



Babies and toddlers will have a ball in Cripple Creek-Victor RE-1 School District's new Early Head Start facility that opened with a ribbon cutting on Dec. 18.
 Photo by Norma Engelberg

CC-V cuts ribbon on a Head Start for babies

District facilities serves children pre-birth-12th grade

By Norma Engelberg
 engelberg@ourcoloradonews.com

Cripple Creek-Victor RE-1 School District opened its Pioneer Pre school 18 years ago, started its Head Start program for 3-5 year olds about 10 years ago and recently started a home-based Early Head Start program for infants and toddlers from pre-birth to age 3. Now, with the ribbon cutting on a new facility, the district can provide something Teller County has needed for a long time, a center-based, child-care facility for infants and toddlers.

Soon after district Early Childhood Education Director Patty Waddle was hired in 2001 she wrote her very first

grant request for Head Start funding. She wrote another successful grant request for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding in 2009 for Early Head Start. That was the beginning of the journey that led to the construction of a new state-of-the-art facility at Cresson Elementary School.

"With this facility we will be able to serve families from pre-birth to 12 grade," Waddle said at the pre-ribbon cutting ceremony on Dec. 18 in the Cresson Elementary School gym. "This concept is becoming a national focus but we've already done it in little old Cripple Creek-Victor schools."

The new building is a combination of two modular units created to order by Eagle Creek Modular Solutions.

"Some of our plans were given to

Eagle Creek on scrap paper and a few might even have been in crayon," said program manager Krys Arrick. "But (company President) Daniel Rasmusen was able to use the plans to create exactly what we wanted."

"We are working toward providing more services but we needed this facility first," Waddle said. "This is something the Teller County Board of County Commissioners realized when they created the Taskforce for Infant and Toddler Care in 2009; that school readiness starts before birth."

Waddle and Arrick thanked everyone involved in making the facility happen and then the gathered crowd walked over to the new building for the ribbon cutting, refreshments and a tour. Cutting the ribbon was Alanah Goldstein and her family, who were chosen to represent Early Head Start families.