



Connect with us

RPS205.com
Facebook.com/RPS205
Twitter.com/RPS205
Youtube.com/RPS205Communications

For Immediate Release: July 30, 2015

Contact: Cathy Bayer
815-489-7211 or 815-378-2079
cathy.bayer@rps205.com

RPS 205 PreK Centers Receive Top State Award

ROCKFORD – Rockford Public Schools' Early Childhood Centers received state recognition this month with a quality and improvement award. All three RPS 205 Early Childhood Centers were recognized with the Award of Excellence for Inclusion of Children with Special Needs from ExceleRate Illinois. The three centers – Dennis, Fairview and Summerdale early childhood centers – were notified earlier this month of the award in a letter (*attached*).

The Award of Excellence is Illinois' highest level of quality rating and improvement system through ExceleRate Illinois. The awards recognize research-based best practice in specific content areas. "This Award of Excellence demonstrates your program's successful implementation of high-quality, inclusive early learning services for children with special needs," in a letter signed by Theresa Hawley, Executive Director of the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development; Cindy Zumwalt, Early Childhood Division Administrator, Illinois State Board of Education; and Linda Saterfield, Associate Director, Office of Early childhood, Division of Family and Community Services, Illinois Department of Human Services.

Each award lasts three years, as long as the program retains its overall designation in the Gold Circle of Quality from ExceleRate Illinois during the time frame. RPS 205 will be recognized at a reception in Springfield Sept. 29.

The [RPS 205 Early Childhood Program](#) serves approximately 2,800 students, ages 3 and 4. RPS 205 won the state's Gold Circle of Quality Award in 2013 for its high-caliber program. The Gold Circle of Quality recognizes programs that have exceeded in 15 benchmarks, including the quality of the learning environment, instructional quality and professional development. That award laid the groundwork for RPS 205 to apply for this recent recognition from ExceleRate.

The recognition affirms the RPS 205 Early Childhood Mission: to empower all young children to become effective, enthusiastic, and socially competent learners by creating a bond among children, their families, their schools and community, said Kim Nelson, Executive Director of Early Childhood Program. "This award validates our commitment to provide inclusive programming and classroom experiences that support access, participation and support for all children, including children with special needs and their families," Nelson said. "This is something we can all be proud of as these practices are reflected at each and every one of our sites."

[ExceleRate Illinois](#) is a statewide quality rating and improvement system designed to make continuous quality improvement an everyday priority among early learning providers. The program establishes standards for helping infants, toddlers and preschool age children develop intellectually, physically, socially and emotionally.

###

Rockford Public Schools offer a rich and varied curriculum to its 28,000 students. It is one of the largest school districts in Illinois and the second-largest employer in the Rockford region. RPS 205 embraces five big initiatives – Readiness Rocks – designed to create a district that prepares all of its students for a bright future: College and Career Readiness, Seven Periods to Success, 21st Century Learning Environments, Preschool for All and College for All.