

**Parent Engagement Opportunity Fund  
Spring, 2009**

**Georgetown Home and School Association**

President: Toby Murphy

Principal: Norbett Carpenter

**Name of Project:** Family Literacy Day

**Goal(s):**

- To increase parental engagement at Georgetown Elementary School.
- To create a general awareness regarding new literacy initiatives taking place at the school.

**Description:**

The day started with a pancake breakfast, open to students and parents. Then parents had an opportunity to shadow their child(ren). During this time, each teacher conducted a literacy station.

**Did you achieve your goal?**

Yes, parents got a chance to participate in different work stations pertaining to the level of their child's education, focusing on literacy development. There was a "general" turnout and lots of positive feedback.

**Who did the project benefit?**

Our project benefitted all. Parents had an opportunity to gain more resources to help their kids at home. Teachers and staff had a chance to collaborate with parents and discuss ways to get involved to improve their children's progress.

**What challenges are you still facing with parent engagement?**

1. Parents feeling they can provide valuable contributions.
2. Working parents - how can they be involved?
3. Continuing to demonstrate the benefits of a positive, inclusive relationship between Home and School.
4. Getting new faces out instead of the same loyal crew every time!

**Thoughts about the project topic (provided by project partners):**

Dedicating a whole day to family literacy is a powerful way to get the message across that success in school requires success in reading. Planning such an event takes time and can't be done in one or two meetings. It is highly recommended that Home and School and teachers plan far ahead.

The list of literacy activities is long and can include:

- shared reading
- drama
- music
- authors coming to the school
- "important people" reading to children
- children teaching parents
- creating books
- book sales
- literacy recognition
- parent seminars
- creating biographies or autobiographies
- making a school newspaper
- using computers
- reading newspapers

Remember, while some parents may themselves have literacy difficulties, don't be concerned about this. Adults with reading challenges have learned to adapt and have figured out ways to be included in events/activities that include reading. The key is sensitivity! Parents will handle the rest!