

Take Your Family to School Week

Swanson Elementary School

Arvada, CO



COLORADO
Department of Education

Swanson Elementary School staff value the importance of building relationships between home and school. Welcoming families into Swanson is not only a goal, it is a priority. When the Family Engagement Liaison learned about the National PTA idea of Take Your Family to School Week (TYFSW), she thought this type of event would be ideal for strengthening the bond between home and school.

TYFSW was planned by the Family Engagement Committee which consists of nine staff members, in coordination with the Swanson PTA, community businesses, and families. This team worked together to plan the daily events and gather materials and resources. Additionally, the team helped facilitate and engage families during the events.

Part of the appeal of TYFSW was that a variety of activities could be offered on multiple days/times. With the wide-range of offerings, many families were able to participate in at least one event. TYFSW was 4 days this year because of a non-student contract day on Friday. Additionally, this was the same week as Valentine's Day, so many of our activities connected to the holiday. Examples of activities include:

- Monday Love Muffins- Families were invited to have a muffin with their child to start the day.
- Tuesday Snuggle up with your love bug and read- Reading is important at any age, so Swanson staff planned a school-wide Snuggle Up and Read. Students got cozy and read a book to their loved ones. Many grandparents participated as well.
- Wednesday Home Depot kids workshop- The Home Depot supplied a kit for families to build a take-home fishing game. This activity brought so much excitement! It also brought in many dads and grandpas.
- Thursday Lunch with your Valentine- Families had pizza and salad for lunch. Valentine's Day is so much fun when you spend it with someone you love.

Swanson students felt proud, confident, and quickly became leaders by showing their parents around the room or taking ownership of the moment/activity. The whole week was a great success and will continue at Swanson for years to come.

One challenge for this year's event was scheduling. Parent-teacher conferences and the non-student contact day impacted the event. Next year, the planning committee will work around these and choose times that are convenient for families.

Swanson's Family Engagement Liaison offers the following advice about planning a similar event: "I would encourage anyone to partner with their school organization such as PTA or PTO or create a committee of teachers and/or parents to provide the support needed to plan the activities. Aim to have activities at different times to allow working families to attend. Reach out to community organizations to assist you with an activity or donation."

Standard 1—Welcoming All Families