

Community Pozole Dinner

Truscott Elementary

Loveland, CO



COLORADO
Department of Education

Truscott Elementary is one of two dual-language immersion schools in the Thompson School District. In 2007, a bilingual Café con Leche parent group started the annual Pozole Dinner event at Truscott. Pozole, which means hominy, is a traditional soup or stew from Mexico that is frequently served as a celebratory dish.

The goal of the Pozole Dinner is to bring the community together in a comfortable and welcoming setting where relationships are formed and strengthened. Building community with these types of events opens the door to success for students, recognizes the school as the center of a community, and builds strong culturally responsive partnerships in Loveland.

The planning process begins approximately two months prior to the dinner and includes brainstorming, planning, and organizing led by the Café con Leche parent group, with assistance from school staff, the family outreach liaison, and the community. The school receives donations from local and regional restaurants and businesses for food, as well as, items for a silent auction. Other activities at this event include arts and crafts, positive behavior support, a photo booth, healthy lifestyle promotion, and fundraising opportunities.

The Community Pozole Dinner has now become one of the most popular events at the school every year. It brings in more families and community members than any other school event. It is a relaxing way to visit, get to know other individuals and families, and create a feeling of belonging in the school community. Participants, planners and implementers provide feedback on the event in person, via surveys and through post-event reflecting sessions designed to evaluate the program and make refinements and adjustments for the next year.

Started as a very organic, grassroots effort celebrating the values and heritage of the bilingual Truscott families, this process represents a deep desire in the community to connect and celebrate cultural diversity in this dual-language immersion elementary school. Cultural events like this are meaningful to our community and have in the past 10 years become part of who we are and how we do business.

The biggest successes from the most recent Community Pozole Dinner was seeing a great number of families return, as well as welcoming new families, and hosting the dinner off-site at the neighborhood church. Doing this revitalized the event and provided a comforting setting where families could receive services, play games with their children and much more.