

**Parent Engagement Opportunities Fund
November, 2009**

O'Leary Consolidated Home and School Association

President: Colleen MacLeod

Principal: Susan Thain-Trail

Name of project:

Reading Strategies Information Night for Parents:
"Helping Our Children become Successful Readers"

Goal(s):

- To provide parents with some useful information about how they can help their child become a successful reader.
- To motivate parents to become more involved with their children's learning.
- To motivate parents to participate in events at school in the hopes visiting the school would become a natural occurrence.

Description:

We hosted an evening workshop, presented by Mr. and Mrs. Costello and Ms. McLellan, teachers at O'Leary School, which focused on reading strategies. The purpose of the workshop was to assist parents and guardians by providing an overview of the reading process and the strategies children can use to develop their reading skills.

Did you achieve your goal?

Yes, we did achieve our goal! The evening provided a wealth of knowledge for our parents who left with a better idea of how to help their children learn how to read. Also, they were provided with a better idea about how their children learn in school.

Who did this project benefit? How?

I believe we all benefitted! We parents benefitted by learning strategies which better enable us to assist our children with reading.

What challenges are you still facing with parent engagement?

Parent meetings where the topic is "reading strategies" is usually not a big drawing card. O'Leary Elementary Home and School and O'Leary Elementary School staff rose to this challenge and set the standard for collaboration and quality with their recent parent information night.

The event was informative, interactive and fun but the story does not end there. A key to their success was how they marketed their project. They designed a high quality pamphlet that was attractive, informative and inviting. Children were encouraged to make sure parents were given the pamphlet.

The event planners would like to have had more parents attend but they turned "lemons into lemonade." They debriefed afterwards and determined that for their next event they would supply a baby sitting service, add to the social part of the evening and address the reality that it is difficult for some parts to attend a parent evening.