Union County School District Improving Early Childhood Education

The Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) has recently emphasized early childhood education in order to prepare students for Kindergarten. Even though the Pre-K Program in Union County has proven successful, to meet the new MDE guidelines, the district has placed more resources and emphasis on this critical area in education. According to Assistant Superintendent Windy Faulkner, paraprofessionals led the pre-k classes in the past. Beginning with the 2018-2019 school year, certified teachers will lead the instruction of the pre-k students, along with the assistance of a paraprofessional. “We are very pleased with the job that our pre-k teachers have done in the past and we would have continued with no changes. However, because of requirement changes made by MDE, we began looking at several options to keep the Pre-K Program in our schools. We came up with a solution we believe to be a wonderful opportunity and the most beneficial to our students.”

With the addition of staff in this area, a few changes will be required. The Union County School Board approved an increase in tuition to help offset the cost of having certified teachers as well as paraprofessionals in the pre-k class at each of our four (4) schools. In the past, the Pre-K Program has been entirely funded through students’ tuition. However, the change will cost the district approximately $ 130,000. Faulkner said, “It is a huge investment, but we know the importance of early childhood education and it is certainly worth it.” The monthly tuition will be $250.00. On April 17, 2018, Pre-K Registration will be held at each school from 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Students must be four (4) years of age by September 1 in order to enroll in pre-k. A deposit of $250.00 will be required to secure a spot in the class but it will serve as the last months tuition (May,2019). Also, the following will be needed to register: student’s birth certificate, social security card, shot record and two (2) proofs of residency. Students will be selected on a first come basis with a maximum of twenty (20) students in each class. Each school will have one (1) pre-k classroom.

Anyone interested in taking advantage of this opportunity is encouraged to pre-register on April 17, 2018, so that class rosters may be finalized. If additional information is required, please call the Union County School District Central Office at (662) 534-1960.