

Perrin Jets Flying into a Bright Future

"Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work." -Thomas Edison

The Perrin Learning Center (PLC) is completing our third academic year of opportunity and work since moving from the Fred Douglass campus. We are an alternative high school program that allows our students to achieve accelerated credit through a self-paced program. PLC is a non-disciplinary campus in the sense that students must agree that they will consistently exhibit appropriate and on-task behaviors in order to maintain their enrollment in the program.

Our students are appreciative of the opportunities provided them by PLC. The following is a small sample of our students' comments on their end-of-semester self evaluations:

"Perrin is the foundation of a new start for me. I have taken in all of the good and all of the love from each of my teachers and put it into my schoolwork, pushing me to my limit. PLC is not only a school for me, it is home." "I wake up wanting to come to school." "I can actually take the time I need to understand, and the teachers treat us as if we were their own kids." "I see Perrin Learning Center as my only way out." "I love being at Perrin because I have made a connection with these teachers and staff that I have never made at other schools." "Being here motivates me to do so much more with my life after I graduate."

Graduation and TAKS Success

During the 2009-2010 school year, we set a new record with 83 graduates, accounting for nearly one out of four graduates in Sherman ISD. For the partially completed 2010-2011 school year, we have already congratulated and sent more than 50 new graduates into the next phase of their lives, confident that they possess the knowledge, skills, and fortitude to succeed in the pursuits of their choice.

A stepping stone toward graduation is, of course, passing the four Exit Level TAKS tests in English/Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. PLC prepares a TAKS Individual Intervention Plan for each student so that they know specific objectives to focus on in their preparations for testing. Mandatory TAKS labs for the four core areas are conducted for several weeks prior to testing. These labs, in conjunction with regularly assigned coursework, provide our students with the tools they need to be successful. While almost all graduates will have passed their TAKS tests prior to completing their coursework, PLC offers the opportunity to retake TAKS for those students who have not. This has allowed many of our students to complete graduation requirements and proudly move on with their lives, rather than dropping out without a diploma.

Perrin Learning Center

Principal: Brett Counce Phone: (903) 891-6680



Student Recognition and Positive Behavioral Supports

PLC staff and students gather in the library on Fridays to enjoy some time for kudos. Students who have perfect attendance or have completed a course are recognized by name. Each teacher presents their student-of-the-week with a certificate and some positive comments to the group about what the student has accomplished to earn the title. One student gains public speaking experience each week by presenting a thought for the week. Themes for this presentation have included compassion, character, integrity, leadership, and perseverance.

Many weeks, the Friday fun is capped by a graduation or two (or three or four). Our graduates bring family and friends to share in this joyous acknowledgement of their achievement. Teachers and graduates share heart-

warming, humorous, and inspirational conversation with the group before the climatic presentation of the certificate of coursework completion.

PLC recognizes and motivates appropriate student choices with several formal and informal positive behavioral supports. Under the formal system, students earn points for perfect attendance, course completions, and being recognized as a student-of-the-week. Various privileges are earned at different point levels. These include the ability to enjoy food and drink in the classroom, going to lunch early, and early dismissal once per week.

PLC held Portfolio Night on March 7. Students were invited to bring family members to show off some of their hard work, and give their teachers a chance to brag about them

to their parents. Free pizza was provided by Dominos, and delicious homemade chocolate chip cookies were enjoyed by all who came. Students who participated in Portfolio Night and the GCC Field Trip were further rewarded with banana splits on March 10.



Our Friends in the Neighborhood- Grayson County College

PLC has established a tradition of taking a field trip each semester for our students to tour Grayson County College. On March 9, students broke up into small groups and were led on an informative walking tour of GCC by both student and staff ambassadors. We were fortunate to visit academic build-



ings and observe hands-on classes in several interesting departments that included health care, computer science, drama, criminal justice, auto body repair, welding, heating and air conditioning technology, and cosmetology. Our students learned firsthand about the affordability of GCC, and of many ways to obtain financial assistance. We extend a big THANK YOU to the friendly staff and students at GCC.

PLC and GCC have recently begun another partnership in a dual credit program. This program allows PLC students to begin taking certain Career and Technology Education classes at GCC prior to their graduation from high school. Hardworking students could obtain a vocational license or certificate from GCC around the time of their graduation from PLC! The program is open to both juniors and seniors.

Student Health and Fitness

PLC students have been able to pump themselves up with new fitness equipment this year, thanks to a grant, written by Kristal Brown, from the Hudson Foundation. Two elliptical machines and a universal weight machine with multiple stations keep our students healthy and fit. The equipment, along with health and nutrition classes, goes a long way towards creating lifelong habits that ensure good health.

PLC Teen Parent Program and Early Head Start

PLC is proud to provide special programs for teen parents and their children on campus. They attend parent education classes three times a week. They learn information on prenatal and postnatal care, child development, parenting skills, nutrition, health, exercise, and career preparation. PLC is thankful for the grants and donations from community agencies that have allowed us to provide our students with important items such as new child safety seats for autos, clothing, diapers, and hygiene products. In addition to education, the program gives our young parents an environment of encouragement and nurturing, allowing them to graduate and become successful in their future lives at home and in the workplace.

One very important way PLC provides for our teen parents is through the Early Head Start program on campus. Many classrooms are devoted to taking care of infants and toddlers, while their parents attend classes down the hallway. This helps to alleviate anxiety, as parents and children are in the same location, and any problems that might arise can be handled quickly. The Early Head Start staff provides both TLC and developmental activities to stimulate the young minds they have been entrusted with. Their efforts help the youngsters be ready to start school with well developed cognitive and social skills.

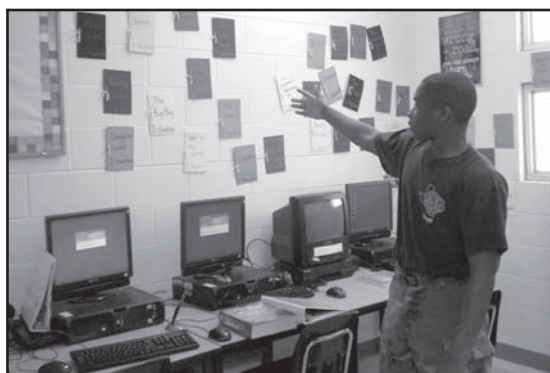


SISD Boot Camp

Principal: Brett Counce Phone: (903) 786-6326

Boot Camp News...

It has been a busy and exciting spring semester at Boot Camp. A very special "thank you" is due to the Sherman Education Foundation. Boot Camp was selected as one of the recipients of the SEF's Circle of Success projects. The grant monies will be used to purchase a Smart Response XE interactive response system, which will allow students great flexibility in learning methods and provide many fun alternative assessments. Students will be able to respond to questions in an open-ended format, input mathematical equations, and key



in scientific functions. The students will be able to enjoy this unique and fun learning format in all their core classes. Everyone at Boot Camp is anxiously awaiting a turn to explore this new addition!

The students are already reaping the benefits of their hard work in a new program available to them at Boot Camp this year. They have had the opportunity to participate in the Read 180 program. This comprehensive literacy program is available to targeted students who come to Boot Camp with reading deficits. It includes many components such as vocabulary development, direct instructions, spelling, and reading comprehension. By providing high interest novels that are reading-level appropriate, students stay engaged in their learning and make real strides toward grade level reading. Several of our students have made multiple grade levels of progress in just a matter of months. This gives them an opportunity to return to their home campus with new academic skills and a confidence in their abilities. At Boot Camp we strive to show each student that education is the way to a better lifestyle, and Read 180 is helping make the difference.

Though Spring Break offered some reprieve from class work, there were

many exciting activities happening at Boot Camp. Students who earned all A's and B's on their report card received the special privilege of attending a pizza party and movie, hosted by the Boot Camp case management team. There was plenty of pizza eating and soda drinking, not to mention relaxing for the movie! The students also participated in a competition called "A Minute to Win It." Some of the challenges included cup stacking, M&M sorting, and various balancing tasks. The winner of each challenge earned extra points toward completion of the program. The boys also enjoyed participating in a Field Day where they competed in fun games such as a water balloon toss, egg roll, balloon pop, sprints, and bear crawls. This week provided a well deserved break for some hard working Boot Campers.

On March 22, The Texas Unit of the Covenant Players performed for the Boot Camp and Juvenile Detention Center students in the new gym. The unit was led by Pam Cowser, who was accompanied by David and Alison Garland. The trio performed several one-act plays with themes targeting life issues of teens. The plays addressed issues such as sexual harassment, effects of alcohol abuse, moral subrogation, and dishonesty. There was a question and answer session following each play, which led to some very good comments and discussion from the students.