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## FAMILY INVOLVEMENT BINGO GAMES

### Fairmount Park Elementary School

### Canton, Ohio

Everyone loves the thrill of shouting, “BINGO!!!” Fairmount Park Elementary School took this favorite pastime and adapted it to promote frequent interaction between students and parents focused on literacy. Family Involvement Bingo supported the school improvement goal of reading by sharing family-friendly specific literacy activities with parents. The Bingo games proved to be a fun way to reinforce to students the importance and pleasures of reading in everyday life.

Two Title I staff members and the principal devised the educational Bingo sheets to look like regular Bingo cards with academic activities in the boxes instead of numbers. The Bingo sheets were distributed to all K-5 students on the first school day of each month. Students were to achieve a regular Bingo (horizontal, vertical, or diagonal) by completing at least five activities with a family partner by the end of the month. Each activity was expected to take thirty to forty-five minutes to complete. Examples of activities included:

- Read and follow directions of a recipe to make a special family dessert.
- Write a thank-you note to a community helper (fireman, librarian, police officer, or other helper).
- Create bookmarks about reading.
- Write a list of products you see at a grocery store using the letters A-Z.
- Draw a map and write directions to show how to get from your house to the school.

There were a total of twenty-five activities on each Bingo sheet. Teachers emphasized to students and parents that the activities were to be completed with a family partner, not by the student alone. Students who achieved Bingo for the month received a paperback book as a reward.

Students and families played the Bingo games for four months starting in January. Throughout this time, students expressed that they enjoyed working with their parents; some students brought back worksheets explaining how they did the activities with their family partner. Students learned from the hands-on experiences and shared quality time with their parents on educational activities at home. Parents emphasized that the Bingo games gave them a chance to do some fun learning activities with their children. Parents appreciated the school’s guidance on specific ways they could read and write with their children at home.

The school plans to continue the monthly Family Involvement Bingo. They are considering strategies to gather input from parents, students, and others on new literacy activities to include in the boxes. Fairmount Park Elementary School surely has a winner with its Family Involvement Bingo!

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