

## **Banning Unified 411! - The nurturing of young minds**

By Principal/Director Colette Burgess, Florida Street Discovery Center

*"Education begins the moment we see children as innately wise and capable beings. Only then can we play along in their world."* — Author Vince Gowman

The nurturing and enlightening of young minds begins the moment that students enter Florida Street Discovery Center, a Transitional Kindergarten and State-Licensed Preschool for the Banning Unified School District.

We strongly believe in research demonstrating the importance of early childhood education and the pivotal role that parents play as their child's first teacher. Parents are encouraged to talk and read to their children to build cognitive skills and emotional well-being. In recent decades, scientific research has shown that 90 percent of a child's brain development occurs before the age of five and so many experts believe that Preschool and Transitional Kindergarten greatly enhance learning and academic performance.

In a report entitled, *"Rebuilding the California Dream,"* The Right Start Commission found, "The quality of care and education that our children receive during these formative years defines their start in life."

### **A Force for Early Childhood Education**

Over the last five years, the Florida Street Discovery Center has become a leading force for Early Childhood Education in the San Geronio Pass.

For our efforts, Florida Street Discovery Center State Preschool has been awarded a Quality Rating & Improvement System Grant. The grant is designed to increase the number of low-income children into our high-quality State Preschool, which will allow them the opportunity for success in school and life. With the grant money, we are able to purchase everything from furniture to crayons to enhance our classrooms according to State guidelines and the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS), a widely used measure of classroom standards.

## **A Look at Florida Street Discovery Center**

In 2014, the Discovery Center opened its doors for the first time. We began serving Transitional Kindergarten students (regardless of family income) who were turning five years old between September 2<sup>nd</sup> and December 2<sup>nd</sup>. We also offered classes for special needs students.

In 2016, the Discovery Center expanded and became a State-Licensed Preschool Program serving three-and-four-year-old children. Currently, Florida Street Discovery Center offers a Full-Day State Preschool and Part- Day Preschool. Our State Preschool program serves 56 students and has a waiting list for a new classroom of 16 students.

We focus on hands-on learning by using the California Preschool Curriculum Frameworks, the Desired Results Development Profile (DRDP), which measures the learning, development, and progress of students, and ECERS.

## **Enrolling Your Child**

Florida Street Discovery Center will continue to offer Full-Day Transitional Kindergarten classes, State Preschool and part-day preschool, each with their own free nutritional program. Parents are encouraged to volunteer to become part of their child's educational experience. We welcome every student here at Florida Street Discovery Center!

For enrollment information, please visit the Florida Street Discovery Center located at 671 North Florida St. in Banning, check out the District's website for more information at [www.banning.k12.ca.us](http://www.banning.k12.ca.us) or call us at 951-849-2930.