

# FIVE PALMS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Five Palms Elementary School · 7138 Five Palms · 645-3850

Wednesday, June 08, 2011

To: Dr. Eli Whitney - GAMER Program  
Fr.: Ms. Liz C. Pineda – Principal at Five Palms E.S.  
South San Antonio ISD

Ref: Five Palms and the GAMER Program

Dr. Whitney, as principal of Five Palms I would like to thank you and your GAMER staff for making our school a better learning community. The GAMER program has helped inspire student for a better future and promoted attendance with positive incentives and purpose.

While GAMER has supported Five Palms for a third year, the program successfully addressed and focused on motivating students to stay in school, respect and plan for a good future career which students, parents and teachers love.

Currently all public schools are experiencing a funding crisis that has affected school budgets. While finding the funds is at the hands of our legislatures, you with the GAMER have developed a program to increase funds at the campus level. The school's daily attendance is what determines how much funds will be provided by the state to the district thus the school. At Five Palms our attendance usually fell as number 9 or 10 which is at the bottom of the list based on the district's 10 elementary schools.

Absenteeism at Five Palms was very high. We averaged about 93% attendance on a given week. This all changed when GAMER added another facet to the program that addressed attendance this February, 2011 school year. Five Palms has increased attendance. Our school is no longer at the bottom of the heap. Students were very excited to come to school because of the GAMER perfect attendance incentive which included monthly field trips and weekly rewards i.e. raffling off a basket full of wonderful prizes, tickets to Sea World, Spurs game, movie passes and much more.

When students are in school they learn and our TAKS preliminary scores show the affects of perfect attendance and positive attitude that the GAMER has instilled in our students. The number of discipline referrals to the office has drastically decreased from 35 a week to 4 or 5 a week within the first year the GAMER program intervned 3 years ago and continues to make a big difference at our campus.

Below is a table that demonstrates Five Palms response to the GAMER program academically and in social skills.

## Five Palms Average Discipline Referral to the office:

2009 Before GAMER	with GAMER Oct. 2009	GAMER- 2010	GAMER	2011
48 a day	15 a day	4 a day		some days none
240 weekly	75 weekly	20 weekly		7 a week

## Five Palms Daily Attendance Average:

Mobility rate at Five Palms is very high, about 35% and daily attendance at 92% and some days as low at 86%. On February 2011 the GAMER Perfect Attendance incentives program took off at Five Palms raising our daily attendance to an average of 95 to 97%. For the month of May, all students in 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade with perfect attendance got to go on a field trip to the Corpus Christi, Texas State Aquarium. Wow! The parents, students, staff and community were so excited! Five Palm students had a great learning experience in Corpus Christi. At least 75% of the students had never been to Corpus Christi.

## Academic: TAKS Scores for Five Palms

With the support of GAMER our school TAKS scores have shown yearly improvement. Student can not learn unless he/she is at school and he/she will not learn unless there is a purpose. The GAMER provides the incentives and purpose.

## Current Preliminary TAKS Scores for Five Palms 2011

Subject	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Campus Score
Reading	66%	72%	87%	75%
Math	58%	81%	94%	76%
Writing	NA	75%	NA	75%
Science	NA	NA	67%	67%

In the next school year it is our goal to focus on all students with emphasis on 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students and science. We are not at the top but Five Palms continues to increase in all content areas.

As principal of Five Palms I am so pleased and thankful to be a partner with the GAMER program that has done so much to help our school make positive gain in all aspects of education. Dr Eli Whitney, Five Palms look forward to continuing this wonderful partnership with the GAMER program that motivates education and builds positive character, excites the students of what they can do, and promotes perfect attendance. While the above is an immediate result I know that your heart for the love of children and their future through the GAMER program you will be remembered by the students whose life has changed because of your believe in them. I believe a lot of our students will stay on the right path of life and will continue to develop and achieve their reasonable goals in life to be positive contributors to our society.

Dr. Whitney, Five Palms loves you and your GAMER program for embracing Five Palms and helping to inspire all of our students. There is a Scottish saying, “**Without hope the heart will break**”. Dr. Whitney, you give hope to others and you have a big heart with an inspiring vision.