

In hopes of getting parents on board with education, Bradie Shrum Lower Elementary School has been holding Parent Involvement nights this school year. The first was held in September and revolved around the school's science fair that was held in early October.

"Statistics show that the more parents are involved the better children do in school," said Principal Brent Minton. "We want to create positive images of school with parents and students."

He said he had a conversation this summer with some staff about parent involvement. First grade teacher Stacy Gilbert approached Minton about the idea of parent involvement nights and that's where it all began.

"She has spearheaded the whole concept," he said. "She has planned the meetings and gotten others involved."

Gilbert said she was fortunate to have parents who were active and involved in her education while growing up and she wants all children to have the same experience.

"We are just trying to have fun and show parents that we have a good time in school," she said.

Minton added that the parent nights are another avenue to communicate with parents and to give them opportunities to be involved with their children in a positive manner.

"Often parents tell us they do not know how to help their children improve academically, therefore, we offer help and suggestions," he said.

Minton said the goal is to have one of these activities every month. He said they try to have the same activity on two different days and times to reach more people.

That is one aspect parent Tracy Gray has appreciated.

"I think the parent involvement nights are a good thing because it provides an opportunity to bring parents, kids, and school staff together to have fun and learn at the same time," she said. "Also for those parents that may not be able to participate during class parties, field trips, or other activities during the day it gives them a chance to still be involved with their child and their school and its staff."

Minton said the feedback has been positive and encouraging.

"I think most who have attended have enjoyed the time and interaction," he said. "The kids have enjoyed it. That is what is important."

Minton said the school staff wants to build an open line of communication with parents and be able to provide them with additional resources to work with their children.

“We want to have a positive rapport with our parents, students, and community,” he said. “We hope to get the community involved.”

Minton said the school is planning an activity in December with WSLM and hope to partner with the Stevens Museum in the New Year.