

Malley Math Madness

Malley Drive Elementary School

Northglenn, CO



COLORADO
Department of Education



Malley Drive Elementary, in Adams 12, understands that the subject of math can be polarizing. As a parent/caregiver, it can be a challenge to know how to help with math learning at home. In response to this challenge, the school created Malley Math Madness, an event that empowers families as partners in their child's math education through game-based practices. The goal of this practice is to provide ways for families to engage their students with math concepts at home.

As with all family engagement efforts, a team of people is necessary to make a great, high-impact event happen. At Malley, the family liaison partnered with the principal, assistant principal, office manager, and other staff to coordinate this engagement opportunity. Malley Drive has the privilege of working with state support staff in the Transformation Network, which provided additional funds to support family engagement efforts that positioned families as partners in their child's education. A variety of board games were purchased with that funding.

Mathematical thinking is so much more than fractions and computation skills, and this event was aimed at making mathematical thinking skills visible and accessible. Board games appropriate for each grade level, including preschool, were purchased. For example, 5th graders were given Battleship. This game requires spatial reasoning, pattern identification, computation, questioning skills, and more. There is power in showing where math exists in our daily lives. By making math learning in daily life activities visible and comprehensible, families were empowered to support math learning at home.

“How many socks, on average, does our dryer "eat" each time we do laundry? Use that information to determine how many socks have been "eaten" by the dryer in your lifetime.”

This practice was evaluated by the number of families that attended, although a snow day for the following school day had already been announced, and the amount of enthusiasm with which families and children engaged with the event.

In the future, should funding not be available to purchase new games in bulk, Malley Drive will shift to focusing on other ways math concepts can be highlighted in everyday life with a low or no cost event.