
THANKSGIVING FAMILY NIGHT

Stettin Elementary School

Wausau, Wisconsin

On November 11, 2002 from 6:00-7:15 pm, Stettin families attended a special evening of activities directly related to the school's 2002-2003 goals focused on writing, citizenship, and math. For many years, Stettin hosted a full Thanksgiving meal for families. Due to school growth, the event was no longer feasible, and a new tradition had to take its place. The staff unanimously agreed to the Family Night as a replacement for the Thanksgiving meal.

Families entered the event for the price of a canned good, which was donated to a local shelter. Each family that attended received a list of when and where to start. Six different agendas were handed out equally so that all the stations started with an equal number of families. Every 15 minutes the principal announced that everyone needed to move on to the next station. In the library, teachers taught families how to write a good paragraph, and everyone wrote what they were thankful for. The multi-purpose rooms focused on math with a table set up for each grade so that students could show their parents what they were learning in their math classes. In the art room, families made a mural and placemats, which were given to a nursing home. The gym provided fun activities such as a turkey shoot, pinning family neckties to a turkey, and decorating cookies.

Many families expected the tradi-

tional Thanksgiving meal. The Family Liaison used the school newsletter and announcements to explain that this year would be different. The Thanksgiving Family Night was evaluated at a staff meeting and at a PTO meeting. Comments revealed a successful, enjoyable family event. Stettin adapted a successful activity. Families still had fun together, and parents left with important knowledge about school goals.

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