Saguache County Tri-District Collaborative Resource Fair

San Luis Valley Joint Interagency Oversight Group

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Encompassing an area of 3,170 miles, Saguache County is the fifth largest county in the state of Colorado. Within this county are three school districts: Moffat, Mountain Valley, and Center. It is an incredibly vast and rural area that often struggles with keeping its communities connected. With the help of the San Luis Valley (SLV) Joint Interagency Oversight Group (IOG), the Tri-District Collaboration came together to connect their students and families to the most valuable resources in the San Luis Valley through the Tri-District Collaborative Resource Fair.

In conversations with the SLV Joint Interagency Group, the superintendents of the Tri-District Collaboration shared that they felt their students and families were disconnected from their community due to recent transitions in leadership within the schools. School leaders and staff felt they needed to repair that harm and begin to build trust.

One of the solutions that came out of those impactful conversations was to host a Resource Fair that created community, partnership, and connection. By having a community event, relationships that may have been fractured through the leadership transitions could begin to heal. Families would feel more inclined to engage with their school, build connections with staff, and learn about resources that could help uplift their families in times of need. Bringing together community-based organizations allowed families to develop self-agency while feeling safe to lean on their school district. It allowed the districts to be present with families, which often was not an option during day-to-day operations.



The San Luis Valley Behavioral Health Group, National Guard, Center for Restorative Programs, San Luis Valley Area Health Education Center, Alpine Achievers, Colorado Workforce, Valley-Wide Health Systems, Boys and Girls Club, Veterans Affairs, Rocky Mountain Health Plans Care Coordination, 12th Judicial Self-Help, La Puente, Colorado Department of Education, Care and Share, Saguache County Public Health, Healthy Young Minds, Center School District Nursing Program, and Colorado State Patrol were all in attendance to share about the services they provide.

The event itself was held on the football field of the Mountain Valley School District. The fair featured a raffle filled with items from community businesses and gift cards. A DJ, bounce houses, and snow cones were provided by the IOG, while the three school districts shared costs for food, staff stipends, and travel expenses.

Food provided that day included a nacho bar and homemade sopapillas. Mountain Valley School District staff prepared the meal. Shuttles were arranged for community members; the committee leveraged all three schools as pick-up and drop-off sites using their bussing capabilities, while leaning on Freedom Wagon to transport individuals from the KV Estates area to the event. The organizers worked hard to build an extensive web of support for the community.

This practice was evaluated by the service providers who hosted a booth. Street data was collected by way of the superintendents and the SLV Joint Interagency Group Director walking the event and asking for feedback directly and in real-time. The planning committee recognized a few challenges. They were competing with many Cinco de Mayo celebrations in other parts of the Valley. It was also the first iteration of this event, so messaging and advertising may not have been optimal. About 60 community members and 30 service providers attended the event, which was considered a success for a first-time event in an area that had not engaged often in the past. The planning committee intended to incorporate a specific street data point received to make this a traveling resource fair and have the districts in the Tri-District Collaboration take turns hosting.

The biggest piece of advice was to strategically select the day of the event so as to not compete with other events. Initially, the planning committee had thought they were being forward-thinking about Cinco de Mayo celebrations and had chosen the right day, but it still had not been enough.