

Sparkplugs 2010

for Parent Involvement | Exemplary Practices



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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Sparkplugs*, the Florida Department of Education's annual publication of exemplary practices for family involvement. The programs described in *Sparkplugs* reflect only a few of the many innovative practices used across the state to recruit, train and recognize parents and other family members. Each program was nominated for the 2009/2010 Parent Involvement Award by its school district.

The purpose of the Award, sponsored by the Florida PTA, Department of Education, and State Farm Insurance, is to promote and recognize innovative school practices that increase family involvement. All entries must be school projects that focus on a specific school-initiated parent/family involvement program or strategy, including those taking place in the workplace, faith-based institutions, and other convenient locations.

Based on the National PTA Standards for parent and community involvement in education, the programs address the key strategies of communication, parenting, student learning, volunteering, school decision making and advocacy, and collaborating with the community.

Regional winners were selected based upon the programs':

1. Impact on family involvement
2. Ability to be replicated
3. Relationship to school goals and objectives
4. Parent/family participation in planning and implementation
5. Uniqueness and innovation
6. Impact on school improvement
7. Ratio of parents to program capability
8. Cost
9. Collaborative efforts

For further information or assistance in implementing any of these unique family involvement programs, please write or telephone the person listed as the Program Contact.

REGIONAL WINNER

SANTA ROSA

Parents, Partners, & Pie

Bennett C. Russell Elementary School

3740 Excalibur Way

Milton, Florida 32583

Program Contact: April Martin

Phone: 850-983-7000

Mission: *The mission of Parents, Partners, & Pie is to promote the collaboration among and the involvement of school stakeholders to increase the success and achievement of all Russell Elementary students.*

Parents, Partners, & Pie is an exciting program that was born from the School Climate Surveys, parent input, and staff recommendations. It brings parents into the school to support student academic needs as well as develop a family friendly atmosphere. Six types of activities were held during the 2009-10 school year, including:

- Two children's authors visited Russell Elementary during the school day and again at night for parents and students to interact together.
- Parent Reading Partnership Workshops were held once per week after school where parents learned reading strategies to try at home and got to practice with their child at the event.
- An "Old-Fashioned Christmas" night was held in the Media Center for families to enjoy exciting holiday activities and books together.
- After-school tutoring was available for struggling students.
- Kindergarten conferences between parents and teachers were a priority.
- Pie Night was the grand finale of Parents, Partners, & Pie, of course! Parents and students visit classrooms for math and reading activities. Parents learned information and strategies to help their child prepare for upcoming standardized tests. Completion of four stations earned you pie and punch in the Media Center, where you could also check out books and speak to Guidance Counselors.

Partners from the entire community were engaged to donate time, talent, and resources to make this a success. After implementation in the 2008-09 school year, Russell Elementary's school grade went from a B to an A, and they hope this kind of parent and community involvement will keep their students achieving at high levels.

Grade Levels: K-5

Budget: \$3,000

Parents Served: 500

Students: 902

ESCAMBIA

Ferry Pass Elementary Science Night

Ferry Pass Elementary School

8310 North Davis Highway

Pensacola, Florida 32514

Program Contact: Christine Rathbun

Phone: 850-494-5605

Mission: *To make a real world connection between basic reading and math skills through science.*

Science Night at Ferry Pass Elementary involved twelve interactive “kitchen science” stations. Every project undertaken could be recreated at home and included ties to reading and math standards for reinforced learning. Connections were made to household tasks (e.g., measurement in cooking). Real world connections made the lessons of Science Night both entertaining and functional. Over fifty families were served on a very minimal budget.

Grade Levels: K-5

Budget: \$44

Parents Served: 75

Students: 70

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LEON

Science and Technology Expo

DeSoto Trail Elementary School

5200 Tredington Park Drive

Tallahassee, Florida 32309

Program Contact: Cookie Zimmer

Phone: 850-488-4511

Mission: *To communicate and educate our school’s stakeholders in how we are utilizing technology to advance our goals for student achievement.*

DeSoto Trail Elementary School held its third annual Science and Technology Expo in April 2010. Parents were given a special track of sessions to follow, children learned useful current technology from the nearby middle school students, science fair projects were on display, teachers demonstrated technology integration, local businesses exhibited how science and technology are part of their employees’ work skills, and even vendors provided information to families. With community partnerships involved, this event reached all students and over 200 parents to showcase the importance of science and technology in today’s ever-changing world.

Grade Levels: PreK-5

Budget: \$500

Parents Served: 200+

Students: 620

OKALOOSA

Good Citizen Awards Night

Annette P. Edwins Elementary School
7 Wright Parkway, SW
Fort Walton Beach, Florida 32548
Program Contact: Connie Hall
Phone: 850-833-3333

Mission: *To increase the number of positive role models among our students, encourage good citizenship, and bring parents into our school.*

Students at Edwins Elementary that are chosen to receive a Good Citizen award must be hard workers who make good decisions, help others, are respectful of everyone at the school, and are a positive role model to others. One student is chosen from each classroom every month and their families are invited to Good Citizen Awards Night. Typical attendance is 100 family members! PTO and business partnerships make valuable prizes available and winners also get to take turns reading the school announcements. Implementation of this program has seen a decline in discipline referrals by half!

Grade Levels: K-5
Budget: \$200
Parents Served: 504
Students: 252

Region I

MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL

REGIONAL WINNER

LEON COUNTY

All American Heroes Rally

Deerlake Middle School

9902 Deerlake West

Tallahassee, Florida 32312

Program Contact: Cathy Schroepfer

Phone: 850-922-6545

Mission: *To foster the spirit of community, giving, and appreciation in our students, as well as engendering a feeling of pride and support for our veterans and military members.*

The All American Heroes Rally integrated civics, science, language arts, physical education, and more in a very worthwhile community project for 7th graders to correspond with Veterans Day. Students spent an entire day engaged in activities where they learned all about the American military veterans of yesterday and today. The day began with an assembly to honor veterans. Over 30 former active military personnel were present, and students heard an inspirational message from a member of each of the five branches of the military. The games and activities included a "Freedom Find" photo scavenger hunt, tug of war, Minuteman Relay, Patriotic Puzzle, apple pie eating contest, Boot Camp relay, and bean bag toss, all which creatively incorporated academic subjects. Students and parents also worked together to create care packages for current members of the military. Each care package not only contained much-needed toiletries and comfort items, but a letter from a Deerlake student.

The rally involved over 100 volunteer hours and included an outpouring of support from the community that donated food, care package items, and awards. One local business provided the money needed for shipping the care packages to the troops. Seventh grade teachers made sure that students had the appropriate background knowledge about Veterans Day by teaching related lessons and requiring student reading leading up to the rally. Students learned about chemical reactions as they tie-dyed shirts red, white, and blue to wear on this special day. The sense of community and pride fostered by all involved parties because of the All American Heroes Rally was unmatched at Deerlake Middle. Most importantly, United States Veterans were honored and troops received care packages.

Grade Levels: 6-8

Budget: \$1,000

Parents Served: 90

Students: 323

OKALOOSA

Principal's Coffee

W.C. Pryor Middle School
201 Racetrack Road
Fort Walton Beach, Florida 32547
Program Contact: Marcus Chambers
Phone: 850-833-3613

Mission: *To give parents an opportunity to respond to and discuss topics related to the school's mission and climate.*

The principal of Pryor Middle School held several Principal's Coffee events during the past school year. This allowed parents to have open discussions with the principal in an attempt to break down common barriers and foster academic communication between students and their parents. Parental suggestions that were implemented as a result of the Principal's Coffee discussions were: additional books for the media center, a redesign of the student drop-off/pick-up area, implementation of online Wikispaces for teachers to communicate with students and parents, a Positive Referral program, and phone calls to parents when their children did something positive.

Grade Levels: 6-8
Budget: \$3,161
Parents Served: 60
Students: 581

Region II

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

REGIONAL WINNER

ST. JOHNS

An Out of this World Family Night Out

Durbin Creek Elementary School

4100 Race Track Road

Jacksonville, Florida 32259

Program Contacts: Angie Conlan & Reisha Rust

Phone: 904-547-3881

Mission: *To create a sense of wonder about our world.*

Students, parents, and teachers planned an extraordinary “Out of this World” experience to provide science knowledge through hands-on learning. NASA staff came to teach parents and students about space exploration and made model telescopes with the kids. A local non-profit organization brought giant telescopes for families to view the night sky. A science educational company set up a demonstration about asteroids that was enjoyed by all. All students were given “Mission Possible” training manuals with one page each for the sun and all of the planets to write down information learned. Tables for each planet were set up in a designated room with fifth graders serving as the ambassadors showcasing the models and research they had done beforehand. Younger students visited each table to learn about the sun and the planets. At least 14 local businesses donated science-themed prizes that were given throughout the evening. A Space Gym area was available for the children to play in and explore. The event also included a laser light show in the cafeteria that was a highlight for all in attendance. When all was said and done, over 800 people came to Out of this World Family Night Out, and a dedicated team of volunteers including parents, teachers, staff, and community partners was pleased with all of the hard work they had put into such an exciting event. With a strong planning team and commitment to learning, family, and fun, this event could be easily replicated at any school. It is an excellent example of reinforcing academic standards through exciting hands-on activities, and Durbin Creek’s FCAT Science scores continue to rise because of this.

Grade Levels: K-5

Budget: \$2,100

Parents Served: 400

Students: 450

ALACHUA

A Second Cup of Coffee

Newberry Elementary School
25705 SW 15th Avenue
Newberry, Florida 33669
Program Contact: Kyra Purvis
Phone: 352-472-1100

Mission: *To provide training for parents of K-2 students on how to support their child's reading progress at home.*

A Second Cup of Coffee training was held for parents at 8:00 a.m. in hopes they could attend before work. Organized by the PTO, parents received coffee and pastries in addition to reading activities for them to take home and practice with their child (letter tiles and practice cards). Parents listened to a short presentation on the reading process and were then taught how to specifically use the new materials they received with their child's learning goals in mind. A Spanish interpreter was available to assist.

Grade Levels: K-2
Budget: \$1,400
Parents Served: 18
Students: K-2 students

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CITRUS

Splash Into a Good Book

Homosassa Elementary School
10935 West Yulee Drive
Homosassa, Florida 34448
Program Contact: Karen Lisa
Phone: 352-628-2953

Mission: *To create excitement about books and to encourage lifelong reading.*

Splash Into a Good Book is a book club that met once a month in the evenings in the school cafeteria. Participating students received a book to read at home with their parents before club meetings. Book selections varied by grade level. First, a short book talk occurs. Then parents learn how to help their child become a better reader. Projects and games helped the children read more fluently and comprehend what they were reading. Some club favorites include magic books, game boards, microphones, story gloves, and creating your own biography. Families also have access to free books online. Club meetings are a lot of fun because reading is a lot of fun!

Grade Levels: PreK-5
Budget: \$2,000
Parents Served: 25
Students: 30

COLUMBIA

Movie on the Lawn

Westside Elementary School
1956 SW County Road, 252B
Lake City, Florida 32024
Program Contact: Carol Stevens
Phone: 386-755-8280

Mission: *To increase the number of successful students by increasing parent participation in school events.*

Westside Elementary's Movie on the Lawn was so successful that another installment was scheduled – back by popular demand! Organized by the PTO, students, families, and staff gathered together at the school and brought their lawn chairs and blankets for the movie. Popcorn, candy, and drinks were sold, too. Between 250-300 families attended this informal, non-threatening, and free event at the school, and the administration at Westside hopes that this will foster increased communication between parents, students, and school personnel. It could easily be replicated at other schools and even adapted into a fundraiser.

Grade Levels: PreK-5
Budget: \$0
Parents and Students Served: 250-300

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DUVAL

Math Family Night

Brentwood Elementary School of the Arts
3750 Springfield Boulevard
Jacksonville, Florida 32206
Program Contact: Tamara McAbee
Phone: 904-630-6630

Mission: *To provide creative at-home learning activities for parents and students, reinforcing family education.*

The Math Committee at Brentwood, comprised of ten teachers, created several exciting math games and hosted Math Family Night to teach parents how to use the games at home with their children. Approximately 62 parents and 100 children attended, rotating between stations where they gathered "passport" stamps, and received take-home activities, games, and tools to reinforce math investigations outside of school. A short presentation on state standards and assessments in math was provided, along with child care and food, to maximize participation in this well-received event.

Grade Levels: K-5
Budget: \$618
Parents Served: 62
Students Served: 100

MARION

Free, Fun and Fast Family Literacy Program

Hammett L. Bowen Jr. Elementary School
4397 SW 95th Street
Ocala, Florida 34476
Program Contact: Carol Runge
Phone: 352-291-7900

Mission: *To engage home, school and community intergenerational populations in solving parent involvement problems in free, fun, and fast ways.*

This comprehensive Title I Family Literacy Program included several events throughout the year where community partners were key. Publix hosted three Math Nights and held a storewide drive for food, clothing, and money for needy students and their families. A Veterans Food Drive was held at the school and students delivered \$2,300 worth of groceries for veterans in need. A pediatric dentist provided training and supplies for kindergarten students. SunTran public transportation system provided a stationary "Wheels on the Bus" learning event for first graders. The Kindergarten Valentine Tea brought families together to learn about good manners. Working together, the students at Bowen Elementary learned a lot while having fun.

Grade Levels: K-5
Budget: \$125
Parents Served: 1500
Students Served: 925

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NASSAU

Southside Pirates Explore Their World

Southside Elementary School
1112 Jasmine Street
Fernandina Beach, Florida 32034
Program Contact: Linda Morris
Phone: 904-491-7941

Mission: *To provide a free multicultural enrichment program for grades K-2.*

This six-week enrichment program highlighted the art, history, and traditions from cultures around the world, including Scandinavia, Africa, China, Australia, Peru, and the United States. Students created a passport journal that included art work, activities, and resources for parents. Parent volunteers assisted in planning events, securing donations for supplies, and helping students. The entire campus was part of the exploration as art projects were displayed in the media center and a world map stood in the cafeteria marking the ethnic heritages of all students.

Grade Levels: K-5
Budget: \$85
Parents Served: 95
Students Served: 96

SUWANNEE

The Parent University Pilot Program

Suwannee Primary School

702 2nd Street, NW

Live Oak, Florida 32064

Program Contact: Lisa Garrison/Sue Hurst

Phone: 386-647-4623

Mission: *To break down barriers between schools and home, and encourage the importance of education through lifelong learning.*

Parents of kindergarten and first graders were invited to attend six parent workshops held throughout the year in their child's classroom and conducted by their child's teacher. Each workshop included a main presentation, reading and math strategies that parents could work on with their children at home, and time for the teacher to make classroom/school announcements. The presentation topics were: Champs at Home, Homework Help, Science at Home, Talk About It, Grab It and Go, and What to Expect Next Year. Parents were provided with a notebook to document what they learned and a tote bag to carry their resources in. A Spanish option was available. Children were not in the room with their parents; they were singing and playing educational games under the supervision of faculty members in the cafeteria.

Grade Levels: K-1

Budget: \$35,000

Parents Served: 493

Students Served: 493

Region II

MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL

REGIONAL WINNER

CITRUS COUNTY

School Website Update

CREST School

2600 South Panther Pride Drive

Lecanto, Florida 34461

Program Contact: Richard Hilgert

Phone: 352-527-0303

Mission: *To update, maintain, and continually improve our website.*

CREST School's multidimensional team, headed by a parent volunteer, updated the school's website to provide an interactive capability to reach the CREST family and the community.

This parent engaged and trained colleagues at IBM, students and teachers at CREST, teachers and students at Lecanto High School (that shares property with CREST), Central Florida Community College, the School Enhancement Council, and Technical Resource Center employees. Pictures were taken, information was gathered, text was written, and the website was formatted and is now updated regularly. Some specific examples of what the new website includes are: information for prospective students, staff, and partners; the monthly newsletter; and expanded communication with CREST families. The project has saved countless time and duplication efforts – not to mention trees by going paperless! The partnership between CREST students and Lecanto High students has already extended beyond the website project with students now volunteering at CREST on a regular basis and creating relationships like never before. With the Internet, not only are all parents, students, and staff served, but the entire public as well!

Grade Levels: PreK-12

Budget: \$0

Parents Served: all

Students: all

DUVAL

Parent Nights

James Weldon Johnson Middle School
1840 West 9th Street
Jacksonville, Florida 32209
Program Contact: Vernice Whitfield
Phone: 904-630-6640

Mission: *To expose parents and students to information necessary to be successful at James Weldon Johnson.*

Parent Nights at Johnson Middle School bring parents into the school to learn about what is going on and how they can help their children navigate through middle school. Topics include school safety nets, promotion requirements, information on the science fair and the history fair, FCAT, and high school registration. One hundred twenty-five parents attended high school night! Guidance counselors volunteer their time and refreshments are provided by the PTA. Phone calls home are made to remind parents to attend. A related program is called Boot Camp and teaches incoming sixth graders everything they need to know about life at Johnson Middle in one day. This program will be expanded to include all new students regardless of grade level.

Grade Levels: 6-8
Budget: \$30
Parents Served: 410
Students Served: 125

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ST. JOHNS

Battle of The Big Cats

Alice B. Landrum Middle School
230 Landrum Lane
Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida 32082
Program Contact: Laura Morey, Deb Selvaon, Trish Shilling
Phone: 904-547-8410

Mission: *To provide a fun-filled evening that will promote school pride and sportsmanship, and raise \$15,000.*

This annual spring event is a basketball game between Landrum staff and Jacksonville Jaguar NFL players. The PTO engages community partners to provide dinner, concessions, entertainment, and a raffle with over 22 gift baskets. It took over 50 parents and 20 staff to plan everything. Students also assist via their school clubs. For example, band students worked the concession stands, and the Middle Act Club sold "Landrum Go Green" water bottles to promote recycling. This event fosters school spirit and pride. It is widely known throughout the community and considered popular to be a part of or to attend this event. Although a fundraiser, it brings families together at the school and also reaches out to future Landrum students. Money raised supports all students at Landrum Middle.

Grade Levels: 6-8
Budget: \$4,000-5,000
Parents Served: 250
Students Served: 500+

REGIONAL WINNER

MARTIN

BCE Team Green

Bessey Creek Elementary School
2201 SW Matheson Avenue
Palm City, Florida 34990
Program Contact: Celeste Norup
Phone: 772-219-1200 x 30351

Mission: *To promote cooperation and respect for our earth and others in our world while reinforcing our Conscious Discipline Character Education Program.*

Bessey Creek Elementary's Green Team includes students, parents, faculty, and the community in an ongoing educational project that encompasses learning about the benefits of recycling, protecting our natural resources, and discovering the importance of conserving the environment. Science, as well as civic responsibility go hand in hand in this community project. Recycle bins were placed in every classroom. Education was provided to students and parents in hopes of extending the practice of recycling in every home. Once a week, fourth and fifth graders gave up their recess time to pick up trash and go to each class collecting the recyclables from about 50 bins. Select chip bags and juice containers were also collected and turned into a company that recycles them into bags, folders, and other fun accessories. The school even earned \$0.02 for each item. Parents enjoyed researching different companies with recycling programs and the school is now enrolled in Elmer's School Program that recycles glue sticks and bottles. Parents discovered and executed a t-shirt fundraiser for Charity Water, a group that provides clean water to developing countries. Things like this provide learning opportunities for students that go beyond their local communities. The fundraiser was kicked off at a PTA Family Fun Night and has already exceeded their goal of \$5,000. This is incredible and required a dedicated team of volunteers and committed students!

Grade Levels: K-5
Budget: Minimal
Parents Served: 549
Students: 549

BREVARD

Arts and Culture Family Picnic

Cambridge Elementary Magnet School
2000 Cambridge Drive
Cocoa, Florida 32922
Program Contact: Kori Hurst
Phone: 321-633-3550

Mission: *To build positive relationships between family involvement and student success.*

The first annual Arts and Culture Family Picnic engaged around 600 people! Families learned how students are taught at this arts and science magnet school and emphasized the diversity of the students. After a picnic lunch, attendees were highly entertained. The Recorder Club performed American tunes. The Chorus presented Mexican, Caribbean, and Hebrew music. English language learners prepared a multi-language performance. Students, with the help of the audience, engaged in a dance called Tinikling, used Lummi Sticks from the Lummi Indians, and played a stone passing game from Ghana. There were songs, readings, string ensembles, dramatic excerpts, and drumming performances, too. Additionally, participants could have their face painted, view cultural displays, and visit the Book Fair. This highly successful event will no doubt become an annual tradition.

Grade Levels: PreK-6
Budget: \$640
Parents Served: 275
Students Served: 325

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FLAGLER

Saturday Booktoons

Bunnell Elementary School
305 North Palmetto Avenue
Bunnell, Florida 32110
Program Contact: Michele Mantell
Phone: 386-437-7526

Mission: *To encourage families to come to the school and use the resources available in the Media Center.*

The Bunnell Elementary School opened their library one Saturday each month for three hours for Saturday Booktoons. Students and families could come to use the computers, read and check out books together, do research, and practice reading assessments. Story-time crafts, educational games, and electronic learning systems were also available. Students enjoyed expressing their creativity or just relaxing and making new friends. The Parent Center was also open during these special Saturdays and provided literature backpacks, magnetic soundboards, flash cards, and other educational tools for parents to check out for home use. This was a great way to foster a sense of community while enhancing literacy skills in a fun, engaging way!

Grade Levels: PreK-6
Budget: In kind donations
Parents & Students Served: All

LAKE

Cypress Ridge Elementary School Volunteer Program

Cypress Ridge Elementary School
350 East Avenue
Clermont, Florida 34711
Program Contact: Rhonda Phillips
Phone: 352-394-6633

Mission: *To improve communication between the school, parents, and community in an effort to increase family and community involvement and reach the goals and objectives set forth by CRES that will positively impact students.*

The Volunteer Program at Cypress Ridge Elementary School is a well-oiled machine! Every family must complete ten volunteer hours. Common activities include grading Math Super Stars worksheets, tabulating reading fluency, establishing community partners who can donate prizes, organizing Spirit Nights, helping in the front office, and collecting and maintaining the Box Tops and Pop Top programs. One of the exciting school wide projects was called Quilt to Books. Every student made a square, and staff and parent volunteers sewed them together to make quilts. They were auctioned off and the money was used to send books to schools affected by Hurricane Katrina. Over 17,200 volunteer hours were logged at Cypress Ridge last year!

Grade Levels: PreK-5
Budget: \$905
Parents Served: 741
Students Served: 605

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OSCEOLA

Highlands Elementary Math Candy Factory

Highlands Elementary School
800 West Donegan Avenue
Kissimmee, Florida 34741
Program Contact: Sherry Misch
Phone: 407-935-3620

Mission: *To educate parents on ways in which to help their children with math.*

The Math Candy Factory proved to have the largest parental turnout in Highlands Elementary history. The goal was for children to get help on their math skills and for parents to learn how to help their children with math at home. One of the business partners prepared and served dinner for approximately 350 people. The first activity was building geometric structures with gumdrops and toothpicks. Then families went to their respective classrooms where the children presented what they had learned in class. Math games were distributed to each family and played. Finally, everyone reconvened in the cafeteria for an ice cream sundae math game involving height, weight, and number of topping combinations. The event culminated in the eating of the sundaes, of course!

Grade Levels: PreK-5
Budget: \$350
Parents Served: 200
Students Served: 150

ORANGE

Lancaster Caring Community

Lancaster Elementary School
6700 Sheryl Ann Drive
Orlando, Florida 32809
Program Contact: Christine Guhl
Phone: 407-858-3130

Mission: *To include parents and community members in the enrichment and strengthening of academic performance while developing positive character in youth.*

The Lancaster Caring Community is a school wide service-learning program. It requires a strong partnership of staff, parents, students, and the community members. Academic skills are woven into each service-learning activity. A monthly newsletter goes to parents in English and Spanish. Parenting classes are offered monthly. Six learning centers are set up in the Caring Community Annex to provide healthy exercise and character education for all grade levels. One service-learning project is collaborative with a school in Beijing, China! There is always joint decision-making on school matters based on school community needs. Community sponsorships are eagerly sought and all contributions have a positive ripple effect on all facets of the school.

Grade Levels: K-5
Budget: \$5,000
Parents Served: 400+
Students Served: 769

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ST. LUCIE

Dad's Club

Lawnwood Elementary School
1900 South 23rd Street
Ft. Pierce, Florida 34950
Program Contact: Tom Peters
Phone: 772-468-5740

Mission: *To provide support to the efforts of Lawnwood Elementary through fundraising, volunteering, and mentoring, and to promote male caregiver involvement in school leadership.*

In its first year, the Dad's Club at Lawnwood Elementary School encouraged men to get more involved in the life of the school and raised money for future outreach. Events this year included family-centered activities, campus beautification projects, physical fitness activities, and academic and social mentoring opportunities. Future plans include parenting workshops, school orientation for new students, and guest speakers. The Dad's Club holds monthly meetings that include food, babysitting, and translation. Projects require about ten hours total per month. The club supports traditional activities of the PTO, SAC, and school district, but is independent and will further legitimize itself through bylaws and board members. What a great way to get dads and other male role models involved to benefit the entire school!

Grade Levels: PreK-5
Budget: \$0
Parents Served: All
Students Served: 604

SEMINOLE

Dividend Ambassadors in Action

Wekiva Elementary School
1450 East Wekiva Trail
Longwood, Florida 32779
Program Contact: Michelle Robinson
Phone: 407-746-3150

Mission: *To strengthen the Wekiva Team to promote a positive learning environment, increase community support and maintain a high level of student achievement and safety.*

Dividend Ambassadors is a volunteer program that was established after budget reductions cut paid staff at the school. They work to support all school improvement goals, including increased academic achievement in reading, math, and science; improving student behavior; and expanding parental and community involvement. Ambassadors are trained in their roles in supervision, safety, and student achievement. They share feedback with teachers and school leadership and participate in school decision making. As leaders in the school, they embrace challenges and work on solutions that will have a positive impact on students.

Grade Levels: PreK-5
Budget: \$156
Parents Served: 17
Students Served: 759

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VOLUSIA

Sunshine Math Movie Night

Spruce Creek Elementary School
642 Taylor Road
Port Orange, Florida 32127
Program Contact: Stephanie Dipietrantonio
Phone: 386-322-6200

Mission: *To involve parents and increase math scores for all students.*

It is a school goal that all students participate in the Sunshine Math Program. Families are encouraged to be involved in helping solve these math problems. The PTA offers "Math Bucks" for bringing in the Sunshine Math worksheets and other tasks each week. Approximately every month, the PTA hosts a Sunshine Math Movie Night. The entire family is invited to the school for a picnic supper and movie viewing. Students use their Math Bucks for admission and the picnic supper. If a student didn't earn any Math Bucks, they are still encouraged to come and pay a nominal fee for a hot dog and drink. This program is growing and hopes to reach even more families next year.

Grade Levels: K-5
Budget: \$100
Parents Served: 100
Students Served: 125-250

Region III

MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL

REGIONAL WINNER

ST. LUCIE

Reality Store Green

Forest Grove Middle School
3201 South 25th Street
Fort Pierce, Florida 34981
Program Contact: Charles Cuomo
Phone: 772-429-5510

Mission: *To help students plan for the future.*

The Reality Store is designed by teachers working closely with parents and community members to develop cross-curricular learning activities related to math and real world financial responsibilities. The lessons they learn are meant to affect school performance, career choices, life goals, and budgeting practices. The cost of raising a family was addressed, as well as the impact of volunteerism through money, time, and talent. In Social Studies class, students chose a hypothetical career and salary based on their actual GPA. In math class, students learn about paying income tax and receiving loans. After students went through stations where they spent money on housing, groceries, child care, transportation, insurance, and more, they wrote about what they learned in their language arts class. The student essays were very telling, proving that many learned that the choices they make now about doing well in school have a direct affect on their future finances and, therefore, lifestyle. Teachers worked with the SAC, Boys & Girls Club, district staff, and parent groups to plan and train for the event to ensure its success. This team has already reached out to other schools to assist in creating an implementation plan for Reality Store in their schools. The project at Forest Grove even made the local papers. Reality Store is an excellent example of working together to create a real world learning experience integrated with academic activities.

Grade Levels: 7-8
Budget: \$25
Parents Served: 6
Students: 409

BREVARD

Space Coast Academies: STEAM and ATEPS

Space Coast Jr/Sr High School
6150 Banyan Street
Cocoa, Florida 32927
Program Contact: Sandra Valdes
Phone: 321-638-0750

Mission: *To provide students with the foundation needed to be successful in the global work force.*

STEAM and ATEPS are two small learning communities at Space Coast Jr/Sr High School. STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Aerospace, and Manufacturing. ATEPS stands for Academy of Teacher Education and Public Service. Parents play a key role in the success of these academies. They serve on the Career Advisory Committees planning awards and honors, field trips, curriculum, and fundraising. One parent serves as the Parent Volunteer Coordinator for each academy. Parents have also chaperoned field trips, attended the annual Open House, provided transportation for university tours, participated in the annual Etiquette Seminar, attended academy initiation ceremonies, and organized a Summer Spirit Camp.

Grade Levels: 9-11
Budget: \$20,000 + Director's salary
Parents Served: 200
Students Served: 111

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MARTIN

Martin County High School Hispanic Outreach Program

Martin County High School
2801 South Kanner Highway
Stuart, Florida 34994
Program Contact: Heldie Moore
Phone: 772-219-1200

Mission: *To develop school, family, and community networks to increase success of Hispanic students.*

The Martin County High School Hispanic Outreach Program bridges the communication gap between parents, their children, and the school. Efforts are concentrated in six categories: communication, parenting, student learning, volunteering/decision making, advocacy, and community collaboration. Parenting workshops, a student mentoring program, parent volunteer training, and parent literacy and technology classes are some of the highlights. As a result, 60 new parents are involved in school volunteer activities, 40 new students are involved in extracurricular school activities, and ten new students are involved in school sports. This program has been effective in opening communication between parents and teachers.

Grade Levels: 9-12
Budget: \$500
Parents Served: 60+
Students Served: 250+

ORANGE

Tiger Den

Jones High School
801 South Rio Grande
Orlando, Florida 32805
Program Contact: Ivy Fowler
Phone: 407-835-2300

Mission: *To provide students with a place to shop for clothes and schools supplies for special occasions at no charge.*

The Tiger Den at Jones High School is a store where students can obtain clothing, food, and toiletries for free. It has even opened its doors to the surrounding community and other nearby schools. Three hundred coats were given away last winter. Over 200 prom dresses were distributed. Students going to college can stock up on items for their dorm. The Tiger Den gives back when there are other needs; i.e., Haiti earthquake relief. A dental health partnership has been established and provides assistance for braces and dental care. Local media coverage and community partnerships have made the Tiger Den an incredible success!

Grade Levels: 9-12
Budget: \$0
Parents Served: 300
Students Served: 1,046

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OSCEOLA

AVID Family Night

Kissimmee Middle School
2410 Dyer Boulevard
Kissimmee, Florida 34741
Program Contact: Kelly Mulvihill
Phone: 407-870-4080

Mission: *To educate parents about the benefits and activities involved in the AVID program.*

AVID is a program that means Advancement Via Individual Determination. Parents of students in AVID were invited to the school each quarter. After light refreshments, parents learned about AVID and the commitment that it requires. They learned how to help their children with note-taking strategies, agenda use, and binder organization. The "Destinations" Family Night themed the lessons around geography. Student guides took parents to Hawaii, Paris, Italy, and the Orient. The "Entertainment" Family Night shared lessons through a movie, play, concert, and theme park. Ninety-nine percent of AVID students remained active in the program due in large part to the success of AVID Family Nights.

Grade Levels: 7-8
Budget: \$12
Parents Served: 30
Students Served: 30

SEMINOLE

The Wishing Well

Hagerty High School
3225 Lockwood Boulevard
Oviedo, Florida 32765
Program Contact: Aleisha George
Phone: 407-871-0750

Mission: *To fund essential items that have a direct impact on the classroom, students, and school.*

The PTSA at Hagerty High School began The Wishing Well program so all busy parents could donate needed items at their own frequency and budget. Teachers submit requests for items that will enhance the classroom experience. Examples include dictionaries, incentives, microphones, anatomy models, cooking supplies, ACT practice tests, and practice workbooks. The PTSA plans fundraisers, solicits donations, and collects membership fees to cover the cost of the items. This program has impacted at least 3,000 students because the items in the classrooms are used by different students throughout the day. Information on how to get it started has already been shared with a local elementary school, and it is easy to replicate in any school.

Grade Levels: 9-12
Budget: \$10,700
Parent Volunteers: PTSA
Students Served: 3,000

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VOLUSIA

Good News Referral Program

New Smyrna Beach Middle School
1200 South Myrtle Avenue
New Smyrna Beach, Florida 32168
Program Contact: Amy Nowell
Phone: 386-424-2550

Mission: *To celebrate good news about students, parental involvement, the school, and the community.*

The Good News Referral Program started three years ago as a partnership between the school and the PTSA. Contrary to the typical referral for bad behavior, this program seeks out good behavior, tells parents about it, and showcases it to the entire school. Students can earn a Good News Referral for things like improving academic achievement, helping other classmates, and anything that exemplifies going above and beyond. Winners are entered into prize drawings! Each quarter brings an assembly where everyone wins something donated by local business partners. Sometimes school district and community VIPs are there to draw winning names. Over the course of the program, Good News Referrals have grown from 100 per quarter to over 450 per quarter!

Grade Levels: 6-8
Budget: \$0-300, varies by year
Parents and Students Served: 1,287

Region IV

ELEMENTARY

REGIONAL WINNER

SARASOTA

Green Kids

Bay Haven School of Basics Plus
2901 West Tamiami Circle
Sarasota, Florida 34234
Program Contact: Betsy Asheim-Dean
Phone: 941-927-9000

Mission: *To interact collaboratively to teach students about science in a meaningful, hands-on way to encourage them as ambassadors to our earth.*

With drought and water restrictions constantly challenging the world, the parents and community partners at Bay Haven School of Basics Plus strive to encourage students to think about water conservation and serve as ambassadors to our earth. The project was a comprehensive study of agriculture, pesticides, organic gardening, and water purity, including testing and analyzing water. Students grew two crops over the year using self-contained, pesticide-free EarthBoxes. Some crops were harvested and eaten during "Salad Days," where students learned about food preparation and the importance of healthy eating. Others were sold at the Spring Carnival and proceeds were donated to a local community organization. Additional crops were donated to the needy. Parents assisted in the writing of a grant to the Southwest Florida Water Management District, and they received an award that was used to install rain barrel stations around campus and in the gardens. Students from the nearby Ringling College of Art and Design helped younger students paint the rain barrels. Students from Booker High School spearheaded a rainwater analysis in order to determine which gardens rainwater was safe for (flower, vegetable, or butterfly). New College of Florida attendees assisted the Bay Haven Science Club in ongoing water testing and analysis. Beautification Days were held three times during the year and parents, students, and teachers all worked together to beautify the campus. The program will be expanded for next year, after Bay Haven received a Keep Sarasota Beautiful grant. Fifth grade students will use recycled food waste in the cafeteria to compost and use as organic soil for the EarthBoxes. Student environmental awareness, lessons in citizenship, and increased science exposure are the results of this exciting project.

Grade Levels: K-5
Budget: \$2,500
Parents Served: 10+
Students: 600

DESOTO

Tell Me a Story – Connecting Multicultural Tales and the Curriculum

West Elementary, Memorial Elementary, and Nocatee Elementary Schools
494 North Manatee Avenue
Arcadia, Florida 34266
Program Contact: Aida Schomburg and Lisa Norris
Phone: 893-494-0261

Mission: *To promote multiculturalism and communication, and to provide parent involvement opportunities.*

All three elementary schools in DeSoto County partnered for this exciting storytelling program. Events were held at night to maximize parent participation. An award-winning bilingual storyteller facilitated the activities and families learned literacy skills and about the values and traditions of other cultures. Both Spanish and English were used throughout the stories and there were ample opportunities for audience participation. The storytelling event was supported in the classroom with lesson plans in math, language arts, science, geography, foreign language, social studies, and music that were all aligned to the Sunshine State Standards. This program reinforced the school as a safe, inviting environment where parents of all backgrounds and languages are welcome and play an important role in their child's education.

Grade Levels: K-5
Budget: \$1,500
Parents Served: 180
Students Served: 1,000

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HERNANDO

Muffins with Mommy and Donuts with Daddy

Deltona Elementary School
2055 Deltona Boulevard
Spring Hill, Florida 34606
Program Contact: Doris Tejada
Phone: 352-797-7040

Mission: *To increase parent involvement and foster a love of reading between parent and child.*

Muffins with Mommy and Donuts with Daddy was a free literacy breakfast for parents at Deltona Elementary School. First, selected books were brought to the cafeteria and parents read aloud with their child. Then breakfast was served. Finally, the school reading coach offered tips on how to increase their child's reading comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary.

Grade Levels: PreK-5
Budget: \$465
Parents Served: 200
Students Served: 230

HILLSBOROUGH

Spooky Science Night

Helen A. Davis Elementary School
10907 Memorial Highway
Tampa, Florida 33615
Program Contact: Crissy Brescia
Phone: 813-854-6010

Mission: *To involve parents and students in hands-on science investigations that are linked to the Sunshine State Standards.*

Parents and students joined together to explore science and learn this exciting subject through inquiry activities. Each grade level and some special areas set up a demonstration booth for Spooky Science Night. Students were encouraged to wear costumes and earned a homework pass for attending with a parent. Hispanic translation was provided. The booth topics included skeletons, microscopes, sink vs. float, matter (slime), magnets, dry ice, sense of touch (grab bags), chemistry in the Fizzy Factory, and music with Spooktacular Sounds. Both Sunshine State Standards and National PTA Standards were met and as a result everyone involved left knowing that science can be fun and is important in the world around them.

Grade Levels: K-5
Budget: \$100
Parents Served: 105
Students Served: 150

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LEE

CAPE: Caring About People Everywhere

Cape Elementary School
4519 Vincennes Boulevard
Cape Coral, Florida 33904
Program Contact: Margaret McErlane
Phone: 239-542-3551

Mission: *To support struggling students who have performed poorly on statewide assessments with strategies and interventions.*

Ten parent events and three PTO Family Fun Nights throughout the year comprised the CAPE program at Cape Elementary. Events included Curriculum Day, Student-led Conferences, Veterans' Day, Science Fair Night, Inventors' Fair, Disney's Give a Day/Get a Day, Mentors' Program, FCAT Celebration, Principal's Party, Fourth Grade Writers' Club, Extended day for students that need additional help, Spring Fling, and so much more. This comprehensive program touched all students and parents at Cape and built untold bridges between the school, business, and home communities.

Grade Levels: PreK-5
Budget: \$0
Parents Served: 630
Students Served: 630

PASCO

Parent University

Lacoochee Elementary School
38815 Cummer Road
Dade City, Florida 33523
Program Contact: Karen Marler
Phone: 352-524-5600

Mission: *To create a community that works together so all students reach their highest potential.*

The Parent University had a variety of activities that parents could choose from, all in the name of helping their children succeed. They even earned “credits” for each activity completed toward a “degree” in Parent Power! Workshops were held monthly and one of the most popular was for non-English speaking parents to learn English through the use of technology. Telephone coaches provided mentoring and a friend to speak English with. The Parent University had a tremendous effect on the empowerment of parents at Lacoochee and the twenty-five graduates this year significantly increased parent involvement in their school community.

Grade Levels: PreK-5
Budget: \$0
Parents Served: 54
Students Served: 108+

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PINELLAS

Pinellas Central Elementary Health and Safety Community Fair

Pinellas Central Elementary
1051 58th Street, N
Pinellas Park, Florida 33782
Program Contact: Jillian Connolly
Phone: 727-547-7853

Mission: *To promote health and safety awareness to our families.*

The Pinellas Central School is a community-based Title I school located in the heart of Pinellas County. To increase parent involvement, raise awareness of child advocacy, and create a strong partnership with the school community, a Health and Safety Fair was created. Since most students are bike riders, a Bike Rodeo, sponsored by All Children’s Hospital, initiated the event. The Pinellas Park Police Department did safety presentations along with fingerprinting of the children. Many health and safety booths, along with displays, were set up for parents and students, such as: Pinellas Park Fire Department, Pinellas Park Health Department, Florida Kids Care and others. The school physical education department participated along with speech teachers and the school nurse who offered hearing and vision screening. Healthy food choices were promoted through art activities. The event was extremely well received and was a tremendous school wide success.

Grade Levels: Pre K- 5
Budget: \$250
Parents Served: 188
Student Serves: 205

POLK

Padgett Reads

Padgett Elementary School

110 Leelon Road

Lakeland, Florida 33809

Program Contact: S. Henderson, D. Burdick, and E. Ashmore

Phone: 863-853-6044

Mission: *To increase student reading scores through empowering all members of the family.*

Every member of the family is a vital part of Padgett Reads. First, the Donuts with Dads workshop takes place in the fall. In the winter, Goodies with Grandparents is held, following the same pattern as the Dads program. Finally, Muffins with Moms is held in the spring. For all three, the adults learn before, during, and after reading strategies and then practice them with their child while enjoying tasty treats. This program stresses the importance of reading together at home, therefore increasing students' reading achievement at school. The entire Padgett community works together to make this program a success as evidenced by the numbers served.

Grade Levels: K-5

Budget: \$300

Parents Served: 413

Students Served: 359

Region IV

MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL

REGIONAL WINNER

LEE

REACH HIGHER

Island Coast High School
2125 DeNavarra Parkway
Cape Coral, Florida 33909
Program Contact: Nancy Hagy
Phone: 239-337-8175

Mission: *To increase and strengthen family involvement through a two-fold creative approach.*

In November, a Town Hall meeting was held to provide information to parents and students on accessing academic assistance and goal-setting, along with the importance of secondary education and career training. The purpose of the Town Hall meeting was to inform, educate, and open the doors of communication between parents, their children, and the school. The event was heavily advertised, and arrangements were made for dinner to be served in an attempt to get as many parents there as possible. Parent volunteers even helped set up and serve. The principal began the evening with information on academics, athletics, free after-school tutoring, and credit retrieval programs. After dinner, parents and students browsed displays from all of the academic departments and were able to ask questions. Counseling staff was on hand to provide information on parenting, credits, attendance, graduation requirements, and decisions on future plans. Over 400 people attended! Surveys on the event were extremely positive and from the Town Hall meeting, a mentoring program evolved with teachers serving as mentors to assigned students and their parents.

In February, a Career and College Night was held. The staff piqued students' interest by wearing shirts from their alma mater, and the art students designed and displayed over 500 postsecondary institution pennants in the school lobby. Parent volunteers were used again to secure and serve food, and assist with the surveys. There were twenty representatives from a variety of postsecondary options. Information was available for students in need of financial aid. Rising eighth graders were invited, and some parents were even interested in the information for themselves. Over 850 people attended this awesome event!

Grade Levels: 8-12
Budget: \$0
Parents Served: 600
Students: 700

COLLIER

Family Fall Festival

Golden Gate Middle School
2701 28th Terrace, SW
Naples, Florida 34116
Program Contact: Kathi Schweikhardt
Phone: 239-377-3800

Mission: *To increase parent participation and reward students for positive behavior.*

Golden Gate Middle heeded the call of the statewide Parent Involvement Day in November 2009 and planned an exciting Family Fall Festival to celebrate student achievement. Through donations from local businesses, a complete turkey dinner was prepared and served (\$2 per person was charged). All of the classic festival games and activities were available, such as the cake walk and face painting. Students could earn game coupons for good classroom behavior. The gym was open for free games. The school jazz band entertained while parents browsed student artwork. There were a few teachers and students dressed in character as pilgrims telling their stories and giving out candy. Everyone had a great time and got to meet the new administrators in a pleasant and fun environment.

Grade Levels: 6-8
Budget: \$0
Parents Served: 110
Students Served: 162

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HIGHLANDS

Avon Park High Family Game Night

Avon Park High School
700 East Main Street
Avon Park, Florida 33825
Program Contact: Seth Lambert
Phone: 863-452-4311

Mission: *To involve parents and the community in school events.*

To return parent involvement to higher participation rates, Avon Park set specific goals for this school year. Family Game Night brought students, parents, families, staff, and community members together for some family fun that focused on physical fitness. Costs were low as this event was a true partnership between business and school volunteers. Future game nights are planned to replicate and expand this success!

Grade Levels: 9-12
Budget: \$200
Parents Served: 30
Students Served: 80

HILLSBOROUGH

Randall Area Youth Services (R.A.Y.S.) Council

Randall Middle School
16510 Fishhawk Boulevard
Lithia, Florida 33547
Program Contact: Kristy Verdi
Phone: 813-740-3900

Mission: *To provide a variety of volunteer, community service, and service-learning opportunities for our students, parents, and teachers.*

The R.A.Y.S. Council is an exciting extracurricular or elective opportunity for students to engage in community volunteerism and service-learning. Some of the ongoing activities include campus recycling, Patriot Day Star Display, Support Our Troops care package collection, the Veterans' Day program, Great American Teach-in, Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service, and hosting a fun day at a foster care facility. In addition to these programs around the community, students are bringing awareness to their classmates on diabetes, foster care, recycling, and the impact of smoking. Parents volunteer in the projects themselves and through assistance with planning, promoting, and financing. Many partnerships have been strengthened as the R.A.Y.S. Council engages the local community to help those in need.

Grade Levels: 6-8
Budget: \$7,350
Parents Served: 200
Students Served: 1,000

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PASCO

Parent University

J.W. Mitchell High School
2323 Little Road
New Port Richey, Florida 34655
Program Contact: Angie Murphy
Phone: 727-774-9200

Mission: *To help parents of high school students deal with the challenges of high school.*

The Parent University at Mitchell High is held quarterly and in the evening to maximize attendance. They all begin with a whole group session on a particular topic, one of which is just for ninth grade parents to ease the transition to high school. Then, there are a variety of breakout sessions to choose from. These topics include parenting, testing tips, underage drinking and substance abuse, PSAT, academic records, choosing an educational path, advanced courses, career academies, virtual options, how to become a volunteer, and the High School Reading Program. With such a wide range of topics, the entire staff engages in collaboration to ensure success!

Grade Levels: 9-12
Budget: \$500-800
Parents Served: 1,000
Students Served: 1,500

PINELLAS

Weekly Calendar for Students and Parents

Seminole Middle School
8701 131st Street, NW
Seminole, Florida 33776
Program Contact: Valerie Harrah
Phone: 727-547-4520

Mission: *To offer a valuable resource of communication between parents and the school.*

An energetic parent volunteer at Seminole Middle created a weekly calendar showing all events for students, parents, and staff. It is e-mailed to everyone once a week. This comprehensive calendar is sent to community partners who want to stay involved. Now, all parents are informed of important activities like after school homework help, the Future City Club, basketball games, portfolio nights, the Robotics Club, and PTA and SAC meetings. This no-cost service is an easy way to engage all parents and students in the school community.

Grade Levels: 6-8
Budget: \$0
Parents Served: 300
Students Served: 1,300

Region V

ELEMENTARY

REGIONAL WINNER

PALM BEACH

Sablo's Chat

Crosspointe Elementary School
3015 South Congress Avenue
Boynton Beach, Florida 33426
Program Contact: Regina Sablo
Phone: 561-292-4100

Mission: *To increase parental involvement and raise student achievement.*

Communication is the key to parental involvement. Focusing on this critical success factor, Crosspointe Elementary School developed monthly chat groups led by Ms. Sablo, the school's Parent Liaison. Academic planning, testing information, teacher conferences, and a host of curriculum issues are a part of this innovative exchange. The monthly informal chat sessions provide a comfortable environment for parents to come to the school for updates, share ideas, and talk about concerns and opportunities. Meaningful relationships with school staff are established and parents can even receive support for personal needs that will, in turn, impact their children's learning. New parents are welcomed and all parents are encouraged to volunteer with the school in various capacities. In fact, all new families receive a flyer upon registering at Crosspointe. The flyer is available in three languages. The program has ten community business partners that provide refreshments and incentives for participation. It is easily replicable at little or no cost. All you need is a meeting place, printed flyers to get the word out, and a caring, dedicated staff team to provide the information that parents need to feel informed and supported. Parents are their child's first teachers and Sablo's Chat empowers parents to make wise educational decisions for their children and their future.

Grade Levels: K-5
Budget: \$0
Parents Served: 183
Students: 367

BROWARD

Dads' Hearts are Into Reading

Broward Estates Elementary School
441 NW 35th Avenue
Lauderhill, Florida 33311
Program Contact: Kealer Franklin and Latisa Nelson
Phone: 754-322-5550

Mission: *To increase the number of fathers and/or positive male role models in the academic lives of students.*

The Dads' Hearts are Into Reading program at Broward Estates Elementary School was a terrific way to increase family involvement and highlight the importance of strong male role models for children. Every year, around Valentine's Day, fathers and other male relatives have been volunteering two hours to read to a class. The day would not be complete without a kick-off networking breakfast. The men choose their book and have a chance to share why they joined the program. Then they go into the classroom and read! Many have come back year after year, and results include fewer student behavior concerns and higher expectations, especially for male students.

Grade Levels: K-5
Budget: \$800
Parents Served: 60
Students Served: 609

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MIAMI-DADE

Together Everyone Achieves More Through Fun, Games, and Talent

William Lehman Elementary School
10900 SW 113th Place
Miami, Florida 33176
Program Contact: Tammi Wells
Phone: 305-273-2140

Mission: *To increase educational awareness through parental involvement.*

This program was established to fulfill the PTA's mission of the same name. The year of fun-filled events started with Movie Night. Next, parents and 5th graders competed against each other in a "Smarter Than a 5th Grader" game night. Parent Bonding & Journaling (PB&J) sessions were held during lunch. A visiting author came to the school and read to groups of students. Parents came out for Morning Coffee Chats to learn about the PTA and discuss school happenings with staff. At the end of the school year, the Achieve, Believe, and Create (or ABC) Gala was held to recognize talented student artists. This program had something for everyone and reached almost all students and parents.

Grade Levels: PreK-5
Budget: \$1,000
Parents Served: 500
Students Served: 600

MONROE

Learn to Speak English

Key Largo School

104801 Overseas Highway

Key Largo, Florida 33037

Program Contact: Christine Velizaroff

Phone: 305-453-1255

Mission: *To give non-English speaking parents confidence in being involved in the school and in their child's education by increasing their English vocabulary and an opportunity to participate in school-related activities.*

The Learn to Speak English program at Key Largo School was developed with parents of PreK and Kindergarten students in mind, as it is their first public school experience in many cases. When there is a language barrier, it can be more difficult for parents to learn about school climate and operations. Once it is overcome, parents are more likely to get involved at their children's school. The parents who participated not only learned English, but got to know each other and formed their own support network. Eight lessons made up the curriculum and when all was said and done, graduates had the confidence to get involved and make a difference.

Grade Levels: PreK-K

Budget: Enough for paper and ink for flyers and vocabulary packets

Parents Served: 80

Students Served: 150

Region V

MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL

REGIONAL WINNER

MIAMI-DADE

Perrine Community Outreach Program

Miami Palmetto Senior High School

7460 SW 188th Street

Pinecrest, Florida 33156

Program Contact: Howard Weiner

Phone: 305-235-1360

Mission: *To foster meaningful relationships and facilitate access to students and families who are geographically distant and marginally involved in the school.*

The Perrine Community Outreach Program was designed to solve learning and communication challenges that arose from two very different neighborhoods combined into one school setting. Some students had difficulty accessing transportation and with communication between school and home. The school partnered with parent volunteers, local government agencies, and churches to implement the Outreach Program. Parents and students were surveyed to assess needs. Tutoring at the Perrine Community Action Agency (PCAA) was initiated twice per week. PCAA also provided daily computer access for parents and students to check grades and other school-related Web sites, in addition to training on the Parent Portal. Palmetto guidance counselors began going to the PCAA for parent meetings. Two Parent Orientation meetings were held in the Perrine neighborhood. The Outreach Program was successful in working with municipal leaders to install a pedestrian light and crosswalk at a busy intersection frequently used by students. Meetings were held at Palmetto feeder schools, local churches, and community businesses to further open lines of communication with Palmetto High. As a result of survey feedback, workshops called "Safe Dates and Healthy Relationships" were offered. School transportation provided by the PCAA is being explored. Barriers were broken and doors were opened as a result of this partnership effort called the Perrine Community Outreach Program.

Grade Levels: 9-12

Budget: \$250

Parents Served: 180

Students: 3,106

BROWARD

Parent Zone Resource Fair

Piper High School
8000 NW 4th Street
Sunrise, Florida 33351
Program Contact: Enid Valdez and Renee Grutman
Phone: 754-322-1700

Mission: *To coordinate and host a resource fair to demonstrate Piper's ability to enhance parent involvement and student achievement.*

The Parent Zone Resource Fair was held in November at Piper High School. It involved all of the elementary and middle feeder schools that send students to Piper for high school. Over 500 people attended and received information about the local community, life in high school, parenting, athletics, arts programs, and career academies. To engage the multi-age audience, Piper nursing academy students took blood pressures and art students did face painting, just to name two of the over 200 student volunteer activities. Feeder schools were invited to join in the entertainment with their dance and music programs. This event brought the community closer together and engaged future Piper students in being comfortable in a new school setting.

Grade Levels: 9-12 plus elementary and middle feeder schools
Budget: \$0
Parents Served: 500
Students Served: 3,000

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MONROE

Culinary Academy

Marathon High School
350 Sombrero Beach Road
Marathon, Florida 33050
Program Contact: Anthony Green
Phone: 305-289-2480

Mission: *To establish a viable culinary program, including a self-funded Dolphin Bistro.*

The Culinary Academy at Marathon High School is the means by which to engage parents, students, and the community for school improvement. The academy restaurant, Dolphin Bistro, is used to incentivize students, teach relevant skills to future foodservice workers, cultivate partnerships with local businesses, promote interdisciplinary learning, and engage families in school activities like catering football games and the Black History Month celebration. Being part of something so important on campus is rewarding for many Marathon students. They want to come to school and do well so they can continue as a part of Dolphin Bistro.

Grade Levels: 8-12
Budget: All funds raised
Parents Served: all
Students Served: all

PALM BEACH

PTSA Parent Connection Website Program

Spanish River High School
5100 Jog Road
Boca Raton, Florida 33496
Program Contact: Ellen Astrove
Phone: 561-241-2200

Mission: *To supplement and expand communication with parents and encourage them to stay involved.*

The PTSA is committed to keeping parents informed and engaged and the PTSA Parent Connection website Program did just that by enhancing the existing official school website. It is very user-friendly and includes a calendar, suggestion portal, and links to the school's Facebook page, district website, and county and state PTA website. Accessible resources include college planning, tutors, literacy events, business partners, school event pictures, and school fundraising opportunities. Over 4,500 visitors have navigated the site since its inception. This program requires nominal funding and time for maintenance, yet it has the potential to impact every student and parent at Spanish River High School.

Grade Levels: 9-12

Budget: \$75

Parents Served: 4,000+

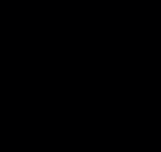
Students Served: 2,150

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For information on participating in the Parent Involvement Awards, please contact your School District's Volunteer Department or the:

Florida Department of Education
Bureau of Family and Community Outreach
325 West Gaines Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400
Telephone: 850-245-0847





Florida Department of Education
www.fldoe.org

This document was prepared (*revised 9/10*) by the
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