

# Parent Teacher Leadership Team

## McElwain Elementary School

### Thornton, CO



McElwain Elementary is a Title I school that houses a diverse number of students. Students come to McElwain from all over the world—Mexico, Honduras, Guatemala, Afghanistan, and India just to name a few. Language and socioeconomic barriers create a challenge regarding family engagement and communication. To partner with all families, staff must provide a variety of modes of communication, multiple opportunities for involvement, and community assistance beyond the classroom as needed.

McElwain Elementary has several partnerships with outside organizations. These partnerships are managed by numerous staff and the family liaison. Over the past few years the most robust partnership has been with the Mile High United Way, The Adams 12 Five Star Foundation, and Food for Hope. Due to their constant support, staff have been able to create and plan many opportunities for our community. Additionally, with the help of Mile High United Way, staff have created a Parent Teacher Leadership Team (PTLT) that has also organized and led many events.



Community events that were held throughout the year include Coca and Coats. This event took place in early October. Staff collected new and gently used coats and distributed them to families and children in need while enjoying cocoa or coffee donated from a local Starbucks. School staff also hosted a trunk or treat in October for all families. In December many community members and staff members also adopted families and provided an entire holiday for families. This year the school supported 60 families during December and 150 Turkey meals in November. In May, staff had Reading and Recreation in which each student was able to

choose a piece of sporting equipment and a brand new book to take home to encourage reading and recreation over the summer. Staff held monthly parent meetings entitled Tea and Coffee with the Principal in three different languages where families received information and provided input. Additionally, throughout the year in collaboration with the Adams 12 Five Star Foundation, staff had an on-site pantry where parents could come and have some of their basic needs met such as food, clothing and household items. This year, 84 families and over 400 individuals received support through McElwain's onsite pantry.

These programs were evaluated using an online panorama survey taken by all interested families. They were also evaluated during the last Tea and Coffee with the Principal where 30 parent leaders attended and provided feedback as invested stakeholders. Families would like to add more cultural events next year now that we are moving away from pandemic restrictions. Overall, feedback indicates that families feel seen and heard.



To create an inclusive and welcoming environment, each school must take an inventory of their students, families, teachers, and communities. They must understand the needs of each individual and base all decisions on those needs. All humans can grow and thrive when they believe there is someone or somewhere that is there to support them. McElwain Elementary believes in that support and has exceeded what it means to be an educational institution, McElwain Elementary is a community institution.