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# Colorado Family Literacy Education Grant Program Annual Report – Fiscal Year 2005

House Bill 1303 (C.R.S. 22-2-124) established the Colorado Family Literacy Education Grant Program and required an annual report be submitted to Colorado’s Senate and House Education Committees each January.

In August 2003, a \$300,000 grant to enhance Colorado’s existing family literacy program was received from the Daniels Fund. Programs were funded by a competitive RFP process and extended through fiscal year 2006.

**Goal:** Support family literacy program in increasing intensity and quality of services by funding expansion and/or enhancement of existing programs along with planning and training activities.

## Programs:

Eighteen (18) programs received grants through the Colorado Department of Education’s Center for At-Risk Education and the Family Literacy Consortium. Grantees also received funding through Colorado’s Adult Education and Family Literacy Act [AEFLA], Even Start, and/or Migrant Education Even Start programs.

These programs, initially awarded grants in 2003-2004, elected to carryover Daniels Fund monies to continue the expansion of their family literacy activities during 2004-2005.

## Participants:

Number of families participating in intergenerational activities (unduplicated count)	500
Number of adults participating in intergenerational activities (unduplicated count)	648
Number of children [birth to age twelve] participating in intergenerational activities (unduplicated count)	896

## Initiatives:

- ✓ Development of full four-component evening family literacy services in elementary school buildings
- ✓ Provision and subsidization of site-based and home-based intergenerational activities

- ✓ Development of intergenerational take-home activities
- ✓ Development of English-as-A-Second Language (ESL) contracts with an adult education partner to provide services for local **Migrant Education Even Start**
- ✓ Provision of early childhood services for parents enrolled in ESL and General Educational Development (GED) courses
- ✓ Increased utilization of **PAT** curriculum [**Parents as Teachers**] and employment of **PAT-certified** parent educators to provide in-home intergenerational literacy activities
- ✓ Development and implementation of **Eat Smart + Be Smart** family literacy/nutrition curriculum
- ✓ Creation and implementation of program curriculum guides for ESL classes\
- ✓ Basic computer classes for adults
- ✓ Upgrading of student software for adults
- ✓ Computer instruction for and use by ESL students and intermediate Adult Basic Education (ABE) students preparing for the GED exam
- ✓ Instruction and practice in development of **Web Books for Everyone** (WEBBEs), computer-generated autobiographical books
- ✓ Utilization of adult education curriculum to develop interactive-literacy activities for parents and children
- ✓ Developing and scheduling community intergenerational literacy Events
- ✓ Scheduling of Library Nights in public library, where pizza was provided, read-aloud activities in English and Spanish were modeled, and books were checked out
- ✓ Development of themed family nights, incorporating utilization of the *Intergenerational Literacy Activities Notebook*, reading aloud, storytelling, special performances from elementary and intermediate students in after-school programs, and community guests
- ✓ Storytime events for adults and children, facilitated by high school drama students
- ✓ Regularly scheduled visits to public libraries
- ✓ Book purchases for and distributions to families
- ✓ Purchase of age-appropriate children's literacy materials
- ✓ Creation of lending library of literacy 'backpacks' in both English and Spanish (with children's activities) for parents
- ✓ Enhanced parent support, as a component of family literacy programming, emphasizing the understanding of children's developmental stages, and providing strategies for parents to interact with their young children to support early literacy development
- ✓ Additional financial support for staff members, reimbursing teachers for mileage expenses during home-visitation and for the purchase of supplies
- ✓ Hiring of additional infant/toddler instructors

### **Lessons Learned:**

- ✓ Involvement in intergenerational activities promotes adults in assisting their children with homework and not focusing solely on the parents' own educational needs.

- ✓ Participation in intergenerational activities assists adults in progressing through education levels, completing levels, and in passing subtests of the GED exam.
- ✓ The use of drama drives home the importance and joy of storytelling and its relation to literacy development in young children and adults.
- ✓ A family literacy coordinator is essential to make sure that all the components of the program are working together.
- ✓ Optimally, native Spanish-speakers should be in charge of Spanish-language home visits and the registration/orientation process for adult ESL students.
- ✓ As a strengths-based program, working with intensive, individual strategies, family literacy is a model of best practices to be used with high-need children and families.
- ✓ Family literacy programming is a focus of the school district's Minority Student Achievement Task Force and the plans it has for continuing to address the needs of minority students.
- ✓ Opportunities to borrow/check-out literacy materials for use at home positively impacts class attendance.
- ✓ The more relevant activities are for adults, the more likely the entire family will value and participate in the activities.
- ✓ It is important that family literacy events include additional attractions (e. g. performances or special guests) to ensure attendance.
- ✓ In order to have community support for family literacy programming, especially in rural areas, it is essential that all the major stakeholders communicate with each other regularly.
- ✓ Partnering with other community members to provide family-literacy services provides positive public relations and enables programs to discover new resources.
- ✓ Working with other community organizations sparks new ideas for future intergenerational literacy activities.
- ✓ Once partners are identified and relationships established, future planning becomes easier.
- ✓ In economically weak times, it is essential to continue to promote and offer family literacy services.