

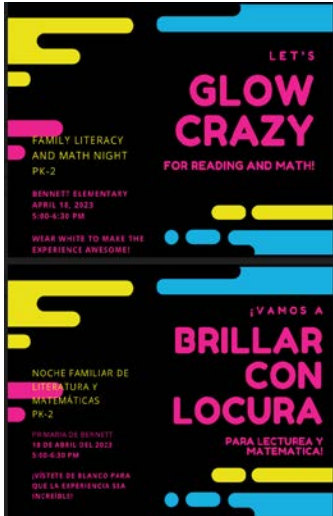
Glow Crazy for Literacy and Math!

Bennett Elementary School

Bennett, CO



COLORADO
Department of Education



As a rural school district where family engagement is vital to student success, the Bennett PK-2 staff, alongside the Literacy Coach and administration, worked to create a family and community event to bring literacy and math alive. Bennett Elementary is a small school on the I-70 corridor with about 300 PK through 5th grade students. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, few in-person school events have taken place and parent involvement has not bounced back to what it was prior. Consequently, student academic achievement and growth have also taken a dip.

Putting on "Lets Glow Crazy for Literacy and Math" was a joint effort by all Bennett Elementary staff. The staff worked together to make an inclusive and inviting event for all ages. BES Literacy Coach, Deanne Cronk, and Principal, Britt Travis, took the lead on planning the event.

The event had two goals as the school focused on boosting student achievement in literacy and math as well as increasing family involvement outside of the beginning of year activities, parties, and field trips. The hope was to engage students in fun math/literacy activities and help parents see how simple it can be to recreate these at home. The focus of the night was to help parents help their students at home, but also give families a safe, fun, and inviting learning event that all members could enjoy. Additional materials were provided so parents could take the games and recreate them at home, giving their child more access to literacy and math skill development.



This event was also created with hopes of boosting the school's positive climate and culture. The staff at Bennett wanted parents to know that they are accepted as they are, and that the school truly cares for and believes in their child. The event gave families the opportunity to enjoy a night together and see the staff unified and engaged with students across all grade levels. This event displayed collectiveness, inclusivity, and furthered the school's desire to continue to build trusting relationships and strengthen the school's capacity to boost student achievement.



Bennett staff evaluated the event in multiple ways. They gathered feedback from parents in person and over social media when the flyer was initially released. This enabled the staff to provide clarity about the details of the event as needed. They also utilized family attendance as an indicator of success. Over 200 students attended, including students and families that did not attend Bennett. Additionally, the event offered both glow-in-the-dark and non-dark classrooms where games could be played to accommodate all family needs. Neon and bright colors in the rooms that were not glow-in-the-dark were used to create a glow effect.

The advice Bennett staff has for anyone wanting to recreate this event is to “just simply do it!” Bennett Elementary plans to hold the event on a yearly basis. Next year, the event will be held earlier in the year (before spring), so students have more time to play the games at home, but also to welcome parents at the beginning of the year. Bennett staff also encourage the use of electronic templates for the games so they can be linked to the weekly newsletter and families can access them as needed.

