Entry Name: Welcome Boxes

Organization Name: Tacoma Public Schools

Category: Branding/Image Package
Why was this needed?

• Starting school for the first time is a big deal. Most years Tacoma Public Schools gives incoming kindergarten and preschool families several chances to visit their school. In the 2020-2021 school year that was not possible, schools were unable to host open houses and tours due to the pandemic.

• The sooner we can connect with families and start building relationships the more successful students are when school begins.

• “Welcome Boxes” were a way to reach new students and let them know we were excited to meet them and to provide families with some tools to help their student prepare emotionally and academically for school.

• Target audience was incoming preschool and kindergarten students.
What’s in a Welcome Box?

The Public Information Office collaborated with the Early Learning team to create and select all the materials in the Welcome Boxes. Boxes contained some parent specific information, but the content was really aimed at students. Everything was packaged in a colorful box addressed to the student.

1. Welcome note
2. Notebook
3. Crayons
4. Cube Counters
5. Magnifying glass
6. Activity Sheets (English and Spanish)
   a. Writing
   b. Math
   c. Science
   d. Reading
7. Growth Mind Set tips
8. Book
9. Mask
10. Magnetic calendar
11. Information on school lunches
12. Information on immunizations
Design, branding and intentional content

• We wanted students to receive their Welcome Box and instantly know that this was something fun and special. The bright blue box is covered with fun graphics in a sketch and doodle style. The colors and graphic style match our established Tacoma Public Schools brand but take on a very fun and age-appropriate look. There is a bold “Welcome” across the front with “welcome” in our top seven languages below. And when you open the box students are greeted with another message, “We can’t wait to meet you!”

• This simple box helps to communicate our values as an organization; our schools are welcoming and loving places for all students.

• Inside the box the activity sheets were designed to with the same bright color palette as the box and again incorporating doodles and playful graphic elements.

• The activity sheets were directly connected to the other materials provided in the box. For example, the math worksheet provides fun activity suggestions for counting cubes and each box contained 20 counting cubes.

• Each activity sheet was also translated into Spanish and items were printed double sided. Spanish is the most non-English language spoken by Tacoma Public School families, providing materials in Spanish helps us support more students and families.
Branded pieces

Cube activities
Actividades con cubos

CUBE ACTIVITIES

Cubes are a great tool for helping students to learn counting, sorting, color identification and other basic math skills. These activities are designed for students entering kindergarten but can also be used with younger students. Keep activities fun and under ten minutes unless your student wants to keep going.

ACTIVITY ONE: COUNTING
Point at the first cube, say “1”, then point to the second and say “2”, and so on. Ask your student questions, like “What comes next?”

ACTIVITY TWO: MATCHING QUANTITIES
Write numbers 1 to 10 on separate cards. Randomly arrange the number cards in front of your child. Have them name the number on the card and place the same amount of cubes on each card.

ACTIVITY THREE: RECOGNIZING SMALL SETS
Make small sets of cubes (up to 5). Ask your child how many are in each set, without counting. Then ask them to describe the set, for example “There are five cubes. Two cubes are red, and three cubes are blue.”

ACTIVITY FOUR: MAKING TOWERS
Have your student stack the cubes and make different size towers. Then have them arrange in order of height. Ask your student questions like, “Which tower is taller?” and “How many more cubes would it take to make them equal?”

ACTIVITY FIVE: MEASURING EVERYDAY OBJECTS
Use the cubes to measure objects around your house, for example, “The pencil is 7 cubes long.” Measure multiple items and compare.

ACTIVITY SIX: CREATE PATTERNS
Use the cubes to make simple repeating patterns. Ask your student questions like, “What color cube would come next?” and “How would you describe the pattern?”

TACOMA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
EVERY STUDENT. EVERY DAY.
EXPLORE BOOKS TOGETHER!

Exploring books and reading together are important for your student’s reading development. These activities are designed to promote curiosity, foster a love of reading, and build skills while enjoying books together.

START AT THE FRONT

Ask, “What do you see on the cover?”, “Can you describe the picture on the cover?”, and “What do you think this book is about?”

READ TOGETHER

- If the book tells a story: Read each page with feeling and express what is happening. Read each page or use the illustrations to interest your child in learning more about the topic. You may ask, “What do you see?” or “What do you think?”
- If the book contains information: Read each page and use the illustrations to help your child learn. If your child wants to try reading the words on the pages, choose a picture book that is just right for the child. Keep their interest by providing support to ensure they feel successful.

SHARE YOUR THINKING IN DRAWING

Your student can use pictures or words to show what they think about the book. For example, if the book contains the word “happy,” ask your child what they would put in a picture to show happiness. Then, have them write their name on the picture.

PART OF THE BOOK

Together notice the front of the book, the back of the book, and how to hold the book to read it from beginning to end.

PARTES DEL LIBRO

Juntos piénsen la tapa del libro, la portada del libro y cómo sostener el libro para leerlo de principio a fi

LEER JUNTOS

- Si el libro cuenta una historia: Lea cada página con sentimiento y expresión. Puede preguntar: “¿Qué está pasando aquí?” y “¿Qué te parece?”
- Si el libro contiene información: Lea cada página y use el texto para encontrar un tema interesante sobre el que aprender más. Puede preguntar: “¿Qué estás aprendiendo?” y “¿Cómo?” (en la foto/lustración) “¿Qué le estás preguntando?”
- Si el estudiante quiere intentar leer las palabras por su cuenta, genial. También puede optar por leer las imágenes, también está bien. Hágalo divertido y simple, ofrece apoyo para asegurarse de que se sienta exitoso.

DESPUÉS DE LEER, HACER PREGUNTAS

Pregunte: “¿Qué aprendiste?”, “¿Cuál fue tu héroe/heroína de la historia?”, “¿Te gustó este libro?”

¡EXPLORAR LIBROS JUNTOS!

¡Explorar libros y leer juntos es importante para el desarrollo de la lectura del estudiante! Esta actividad está diseñada para promover la curiosidad, fomentar el amor por la lectura y desarrollar habilidades mientras disfrutan de los libros juntos.

PARTE DEL LIBRO

Juntos piénsen la tapa del libro, la portada del libro y cómo sostener el libro para leerlo de principio a fin.

EMPIECE POR EL PRINCIPIO

Pregunte: “¿Qué ves en la tapa?”, “¿Podrías describir la imagen?”, y “¿Qué crees que puede tratarse de este libro?”

COMPARTIR EL PENSAMIENTO DEJANDO UN ESPACIO PARA ESCRIBIR

El estudiante puede usar imágenes o palabras para contar una parte favorita o un dato interesante del libro. Hacerlos parte activa para el libro para contar una nueva historia.

VOLVER AL LIBRO

Busque letras o palabras familiares en cada página. Si el concepto de letras es nuevo para el estudiante, escriba su nombre y busque cada letra en una página del libro.
Branded pieces
My Ideas Notebook
Mi cuaderno de ideas

MY IDEAS NOTEBOOK
For young learners, writing (expressing ideas and thoughts) often occurs in the form of drawing. Drawing allows the student to tell stories, capture information, and convey ideas even before they can write a letter or spell a word. Encourage your student to capture their ideas and thoughts in their notebook.

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT YOUR STUDENT'S WRITING
• Talk with your student about what they want to write before they write it down.
• Encourage them to draw, adding details to make their message clear.
• Support their efforts to use letters and words to convey their ideas. The concept that letters and words convey meaning is important, but spelling is not the focus. Offer any and all support they might need to feel successful.
• If they'd like, write down their ideas as they dictate to you.

WRITING ACTIVITY IDEAS
• Retell a favorite story or part of a story.
• Tell about a happy time or special day/memory.
• Describe a favorite toy, game, movie, video game or place.
• Make a list of the things you do (the student) to be a good friend.
• Draw a favorite item/animal and label its parts.
• Keep a weather log for a week (sunny / cloudy /rainy / hot / warm / cool / cold, etc.)
• Record "A Day in the Life." The student notices and draws/writes about what they did in the morning, the middle of the day, and at night on a chosen day.
Branded pieces
Future Scientist
Futuro científico

FUTURE SCIENTIST
Young learners are full of wonder with how the natural world works. Science allows students to engage in their natural curiosity and ask questions. When your child asks these questions, it is important that we allow them to try and figure out answers themselves, rather than providing the answers.

USING A MAGNIFYING GLASS
Part of understanding the world is looking closely at how objects are made. Try looking at leaves, rocks, sticks, soil or even the sidewalk. As your child investigates these objects with the magnifying glass ask them:

- What do you notice with the magnifying lens that you didn’t before?
- Do you notice any patterns or shapes in the object?
- How do you think this was made?

SCIENCE ACTIVITY IDEAS

ACTIVITY ONE: EXPLORING LEAVES
Gather a few different types of leaves. Have your student use the magnifying glass to investigate which is the same and different. Next, put the leaves under a piece of paper and rub a crayon over them.

ACTIVITY TWO: TALK ABOUT THE WEATHER
What type of clothing should they wear today? What might they wear when it changes to fall? How does the weather impact us every day?

ACTIVITY THREE: LET’S GO TO THE PARK
How do swings work? How can your student make themselves start to move on the swing? What happens when you bump into someone at the bottom of the slide?
**Branded pieces**

**I can do hard things!**

¡Puedes hacer cosas difíciles!

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**You can do hard things!**

**GROWTH MINDSET**

Growth mindset is the belief that abilities and intelligence can change and grow. It promotes a desire to learn, allows us to embrace challenges, helps us persist following failure, and encourages us to keep learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instead of Thinking...</th>
<th>Think this!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can’t do it.</td>
<td>I’ll keep trying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m not good at this.</td>
<td>I can learn to do this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s too hard.</td>
<td>With practice, things get easier.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m afraid to make a mistake.</td>
<td>Mistakes are opportunities to get better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are better at this than me.</td>
<td>I can learn from them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t know how.</td>
<td>I can learn how.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can’t make this any better.</td>
<td>I can improve.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I give up.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**MENTALIDAD DE CRECIMIENTO**

La mentalidad de crecimiento es la creencia de que las habilidades y la inteligencia pueden cambiar y crecer. Promueve el deseo de aprender, nos permite aceptar los desafíos, nos ayuda a persistir después del fracaso y nos anima a seguir aprendiendo.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>En lugar de pensar...</th>
<th>¡Piensa esto!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No puedo hacerlo.</td>
<td>Seguiré intentando.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No soy bueno en esto.</td>
<td>Puedo aprender para mejorar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Es muy difícil.</td>
<td>Con práctica, será más fácil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tengo miedo de cometer un error.</td>
<td>Los errores son la forma en que aprendo a mejorar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son mejores en esto que yo.</td>
<td>Puedo aprender de los demás.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No sé cómo.</td>
<td>Puedo aprender a hacerlo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No puedo mejorar esto.</td>
<td>Siempre puedo encontrar formas de mejorar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Me rindo.</td>
<td>Probaré de otra manera.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Branded pieces

The box!
Distribution

- Nearly 4,000 welcome boxes were distributed to incoming kindergarten and preschool students. The majority of boxes were sent directly to student homes through USPS. Additional supplies were sent to each school to ensure that new students would receive a box.