
A DAD’S CELEBRATION

Madison Junior High School

Naperville, Illinois

Work demands and travel obligations often hinder fathers from developing stronger ties with the school. While brainstorming ways to increase father participation, the idea of A Dad’s Celebration emerged. The parent involvement team wanted an informal interactive event that would encourage fathers and their children to experience aspects of school life.

The committee invited all families to the early Saturday morning breakfast. Interested dads and their children made reservations to attend. Children whose fathers were unable to come could invite another adult male. The committee scheduled the breakfast early in the day so that families could still follow their Saturday routine of activities.

The Blue Grass Strings and Jazz Band arrived in their pajamas to start off A Dad’s Celebration. Families enjoyed a simple continental breakfast, featuring doughnuts donated by Krispy Kreme. After breakfast, dads and their children played together at the tech lab, on the climbing wall, or in a classroom working a lesson together. Staff volunteered their time and talents supervising these activities. District support, donations, and building funds paid for the cost of the event—about \$300.

Approximately 250 people attended A Dad’s Celebration, including divorced fathers who only have weekend visitation rights, a homeless father with his son, and a home-schooled daughter with her father. After the breakfast, more fathers volunteered to chaperone field trips. Providing interactive ways for fathers to be involved in their children’s education elicited a very positive response from everyone.

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