Celebrating Culture and Community Night

Meadow Point Elementary School, Cherry Creek School District

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Meadow Point Elementary School hosted a Celebration of Culture and Community Night to foster a greater sense of belonging among students and families. A small Title I school, 37% of Meadow Point's community is Spanish-speaking, with families representing more than 12 countries of origin outside the United States.



The concept emerged a year earlier during a Spanish Conversations parent night. Families had expressed interest in hosting tables that would showcase artifacts and dishes from their home countries. Building on this idea, the Community Liaison and Principal planned the event's structure and logistics. To deepen cultural exploration, four organizations offered live performances that introduced students and families to cultures through song, dance, and storytelling. In addition, each classroom selected countries to represent on posters highlighting flags, languages, notable figures or landmarks, and other cultural facts. The art teacher helped students create projects representing art traditions from around the world to be displayed during the event.

Fifteen families hosted tables during Celebrating Culture and Community Night that reflected their cultural heritage through decorations, artifacts, and culturally significant foods. During the first hour, families visited each table and enjoyed dishes from around the world. Students participated through "passports," which were stamped at each table and included prompts related to learning about a new food, country, song, tradition, or cultural attire, as well as meeting a new friend. The second hour of the evening featured live performances by local cultural organizations. Each performance group was given 10 minutes to perform and was encouraged to include an interactive, educational component. Seven students dressed in traditional attire and were showcased on stage between performances. Parents shared brief explanations describing the cultural meaning of the attire. One particularly meaningful performance was the local high school's Latin American Dance club debut. Many students would eventually attend this high school, and the performance showed future opportunities.

The event was evaluated through a survey via a QR code posted throughout the space. The survey was available in both English and Spanish, and a grocery gift card drawing was offered as an incentive. While the survey had a low response rate, families expressed strong appreciation for the event and its focus on cultural connection and community building. Attendance was lower than that of previous family nights. Feedback suggested that timing may have been a contributing factor. The event was held on a Thursday prior to a holiday break.

To replicate this practice, school staff recommend starting to plan early and communicate with many cultural organizations for support. Limited availability and funding constraints posed challenges. By contacting more than 20 organizations, four confirmed and performed. A variety of methods were used to promote the event, including paper flyers, phone calls, e-newsletters, yard signs, and text reminders.