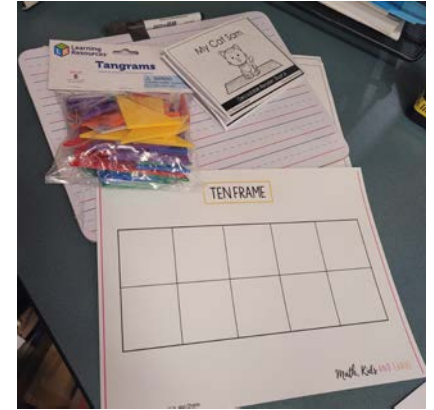
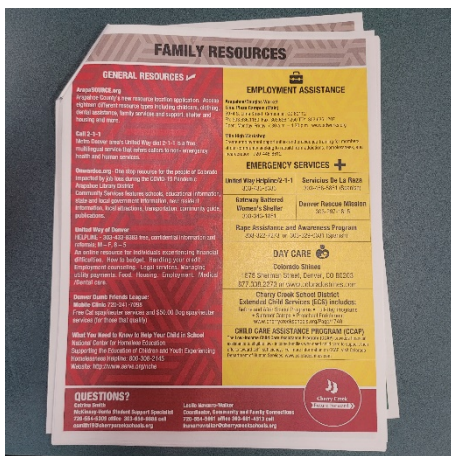


Welcome Packet Initiative Village East Elementary School Aurora, CO

Like many schools across Colorado, Village East Elementary School enrolled many newcomer students in the 2023-24 school year. The Welcome Packet Initiative not only supported newcomer families, but also families and students already in the school and experiencing hardship. With all of these families in mind, one kindergarten teacher, Ms. Dani Bettis, reached out to the community liaison with an idea to create a packet of materials that provided a starting point for many to receive the assistance they needed. The goal was to create welcome packets with English Language Services and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) information. Examples of materials in the packets included:



- A welcome letter with access to East Village’s family survey;
- Information on community resources including: STRIDE Community Health Center, English classes, clothing and food banks, etc;
- A white dry erase board with marker;
- Consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) pattern books and decodable readers;
- Stories and books specific of culture and heritage;
- A laminated ten frame sheet to practice math skills;
- Tangrams (for younger kids) for abstract thinking and creativity; and
- SEL materials including best practices for overstimulation/stress/anger.



The Community Liaison met with the newcomer families on the student’s first day of school, took them to class, and facilitated an exchange of information between the teacher and family. Students received a backpack with school supplies. These interactions helped to identify students and families that needed assistance. While this has only been in practice since February 2024, teachers and parents have said the Welcome Packet Initiative has made things much smoother. As Village East continues to provide the welcome packet, the paraprofessionals who interact with students daily will be more involved and report back with how those handoffs went.

As with all programs that offer support to the community, each school that implements it needs dedicated staff to conduct follow ups and be willing to spend the time with the students and their families.