Family Literacy Night

*Project Planner*

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| **Project Description** | Dr. Suess’s birthday is March 2nd. This will be our target date for East Elementary’s first “Family Literacy Night”. We will recruit teacher volunteers that will assist the students in creating various stations focused around phonics, comprehension, and writing. The goal of this event is to educate parents and students about improving these literacy skills. This night will allow students to explore and practice within these areas, along with inform parents about activities and tips to support their child’s literacy development at home. This is particularly important because—with the small size of our community—parents more than likely also have students attending the primary building. Therefore, this night can be beneficial to these students as well. All of this will hopefully, in turn, help boost our district’s standardized test scores. |
| **Planning and Preparation** | Recently, a group of my sixth grade students and I got together and discussed a quality service learning project—keeping in mind that this includes a proper duration and intensity, a link to curriculum, meaningful service, youth voice, diversity, reflection, progress monitoring, and partnerships. We thought about issues within our school and used our community’s newspapers to discover issues within our community. It was explained that we are going to start a new project which will help our school and/or community that will also incorporate learning a skill for us. For “homework”, each student was to think about such a project idea by using our newspaper and collaborating with their own families about a service-learning project.  After some time and research, we met again and discussed our ideas. It was interesting how concerned both families and students were with the PSSA assessments and our school’s testing scores. Reading and language arts skills are an area that our community wants to improve upon. Therefore, we decided that we wanted to focus on that need by bringing the community’s parents and their students into the school to teach them about literacy skills, activities, and ways to improve upon these skills at home.  We will advertise and promote the event through posters and pamphlets—along with possibly collaborating with a technologically savvy teacher to create a video to entice students and their parents into joining us on this night. Volunteers will also be recruited to help with providing and serving refreshments and a light snack at the event. In all, I believe great discussion and collaboration occurred while meeting with these students—which, in turn, resulted in project that will benefit both the community and school. |
| **Action** | We will first decide on an exact date for our project. Since Dr. Suess’s birthday is on a Sunday (and soon), we will meet with our principal to decide if what day during week of March 3-7 would be the best day, or if that week is too soon. Once we decide on a date, we will be discussing what goes on our advertisements that we will hang around the school and community. We will then create, edit, and distribute them.  Meanwhile, students will begin their meaningful service by choosing a theme for our first literacy night and recruiting teacher volunteers. Then they will choose a volunteer teacher to work along-side with and start planning a station that is related either to a phonics, comprehension, or writing activity that compliments this theme. They will create and gather any necessary materials and be prepared to present their station to parents and students who join us for that night. |
| **Reflection** | As “homework”, my students who took part in managing and facilitating a literacy station will write a reflective journal about their station and how it went at Family Literacy Night. These logs have to include:   * What was your station? * What happened during Family Literacy Night? Were there any “great stories”? * How doing this service for other students and the community service make you feel and why? * How did you think your service made a difference? * How is this service going to help both you AND the community in the long run? * What did you learn about yourself after completing this project?   I believe these logs will be so insightful to both myself and our group that coordinated this project! These will be used for discussion during our celebration. |
| **Celebration** | I have every confidence that East Elementary’s first annual Family Literacy Night will be a success! To celebrate the end of our service-learning, my sixth grade group will get together over an ice cream party to discuss what went well and what could have been improved upon in our stations. Through this time, students will mention things that they learned—some being about things at home they could do to develop their literacy skills; others about their leadership skills they didn’t know they have, or about the obstacles you must hurdle in order to properly manage an activity. They will use their reflective journals to generate discussion. |