

# Mission Accomplished: YMCA's TEEM program recognized as Texas Certified Ready School

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PALESTINE — Thanks to the study, preparation, teaching and attention to detail of teacher Robin Scoggin, the Texas Early Childhood Model (TEEM) program at the Palestine YMCA successfully completed its mission of being recognized by the State of Texas as a “Texas Certified Ready School” recently.

“I am very proud of the hard work that Robin has done,” Child Care Director Carl Simons said. “I am very excited for the center.”

The certificate received by the YMCA acknowledges the “professional effort and dedication of Robin Scoggin in meeting all requirements for Texas School Ready certification” and commends her efforts to insure that the children under her care are “equipped with the foundational skills they need to be successful in school and in life.”

“This is my third year teaching the 4- to 5-year-olds. I am what is considered a T-3,” explained Scoggin. “I still have required training and am evaluated once a month.”

The TEEM teacher-training process is intensive because the program’s standards are high. Each teacher must attend regularly scheduled classroom sessions, participate in online discussion between meetings and finish homework assignments.

Scoggin, who does double duty as the assistant child care director, applauds the TEEM program and notes a difference in both the children and in herself over the past two years.

“The kids are definitely remembering things better and expanding on what they learn,” Scoggin said. “As my confidence grows, I am able to incorporate more stuff into the classroom out of the huge volume of information that I receive.”

TEEM is the result of an effort that all preschool children are ready to begin their school



career with skill and confidence. Originally the State Center for Early Childhood Development Center (SCED) was charged by the 78th Texas Legislature to study the integration of early care and early education services for preschool children among public state pre-kindergarten, Head Start, and licensed child care programs.

Texas Gov. Rick Perry named the Center for Improving the Readiness of Children for Learning and Education (CIRCLE) the SCED. Led by Dr. Susan Landry, Ph. D., CIRCLE is a part of the children's Learning Institute at the University of Texas Health and Science Center-Houston. The SCED's role is to provide TEEM staff with both the classroom materials and the in-depth training in which to reach children — especially those from at-risk families. One goal is to monitor each child's progress through the first grade. For example, upon entering kindergarten, the children are administered the Texas Primary Reading Inventory which is an assessment of their skill level within the first two months of the school year.

The Texas Education Agency recently joined the SCED in auditing the program and assumed total responsibility for awarding grant monies. The latter action restricted fund availability to independent school districts.

Initially, the Palestine YMCA was given over \$10,000 in TEEM curriculum, kits, and training for preschool classrooms in August 2007. However, the YMCA continues to be subsidized due to the foresight and vision of Northside Principal Barbara Dutton who encouraged the Palestine Independent School District to include licensed child care institutions in their grant application.

Dutton first recognized the importance of the TEEM/CIRCLE style of pre-school instruction four years ago when one of her teachers introduced the agenda to her group of youngsters. Northside is the PISD site for all of their Head Start and pre-K classes.

“I was impressed by the curriculum, the materials, and the professional development and achievement of this teacher,” Dutton said. “At the end of the school year, her children performed at a much higher level than those in the other seven classes.”

Not all school districts in the area proposed the day care centers in their request for funds, but Dutton was adamant that the day care centers be incorporated so that all the children would be steeped in the same academic readiness. At the time, PISD called a meeting asking all day care centers who wished to be involved in the TEEM program to sign a Memorandum of Understanding agreeing to maintain the standard of excellence established by UT Houston.

“This is an awesome academic program,” Dutton said. “The children are well-prepared. It makes a huge difference.”

“I love this program,” echoed Darleen Deupree, M. Ed., formerly Region VII/Kilgore TEEM mentor who is now under contract with PISD as a CIRCLE mentor. Deupree has worked with teachers for the past six years and with Scoggin for the last three in

particular.

“Robin gives her very best to the students,” Deupree said. “It comes from the heart. She cares. She knows the families and is willing to work with the whole family — it is not just child care. That is why the kids love her.

“Her (Scoggins’ first group of) kids are in the first grade now,” continued Deupree. “That’s what she and I have both been working so hard for — that she especially worked so hard for.”

During an average class day, Scoggin organizes student visits to each one of the seven prescribed TEEM learning centers. Playful activities vary, but are designed to accomplish certain objectives involving reading, writing, math and science.

For more information regarding the Early Childhood Development Center and the TEEM program, contact the Palestine YMCA at 903-729-3139 located at 5500 N. Loop 256 or log onto [www.palestineymca.org](http://www.palestineymca.org).