

Parent Academy Poudre School District Fort Collins, CO



COLORADO
Department of Education

The Language, Culture, and Equity Department within Poudre School District (PSD) hosts an annual Parent Academy to provide learning opportunities for parents to support their student's success. The academy has become a staple and beloved event within the district.

District staff invited all Title I and Linguistically Diverse families to participate in the one-day conference, held at the Hilton in Fort Collins. Most participants were native Spanish and Arabic speakers. Upon checking-in, parents enjoyed a continental breakfast and browsed community resource tables. After a general presentation, participants attended three breakout sessions, with six workshops to choose from in each session.

Parents who attend this event learned about topics such as: healthy communication, setting boundaries, wellness and learning, transition to high school, undocumented student college support, financial aid information, family and community partnering and marijuana in Colorado and its impact on youth. In total, over 200 parents, 14 presenters, 16 community partners and 33 staff attended the Parent Academy. Poudre School District's superintendent gave the opening address and an assistant superintendent was the lunchtime presenter.

While planning and conducting the Parent Academy is a huge undertaking, many partners were available to lighten the load. One PSD district staff member explains: "Family Liaisons are vital to the success of Parent Academy due to the relationships they hold with families and students. Family Liaisons were the ones informing, inviting and registering parents for the Parent Academy, which is key to assure attendance to the event. We also partnered within PSD: Early Childhood, MTSS, Integrated Services, Wellness, Partnership Center and the Communications Department. The programs were available in Spanish and English, interpretation was provided in workshops, and some workshops were presented in Spanish only."

Poudre also maintains strong relationships with community organizations that supported the event, including Colorado State University Access Center, El Centro, Family Leadership Training Institute and the Admissions office, Poudre River Public Library, The Community Life Center, La Familia (The Family Center), Centennial BOCES, Vida Sana, Turning Point, and the Larimer County Workforce Center.