
OPEN TECH LAB

Ranch View Elementary School

Naperville, Illinois

Ranch View Elementary School has an exciting new program for students, their families, neighbors, and friends. Ranch View and the School/Family/Community Partnerships Team sponsored an Open Tech Lab, which was open two nights per month from 6-9 p.m. Individuals and families could explore the Internet, become more computer proficient, and/or complete homework assignments in the school's technology lab.

The Open Tech Lab targeted the school improvement goal that Ranch View would use up-to-date technology as a tool and integrate it into everyday learning, allowing all people to be creative and powerful communicators, to improve learning, and to be producers of knowledge.

Throughout the 1999-2000 school year, the Computer Assistant, Ms. Taylor, facilitated the Open Tech Lab. She served as a resource to answer questions and guide the technology users in their use of the computers. We advertised the activity through fliers sent home with Ranch View students, the *Ranch View Review*, and homeowners' association newsletters for neighborhoods in our attendance area. The fliers featured mini-dialogues that got our information across in an entertaining, easy-to-read style.

Attendance records indicate that a diversity of people used the lab including Ranch View families, Ranch View parents, and several community members who are not involved in Ranch View in other ways. The Open Tech Lab succeeded in averaging twelve participants per evening.

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