

Family-School Partnership Awards Application

Standard I – Welcoming All Families

Whitesburg School PTA began this year with the goal of reaching out to all families to help build a sense of community in the school. Since our school includes a wide range of ages serving grades Pre - Kindergarten through 8th grade, as well as a racially and socioeconomically diverse population, our goal was to focus on informal events that promoted interaction between families with children across grades. To reach this goal we focused on National PTA's Take Your Family to School Week.

We had events held on virtually every day of Take Your Family to School Week. The festivities began on Tuesday, Founders' Day. The events scheduled for that evening were Family Game Night and a Whitesburg School Bake-Off. After a brief PTA meeting explaining the significance of Founders' Day, families gathered together in the school cafeteria over an informal dinner of pizza catered from a local restaurant. Cafeteria tables were set up with a variety of board games. There were families who attended the event with children enrolled across the spectrum all the way from Pre-Kindergarten to 8th grade. It was heartwarming to see the children interact with each other. There were children from different grades playing board games. There were parents playing board games and getting to know each other as well. There were faculty members and their families in attendance as well. Most importantly, the attendees were a diverse group, several of whom do not normally attend PTA meetings. There was a Bake- Off to coincide with the Family Game Night. Children could enter the Bake Off in either the Pre - Kindergarten through 4th grade category or the 5th – 8th grade category. There was a

separate category for faculty and staff as well. Bake-Off entries provided dessert for the event and were judged by a few parents and staff members.

On Wednesday morning we hosted Doughnuts with Dads. Children and their fathers or father stand-ins were invited to stop by between 7am and 7:40am to have a doughnut before going off to school and work. Once again it was refreshing to see new faces and meet fathers that we do not normally see at PTA events. On Thursday morning we hosted Muffins with Mom. Children and their mothers or mother stand-ins were invited to stop by between 9am and 9:40am (we had a late start due to bad weather) to have a muffin before going off to school and work. The event was attended by parents with children of all ages. There were parents who were new to our school as well as our city and they were able to learn more not just about our school but also about our city.

On Friday morning we had our last Take Your Family to School Week event. That morning, we hosted a Parent Show and Share event. Parents with unusual skills stopped by the school and shared these skills with the students. Parents talked to students about various skills such as using sign language, speaking French, basic yoga poses, etc. Parents were identified by sending out requests via our Facebook page and newsletter thus giving all parents an opportunity to participate.

In summary, the Take Your Family to School Week events at Whitesburg School helped us achieve our goals by welcoming all members of our school family. It gave all families an opportunity to be involved in the school in some way, to make new friends, and to connect with families across a vast range of grade levels. They also gave the administration and faculty a chance to get to know students and families in an informal setting.