

# Pre-kindergarten strengthens Kraybill program

## Pre-kindergarten philosophy for Kraybill, Locust Grove and New Danville

- The LMS pre-kindergarten program is designed to create a secure and nurturing environment that builds a love for school and for learning. It takes seriously the child's natural curiosity and develops a foundation for academic growth and social competence.
- Christian faith and values are an integral part of the program. The program recognizes that "a child's play is their work." By interacting with their peers, students learn to play cooperatively, express feelings, solve problems, and resolve conflict. Through experimentation and manipulation of classroom materials, each child has the opportunity to explore and create.
- The curriculum includes opportunities for fine motor and gross motor skills, large and small group activities, self-care, art experiences, music, dramatic play, introduction to basic math concepts, and memorization of scripture and poetry. Print awareness and sounds are experienced when children listen to stories, engage in rhyme and finger plays, and see their "talk written down."
- The program develops a curiosity for learning that is crucial to mastery at higher grade levels.

*Thank you so much for the wonderful work you do in the pre-kindergarten class at Kraybill. We know it must take a lot of energy, and we really appreciate your warmth, enthusiasm, creativity, and loving attitude. It was a pleasure to see how happy and engaged the children were in class Tuesday morning. They all looked very pleased to be there! It means so much to us that Samuel loves going to school.*

- Anne Marie Stoner-Eby,  
Kraybill parent

For the first time in the history of the Kraybill Campus, pre-kindergarten students are part of the student population as they explore their world, learn to play cooperatively with others, and enjoy art, music, books and numbers.

Tami Dombach enrolled her son, Bryce, in pre-kindergarten this year because she feels it's important that children have at least a year of pre-school before kindergarten.

"Times have changed with education," Dombach said. "What once was taught in kindergarten, our children are expected to know before they even start.

"Bryce has really adjusted well to the program. He has enjoyed going two full days and has been able to focus on really starting to learn word sounds, writing, and learning through the many crafts they do.

"Kraybill needed to start a pre-school program so the kindergarten teacher can express what she feels is important for the pre-schoolers to learn. This way the teachers can work together in preparing them for kindergarten and first grade."

This kind of continuity was exactly what Principal John Weber had in mind when the new program was designed.

"With close coordination of the programs (PreK and kindergarten), Kraybill is able to adjust instruction to better meet the range of learning needs," he said. "As teachers discuss what happens on each level, there should be less duplication of activity and a broader exposure that enriches the student.

"I also believe that consistent approaches to discipline and socialization of students are more effective when PreK and kindergarten are in com-



Teacher Anne Roth loves her job. "What a delight it is to be part of their nurture and growth," she says.

munication."

Anne Roth, pre-kindergarten teacher at Kraybill and New Danville, says it is a real plus to have taught kindergarten for seven years.

"It definitely helps me know what things would be helpful for the PreK children so they can make an easy transition into kindergarten."

For Roth, who also taught two years in pre-kindergarten, her work with children goes beyond the important task of preparing them for continued academia.

"I love being able to work with the whole child," she said. "Adding the spiritual dimension to the physical, social, emotional, and academic growth of a child is a privilege I have as a teacher in a Christian school setting. We have the freedom to pray, sing to Jesus, talk about Jesus, and include Jesus in our daily routine.

"Our philosophy emphasizes a 'secure, nurturing environment that builds a love for school and for learning. It also states that 'Christian faith and values are an integral part of the program.' These are very important components in the PreK program and are, I feel, a wonderful extension of the Christian home."

Kraybill has 14 pre-kindergarten students enrolled this year, Locust Grove has 16, and New Danville has 13. Stephanie Kreider teaches PreK at Locust Grove.

Applications for the two-day pre-kindergarten program are being accepted for the 2007-08 year as well as for the remainder of this year. For more information or to schedule a visit, please call Principal John Weber at Kraybill (653-5236), Principal Jay Roth at Locust Grove (394-7107), and Principal Judi Mollenkof at New Danville (872-2506).