



NEWS RELEASE

Waterford School District, 1150 Scott Lake Road, Waterford, MI 48328

Stepanski Early Childhood Center Earns National NAEYC Accreditation and is Among First in Nation to Complete More Rigorous Accreditation

January 16, 2008, Waterford, Mich. – The Waterford School District Stepanski Early Childhood Center is one of the first early childhood programs to earn accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) – the nation’s leading organization of early childhood professionals. “We’re proud to have earned the mark of quality from NAEYC, and to be recognized for our commitment to reaching the highest professional standards,” said Joan Mulcahy, Stepanski Early Childhood Center Principal. “NAEYC Accreditation lets families in our community know that children in our program are getting the best care and early learning experiences possible.”

To earn NAEYC Accreditation in the new system, Stepanski Early Childhood Center went through an extensive self-study process, measuring the program and its services against the ten new NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and more than 400 related Accreditation Criteria. The program received NAEYC Accreditation after an on-site visit by NAEYC Assessors to ensure that the program meets each of the ten NAEYC program standards. NAEYC-accredited programs are also subject to unannounced visits during their accreditation, which lasts for five years.

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In the 20 years since NAEYC Accreditation was established, it has become a widely recognized sign of high-quality early childhood education. More than 11,000 programs, serving one million young children, are currently accredited by NAEYC – approximately 8 percent of all preschools and other early childhood programs. “The new NAEYC Accreditation system raises the bar for preschools, child care centers and other early childhood programs,” said Mark Ginsberg, Ph.D., executive director of NAEYC. Stepanski Early Childhood Center’s NAEYC Accreditation is a sign that they are a leader in a national effort to invest in high-quality early childhood education, and to help give all children a better start.”

The NAEYC Accreditation system has set voluntary professional standards for programs for young children since 1985. As of September 2006, the Association’s revised program standards and criteria have introduced a new level of quality, accountability, and service for parents and children in child care programs. The new standards reflect the latest research and best practices in early childhood education and development. NAEYC is committed to utilizing the newest studies and analysis on positive child outcomes to ensure young children continue receiving the highest-quality care and education possible.

The NAEYC Accreditation system was created in 1985 to set professional standards for early childhood education, and to help families identify high-quality preschools, child care centers and other early education programs. To earn NAEYC Accreditation, a program must meet each of the ten NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards. Programs are accredited by NAEYC for a five-year period.

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