

Sparkplugs

for Parent Involvement | Exemplary Practices



Sponsored by

**Florida
PTA[®]**

everychild.one voice.



**Florida Department
of Education**



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Sparkplugs*, the 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 involve parents and family members in meaningful school programs. Each program was nominated for the 2013 Parent Involvement Award by its school district.

These summaries were taken directly from the applications submitted by the school districts. They have been edited for brevity, but every attempt has been made to retain their original content.

The purpose of the Parent Involvement Award, sponsored by the Florida PTA, the Florida Department of Education and State Farm Insurance, is to promote and recognize exemplary 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 work-place, faith-based institutions, and other convenient locations.

Based on National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships in education, the programs address the key strategies for increasing family involvement:

1. Welcoming all families into the school community
2. Communicating effectively
3. Supporting student success
4. Speaking up for every child
5. Sharing power
6. Collaborating with the community

For further information or assistance in implementing any of these unique family involvement programs, please write or call the program's contact person.

.....

Sparkplugs

Contents

Region I: Elementary School

Kate Sullivan Elementary School – Winner	3
Merriam Cherry Street Elementary School	4
Hellen Caro Elementary School	4
Jefferson County Elementary School	5
Baker Elementary School	5
W.H. Rhodes Elementary School	6

Region I: Middle and High School

Cobb Middle School – Winner	7
Gulf Breeze High School	8

Region II: Elementary School

Durbin Creek Elementary School – Winner	9
Newberry Elementary School	10
Westside Elementary School	10
Dinsmore Elementary School	11
Hilliard Elementary School	11
Lake Butler Elementary School	12

Region II: Middle and High School

Matthew W. Gilbert Middle School – Winner	13
Citrus Resource for Exceptional Students in Transition (CREST)	14
Callahan Middle School	14
Bartram Trail High School	15

Region III: Elementary School

Sabal Elementary School – Winner	16
Sawgrass Bay Elementary School	17
Felix A. Williams Elementary School	17
Four Corners Charter School	18
Mariposa Elementary School	18
Lake Mary Elementary School	19
Cypress Creek Elementary School	19

Region III: Middle and High School

Celebration K-8 School – Winner	21
West Shore Junior Senior High School	22
Northport K-8 School	22
Milwee Middle School	23
T. DeWitt Taylor Middle-High School	23

Region IV: Elementary School

Poinciana Elementary School – Winner24
Nocatee Elementary School25
Pine Grove Elementary School25
Foster Elementary School26
Orange River Elementary School26
James M. Marlowe Elementary School27
R. Bruce Wagner Elementary School27
Englewood Elementary School28

Region IV: Middle and High School

T.R. Robinson High School – Winner29
Manatee Middle School30
Powell Middle School30
Fort Myers Middle Academy31
Countryside High School31

Region V: Elementary School

Castle Hill Elementary School – Winner32
William Lehman Elementary School33
Poinciana STEM Elementary Magnet School33

Region V: Middle and High School

Suncoast Community High School – Winner34
Rickards Middle School35
Leewood K-8 Center35

REGIONAL WINNER

LEON COUNTY

The Arts Festival

Kate Sullivan Elementary School

927 Miccosukee Road

Tallahassee, Florida 32308

Program Contact: Evelyn Pender

Phone: 850-487-1216

Mission: *To make real world connections for children, parents and the community to celebrate and study the arts.*

The arts provide exciting and creative ways to make real world connections for children, parents and the community and help everyone understand how humankind expresses knowledge, values and cultural heritage. Focusing on an enduring theme, such as “Generations,” the Arts Festival is an annual, all-day celebration of the arts.

Each year, local artists, musicians and dancers donate their time and expertise for this affair, providing art demonstrations, music and dramatic performances. Parent and high school student volunteers set up twelve to fifteen stations with make-and-take art projects that relate to the theme and often relate to the cultural backgrounds of the diverse student population. This year, stations included gyotaku fish printing, watercolor resist painting, abstract spin art painting, beaded jewelry, stamped bookmarks, bookmaking techniques, face painting, and textured pottery medallions.

Younger and older students are paired together—usually with their reading buddy from the regular day—and the older students usher younger ones to the different stations to participate in the activities. They watch art demonstrations such as portrait drawing, painting, quilting and pottery, and try their hands at the various activities.

The festival has become a legacy at the school and in the community. Local artists, business partners, community organizations and volunteers return time and again to support the festival. The parents and students value the arts and the school’s diversity and enjoy celebrating through the annual Arts Festival!

Grade Levels: VPK-5

Budget: \$1,000

Parents Served: All

Students Served: 838

BAY COUNTY

Family Art & Writing Night

Merriam Cherry Street Elementary School

1125 Cherry Street

Panama City, Florida 32401

Program Contact: Susan Wise

Phone: 850-767-1480

Mission: *To involve parents in school culture through art and writing.*

When parents understand their child's education, they are better equipped to assist in the education process. With this end in mind, the Family Art & Writing Night allows parents to experience the school curriculum in an enjoyable atmosphere. The event also allows for bonding time between parents and their children as they work side-by-side to learn about, create and write about art. Over the course of the evening, students learn about a famous artist and then produce an artwork related to or influenced by the work of that artist. Afterward, teams of students and their parents write about the artwork. During these events, the art teacher talks to parents about art education as well as writing standards. The art teacher models how parents can offer specific feedback to their children, which is a profoundly effective parenting skill. Parents and children enjoy learning and working together in this creative endeavor.

Grade Levels: PreK-5

Budget: \$150

Parents Served: 150

Students: 150

.....

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

Watch D.O.G.S. (Dads of Great Students)

Hellen Caro Elementary School

12551 Meadson Road

Pensacola, Florida 32506

Program Contact: Monica Silvers and Christina Fenger

Phone: 850-492-0531

Mission: *To provide positive male role models for students and enhance academic growth.*

This innovative program focuses on education and safety in schools by using the positive influence of fathers, grandfathers, and father figures. The two-fold purpose is to (1) provide an unobtrusive fathering presence; and (2) provide positive and active role models for the students at school. The program is launched with a pizza night. Fathers, stepfathers, grandfathers, and uncles are asked to donate 2-7 hours of volunteer time at the school. These Watch D.O.G.S. work with small groups or individual students by reading together, using flashcards, helping with homework, listening and providing words of wisdom. They also monitor school property, patrol campus, assist with student drop-off and pick-up, help with recess, eat lunch with students, and share about their careers and interests. This program has a proven record of increasing volunteer hours, reducing bullying, increasing positive male involvement and PTA memberships. Students love hearing the Watch D.O.G.S.' stories, giving them high fives, and having these positive men with them at school.

Grade Levels: K-5
Budget: \$450
Parents Served: 12
Students: 910

.....

JEFFERSON COUNTY

Title I Family Fun Night

Jefferson County Elementary School

960 E Rocky Branch Road
Monticello, Florida 32344
Program Contact: Tammy McGriff
Phone: 850-342-0100

Mission: *To provide a venue that would engage school, family and community members in academic-centered activities.*

Title I Family Fun Night provides a venue for families, schools and the community to engage in educational games that focus on reading and math skills necessary for academic success. The night begins with an informative session about the performance of the district's schools as well as the multitude of activities available to further progress toward achievement. Parent volunteers share their experiences and demonstrate the value of volunteering in their children's schools. Family members are encouraged to visit their local schools and volunteer.

The crux of the evening, however, is the family time after the district presentations. Families split into groups during the evening. The first group attends an arts and crafts session, creating Valentine's Day cards to express love and/or appreciation to an important person. Each family also receives materials to create future projects at home together. The second group plays Bingo games based on math and reading topics. Winners earn prizes such as puzzles, strategy games and books. More importantly, families enjoy the time together!

Grade Levels: PreK-12
Budget: \$300
Parents Served: 60
Students: 30

.....

OKALOOSA COUNTY

PassPort to Success

Baker Elementary School

1369 Fourteenth Street
Baker, Florida 32531
Program Contact: Jeanette Reed and Elizabeth Pizzotti
Phone: 850-669-7279

Mission: *To provide materials and training that will allow parents to assist students in reading and math.*

PassPort to Success, which stands for Parents Assuring Student Success, is an exciting program that provides every student and parent the opportunity to work cooperatively on grade-level standards identified by classroom teachers as areas

of need. Each grade grouping meets with the school's Parent Involvement Plan coordinator to decide which learning activities will meet the needs of the students and parents for that school year. The focus is on strengthening math, reading and writing skills. PassPort also provides parents with invaluable training about how to use reading and math materials at home with their children. A resource room helps further this goal by providing grade-level books, games, CDs, and math manipulatives for parents and caregivers to check out to help them work with their students at home.

Grade Levels: K-5

Budget: \$0

Parents Served: 240

Students: 687

.....

SANTA ROSA COUNTY

Ice Cream and Books Family Literacy Night

W.H. Rhodes Elementary School

5563 Byrom Street

Milton, Florida 32570

Program Contact: Angie M. Donlan

Phone: 850-983-5670

Mission: *To promote family literacy and involvement.*

After significant promotion, parents and students turn out in droves for Ice Cream and Books, a fun family event that gives parents ideas and specific information about helping their children achieve success. The school buzzes with happy families, laughing and enjoying their ice cream. Students and caregivers visit each activity station, including Book Character Bingo, a Book Walk, Storytime Theatre and Create-a-Book. Each student may also bring a gently used book to participate in a school-wide Book Swap, where they give their book to get a "new" one. Student names are recorded at the door, and winners are drawn at random from this list throughout the evening. These lucky attendees can win a free book! Parents and students alike love the event and can't wait for next year's Ice Cream and Books night.

Grade Levels: K-5

Budget: \$480

Parents Served: 400

Students: 400

REGIONAL WINNER

LEON COUNTY

Backpack Program

Cobb Middle School

915 Hillcrest Street

Tallahassee, Florida 32308

Program Contact: Dr. Yvonne Jones

Phone: 850-488-3364

Mission: *To provide food as well as summer reading materials to underprivileged students.*

Recent national efforts have brought the issue of child hunger in the United States to the forefront. It is a sad reality that many children go hungry over the weekend when they don't have access to healthy school meals. To alleviate this problem, Cobb Middle School runs a backpack program to provide weekend meals for families in their school community who would otherwise go without.

Each Friday, members of the BETA Club (a community-service organization), parents and volunteers from the Tallahassee Rotary Club provide 14 families with a backpack filled with food items to help families in need. This commitment is not taken lightly, as the families depend on the help each weekend throughout the school year.

Volunteers pick up weekly donations provided by a local food bank. School clubs and organizations also host canned food drives throughout the year to help stock the school's food pantry with supplies. Students bring canned goods for admittance to dances, athletic games, or other school events. On campus there are a number of collection containers for anyone who wants to donate.

On distribution days, students receive the goods in backpacks to ensure they are not visible to other children. The backpacks blend in with the school environment, helping to protect the child's anonymity. Once the backpacks are filled, they are given to a specific teacher who distributes them privately to students on Friday afternoons before they go home. The backpacks are returned the following Monday to the teacher to be refilled for the following weekend.

Over the past several years, through the diligent work of volunteers, the school has been able to expand the program to help more students and families. This project has served many families in need and hopes to continue doing so for years to come.

Grades Levels: 6-8

Budget: Donated by Second Harvest Food Bank or parents

Parents Served: 30

Students Served: 20

SANTA ROSA COUNTY

Gulf Breeze High School Boosters

Gulf Breeze High School

675 Gulf Breeze Parkway
Gulf Breeze, Florida 32561
Program Contact: Jon Watts
Phone: 850-916-4100

Mission: *To provide food for student athletes.*

For a number of years, student athletes have been served expensive, lackluster fare at their sports banquets. Finally discouraged by the procession of poor food, boosters teamed up with a local parent to provide cheaper, tastier meals for the celebratory evenings. This volunteer and his small team cook up an appetizing spread of delicious entrees for the voracious teams. For the larger banquets, the boosters' new recruit often enlists the hands of the Jr. Optimist and Key Clubs, whose members volunteer for community service points.

The boosters continue to team up with the crowd-pleasing chef to ensure the school's student athletes receive a nutritious, yet affordable meal prior to their sporting events. Thanks to the efforts of these boosters, students now venture into their competitions refreshed and energized toward victory. The super chef and crew even travel to state parks in advance of traveling teams to provide a much-needed meal prior to away games.

Grade Levels: 9-12
Budget: \$0
Parents Served: 100
Students: 100

REGIONAL WINNER

ST. JOHNS COUNTY

Get Your Game On!

Durbin Creek Elementary School

4100 Race Track Road

Saint Johns, Florida 32259

Program Contact: Angie Conlan

Phone Number: 904-547-3881

Mission: *To build a sense of community with the Durbin “family.”*

Get Your Game On! is a year-long theme that incorporates many different, fun-filled elements and events. In addition to fostering deeper relationships, games help build communication, problem-solving and life skills.

A Family Game Night kicks off the year. After a dinner that is provided by a business partner, families can sign up for a live game show—this year’s exciting contests included Family Feud, Minute to Win It, and Jeopardy! Teacher teams also compete and the crowd enjoys every minute of this spirited fun. Giant versions of games like pickup sticks, checkers, and Twister are available for families to play. Bingo, face painting and an obstacle course also entertain children and parents.

To encourage more parent participation with the PTO’s efforts throughout the year, each household receives a Family Bingo Card. When their card is filled by completing parent involvement activities such as Visit a Business Partner, Give PTO an Hour of Your Time, Have a Game Night at Home, and more, they are entered in a drawing for a special family package at the end of the year.

Teachers are included in this fun-filled year, too! PTO created a Durbinopoly Game for teachers with the goal of owning all the properties on the board. Once the teacher owns all properties which can be purchased by completing such tasks as Attending a Spirit Night, or Getting a Parent to Attend a PTO Meeting—the teacher is eligible to win an Apple iPad for their classroom.

From an adults-only Casino Night, to game-themed school year calendars and first-day folders, this project aims to include families in the FUN of building familial and community relationships with the school serving as the center.

Grade Levels: K-5

Budget: \$3,000

Parents Served: 1,500

Students Served: 860

ALACHUA COUNTY

Homework Workstation Helper

Newberry Elementary School

25705 SW 15th Avenue
Newberry, Florida 32669
Program Contact: Renee Buckland
Phone: 352-472-1100

Mission: *To prepare students with at-home homework tools to increase academic performance.*

Research has shown that students have greater success completing homework when they have a dedicated space in which to work. The Homework Workstation Helper is a community outreach program that provides parents with resources for creating this kind of workstation for their children to use at home.

Parents are invited to a make-and-take evening. During the first half of the evening, teachers share the school’s homework policy, homework resources and hands-on math and reading strategies for parents to use with their children. During the second half of the event, parents can make a homework workstation for their student to use at home. Each station—constructed from a tri-fold board cut in half—has pencils, erasers, a highlighter, crayons, post-it notes, a to do list, clothespins, Velcro dots to hold homework assignments and reading logs, lined paper and a ruler. Parents personalize the board for their children and learn how to best utilize the workstation at home.

Grade Levels: K-4
Budget: \$331
Parents Served: 30
Students: 30

.....
COLUMBIA COUNTY

Westside Elementary Community Fall Festival

Westside Elementary School

1956 SW County Road 252B
Lake City, Florida 32024
Program Contact: Janice Camp
Phone: 386-755-8280

Mission: *To involve the whole community in a fun-filled night in an effort to raise funds for the school.*

While the Community Fall Festival acts as an alternative to the standard school fundraiser, it also gives parents and community members a low-key way to get to know the school, its staff and other parents, which will hopefully encourage more parents and community partners to get involved in school operations. The day begins with a Fun Run for everyone in the community. Immediately after, the Fall Festival opens with grade-level-designed games, booths and activities. Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation, Florida Highway Patrol and other community partners hand out information and sponsor activities at their interactive booths. Food donated by local restaurants and businesses is available for purchase. Also, students and parents can

purchase or win reward tickets, which offer fun incentives like popsicles for an entire class, or a reserved parking space for a month.

Grade Levels: K-5
Budget: \$500
Parents Served: 450
Students: 507

DUVAL COUNTY

Cookies, Cocoa and the Common Core

Dinsmore Elementary School

7126 Civic Club Drive
Jacksonville, Florida 32219
Program Contact: Vicki Drake
Phone: 904-390-2935

Mission: *To give parents a better understanding of the Common Core State Standards.*

This annual event promotes literacy and helps parents develop an understanding of the new Common Core State Standards through a hands-on approach. Over the course of the evening, parents explore different bands of the Common Core Standards that build upon each other from one grade level to the next. After learning about these standards, parents have the opportunity to apply their newfound knowledge by examining real world texts at the book fair. Here, the media specialist displays nonfiction texts that meet the standard explored previously in the evening. This event is not only eye-opening to the parents, allowing them to see what their child will be learning over the course of the year, it also provides children an exciting opportunity to show their parents the hands-on activities and talk with them about books they would like to read.

Grade Levels: K-5
Budget: \$300
Parents Served: 150
Students: 75

NASSAU COUNTY

Bingo for Books

Hilliard Elementary School

27568 Ohio Street
Hilliard, Florida 32046
Program Contact: Sue Vanzant
Phone: 904-845-4471

Mission: *To promote reading as a family activity, extending classroom learning.*

The much-anticipated Bingo for Books is an annual celebration of reading. While giving away thousands of books to students and their families, school staff also educates parents and adult family members about reading with their children for enjoyment. After a free dinner together, families are invited to the media center to browse, discuss and choose books that encompass a wide spectrum of interests and

Region II: Elementary Schools

reading levels. Built into the night’s activities are directed discussions on choosing books suitable for each child’s reading level and interest. The highlight of the evening is, of course, the big bingo game. Staff members pass out bingo cards and chips to all family members and the media assistant gets the bingo ball rolling. When a guest gets bingo, they are awarded with a book slip. The winner then takes the book slip to the library, where the prize books are displayed, and exchanges the slip for a book of his or her choosing.

Grade Levels: PreK-5
Budget: \$4,745
Parents Served: 253
Students: 456

.....
UNION COUNTY

Tiger Up Morning Mile
Lake Butler Elementary School

800 SW 6th Street
Lake Butler, Florida 32054
Program Contact: Amy Britt
Phone: 386-496-3047

Mission: *To promote healthy lifestyle choices with students and their families.*

For four years now, the Tiger Up Morning Mile provides the entire community with an opportunity to improve physical fitness by opening its track to everyone for the first 20 minutes of each school day. Parents and community members come each day to walk with students and to volunteer to stamp children’s cards. Students keep track of their mileage by getting a card stamped for each quarter mile lap they complete. Records are kept for individual students and classes, and milestones are celebrated at honor roll assemblies and in local newspaper articles. At assemblies, students earn prizes for the number of miles they have walked. Partners also donate a variety of items that help students track their new healthy habits, including exercise log books, bicycle helmets and pedometers. In addition to supporting school improvement goals and healthy habits for students, the morning walk routine helps to channel students’ energy and get their blood pumping each day before classes begin.

Grade Levels: 1-4
Budget: \$0
Parents Served: 7
Students: 693

REGIONAL WINNER

DUVAL COUNTY

Election: The American Experience

Matthew W. Gilbert Middle School

1424 Franklin Street

Jacksonville, Florida 32206

Contact Person: Patricia Leifer-Hayes

Phone: 904-630-6700

Mission: *To educate our students and to reach out to our parents and community.*

Election: The American Experience is the focal point of a school-wide program that brings civics lessons to life for students, and serves as a link to connect with parents and the larger community. Starting in September, students learn election history and facts via the morning announcements. Each week, prizes are given to students who can answer the election question of the week. Student government elections are a substantial part of this endeavor. Students interested in running for a position complete applications and undergo interviews. Eligible candidates then learn the art of campaigning and communicating their ideas via posters, speeches and presentations. They also campaign at the local public library branch, which provides space for their campaign materials.

All students register to vote as Election Day draws near. On Election Day, classes are escorted to the media center where they must show identification to the pollsters and have their names checked to see if they are registered. After casting their ballot, voters receive an "I Voted" sticker.

That evening, families are invited to the school for a community-wide celebration. Student government candidates present their stump speeches via video. Everyone sits down to an "All-American Meal" of hot dogs, hamburgers and apple pie. After dinner, the principal and student government advisor announce the results of the student government elections. The young leaders present their acceptance speeches to conclude the evening and inspire the community to believe that their futures are secure under their leadership.

Grade Levels: 6-8

Budget: \$1,698.

Parents Served: 80

Students Served: 570

CITRUS COUNTY

Box Tops and Coupons for a New Playground

Citrus Resource for Exceptional Students in Transition (CREST)

2600 Panther Pride Way

Lecanto, Florida 34461

Program Contact: Susan Castorina

Phone: 352-527-0303

Mission: *To provide equipment for an all handicapped accessible playground.*

Because Citrus CREST exclusively serves students with various, and sometimes multiple-disabilities, having play equipment that is appropriate and accessible for all students is absolutely essential. Most recently, the School Advisory and Enhancement Committee decided that more equipment suitable for severely handicapped and wheelchair bound students was needed. Unfortunately, due to its expensive nature, recreational equipment often must be purchased with supplemental funds. The school uses Box Tops for Education to fund its play equipment. While just \$204 was raised through this process in previous years, with the encouragement of the SAEC and a few dedicated volunteers, this year's collection drive is on track to raise over \$1,100. The great success is attributed to the campaign leader who spearheads an awareness campaign. School families are provided flyers and messages to send to friends and family, requesting Box Top donations. Collection boxes are placed in prominent businesses and restaurants throughout the community to gather more donations.

Grade Levels: Birth – age 22

Budget: \$0

Parents Served: All

Students: All

.....

NASSAU COUNTY

Stars, Stories, & Science Event: Astronomy Event

Callahan Middle School

450121 Old Dixie Highway

Callahan, Florida 32011

Program Contact: Monica Wright

Phone: 904-879-3606

Mission: *To stimulate student and parent/community interest in science awareness..*

This all-star evening, held in conjunction with the annual science fair, celebrates students who enter projects in a variety of scientific areas. During a public display of the projects, parents can circulate and view student work while judges score each project based on creativity, scientific thought, understanding, workmanship and clarity. Awards are given to students who place in each scientific content area. In addition, the Northeast Florida Astrological Society brings several high-powered telescopes, giving families an up-close view of the night sky. This exciting opportunity is often the students' first time seeing the stars in such detail.

Grade Levels: 6-8

Budget: \$700

Parents Served: All
Students: All

.....
ST. JOHNS COUNTY

Theatre Boosters Association

Bartram Trail High School

7399 Longleaf Pine Parkway
St. Johns, Florida 32259
Program Contact: Kathie May
Phone: 904-547-8340 x22574

Mission: *To promote a relationship among students, parents, school and community to support the school's theater and International Thespian Society, encourage theatrical training of students, educate the local community with theater performances, and provide volunteer and financial support.*

Since its inception, the Theatre Boosters Association has striven to foster an environment of acceptance, involvement and success in which all theater students can thrive. This group of dedicated volunteers ensures that students can focus their efforts on developing their performing skills by providing effective marketing strategies for each performance and by organizing the financial and logistical aspects of the International Thespian Society (ITS).

One of the most important roles of the booster association is to market all of the ITS performances. Thanks to effective communication which targets feeder schools, retirement communities, and local business partners, the most recent productions have been mostly sold-out! Their successful fundraising events include a "Night of One Acts," which specifically garners interest from incoming freshman. Every student who auditions is guaranteed a part, and the senior students direct the one-act plays. Boosters also encourage staff, student and community involvement, drawing people into the "behind the scenes" work which enables each show to go on.

Grade Levels: 9-12
Budget: \$6,600
Parents Served: 75
Students: 125

REGIONAL WINNER

BREVARD COUNTY

Trailblazer Jamborees

Sabal Elementary School

1401 N Wickham Road

Melbourne, Florida 32935

Contact Person: Dianna Hetzel and Gevonne Blum

Phone: 321-254-7261

Mission: *To actively involve parents in the educational process of their children.*

A clever solution to promote parent involvement, Trailblazer Jamborees, enable parents to demonstrate the benefits of lifelong learning to their kids while honing their own skills and interests. Each Jamboree offers 3 to 6 "jam sessions," during which parents can learn about any number of topics. Before the event, parents receive a course catalog to peruse prior to the event in order to identify the sessions they would like to attend the evening of the Jamboree.

All jam sessions are ultimately centered on strategies that ensure the success of children at home and at school. Session topics include FCAT prep, reading with children at home to improve comprehension, helping students with homework, understanding Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), and helping students with special education needs. Some sessions are presentations while others offer hands-on activities. All sessions have a home/school connection that parents can utilize with their kids at home.

One of the most important parts of these events is the parent feedback. Each Jamboree is carefully planned and scheduled with parent wishes and needs in mind. Surveys, exit slips and emails ask parents for suggestions for upcoming Jamborees and jam sessions. Teachers and school staff enjoy planning the events since they know parents are eager to attend and parents look forward to tips and ideas about topics they've requested. Parent involvement has increased significantly since instituting the Jamborees!

Grade Levels: PreK-6

Budget: \$1,000

Parents Served: 450

Students Served: 603

LAKE COUNTY

Family Resource Room

Sawgrass Bay Elementary School

16325 Superior Boulevard
 Clermont, Florida 34714
 Program Contact: Maria Cruz
 Phone: 352-243-1845

Mission: *To provide academic and community resources to students and families, to give them the necessary tools for success in school and beyond.*

The Family Resource Room provides a wealth of educational materials for parents and students to review. The list of resources includes book and periodicals, DVDs and games, computer programs and even laptops. These resources are often not available to families outside of school due to economic hardships. Providing access to such materials gives parents the ability to help their children learn and involves the entire family in the learning process, which makes for a fun and more successful way to improve student achievement.

To motivate students and parents to use the resources provided to them through the Family Resource Room, Sawgrass Bay has developed themed Media Nights held monthly. At these theme nights, families can participate in meaningful academic and craft activities, check out library books, and access additional resources such as student and parent homework help which equips parents with the skills necessary to assist their children at home with their academic studies.

Grade Levels: PreK-5
 Budget: \$1,800
 Parents Served: 1355
 Students: 1277

MARTIN COUNTY

Building the FAWE Community through Events and Communication

Felix A. Williams Elementary School

401 NW Baker Road
 Stuart, Florida 34994
 Program Contact: Daryn Schwartz
 Phone: 772-219-1640

Mission: *To enhance the school community through events and communication.*

A full calendar of events encourages student and parent involvement at school. A father/daughter dance brings together nearly 130 dads, granddads and daughters for an evening of sweet treats and sweet feet. A slew of volunteers handle the setup, the cleanup and serve the attendees throughout the evening. The Family Fall Community Festival welcomes more than 800 students, families, and community members to school for food, games, and family-oriented fun. Later in the year, the mother/son dance brings almost as many folks back to the school's dance floor while three male professional hip hop dancers instruct moms and their boys in the current dance moves. Two family movie nights round out the activities for the year, allowing

Region III: Elementary Schools

students and parents to mingle with faculty and staff and enjoy a film together. Additionally, the "Splash Flash," a bimonthly electronic newsletter, introduces parents to upcoming events and opportunities. A new volunteer website and parent/administrator mixer allows family members multiple opportunities to engage in the school's conversation around success and involvement.

Grade Levels: K-5
Budget: \$0
Parents Served: 531
Students: 655

.....
OSCEOLA COUNTY

Cultures of Orange Island Mardi Gras Style
Four Corners Charter School

9100 Teacher Lane
Davenport, Florida 33897
Program Contact: Kenneth Toppins
Phone: 407-787-4300

Mission: *To include parents and students in learning about Florida.*

This program tries to make learning exciting for both students and their families by involving everyone in a school-wide parade of Florida culture. Each teacher seeks the help of at least two parents to help create costumes for the children to wear in the parade. These costumes showcase what each grade learns about Florida during the year. For example, kindergarteners learn about Florida flowers, while 1st graders learn about Florida butterflies. Middle school students focus on the explorers who visited Florida, while 4th and 5th graders represent the first settlers. As each grade marches in the parade, they present what they learned throughout the year.

Parents work alongside staff to organize the parade and create booths for the children to visit afterwards. All parents have an opportunity to get involved, whether as part of the planning team or by painting faces, creating masks, making costumes, or staffing the event booths.

Grade Levels: K-8
Budget: \$900
Parents Served: 250
Students: 1,050

.....
ST. LUCIE COUNTY

Mariposa Family Math Night
Mariposa Elementary School

2620 SE Mariposa Avenue
Port Saint Lucie, Florida 35952
Program Contact: Teresa MacInnes
Phone: 772-337-5960

Mission: *To promote high student achievement by providing support and resources through a unified system that involves all school stakeholders.*

Family Math Night connects parents with the classroom by giving them a glimpse of the daily math curriculum and by allowing students to share what they know about math with their families. After a free spaghetti dinner, families circulate around the various math zones set up around the cafeteria. Each grade has its own area, and the activities at each station are interesting and hands on. Families can work on tangram puzzles, patterning activities, problem solving and other engaging inquiry-based fun math activities. Students are encouraged to “take charge” at each station. So, they can have “Math Talk” with their parents and demonstrate how to complete each activity. At the end of the evening, families are given a math packet which provides a list of simple math activities for families to do together at home, resources for extra math help, and a compilation of children’s books that deal with math.

Grade Levels: PreK-5
Budget: \$970
Parents Served: 800
Students: 800

.....

SEMINOLE COUNTY

Spring Arts Festival

Lake Mary Elementary School

132 S Country Club Road
Lake Mary, Florida 32746
Program Contact: Meredith Aziz
Phone: 407-320-5650

Mission: *To bring together school, family and community while having a great time.*

The Spring Arts Festival is a school-wide event where parents, students and the community come to enjoy games, food and fun while viewing student artwork. Each student at school has a piece of art on display for the art show. Students present their work and explain what they have learned about the history and techniques of art. Community business partners run games and donate gifts for raffles during the festival. The event allows parents and school staff to get to know each other in a friendly, informal setting.

Grade Levels: PreK-5
Budget: \$2,500
Parents Served: 400
Students: 600

.....

VOLUSIA COUNTY

Math-O-Fun Night

Cypress Creek Elementary School

6100 S Williamson Boulevard
Port Orange, Florida 32128
Program Contact: Sandy Russell
Phone: 386-322-6101, ext. 39406

Mission: *To educate parents and families on new Common Core math standards while having fun.*

Region III: Elementary Schools

Common Core State Standards represent significant, widespread educational reform that aims to prepare students to thrive at college and in a career. Math-O-Fun Night is an evening of collaboration that teaches families about the eight Standards for Mathematical Practice using manipulatives and games. After an overview and Q&A session about the Common Core State Standards, families rotate through eight classrooms with a different Mathematical Practice focus across grade levels in each room. The teachers model games and classroom strategies while providing questioning techniques for parents to use at home. Teachers also help parents see how to adjust the game/strategy across grade levels and how to help challenge their students. Community partners and some volunteer parents create and distribute goody bags to parents at the end of the night. Each bag contains games, directions, question stems, manipulatives, and literature about the Common Core State Standards.

Grade Levels: K-5

Budget: \$800

Parents Served: 300

Students: 390

REGIONAL WINNER

OSCEOLA COUNTY

Pride Parent

Celebration K-8 School

510 Campus Street

Celebration, Florida 34747

Contact Person: Amita Shah and Patty Delaney

Phone: 407-566-2300

Mission: *To enhance the school environment for all students, staff and parents.*

Pride Parent is a collection of classroom parents who work as liaisons between the teacher and other parents in the class regarding classroom activities, trips, special activities and other teacher requests.

Pride Parents also help organize other parents for school-wide volunteer opportunities, including: (1) the Spirit Closet, which recycles school uniforms for students who need new ones; (2) the national Recycle Bowl competition, which increases student awareness of recycling (the school has won two years in a row!); (3) the fall walk-a-thon and spring talent showcase fundraisers; and (4) Bookmark Buddies, which helps to increase face-to-face reading time for 3rd graders identified as needing extra help.

The year kicks off with a breakfast meeting at a local restaurant. Parents are invited to discuss the county volunteering guidelines and protocol and are given an opportunity to mingle and meet other parents and administrators from the school in a relaxed, fun atmosphere. Administrators also provide parents with folders that include PTA contact information, ways to earn money for the school and ways to volunteer.

While many schools have room parents, this program is unique in that it empowers parents to engage other parents in school service and correlates the interests of the volunteer with the needs of the school. For example, parents who enjoy working one-on-one with students are tapped as Bookmark buddies while a parent with a flair for talent can help with the Spring Student Talent Showcase. Thanks to Pride Parents, all parents are leveraged to help as much as they are able, in order to serve the school and its students.

Grade Levels: K-8

Budget: \$500

Parents Served: 50

Students Served: 1,275

BREVARD COUNTY

West Shore's Fine Arts Theatre Booster Club

West Shore Junior Senior High School

250 Wildcat Alley

Melbourne, Florida 32935

Program Contact: Maureen Fallon and Kathi Heller

Phone: 321-242-4730

Mission: *To support the school's theatre arts program.*

Theatre arts enrich students' intellectual development, academic achievement, and creative expression. The Theatre Booster Club helps to ensure that students can enjoy these perks and not get bogged down in fundraising. The Booster Club also organizes volunteer efforts to create the sets, costumes and programs necessary for successful theatrical productions. Various fundraisers support the program during the year. Boosters sell mattresses, concessions during show intermissions, photographs, car decals, show tickets, and host a car wash. These activities doubled the theater program's budget for the year. The booster club also created a website to keep all participants—students and adult volunteers alike—fully involved and up to date. This site lists volunteer needs, information about auditions, costumes, practice schedules and upcoming productions.

Grade Levels: 7-12

Budget: \$5,000

Parents Served: 1,200

Students: 150

ST. LUCIE COUNTY

Take the Lead and Read

Northport K-8 School

250 NW Floresta Drive

Port St. Lucie, Florida 34983

Program Contact: Lynne C. Gruszka

Phone: 772-340-4750

Mission: *To provide enrichment for the Northport literacy initiative by bringing parents into the equation.*

The Take the Lead and Read program provides a powerful scaffolding tool that brings parents, grandparents, district personnel, community partners—such as the Veteran Partners in Education, Northport PTO, the 21st Century Community Learning Center afterschool program and Waggin' Tales Reading Therapy Dogs—into all classrooms to provide literacy support and enrichment. The program gives the community the opportunity to model good reading skills and fluency, as well as to introduce words and share connections in text-to-text, text-to-self, and text-to-world settings. The program also offers opportunities for parent training on how to best assist their own children. A variety of fun activities—including a grand kickoff, Community Reading Day, Bingo For Books, dinners and FCAT strategy training—round out the program and encourages collaboration between families, the community, and the school.

Grade Levels: K-8

Budget: \$0

Parents Served: All

Students: 1,272

SEMINOLE COUNTY**The Wizard of Oz FCAT Games****Milwee Middle School**

1341 Ronald Reagan Boulevard

Longwood, Florida 32750

Program Contact: Marsha Geary and Connie Phillips

Phone: 407-746-3840

Mission: *To motivate and engage students in reading.*

Set over 10 weeks, the FCAT Games unite the school in reading *The Wizard of Oz*. After viewing a clip from the movie, reading a chapter summary, and listening to a short excerpt from the book, students must answer an FCAT benchmark question on a ballot. Teachers collect ballots, and correct answers are submitted for a school-wide prize drawing. Prizes—including tickets to Oz, the Great and Powerful and paperback copies of *The Wizard of Oz*—are drawn each Friday. The strength of the project is the weekly exposure to FCAT reading benchmarks through a high interest activity. The shared discussion of correct answers to the higher level thinking questions add focus and enthusiasm to learning and reviewing for the assessment.

Grade Levels: 6-8

Budget: \$2,500

Parents Served: 100

Students: 1280

VOLUSIA COUNTY**Opening the Doors: One School's Journey to Increasing Shareholder Involvement****T. DeWitt Taylor Middle-High School**

100 E Washington Avenue

Pierson, Florida 32180

Program Contact: ShariLou McConnell

Phone: 386-749-6800

Mission: *To encourage a climate in which the involvement of families, community members, teachers and students is based upon a cooperative working relationship free from barriers.*

In informal workshop settings, parents and students learn about middle school promotion requirements, bullying prevention, high school graduation requirements and navigating the road to college. Families also learn about policies on grade point averages, honor roll, incomplete and non-passing grades, the online grade book and tutoring contacts. All information is shared in both English and Spanish, which is critical since more than half the students consider English as their second language. This engagement event kicks off the school year, opening the school doors to parents and students. It requires collaboration among various school and community partners and offers parents critical information regarding their children's success. Parents appreciate the opportunity to connect with school faculty and staff prior to the start of the school year, and all participants report positive outcomes thanks to this sharing of information.

Grade Levels: 6-12

Budget: \$200

Parents Served: 350

Students: 225

REGIONAL WINNER

COLLIER COUNTY

Community Outreach Night

Poinciana Elementary School

2825 Airport Road

Naples, Florida 34105

Program Contact: Elena Correa

Phone: 239-377-8100

Mission: *To promote family involvement through evening events held in the neighborhoods of the families.*

When parents can't come to the school, the school must come to the parents! This is the philosophy of Community Outreach Night, which takes all the essential elements of a school-based parent night, on the road. Since most families must take public transportation to reach the school, which limits the number of parents who attend events at school, faculty and staff commit to traveling to more than 50 parents for these events.

Faculty and staff volunteers bring donated clothes, food and supplies to the Community Outreach Nights. School staff members present mini-workshops, offering tips and ideas to support parents with their child's learning. Donated school supplies supplement their discussions, and parents are grateful for the resources which equip their children to succeed in school.

Volunteer opportunities at the school are shared with parents and family members, including serving on the School Advisory Committee. Staff members also discuss the chance to work with neighborhood organizations, such as local daycare facilities and the neighborhood association. Parents can learn about adult education classes and how to enroll if they are interested.

The semi-annual event is always a success, thanks largely to a number of local partners including daycares, non-profits who donate meals, and local neighborhood associations. Thanks to this parent-focused outreach, parent involvement has increased at school events over the course of the year.

Grade Levels: PreK-5

Budget: \$200-500 in donations

Parents Served: 50

Students Served: 110

DESOTO COUNTY**Leader In Me Parent Night****Nocatee Elementary School**

4846 SW Shores Avenue

Arcadia, Florida 34266

Program Contact: Aida Schomburg

Phone: 863-494-4511

Mission: *To instill leadership qualities in all students in preparation for life in the 21st century.*

During this year-long program, students, their families, school faculty and community members collectively learn the Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. These habits develop leadership, speaking and decision-making skills, and help prepare students for life in the 21st century. Student speakers introduce each habit to parents and community members, illustrating each concept with posters. Students share not only their understanding of these leadership skills, but how they use them in their lives every day. This philosophy is a daily part of the school environment, and teaching the concepts to parents and the community ensures that students hear the Seven Habits language both at home as well as at school.

Grade Levels: K-5

Budget: \$0

Parents Served: 145

Students: 295

HERNANDO COUNTY**Dr. Suess' Birthday Bash****Pine Grove Elementary School**

14411 Ken Austin Parkway

Brooksville, Florida 34613

Program Contact: Nancy Hurst

Phone: 352-797-7090

Mission: *To increase parent involvement and promote family literacy by emphasizing our students' love of reading.*

Dr. Seuss' Birthday Bash is an annual, school-wide event that invites families to experience reading in a fun and exciting way while promoting literacy in the home environment. The evening event begins with students receiving their passport to literacy, highlighting stations that focus on Dr. Seuss books. Each station is run by a "Seussy" reader from the community, including middle and high school student volunteers. After reading the book at the station, students engage in literacy activities that encourage reading outside the school environment. By far, the most popular station is the Supervisor of Election's booth where parents and students use ballots and voting machines to vote for their favorite book. Students can enter completed passports into a drawing for impressive prizes, including literacy baskets full of books and a home computer donated by community partners.

Grade Levels: PreK-5

Budget: \$100

Parents Served: 140

Students: 190

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

Foster's Family FCAT Jeopardy Night

Foster Elementary School

2014 E Diana Street

Tampa, Florida 33610

Program Contact: Brittany Podsobinski and Joe Ratasky

Phone: 813-276-5573

Mission: *To empower and equip parents with strategies for supporting their student at home.*

The Family FCAT Jeopardy Night provides FCAT information to parents, including strategies to enhance student learning in a family-friendly environment. During the event, students and parents work together to answer FCAT-type questions. After a short information session, families join together to form teams, answer questions, and have their answers scored by judges. Teachers give the right answer and briefly explain the rationale. Winners receive educational learning games, and all parties leave with a better understanding of the test's format and challenges.

Grade Levels: 3-5

Budget: \$50

Parents Served: 70

Students: 121

.....

LEE COUNTY

Family Math Night

Orange River Elementary School

4501 Underwood Drive

Ft. Myers, Florida 33905

Program Contact: Holly Bell, Tammy Scott and Dave Crawford

Phone: 239-694-1258

Mission: *To teach families how to play games at home to improve math skills and make learning fun.*

This event teaches families to play—and learn—together! After enjoying a meal cooked by staff members, each family receives a math packet with directions and samples of exciting math games and activities. Directions are also provided in Spanish as the majority of families are Hispanic. Families rotate through 24 different centers in the media center, cafeteria and school walkways for an hour and a half. Teachers explain the directions and play along with families at each station. Teachers report specific evidence of how the Math Family Night makes a positive impact on their classrooms.

Grade Levels: PreK-5

Budget: \$700

Parents Served: 150

Students: 400

PASCO COUNTY

Family Math Breakfasts

James M. Marlowe Elementary School

5642 Cecelia Drive

New Port Richey, Florida 34652

Program Contact: Linda Blake

Phone: 727-774-8600

Mission: *To provide guidance for families to help their children succeed in math.*

Grade-level Family Math Breakfasts give parents the opportunity to spend time with their children while learning to play math games that require computation and higher-order thinking. Each grade has its own event so families can focus on the standards and skills applicable for that level. For example, since second graders are expected to learn about time and money, the goody bag for the second grade math breakfast includes a “clock” and “money” to use. After sharing a meal and having fun together, families can take the games home for continued use. As the regular school day begins and kids go to classes, parents are invited to stay for an informational session about state math standards. Childcare is provided so all parents can attend all the appropriate breakfasts with their children.

Grade Levels: K-5

Budget: \$300

Parents Served: 150

Students: 90

POLK COUNTY

Red, White, Blue... and YOU!

R. Bruce Wagner Elementary School

5500 Yates Road

Lakeland, Florida 33811

Program Contact: Kim Mayes

Phone: 863-701-1450

Mission: *To encourage and educate students to be responsible citizens.*

In an effort to make citizenship lessons tangible for elementary students, Red, White, Blue...and YOU! encompasses a number of activities, including a school-wide election and Patriotic Family Night. The first evening brings families to school to vote in a virtual presidential election. The results are tabulated and announced the following morning. That evening, Patriotic Family Night provides families with a variety of activities, including Dollar Dinners, a book fair with patriotic themes and academic enrichment stations to give parents a chance to learn together with their children. The academic stations—reading, writing, math, art, social studies and technology—are each supervised by two teachers who provide directions and feedback as families put “The Star Spangled Banner” in the proper sequence, write acrostic poems using the letters of their favorite candidate’s name, graph the results of the school’s election, make beaded voting bracelets, answer questions about an electoral college map, and complete an online White House scavenger hunt. Parents are also provided with a variety of books and resources to use at home with their children to further encourage learning about citizenship.

Region IV: Elementary Schools

Grade Levels: PreK-5
Budget: \$6,165
Parents Served: 60
Students: 150

.....
SARASOTA COUNTY

Community Garden
Englewood Elementary School

150 N McCall Road
Englewood, Florida 34233
Program Contact: Mark Grossenbacher
Phone: 941-474-3247

Mission: *To promote student academic gains, parent involvement and student behavioral gains through a collaborative project.*

The Community Garden project is designed to bring students, parents, staff and the community together to integrate content-specific learning for all grade levels with the goals of increasing students' academic, social and behavioral achievement. This project positively impacts student learning by integrating all core curriculum areas and providing inquiry-based lessons supported by parents and community partners. Through this project, students partner with their teachers and parents under the guidance of more than eleven community partners—including local garden clubs, Home Depot, nurseries, farmer's markets and more—to organically plant, grow and harvest a variety of vegetables, herbs and fruit. Each grade level and content area has its own plot inside the garden and everyone works together to size and build the plots, replace old soil, and install an irrigation system. Students and parents enjoy meals together from the garden throughout the year and monitor its growth and progress.

Grade Levels: K-5
Budget: \$3,000
Parents Served: 350
Students: 424

Region IV

MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL

REGIONAL WINNER

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

"The Cube" – College and Career Center

T.R. Robinson High School

6311 S Lois Avenue

Tampa, Florida 33616

Program Contact: Barbara Simmons and Meg Hernandez

Phone: 813-272-3006

Mission: *To help students develop a concrete plan during their junior and senior years, so they can successfully transition to postsecondary options (college, military, technical school, etc.).*

The goal of the CUBE—which stands for College and Career Center (the letter C cubed)—is to help students develop concrete plans for their postsecondary futures and assist them in meeting the benchmarks on the way to their goals. In the CUBE, parent volunteers meet with any student who stops by and discusses their future goals and aspirations. Some students set up college visits and apply for scholarships, some discuss career centers or technical schools, and others need help signing up for the SAT. Advice and assistance is tailored to each student's individual needs, wishes and circumstances. Students who are interested in attending a four-year college are provided with tips for completing college applications and applying for scholarships, while students who want to be certified through a technical school are provided information on quality, low-cost options and are shown how to apply for federal student aid and grants. CUBE volunteers are responsible for two key tasks—helping students sign up for the Bright Futures Scholarship and helping juniors sign up for the SAT if they are eligible for the free waiver.

Parent volunteers are on campus three days a week. When parent volunteers are not present, the college and career counselor is available at select times in the CUBE. Since opening last year, more than 150 students have come in for a formal session with a volunteer or the counselor. Students leave these sessions with a folder full of information and personalized next steps for achieving their postsecondary goals.

Grade Levels: 9-12

Budget: \$1,500

Parents Served: 7

Students Served: Over 150

COLLIER COUNTY

New Year, New You!

Manatee Middle School

1920 Manatee Road
Naples, Florida 34114
Program Contact: George Harvey
Phone: 239-377-4400

Mission: *To emphasize the importance of family fitness and healthy eating.*

New Year, New You! encourages families to resolve to eat healthier and exercise more. Families enjoy a whole wheat pasta dinner alongside healthy taste-testing items such as Asian pears, star fruits, kiwi, pomegranate and broccolini. Additionally, there are a plethora of fitness activities available over the course of the evening, including hula hooping, sit-up contests, basketball shoot-outs and free throwing, dancing and jump roping. In addition to the physical activities, cosmetology students from a local vocational technical school give manicures and relaxing massages. The medical community donates dental items to families, and the University of Florida Nutrition Program has a fun "Wheel of Nutrition" game for people of all ages. This evening of health and fitness helps families commit to a healthier lifestyle.

Grade Levels: 6-8
Budget: \$3,400
Parents Served: 170
Students: 170

.....

HERNANDO COUNTY

Ethnic Food Festival

Powell Middle School

4100 Barclay Avenue
Brooksville, Florida 34609
Program Contact: Luz Bauzo and Deana Walker
Phone: 352-797-7095

Mission: *To involve the community and parents in students' education through cultural awareness and celebration.*

Hosted by the school's Spanish classes, the Ethnic Food Festival draws upon school and community partners to provide a fun, engaging atmosphere for all participants. The school's string players, dance troupe and band perform throughout the event. Parents choose what dish they want to make and volunteer their time to prepare and serve food for the festival. All participants have a great time enjoying the sights, sounds and tastes of different cultures.

Grade Levels: 6-8
Budget: \$0
Parents Served: 0
Students: 150

LEE COUNTY

Learning Beyond the Classroom Walls

Fort Myers Middle Academy

3050 Central Avenue
Fort Myers, Florida 33901
Program Contact: Bob Scallan
Phone: 239-936-1759

Mission: *To foster a learning relationship between parents and their children by engaging them in hands-on activities together.*

This event combines a number of focus areas: student motivation, academic success, career awareness, music recital and dance performance. Upon arrival, parents serve as a juried audience that listens to woodwind and brass instrument music recitals. Afterwards, parents and children have their picture taken by students who have expressed an interest in a career in photography and have received instruction from a professional photographer. Students interested in culinary arts prepare the dinner and wait on guests during the meal. During dinner, the dance team entertains guests and a featured guest speaker—a former student—shares her stories of entrepreneurial success creating her own business and encourages students to focus on education, decision making and goal setting. At the end of the evening, parents and students are given ceramic tiles and markers, and collaborate to establish three goals: one to be reached by the end of middle school; one to accomplish by the end of high school; and one to strive for beyond high school. The tile is a souvenir to remind each student of the evening and to serve as a daily reminder of their goals.

Grade Levels: 6-8
Budget: \$80
Parents Served: 88
Students: 52

PINELLAS COUNTY

Fourth Annual College and Career Fair

Countryside High School

3000 State Road 580
Clearwater, Florida 33710
Program Contact: Jane J. Hussar
Phone: 727-725-7956 x2039

Mission: *To provide families with the tools and instructions needed to ensure student success.*

The Fourth Annual College and Career Fair sets itself apart from similar events throughout the state by opening its doors to students and their adult family members alike. More than 120 exhibitors—including colleges and universities, vocational technical schools, military branches, nonprofit organizations, and professionals secured by the local Chamber of Commerce—interact with the community, sharing opportunities, career paths, and next steps toward a secure and rewarding future. Fees charged to each exhibitor pay for the cost of the fair and allow the school to award a \$1,000 scholarship to a graduating senior.

Grade Levels: 9-12
Budget: \$2,232
Parents Served: 350
Students: 450

REGIONAL WINNER

BROWARD COUNTY

Everyone Counts Family Program

Castle Hill Elementary School

2640 NW 46th Avenue

Lauderhill, Florida 33313

Program Contact: Leticia Ingram-Phillips

Phone: 754-322-5600

Mission: *To educate parents and motivate students to develop a passion for reading, math, and science and to build positive parent-student-school relationships.*

The Everyone Counts Family Program believes in building strong and lasting relationships with parents, students and community partners. Three major annual events focus on academics, fitness and health, and provide important information to families in a fun format.

Families attending the “Under the Big Top” math night are amused by the carnival-themed evening and events. This all-star evening offers mini math workshops for parents and provides them with resources to use at home with their children. Parents learn about math games, watch their children perform math-related dances and songs, eat dinner together and leave to practice math together at home.

The All-Star Reading night presents teachers decked out as their favorite storybook characters. After character read-alouds, students interact with e-book stories, play educational games on the Game Party Truck, and apply for library cards with volunteers from the Lauderhill Mall Library. While students lose themselves in their books, parents attend workshops on how to ask their children questions while reading and how to help them become proficient readers. Books and prizes are given away throughout the night. Families can also purchase books through the Book Fair before sitting down to dinner together.

Rock and Roll is the order of the evening during Science Rocks. For this rollicking event, the Museum of Discovery and Science constructs twenty stations full of fun projects, problems and science information. Teachers and parent volunteers don lab coats and facilitate the stations as students learn, play and collaboratively find answers to tricky questions at each station. Parents receive science resources and literacy information, as well as a list of questions to ask their children at home.

Grade Levels: K-5

Budget: \$900

Parents Served: 300

Students Served: 420

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY**All For One****William Lehman Elementary School**

10990 SW 113 Place

Miami, Florida 33176

Program Contact: Angela Lozano

Phone: 305-273-2140

Mission: *To promote student achievement through family involvement.*

In a year of educational cutbacks and economic stress, this PTA brainstormed the theme of “All For One” to demonstrate to the entire community that the school staff and families are working together to help students achieve academic success. Throughout the year, more than nine PTA-sponsored events bring families together to learn about ways to maximize their students’ potential and success and to foster a strong community. Ice cream socials, volunteer breakfasts, frequent family pizza and skating nights, a grandparent celebration, collection drives for needy families, parent/child breakfasts and lunches, a holiday shop and a Valentine’s Day balloon sale allow all students and their parents valuable and fun time together.

Grade Levels: PreK-5

Budget: \$1,000

Parents Served: 850

Students: 600

PALM BEACH COUNTY**Scientist and Mathematician of the Month****Poinciana STEM Elementary Magnet School**

1203 N Seacrest Boulevard

Boynton Beach, Florida 33435

Program Contact: Gwen Harris

Phone: 561-739-5700

Mission: *To provide an opportunity to reward all students for improvement and effort instead of only those who can achieve honor roll.*

While it’s important to recognize academic achievements, many children who are working toward academic success are left out of traditional honor rolls and reward programs. The Scientist and Mathematician of the Month program helps to spotlight those students who work hard and demonstrate a desire to learn, whether those traits are reflected in their grades or not. To be nominated to this position, students must show enthusiasm for learning, good citizenship, ethical behavior, a desire for accuracy and have excellent attendance. Each class selects one scientist and one mathematician each month. PTA volunteers photograph each winning student in a lab coat. These photos are displayed outside their classroom and at the entrance to the school for all visitors to see. Students are also recognized at a monthly breakfast to which parents and family members are invited. Each honoree receives a certificate from the principal and a goody bag prepared by the PTA.

Grade Levels: K-5

Budget: \$3,000

Parents Served: All

Students: All

REGIONAL WINNER

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Career Showcase

Suncoast Community High School

1717 Avenue S

Riviera Beach, Florida 33404

Program Contact: Diane Page

Phone: 561-882-3401

Mission: *To guide students as they contemplate their futures and provide them with an opportunity to interact with business leaders.*

“Beginning with the end in mind” helps students create meaning and purpose for their education. Because they believe that a student’s course of study must be personally meaningful, Suncoast teachers and the PTSA organized the first Career Showcase five years ago. The Career Showcase gives students the opportunity to explore possible careers and discover how relevant their courses can (and should) be.

Through the showcase, students learn extensively about various careers by listening to professionals’ presentations and asking well-considered questions. Approximately 150 presenters from over 80 different professions are chosen based on student requests for the various careers. Presenters are grouped by field, stationed at booths or tables and provide display boards, brochures, samples and other visual aids in order to educate students about their particular profession. Especially memorable displays this year included a neurosurgeon’s video of an aneurism operation, as well as a 40 foot windmill at the Florida Power and Light booth!

A parent volunteer-manager ensures a seamless event for all involved. This coordinator organizes other parent volunteers who host the presenters, help them prepare and set up, and provide them with meals that day. Advocacy and community collaboration are integral to this program since specific professionals, whether parents or members of the community, are targeted and recruited in order to meet the goals of the program and requests of the students.

Response to the Career Showcase is overwhelming. Parents equate the event with professional conferences, while a NASA representative has asked to work alongside the school’s committee to create a model for other Florida high schools to follow. Most importantly, students comment on how the showcase has been instrumental in developing their professional interests and in beginning networking relationships with professionals in the field.

Grade Levels: 9-12

Budget: \$6,000

Parents Served: 50

Students Served: 1,600

BROWARD COUNTY**Real Food in the Real World****Rickards Middle School**

6000 NE 9th Avenue
 Oakland Park, Florida 33334
 Program Contact: Dr. Kwan Drake
 Phone: 754-322-4416

Mission: *To increase nutrition awareness and encourage kids and families to embrace and learn from nature.*

This project introduces students to a community garden as a way to promote interest in nature and environmental science. Students design and plan their own class plots, plant the seeds and tend their garden. As plants grow, students measure and calculate the progress. When plants develop into ripe vegetables and herbs, the students proudly pick them for a few purposes. One of the most popular uses is as part of a spaghetti dinner for families—the fresh veggies take the spotlight in a delicious tossed salad. At another parent involvement event during National School Lunch Week, parents are invited to eat lunch with their children as students answer questions about water and nutrition. During the lunch, families enjoy spa water flavored with fresh cucumbers and berries and eat salsa fresh from the garden. A local hospital administrator joins the school staff to host an evening event that same week, speaking about how to prepare low cost, healthy meals.

Grade Levels: 6-8
 Budget: \$800
 Parents Served: 600
 Students: 650

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY**Today's Kids Improving the Environment for a Healthier Tomorrow****Leewood K-8 Center**

10343 SW 124th Street
 Miami, Florida 33176
 Program Contact: Angela Lozano
 Phone: 305-233-7430

Mission: *To promote student interest in the STEM fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.*

Surprisingly, this garden project began with a trip to Everglades National Park to collect water samples. Students analyzed the samples from multiple habitats in the Everglades, calculating the level of phosphates and other pollutants in the water. The students' solution to improving the local water pollution problem led to the planting of a school garden in which they can conduct research on safe, sustainable agricultural practices that do not contain deadly pollutants. The project calls for all students to become active researchers in environmental conservation. Using Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics in this project, students improve critical reasoning and higher order thinking skills. The garden has been featured at

Region V: Middle and High Schools

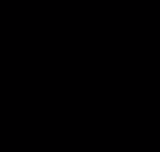
the national level, allowing parents to become active public relations leaders and promoters of the school's innovative environmental projects. Parent involvement is vital as parents lead in-class cooking lessons, participate in engineering activities, document the garden project and reach out to the business community to foster partnerships.

Grade Levels: K-8

Budget: \$1,500

Parents Served: 20

Students: 1,400



Florida Department of Education
www.fldoe.org

This document was revised 12/2013 by the
Bureau of Family and Community Outreach
325 West Gaines Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400
850-245-0847