

ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Ridge Elementary School
Bellevue, Ohio

We've always had a hard time getting parent involvement in our school, so we knew we had to do something fun to make parents want to be more involved in their children's education.

One of the most effective practices in our school, family, and community partnerships program is the ice cream social. We first implemented the activity in the Spring of 1998. We had a great turn out, and the attendance grew even larger the second year when we added a talent show. We also included a PTO meeting at the beginning of the event so our PTO attendance is rising rapidly.

The activity included students and their families, along with the entire school staff and their families. We used funding from the Ohio Partnership grant to purchase ice cream, cups, spoons, and door prizes. We purchased gift certificates at a variety of places: Food Town, Hair One (for a cut), Soak City, and many others. We also received donations from local businesses to add to our door prizes. When the families arrived, they received one ticket per family which they put their name on. We drew for prizes after the talent show.

Auditions for the talent show were held during recess time for approximately two weeks prior to the event. PTO members offered to judge the auditions. Not only did students perform, but parents and staff members performed as well. The talent show was a huge success. There was standing room only.

We plan to continue this very successful practice on a yearly basis. We will also continue to schedule a PTO meeting at the beginning of the ice cream social so that more parents are able to participate in the PTO.

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