
OPEN COURT PARENT WORKSHOPS

Vinedale Elementary School

Sun Valley, California

Camellia Avenue Elementary School

North Hollywood, California

To facilitate parents' understanding of the newly instituted Open Court reading program, Action Teams at two schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District each organized similar workshop series to foster home-school support for students to improve their progress in language arts.

Through discussions with parents, the Action Team for Partnerships at Vinedale identified the need for its Open Court workshop training. The Action Team worked with its reading coach, Parents As Learning Partners facilitator, the Healthy Start Family Advocate, and administrators to craft the subsequent workshop agenda, resources, and materials. All families of students in grades kindergarten through fifth and special education were encouraged to participate in the workshop. To reach out to all families, the team conducted some of the workshop sessions at a local agency site in the community that was closer to students' homes. They also offered the workshop in both the morning and evening to accommodate families' schedules.

At Camellia Avenue Elementary School, the Action Team for Partnerships worked with its two Open Court Coaches to design its workshop series focused on basic reading skills. Camellia Avenue held its workshops on three different days, two days for primary grade parents and one day for upper grade parents. In preparation for the workshops, parents helped assemble packages containing Open Court sound spelling cards, high frequency sight words for each grade, a sample story, and an overview of the workshop in Spanish for the participants to take home. To accommodate Spanish-speaking parents, the coordinator and the parent community representative translated at the workshops.

The Open Court Workshop series at Vinedale and at Camellia Avenue brought parents and school staff together in partnership to make this new language arts program a successful learning experience for students at both schools. Parents were pleased to receive information on ways to help their children at home with the Open Court reading program and with general reading strategies. The schools have since observed that more students are coming to school better prepared to make progress in language arts.

Both schools have plans to expand their workshops next year, focusing on new ways to address transportation and scheduling challenges, and possibly adding math workshops to the series.

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