



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Families Learning Together puts parents center stage**

**SAN JOSE, CA** – Nearly 400 moms, dads, aunts, uncles, grandparents, guardians and kids of all ages turned out Saturday, March 12 for the Santa Clara County Office of Education’s first Families Learning Together STEAM Event, a one-of-a-kind day of learning featuring parent leaders as the main event facilitators.

Throughout the day-long conference, parents teamed up with content-level experts in the subjects of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math to deliver fun, hands-on sessions in both English and Spanish designed to illustrate how parents can reinforce student learning at home. Topics included simple technology and engineering activities for early learners; a math and physics “race car” activity for middle school students; and an “Engineering your own ‘fridge” experiment for high school students. In the afternoon, families participated in “Tinkerlab” projects to foster creative thinking, which were then displayed at a STEAM showcase closing out the day.

“What I really like about the STEAM event is all of the inspiration my son got for new ideas at home, even new things to make with his Legos,” said Maureen, a parent participant with a son in kindergarten. “I liked working in groups because he got to see from the older kids how their thought process worked to solve problems, and he was getting taught by other kids, which was really nice.”

Families Learning Together is a signature event of the SCCOE’s Parent Engagement Initiative, which empowers parents to improve student achievement by addressing the academic, discipline, nutrition and safety needs of their children. Participants learn specific strategies to support their children, and then later practice their new skills and improve their strategies through collaboration with other parents.

“Our impressive turnout demonstrates that families in our community are eager for opportunities to engage in authentic learning with their children, and with one another,” said Melissa Christie, Director of Curriculum & Instruction. “We’re extremely proud of what our parent leaders have accomplished and are committed to ensuring all families have the skills and mindsets necessary to advocate for their child’s education.”

[View pictures](#) from the event.

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