

Families form home school cooperative

Marshall County parents to assist with instruction, projects and other duties in classrooms

1 STATE CENTER — Seven families in a small city in Marshall County have joined together to form a home school cooperative.

The Times-Republican reports that classes at ACRE Agriculture Education Center will start this fall in State Center. ACRE stands for Ag Curriculum in a Rural Environment.

A tutor has been hired to facilitate daily instruction, but Shannon Eldridge and Brad Pfantz, both active in forming the cooperative, say parents will be in classrooms on a daily basis. Parents will assist with instruction, projects and other duties.

According to material prepared by Eldridge and Pfantz, “a home-school cooperative is a group of like-minded homeschoolers collectively providing resources resulting in a greater educational benefit to the participating families and students, versus those achieved as a single family unit or individual student.” Instruction for the students will be Christian-based, but nondenominational, Eldridge said. According to Pfantz, there is an opportunity to use livestock and horticulture projects to reinforce what’s taught in the classroom since State Center is an agriculture community.

The cooperative’s initial demographic will be children age 5 to 8 years old.

Eldridge and Pfantz said members of the cooperative had discussions with other parents, public school educators, private parochial school educators and parents in other home school cooperatives before forming their own. They also visited a public charter school in Walton, Kan., that they say uses agriculture projects to reinforce classroom curricula.

The school is funded by the parents of the children participating in the cooperative.

— Associated Press