

# ELL Parent Engagement Night

## Dunn Elementary School

### Fort Collins, CO



**COLORADO**  
Department of Education

Standardized testing is a time of year when teachers, students, and parents begin to have a lot of anxiety and questions about the format and testing techniques. At Dunn Elementary School, the family liaisons, ELL teachers, 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, school administrators, and a district interpreter were involved in creating an English Language Learner (ELL) Parent Engagement Night.

The goal of the event was to build relationships, inform the parents about upcoming standardized testing, and meet with other families from around the world. The parents gain knowledge and information about state tests, feel comfortable, learn, meet with people of different cultures, and learn how to support their students at home.

At the Parent Engagement night, families received dinner and child care. The evening began with introductions of all ELD teachers liaisons. After introductions, families participated in an icebreaker to get to know each other. The presenters shared a PowerPoint with information about the standardized testing. They provided the families with information about how they can practice with their students at home and prepare them to be successful during testing.

Parents became aware and involved in their child's educational experience while learning about the tests and how to help their children prepare at home. Many of the parents were comfortable and formed a community over the same questions and concerns. Dunn teachers reported that students also seemed very comfortable during the exams because parents were able to have conversations at home that helped ease their child's minds.

Dunn Elementary distributed an exit survey to evaluate the event. Staff received feedback via email after the event. Participants shared positive feedback with staff and emailed saying they enjoyed it. They also let the school know how much they enjoyed meeting with multiple parents from all over the world and talking with the teachers. They said the ice breaker helped them to build relationships with the school staff.

The school's family liaison offers the following advice for schools interested in replicating the event: "Food and icebreakers are a great incentive to get people together and great way to bond with others. Send parents the PowerPoint afterwards so they have time to read through it at home at their own pace and ask questions."