**Hosting FAMILY Math Events**

**Tips for Success**

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**How many events during a school year?**

Host at least two events with the consideration of up to four during the school year to give both parents/guardians the opportunity to participate in this setting with their child. Planning a fall event allows the educators to talk about how the adult can support their child learning math during the school year and again in the spring to be able to promote activities that occur during the summer to continue the learning outside the classroom.

**How long should the event last?**

The event should be about 1.5 hours in length where the participants are actively engaged with activities. Of course, there will be prep work to organize the materials and set up the room for the event but clean up should be minimal. If you can allow the families to take the activities home, then just provide a large Ziplock bag with all the materials pre-packaged for each family. Printing the activity boards on heavier card stock makes them more durable but regular paper works fine.

**Will there be food served?**

If any type of food is provided, please serve it at the beginning of the event or at a break during the middle. Leaving food to be eaten at the end creates a challenge for wrapping up the session when the hosts are ready to go home.

My preference is the middle for a snack break and natural time to separate the adults and the children if you wish to address certain topics with the adults only like new math curriculum being used. While sharing information with the adults the children would be creating a puzzle to challenge their parents to put together after they are reunited.

**Who is involved?**

Be prepared to have more attend than expected. Remember each class size has doubled (one child paired with one adult) so having a team to plan and host the event is best when questions/issues arise. It is suggested to select a couple of grades to start with instead of the entire school. But of course, the size of the school will help determine what might work best.

Finding a space that will accommodate the number of participates and provide table seating for everyone may lead you to use a cafeteria, library, community rec center or banquet hall. Always identify a couple of adult volunteers from the school/community available if a student needs an adult partner. If possible, it is nice to be able to have every student from the selected grades participate in this less formal setting.

These events can be in **different formats** such as of Family Math nights or Grandparent Afternoons by adopting the residents in the local elder care center. This designed time is focused on only one child and the adult partner. Usually, school events are performances in which the adult observes with little to no interaction with the child. That is not the case with these Family Events. No matter the content (It could be reading, science, math, engineering) being highlighted…the partners are doing the activities together.

Provide childcare for the younger siblings if needed which allows for one-on-one interaction during the math time together. Other staff or possible high school students can play with the younger children while the adult and child are participating in the math activities.

Encourage teachers the next day in school to set aside time to have the **s**tudents do at least one of the activities especially if there were students unable to attend. The student who participated can take the lead and explain the activity to the peer who was absent for the event. Selecting activities from the Family Math Book that reinforce the skills being studied currently during the school day is a nice alignment and connection to the classroom.

**ACTIVITIES for the Early Birds**

There are always a few that arrive early so having a few activities around the room or at their tables to keep them busy until it is time to start as a group is highly suggested. Creating different data displays for participants to record their information is a good way to get them personally involved from the beginning.

**Graphs:** Make it math related by creating a birthday graph with the bottom axis with the names of the months and ask them to write their name on a sticky note and place it on the graph representing the month in which they were born.

**Charts or Tables:** Tally mark their favorite topic of your choice

**Venn Diagrams:** May be two overlapping circles where one circle is wearing Glasses and the other circle is Favorite Number larger than 20. Please U.S.E. initials to record on a whole group display so it is not easy to identify individuals, but everyone is represented.

**TABLE Starters:**

**ESTIMATION:** Having an estimation activity at each table is a great way to have everyone start talking about numbers. You can be creative with different containers and what items you place inside.

**Types of Containers**

**Boxes:** Tape a single sample on the top of the box. By seeing a sample of what is contained inside might provide a volume related clue. If the box is shaken the sound made may also provide another volume clue.

**Sacks: Cloth with drawstrings or small paper ones.** You cannot see but might be able to feel to get an idea of how many are in the sack, but you still cannot see the items.

**Jars:** Using plastic jars are the safest so not to have to worry about breakage. The jars can be filled up in so many ways. You can see the outer layer of the items but cannot count them individually.

**Zip lock bags**: These bags allow for seeing and touching the items. You do not want to allow enough time for the items to be counted but to glance at the entire amount and estimate what it may be closer to begins the thought process of estimation. Create a display of bags containing benchmark amounts of one item, 5 items, 10 items, and items 20 on the wall and then briefly show the bag which is being estimated to the group. Ask them to identify between which two values they believe the amount fits.

**Types of Items**

**SAME exact item**: Pennies, marbles, balls, paper clips,

**Same Item but different colors** like Jellybeans, Skittles – This allows for multiple questions of the same or different color combinations: What is total of the yellow jellybeans? What is the total of the red and white jellybeans?

**Two different sized items**: Seasonal items like Candy Corns and Candy Pumpkins