on line. The referrals for our district automatically come to the district and connect families with ECSE staff. This is an online service until a family makes contact with the district.

Follow Along - Follow Along is a county program that is offered by Scott County Public Health. This program also tracks development for families, but it is all done through Scott County Public Health. Families must register with Public Health in order to start this tracking process. Registration forms can be found online.