
FAMILY LITERACY NIGHT

Allen Elementary School

Canton, Ohio

Allen Elementary hosted a family literacy event on the same night as parent-teacher conferences. More than 200 families visited the auditorium to pick up materials that they could use at home with their children to practice Terra Nova proficiency testing skills. Grade-level packets included activities and games focused on literacy skills. Allen's Lead Literacy Specialist and the district Family Involvement Coordinator answered questions and assisted parents in working with their children. The district Family Involvement Coordinator also introduced parents to the Fast Start poetry program for grades kindergarten through two. The Family Literacy Night helped support a school improvement goal of 75% of students passing the Terra Nova proficiency test.

On the night of the event, parents entered the auditorium and were treated to refreshments. The atmosphere was casual so parents felt comfortable to ask questions. Teachers stood at tables with the grade-level packets and encouraged parents to take the materials home to use as remedial or enrichment activities. The packets gave parents the opportunity to see the skills students need to successfully pass the proficiency test. As parents received the packets, they signed their names so the school could keep track of who received what materials. After the event, teachers received the sign-in sheets to see who

needed the packets sent home because they were unable to attend the Family Literacy Night.

All parents, students, and community members were invited to the Family Literacy Night. The Action Team for Partnerships publicized the event on the school's outdoor sign, daily announcements, and the weekly school bulletin sent home to parents. The total cost of the evening was approximately \$1,000. The Ohio Reads Grant covered the costs of the grade-level packets. A donation from the PTA paid for the refreshments.

Family Literacy Night gave students and their parents an opportunity to obtain materials that would help them work together on literacy and test-taking skills at home. Parents were surprised at the number of skills required to pass the test. They commented on how much harder the curriculum was compared to when they attended school. In the future, the Action Team hopes to have a session or maybe a series of mini-sessions to work directly with parents and their children on specific literacy strategies.

*Stephanie L. Patrick, Principal, and
Theresa Mikus, Lead Literacy Specialist*
(330) 453-2782
s_patrick@ccsdistrict.org