



## Family Math Night and ESEA – What the Research Says

Decades of research has clearly indicated that there is a strong relationship between family engagement and student academic success. According to Henderson and Mapp<sup>1</sup>, students whose parents are involved in their schooling, regardless of family income or background, are more likely to:

- have higher grades and test scores
- attend school regularly
- have better social skills
- show improved behavior
- adapt well to school

Today's schools know that educating our children requires a team effort and that building connections between families and schools is key to developing academic achievement for all children. One way to build these connections is through Family Math Night events. Hosting a Family Math Night can help build strong family-school partnerships, engage parents meaningfully, and contribute to achieving high standards.

### Building Strong Family-School Partnerships

Parents rate family and community engagement as the most important driver of satisfaction with their child's school.<sup>2</sup> So it's important for schools to welcome parents as partners in their child's education. Parents who feel supported are more likely to become involved and *stay* involved.<sup>3</sup>

Our Family Math Night events help build a bridge between home and school. Families attending the event feel engaged in the school community and teachers feel supported in helping children learn. Collectively, these contribute to a positive social climate that supports children's academic success.

### Engaging Parents Meaningfully

All parents want their children to succeed in school. That's why it's important to engage parents in their child's school experiences on an academic level. Research shows that "when schools engage families in ways that are linked to improving learning, students make greater gains."<sup>4</sup>

Our Family Math Night events are an excellent opportunity for parents to reinforce and build on the learning going on at school. These fun and academically engaging events help parents feel meaningfully connected to their child's learning. Parents walk away from the event knowing they have made an important contribution to the success of their child.

## Achieving High Standards

Research studies have shown a direct link between parental involvement and student achievement.<sup>5</sup> In fact, the most accurate predictor of a student's achievement in school is the extent to which the student's family is able to become involved in their children's education at school, at home, and in the community.<sup>6</sup>

Our Family Math Night events engage families in ways that are linked directly to classroom learning. Parents work one-on-one with their child exploring hands-on, standards-aligned activities that reinforce what goes on in the classroom. They gain skills and strategies that can be used to help their child with math at home contributing to academic success.

In conclusion, the evidence suggests that "parental engagement strategies have the greatest impact when they are focused on linking behaviours of families, teachers and students to learning outcomes, when there is a clear understanding of the roles of parents and teachers in learning, when family behaviours are conducive to learning, and when there are consistent, positive relations between the school and parents."<sup>7</sup> A Family Math Night event is an easy, actionable item in a comprehensive plan designed to build strong family-school partnerships by engaging families in ways that support high academic achievement.

1. Henderson, A.T., and K.L. Mapp. *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement*. National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools, Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 2002.
2. Collaborative for Customer-Based Execution and Strategy, Benchmark K-12 School Study, Rice University, 2017.
3. Henderson, A.T., K.L. Mapp, V. R. Johnson, D. Davies. *Beyond the Bake Sale: The Essential Guide to Family-School Partnerships*. The New Press, New York 2007, 47.
4. Henderson, A.T., K.L. Mapp, V. R. Johnson, D. Davies. *Beyond the Bake Sale: The Essential Guide to Family-School Partnerships*. The New Press, New York 2007, 3.
5. Peters, Thaddues J. *Parental involvement: How does it relate to student behavior and academic success?* Capella University, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2012.
6. Henderson, A. T., & Berla, N. *A new generation of evidence: The family is critical to student achievement* (A report from the National Committee for Citizens in Education). Washington, DC: Center for Law and Education, 1994.
7. Emerson, L., Fear, J., Fox, S., and Sanders, E. *Parental engagement in learning and schooling: Lessons from research*. A report by the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) for the Family-School and Community Partnerships Bureau: Canberra, 2012, 32.

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