

SUPER BOWL FAMILY NIGHT

Willard Central Elementary School Springfield, Missouri

Survey responses indicated that parents wanted more social activities. The physical education teacher came up with the idea of Super Bowl Family Night to be held the Tuesday before the big game. Activities set up in the gym included making and flipping paper footballs, “Silent Football,” cup stacking, measuring footballs, and guessing how many candy footballs were in a jar. While families rotated through the stations, participants’ names were drawn to win prizes. The families also received tickets to redeem for sodas and nachos.

The Action Team for Partnerships publicized the event by sending a flier home with each student and advertising through the district web site, the school newsletter, the student agenda, and word of mouth. During Super Bowl Family Night, Action Team members organized groups as people arrived, facilitated the activities, and helped serve food. Teachers assisted by planning the activities and acquiring supplies. The administrator played Master of Ceremonies and distributed prizes.

A \$500 grant covered the expenses for the evening. Parking was the main challenge for the Action Team—the school’s parking lot holds 75 cars. In order to accommodate the school-wide event, the program was scheduled for two nights. However, one week before the event, the Action Team learned

that the gym was unavailable both nights. As a solution, they decided to make a “come and go” type of event so that attendance could fluctuate during the hour-long program.

Serving food, giving away prizes, involving students in the planning process, having a variety of stations, and widespread advertising contributed to a successful event. Willard Central has had other activity nights but none with as high an attendance rating. Students demonstrated their knowledge of spelling, mathematical calculations, and motor skills for their families. Parents became more familiar with the school, and teachers interacted with students in an environment outside of the classroom. One parent said, “We would like to thank you for the Super Bowl Family Night. We enjoyed the different activities. The snacks were nice too. The fun parts were the games and activities that were easy but promoted thought and coordination.” In future years, the Action Team will add more activities and include more student planning. They also hope to serve a meal, display student work, and include a fundraiser.

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