

Camp Read S'More

Central Queens Elementary School (Grades K-6 school population: ~250)
2015-2016

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Central Queens Home and School transformed the school gym into “Camp Read S’more” and filled with camp themed literacy activities for parents to do with students.

The project benefitted:

- ✚ **PARENTS** who received fun worksheets and activity ideas to use at home to strengthen literacy.
- ✚ **TEACHERS** were offered the opportunity to see parents and students learning together.
- ✚ **THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY** who benefits from increased use of the school after hours as a place of engagement and community.

How were the parents encouraged to attend?

- ✚ The event was promoted through invitations directly to parents.

Webstory:

There was a lineup to get in. Kids in pajamas clutched books and pencils, ready to join in the fun. There was a lot of chatter “What do you think we will see?” “This is going to be SO fun!” “Can we stay here all night, Momma?” We arrive inside to see the gym at CQES transformed into a giant camping experience, complete with critters and a fishing pond. There are tents and sleeping bags, and several “fires” to sit around. This is not a Brownies or Guides event, this is family literacy engagement! And everyone is having a ball! There are several learning stations set up in the gym – you can go fishing for words, make binoculars and then spy around for animals hidden and in plain sight, reading nooks in tents, and the grand finale - a read along story on the big screen, under dimmed lights and starlight in the ceiling. It was a magical night of learning. Each station was not only fun and engaging for both parent and student, but was directly linked to literacy outcomes, carefully constructed to meet the abilities of the K-6 population. Often the same activity had several levels of difficulty, to ensure everyone had success. The fish in the pond each had a word on them, and students had to sound out and write down each word they “caught”. The animals in the room were part of an alphabet scavenger hunt – find an animal in the room starting with each letter of the alphabet. (using taxidermied animals for the Dept of Wildlife – such a great touch of realism). There was a storytelling and word ordering station, all with a camping theme. Parents were equally engaged as the students, working beside and with their kids to figure out a riddle or to sound out letters and words. The gym was packed with people and smiles – no one wanted to leave!