

Celebrity Literacy Night

*Highland Goffes Falls School
Manchester, New Hampshire*

One of New Hampshire's state standards is the enjoyment of reading. While students at Highland Goffes Falls School read daily as part of their homework, these assignments do not necessarily encourage reading for pleasure. A father on the Building Bridges Parent Involvement Committee suggested inviting local sports celebrities to read to the children to promote reading for fun.

Members of the committee liked the idea and decided to feature the celebrity readers at the school's annual Scholastic Book Fair. The mascots of the Manchester Fisher Cats baseball team and the Manchester Monarchs hockey team, a member of the Manchester Wolves arena football team, an American Hockey League player, the athletic director, and the captains of three sports teams from the University of New Hampshire, plus a Manchester firefighter, turned out for Literacy Night. They read stories available for purchase at the fair while students and their families shopped.

Parents, administrators, and teachers helped organize Literacy Night. The committee called all the sports teams, sent out notices, arranged reading areas for the celebrities, bought and prepared snacks for the students and parents, and wrote thank you notes to the readers afterwards. To publicize the event, they sent fliers home with students and made posters, along with placing information in the local *Hippo Press Newspaper*.

Despite the large amount of time required for planning and advertising, Highland Goffes Falls School plans to repeat Literacy

Night in the future. Parents and teachers both appreciated how much excitement the event generated from the students, and the readers enjoyed themselves enough to volunteer to return next year. The school spent just \$50 to buy snacks while also reporting the highest book sales in the history of its Scholastic Book Fair. The evening was a win-win situation for everyone.

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