

Community Liaison Sagebrush Elementary School Aurora, CO



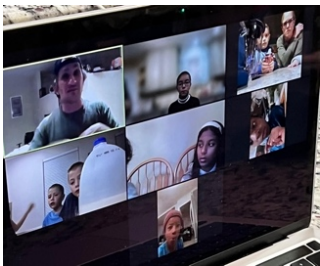
COLORADO
Department of Education

As a Title I school, Sagebrush’s vision is to build an environment in which every student will thrive socially, emotionally, and academically as they are prepared to make a positive impact on the world. This vision sparked a need to create opportunities for families to engage with the school in a way that builds and strengthens relationships and connects them with the necessary resources to be successful. In partnership with school administration, the Family Liaison, and the school’s staff, plans were crafted to address the physical, emotional, and financial needs of the student body and community. Through various events and volunteer opportunities Sagebrush was able to show up in a very real way for its students.

The first endeavor of the year was to connect families with resources that addressed the financial strain that a majority of families were feeling. To accomplish this, volunteers collected food, clothing, and hygiene items. A food pantry was then constructed, and families were invited to select food that met their family’s dietary needs as well as other personal items. The response from the community far exceeded expectations as donations kept rolling in throughout the year.



Winter holidays are often a time for celebrating with families and an opportunity to slow down and enjoy loved ones. However, this time of year can also cause stress for families. Through a coordinated effort with a neighboring school, Sagebrush launched a present drive. Numerous donations and countless volunteer hours by members of the staff and community led to the collection of approximately 600 gifts which provided over 60 families with holiday assistance.



Access to quality food and education is something many families lack. Through a partnership with the Cooking Matters at Home organization, families received fresh ingredients and tips for cooking nutritious meals. These classes encouraged all members of a family to participate and share in the fun as well as build relationships with neighboring families.

Families have multiple needs that cover a wide variety of topics. To provide families with information about general safety practices, ways to connect with the school, and resources for addressing academic, mental, economic, and physical health needs, staff created a virtual resource center. This resource proved to be very valuable as its platform connected families with much needed services within the community.

Each of these practices were evaluated by continual communication from families through digital surveys to ensure that the school’s response remained relative and consistent to the families it serves. Overall, the success of the programs at Sagebrush was largely dependent on staff and community participants volunteering time and energy. Therefore, it is important to establish a relationship and a partnership with the community early on. Sagebrush’s family liaison shared: “Our advice would be to not be afraid to ask for what you want and need; chances are you will be the voice for those who are afraid to speak.”

Standard 6—Collaborating with the Community
Essential Element 4—Dedicate Necessary Resources