

Fall Community Connections Event

Thompson School District

Loveland, CO



COLORADO
Department of Education

Staff within Thompson School District’s Departments of Language, Culture and Equity and Title I Family and Community Engagement collaborated to host the Fall Community Connections Event. The goal of the event was to create paths to stronger communication and collaboration and to build and nurture relationships among students, staff, and families. Students with a gifted education identification (GT), English Language Learners (ELLs), students in the Dual Immersion Program (DLI), and students attending Title I schools in all grade levels Kindergarten to 12th grade were all invited to attend.

This outdoor event took place at a centrally located open-air park in downtown Loveland. A number of booths were hosted and staffed by community partners and in-district partners to provide information and resources for families. Students from Title I schools provided entertainment representing the cultural backgrounds of participating students and families. Both the “Folklorico Dance Club” from Truscott Elementary and a local community Folklorico dance club performed.

Strong partnerships and collaboration made this event a success. Participating community partners included the Loveland Fire Department, Front Range Community College, the Loveland Public Library, Sunrise Healthy Clinic, Loveland Public Transit, Steps eXp Reality, Servicios de la Raza, Loveland Rotary KidsPak of Loveland, and AIMS Community College. Loveland restaurants provided food, and everyone who completed an event survey received a free Kona Ice from a local vendor.

The practice creates a sense of belonging for students and families as they connected with the performances, cultural music, and with others in the larger community. This practice also provided important information from community providers in a one-stop shop at the event booths, including information related to student learning, extracurricular activities, the road to graduation, and beyond. Thompson School District representatives were on-site to provide information to families about graduation requirements, district athletics, district nutritional services, after-school childcare programs, and Loveland Rotary KidsPak (a partner organization that provides meals to families in need).

Thompson School District staff collected valuable information through the end-of-event survey. The questions included in the student survey and parent survey were tied to the district’s strategic plan to increase the meaningful engagement of all stakeholders. The goal was not to evaluate the event itself but rather, collect student and parent/guardian feedback on their sense of safety and belonging within the school system, as well as what families need when it comes to helping their child succeed in school. Staff gathered a robust set of qualitative data that informed the district equity and family/community engagement policies, and was used to identify funding and programming priorities for next year.

Essential Element 2—Build Trusting Relationships
Standard 6—Collaborating with the Community

