Family Literacy Lab

Cimarron Elementary School, Cherry Creek School District

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The goal of the Family Literacy Lab at Cimarron Elementary School was to help strengthen the connection between families and what's happening in the classroom by creating a fun, interactive literacy experience where parents could be directly involved in their child's learning.



This event was planned through collaboration between the kindergarten teacher and the Educator Community Liaison. They drew inspiration from literacy expert Nawal Qarooni, who focuses on meaningful ways to involve families in learning. Together, they communicated with families, organized the event, and made sure the activities were simple, engaging, and accessible for everyone.

The Family Literacy Lab took place during the school day, and families were invited to join their children in the classroom. Parents and siblings participated in interactive reading activities alongside the students. The goal was to show families what literacy instruction looks like in kindergarten and give them practical strategies they could use at home. It also helped boost student confidence and excitement around reading, while making families feel more connected and included in the classroom community.

The planning lead evaluated this practice through the number of parents who participated, feedback from families, and teacher observations. Overall, families really appreciated the opportunity to be involved and shared that they felt more confident supporting reading at home. One challenge was scheduling, since it could be hard to find a time that worked for everyone. Another challenge was making sure families clearly understood the purpose of the event. Even so, participation and engagement were strong.

To replicate the Family Literacy Lab, the organizers recommend focusing on clear communication and keeping things flexible. Personally inviting families and making it clear that everyone was welcome—including siblings—helped increase attendance. It was also important to keep activities simple and easy to repeat at home. One parent shared, "I loved seeing how my child learns and how I can help at home," which really captures the impact of the experience. Creating a welcoming environment made a big difference, and even small efforts to connect with families could have a lasting effect.