

Family Fun Fair

*Thompson Middle School
Newport, Rhode Island*

At Thompson Middle School, students and their families received a passport to education and fun. This spring, the school held its First Annual Family Fun Fair, featuring stimulating activities with educational themes. Each attendee received a passport that they had stamped or signed as they participated in the various activities. Individuals with 10 or more stamps could enter a prize drawing for live lobsters. The indoor block party atmosphere entertained families and students as they sampled core academic areas.

The fair took place between 5:00 and 7:00 on a Thursday evening. Families chose between 24 activities which included: Dance and Exercise, Internet Help, Weird Science, Peace Promotion, Arts and Crafts, Volunteer Opportunities, Community Policing, Information Booth, Yearbook, Literacy, Math Fun, Foreign Language, “When I was a Kid,” Fingernail Polish, Robotics, Social Studies, Knitting, and Lobster.

Thompson’s parent liaison and Parent Partnership Coordinating Committee (PPCC) planned the event and sought donations to reduce costs without sacrificing fun. A local Ben and Jerry’s supplied ice cream, school staff and parents prepared other snacks. An area lobster company donated four lobsters. Community police volunteered their time to share drug awareness information with students. The principal allocated funds to purchase supplies for the arts and crafts table, as well as to mail Family Fun Fair invitations to parents. She also designed the passports.

The school’s student council greeted visitors at the sign-in table. Teachers, staff, and

parent volunteers had a blast leading the activity booths. The principal, who played roving photographer, also led arts and crafts activities.

At its monthly meeting, the PPCC evaluated the success of the Family Fun Fair. Students and parents benefited from interacting with one another in literacy, mathematics, science, and social studies activities. Parents learned about the school’s academic programs in a fun atmosphere where they could speak informally with their children’s teachers.

Students, parents, and school staff alike enjoyed the event. As one student described, “It was so much fun.” Next year, the PPPC hopes to welcome even more families to the Second Annual Family Fun Fair. “I learned a lot,” commented one father.

*Veronica Mays, Parent Liaison
(401) 847-9657
vmays@newportrischools.org*