

Wheat Ridge Articulation Group

Jeffco Public Schools

Wheat Ridge, CO



COLORADO
Department of Education

Jefferson County Schools had a mantra for the 2021-22 school year; “Better Together.” The Wheat Ridge Articulation Schools Family Engagement Liaisons took that to heart and set a goal to create a Family Learning Series for all families in the Wheat Ridge area. The goal of the series was to bring families from different schools together in a fun learning environment. All elementary schools, the middle school and the high school were invited to participate in this effort. The team met in the fall of 2021 to start the planning process.



Four different Learning Series Events were held throughout the school year at different schools. Each event had a specific focus with three different learning opportunities for families centered around the main topic. It was the hope of the group to positively impact family involvement in student learning by supporting the adults with information pertinent to their child’s education. It was an important aspect to have families together in a social setting since there was no option for that type of involvement in the previous years due to the pandemic. It was also a chance to include community members in our school focused events. The first event focused on Technology, the second was around Mental Health Challenges, the third created Toolkits for Families (restorative practices, love and logic, etc.), and the fourth was on Health (physical, mental, and nutrition).



The last event was the most successful. It was formatted as The Amazing Race. Families received a race card upon entry and received a stamp when they completed a challenge. There was a Supermarket Sweep Challenge that taught about nutrition (families had to ‘shop’ for foods to make a healthy meal for under \$12), an Obstacle Course (focusing on fun ways to stay physically fit), and the Mental Health challenge included a jeopardy type game. Families also explored Self Care Booths (staffed by community members) and then made a Self-Care Plan for their family. There were also give a ways and prizes at the end of each event.

The group met after each event to evaluate and brainstorm how to make it better. There were several challenges such as the first event being scheduled at the same time as another big event at the school, however, the Family Learning Series was able to piggyback on the more established event. One event was also canceled due to covid numbers, and another was held virtually due to covid numbers.

Working together with other schools may seem overwhelming, but it really helped us provide great trainings for our families that we would not have been able to do as easily as one school working alone. It seemed to work out best, and draw the most families, when it was a hands-on experience for the family to do together (like the Amazing Race).

