
PAWS FOR READING

Carstens Elementary School

Detroit, Michigan

The Action Team for Partnerships (ATP) at Carstens Elementary School accepted support from the Detroit Tigers Major League Baseball team to demonstrate the importance of reading and to reward individual student's achievement.

The Detroit Tigers sent a letter informing Carstens Elementary about the availability of the Tiger mascot, Paws, for assemblies. The ATP scheduled two assemblies—one for the lower grades and one for the upper grades. The Detroit Tigers provided a script that included the introduction of Paws and a poem called “Casey at Bat.” A fourth-grade male teacher introduced Paws and read the poem. Paws does not speak so he acted out parts of the poem. Carstens school band played music to accompany Paws. After the poem was read, students answered questions about what they had just heard. Paws distributed Detroit Tigers stuffed animals as prizes for correct answers. Students and staff provided very positive feedback about the assemblies.

The Detroit Tigers gave the school Tigers pencils, baseball cards, and pins. The school awarded these souvenirs to each class as additional prizes based on listening well during the reading of the poem and the assembly. Carstens Elementary used some of the souvenirs as raffle prizes for Reading Month; for every book that students read, they were entered into the monthly raffle. The Detroit Tigers also sponsored an attendance contest through which several students attended a baseball game as a reward. Paws was in the area where the students were sitting, which provided nice continuity from the assembly.

Paws will be invited back next year. The cost of \$125 for the assemblies was well worth it. The Detroit Tigers helped support the importance of reading in a motivating way.

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