

Strategic Partnering for Student Success

Cimarron Elementary School
Aurora, CO



COLORADO
Department of Education

Cimarron Elementary school is a Title I school located in the Cherry Creek School District. Over the past several years, the school staff and administration has focused on cultivating strong family and community partnerships to support student learning. The structure of this partnership program has three main components: resources, interventions, and community building.

Resources. Cimarron staff believes that families are better equipped to support their children’s academic and behavioral success when their basic needs are met. With the assistance of the School Nurse and the Title I Family Liaison, the school has worked to remove obstacles for families in needs of medical resources. For example, the school partnered with Essilor Vision Foundation to provide free eye exams and glasses frames to over 30 students in the school.

Cimarron has also partnered with a Denver nonprofit organization to give free dental exams to second graders, the grade at which children are most likely to develop cavities. These students receive a free exam and fluoride sealants when needed. Parents do not need to be present for the exam, though they do sign a permission slip.

Interventions. Students’ academic achievement is Cimarron’s number one priority. As such, families are actively involved in intervention strategies. The school has used Title I funds and READ Act funds to purchase computer-based reading intervention programs. Families of students with a Significant Reading Deficiency (SRD) are invited to attend training sessions about how to support their children’s reading at home. Families who do not have access to a computer can borrow one from the school. Cimarron hosts an end-of-year celebration for students and families who participate in this reading intervention. Additionally, Cimarron’s school library remains open year-round so students and families continue reading over the summer.

Community Building. The Cimarron Parent-Teacher-Community Organization (PTCO) focuses on equity and inclusive excellence to ensure that every member the school community feels welcomes and valued. The group has “courageous conversations” about the perceived impact of race on academic achievement. The school offers free classes for parents to learn English, held Monday-Thursday from 1-3pm. The school also hosts literacy nights and math nights. On average, 300 families attend each event and leave with armfuls of free books.

Over the last three years, Cimarron has seen a steep incline in the School Performance Framework. The principal attributes this to a combination of universal instruction and strong family-school-community partnerships. To schools interested implementing some of these initiatives, the principal recommends building purposeful relationships with parents and having a three-year vision. Changes in academic achievement through partnering do not happen overnight, but they do happen!