

Back to School Night in Spanish

Louisville Elementary School

Louisville, CO



The introduction of an additional Back to School Night specifically tailored for Spanish-speaking parents has been instrumental in promoting equity and inclusivity at Louisville Elementary School. By providing a place for Spanish-speaking parents to engage with teachers, administrators, and other parents in their native language,



Louisville Elementary has tried to bridge linguistic barriers and ensure that all parents have equal access to important information about their child's education. This initiative not only seems to foster a sense of belonging and empowerment among Spanish-speaking families, but it also demonstrates the commitment to honoring and valuing the diversity within the school community. Because of this one event, parents seem to better understand who they can talk to in the school, how they can communicate things, and recognize that school leadership supports strong home-school collaboration.

The initiation of an additional Back to School Night for Spanish-speaking parents came from the proactive leadership of the Families and Educators Together (FET) committee chair. Recognizing the challenges that Spanish-speaking parents face in fully participating in school events, the committee garnered support from stakeholders and advocated for the necessary resources and logistical support to make the Back to School Night a reality.

This practice began with the intent of developing stronger relationships between families and educators from the start. The FET committee decided to hold an informal gathering that included parents, children, and food (which is essential to building community). After a brief icebreaker, everyone received a calendar for all the important dates for the year, upcoming FET meetings, and events deemed urgent for parents to know throughout the school year. This information also included what to do on the first day of school, what to do for Meet and Greet with the teacher, and what to do for Back to School Night. After a tour of the school building, parents had time to participate in small group conversations to ask questions that they had about the school and FET meetings.

Families who participated in the Back to School Night in Spanish shared that they felt like for the first time they were included and could speak up for themselves. In addition, student ACCESS scores greatly improved and Louisville Elementary ended up being the number two school in the district for ACCESS. Parents shared, “Apreciamos mucho toda la ayuda que nos han brindado,” (We greatly appreciate all the help you have given us) and “Antes no participabamos, pero ahora tenemos la confianza de hablar y compartir” (Before we did not participate, but now we have the confidence to speak and share).

The event coordinators have several pieces of advice for those hoping to conduct a similar event. First, speak with Spanish-speaking parents to understand their frustrations and needs. Next, work together and solicit help from teachers and administrators. Third, focus on personalizing the event by making it about things that are important to Spanish-speaking parents. Finally, continue to get feedback from parents about what is helpful along the way, and keep an open mind for things they have to say.