

TAHPERD Exemplary School Award Recipient Comments

I will say that during the application process we were able to see if we were in compliance with the requirements. If class size or space is an issue on your campus, letting your administration know that you are applying can help with that. Any campus likes to receive recognition and will get on board with helping your program achieve that. Thanks in part to our ES award, our campus budget committee awarded us more money for equipment!

Analisa Cardenas
Roberts Elementary
Lubbock ISD

In 2016, Colonial Hills was selected as a Level 2 Exemplary School by TAHPERD. The application set the bar high for all applicants applying. The application was a motivation for schools to have an established TEKS based health and physical education curriculum with student assessments and evaluations. It also motivated schools to have certified teachers with professional development and professional involvement. The motivation continued to involve appropriate facilities and equipment as well as a rational teacher/student ratio. When I filled it out on behalf of our school, it was a great rubric for all schools to follow.

This was the first stepping-stone towards our healthy school goal. Our wellness committee completed a School Health Index from Healthier Generations. This was our second step. We had to exceed in all six areas: (1) School Health and Safety Policies and Environment, (2) Health Education, (3) Physical Education and other Physical Activity Programs, (4) Nutrition Services, (5) Health Promotions for Staff, and (6) Family and Community Involvement.

At Colonial Hills Elementary, we set a goal to ensure that all children have access to a healthy school environment where they can learn and flourish. We hoped that the children would use their gained knowledge in future endeavors. However, positive changes take time. If your school wants to become a "healthy school," you need to be patient, and you need to get the entire school community involved.

The impact of our healthy school success has been remarkable. When schools actively involve parents and engage community resources, they are able to respond more effectively to the health-related needs of students. Family, school, and community involvement foster partnerships. These partnerships result in sharing and maximizing resources. In addition, they help the youth develop healthy behaviors and promote healthy families.

As a result of this great collaboration, our school has been recognized nationally. We received Gold status by the Alliance of Healthier Generation.

Sincerely,
Coach Terri Pitts M.ED.
Colonial Hills P.E./Health Teacher
Northeast ISD

Receiving an Exemplary School Award was not only a great honor but a great reminder to our students that Health and PE will be a driving force at our school. When students, parents and visitors see the TAHPERD Exemplary banner, they should understand that we place a high value on becoming lifelong learners of wellness.

Eric King
Physical Education Teacher
Seminary Hills Park Elementary
Fort Worth ISD

The THAPERD Exemplary Application has been a great tool for evaluating what we have in place at our school and the areas that we need improvement. There is always room for improvement and the last thing you want for a school is to become complacent with what is being done. That is when growth and success stops. At Turner Elementary we have used the application as a guideline for what you should see on our campus. We meet monthly with our leadership team to discuss ways we can improve. Having reached the Bronze level has been a very gratifying experience for me, and my entire school community. Parents have been curious about the award and after hearing about the details are making connections that the things they heard their children talk about or things their children did in the home, are things our school encouraged to earn this award. They were a direct part of the journey and they contributed. When the families are making these connections, that is when you feel good about receiving such a prestigious award.”

Jackie Caver
Physical Education Specialist
Turner Elementary
Pasadena ISD

In 2014 Bowie Elementary, Lubbock, TX received an Exemplary Status Level 3 from TAHPERD. It was a long process that has taught many people about the importance of Physical Education. Through the process of applying, we had to communicate with Classroom teachers, Principals, and other Administrators in our district as to why Physical Education is an important part of our students’ day. As we went through the process together, we were able to communicate and advocate not only for our program at Bowie Elementary, but for all the Physical Education programs throughout our district.

As we went through the process I got to sit down with my former Principal and discuss in length about scheduling, class sizes and budgets to help improve overall success in Physical Education for all students. I was also able to communicate and advocate for the elementary schools in our district through meetings with District Administrators.

Because of this process our school has had many community partners that share in our quest to improve our students love of movement and lifetime activity. We have 1 community partner that partners with just Physical Education and their employees volunteer 2 times a month to come enjoy and participate in our

Physical Education Program. I partner with a local University to help future teachers see the importance of the love being active. We have had school board members and current Mayor come by just to see what we were up to. So we have had more community support and are able to share in our successes with them.

Since the award Bowie Elementary has had several different principals and all have supported our program and have continued to allow me to participate in community and organizational endeavors. We now have a Run Club before school, participate in Marathon Kids, Jump Rope for Heart, NETgen and many other outstanding organizations. At Bowie Elementary, all grades K-5th come to Physical Education every day for 45 minutes and PK comes every day for 30 minutes. We also have a 15 minute of recess for all students before lunch which has been great for our students. This allows our students at least 60 minutes of activity every day during the school day. Our classroom teachers also participate in GoNoodle, which is paid for by one of our local medical communities.

At the district level we have Content Focus session every 6 weeks so our district Elementary Physical Education teachers can come together and share activities that go directly with our yearly plan. The district has added lead teachers who are responsible for a small number of schools. The lead teachers are able to go out and support their assigned schools by answering questions and advocating needs at the District Level. They are also able to make the District Administrators aware of specific needs at each school, like class sizes and equipment needs.

One of the best things about receiving the Exemplary Status is the connections I have made not only in Lubbock but throughout the state of Texas. As I grow and use more technology I have connected with many Physical Education Teachers and love to share ideas with them through the use of twitter and Facebook. I now have a large screen and am able to use apps and technology to help differentiate so all students learn. Technology also frees me up to help support students who are struggling and also helps me make connections with students.

Applying for Exemplary status was difficult at times, but it has made me more confident. It has provided me an platform to advocate for all our Physical Education programs in Lubbock therefore improving Physical Activity for all students in Lubbock ISD.

Tammy Smith
Physical Education Specialist
Bowie Elementary
Lubbock ISD