

---

## **FAMILY NIGHT OUT AT RYAN'S Banks Elementary School Baton Rouge, Louisiana**

**T**he best way Banks Elementary School got families and the community involved this year was to schedule an evening field trip for the entire family. Students accompanied by a parent, family member, or neighbor could attend Family Night Out at Ryan's Steakhouse from 4:00 to 7:00 pm. Siblings were invited too. Students and their families enjoyed meat, fish, vegetables, salads, and lots of desserts.

The principal, teachers, and support staff attended the family field trip, which was a fun way for school staff and families to communicate in an informal setting over a good meal. During dinner, the staff explained school compacts and asked parents to sign them. They also shared information about available tutorial services and upcoming school events. The Action Team for Partnerships further extended the value of the evening by discussing table etiquette and asking parents to sign "Dinner with Family" agreements, which stated that the family would try to eat together at home at least once a week.

The school system funded two busses to Ryan's Family Steak House. Another 50 people provided their own transportation to the restaurant. For every paid meal, Ryan's provided a coupon for a free child's all-you-can-eat meal. Chaperoning was at a minimum—adults were responsible for their own children.

The event was a great success. Families received useful information and enjoyed sharing a meal with their students' teachers. Some students even found out what it felt like to really, really have enough to eat.

*Pat LeDuff, Parent Liaison*  
(225) 357-3371  
patleduff@netzero.net