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Cre-Act closing

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POCATELLO — A local elementary school run by Franciscan sisters that has offered a unique program for 20 years will close its doors for kindergarten through the sixth grade at the end of this academic year.

Officials with the Cre-Act School, short for Creative Acting, made the announcement to faculty and Act families Thursday night. The sisters plan to continue their preschool program at a new location, but the school won't disappear from the community.

“The Cre-Act School has had a strong and vigorous life as an institution. It’s not something that we want to close,” Sister Francine Cardew, director of education for the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist, said Thursday.

The Cre-Act School, started by Mother Dorothy Prokes, has an enrollment of 46 students. Of those, 20 are from out of the country.

“There are a multitude of reasons why the school needed to be closed as a formal institution,” she said. “One would be finding the appropriate staffing for the specialized program to make it develop.”

The preschool will be merged with the existing READ Program, Franciscan Counseling Center Mother Mona Brunner to form a new Franciscan Intergenerational Service.

The sisters plan to launch the intergenerational program this September in a new location. The location for the intergenerational program will be or what they will do with their school building Grant Ave., was previously Emerson Elementary School.

“That’s still in the process,” said Sister Anthony Marie Greving, a member of the local Franciscan community. “We just felt we’d get past today telling parents and the children and teachers. We’ll take it one step at a time; that’s yet to be determined.”

Greving said the sisters will remain committed to local family life education through the new program.

“This has been an issue for the past few years trying to determine what’s the best way for the Franciscan programs (where the Franciscan programs are offered) to continue its mission,” Greving said. “There’s been a lot of discussion about this decision.”

The elderly program Mother Mona started offers classes and other assistance to help an aging population. The READ program offers after-school tutoring in reading for youths throughout the community.

Mother Prokes, who also lives in Desert House and recently celebrated her 90th birthday, has written a book entitled, “A Road Map to Education: The Cre-Act Way.”

Greving said several elementary schools, high schools and even universities throughout the community use the Cre-Act method to use for class instruction.

Cardew explained at the Cre-Act school, lessons incorporate the senses and body movement. Each year. And in math class, for example, she said students might form groups and join other groups for multiplication.

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