

and offers instruction in reading, writing, math, and social skills. The primary goal is to maintain skills over the summer break, although many students advance during this period.

In the past few years, about 150 students have participated in the program, which will be offered at Lewis-Palmer Elementary School for elementary students and Palmer Ridge High School for secondary students. Parents are encouraged to provide transportation, although buses are available when necessary. Classes are offered four times a week for six weeks.

Case managers determine the need for ESY, and Fleury said that students often find participation to be a positive experience because they are among others with abilities and problems similar to their own.

In other matters, Fleury said that the district has received a state grant (\$11,000) in support of the RTi program (Response to Intervention) at Palmer Lake Elementary School and Lewis-Palmer High School. This grant supports the offering of a multi-tiered system of support for students who struggle with various areas of academics. Next year Lewis-Palmer Elementary School and Lewis-Palmer Middle School will join the program.

The grant funds support the cost of substitute teachers so that staff may receive training. The state provides technical assistance coordinators and has stated a goal of providing such support statewide.

Fleury reported that she is now working on staff allocation for next year by analyzing caseloads over the various grade levels.

**Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope**

The group heard a presentation on the Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope (PATH) program, which involves a conference between a student, his or her family, friends, and those who are paid to provide services. Students decide who will participate during the process. By producing a large graphic representation of the student's goals and the means to reach them, families and educators can develop a more well-rounded vision of the individual student than through testing and other quantitative means, according to the presentation.

Special Education Parent Liaison Michelle Nay is a certified facilitator in the production of a PATH and explained the process. The process begins with determining

the dreams and goals of the student—such as where they would like to go, what they like to do, and what their personal strengths are.

From this broad beginning, the group works to develop plans to achieve the student's goals, first by going forward a year and showing steps taken (such as planning a trip, having frequent play dates, and getting to know someone better).

The next step is to look at the present and identify those who could help the student to achieve his or her goals and make concrete short-term plans and assign participants a role in the execution of the plan.

Finally, there is a section on the six-month timeline to see what has been achieved and what is yet to be addressed.

Nay said that this process is very useful in helping family and educators to get to know an individual student in a more well-rounded way. Many special education students have difficulty in communicating and self-advocating, and this process provides a concrete plan worked out among people who care for the individual.

Nay and one other individual in the district are certified to facilitate a PATH, and she encouraged parents to seek one.

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