

## OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

### CAMPUS

Seminary Hills Park  
Elementary School  
*Recognized 2005-06*

### DISTRICT

Fort Worth ISD

### INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION

2004-05

### PROGRAM SUMMARY

The **goal** of Seminary Hills Park Elementary’s program is to improve student performance in science.

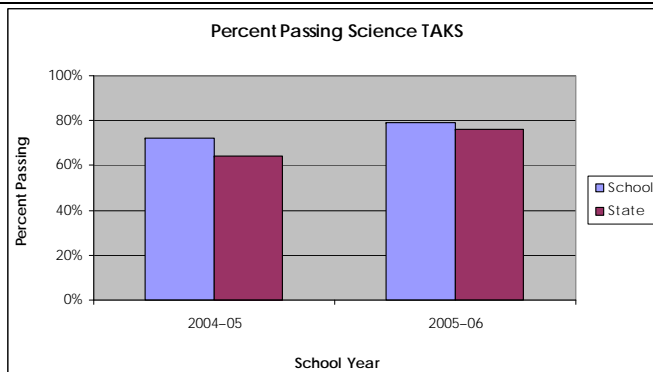
**Key strategies** include school-wide planning and design of an outdoor learning center and creation of volunteer opportunities for staff, students, parents, and community members.

**Outcomes** include an increase in the percentage of students passing science TAKS.

### EFFECTIVENESS

The program was implemented with the opening of the campus in 2004-05. In that year, the percentage of grade 5 students passing science TAKS was 72%, compared to the state average of 64%.

After implementation, the percentage of grade 5 students passing science TAKS increased to 79% passing in 2005-06, compared to the state average of 76%.



Source: AEIS

**CONTEXT/IMPLEMENTATION**

*Demographics (2005–06)*

Grade Levels Served		EE-5		Campus Enrollment		560	
<b>Ethnic Distribution</b>				<b>Economically Disadvantaged</b>		526	93.9%
African American	30	5.4%	<b>Limited English Proficient (LEP)</b>		328	58.6%	
Hispanic	479	85.5%	<b>At-risk</b>		393	70.2%	
White	35	6.3%	<b>Mobility (2004–05)</b>		78	20.5%	
Asian/Pacific Islander	12	2.1%					

Source: AEIS

*Background*

- Seminary Hills Park opened in 2004–05. Students and teachers from nearby overcrowded schools were relocated to the new campus.
- The school’s student population was 94% economically disadvantaged and 70% at risk in 2005–06.
- The principal assigned to the campus was a first-time principal.
- Students in the urban neighborhood served by the school had limited access to informal science learning opportunities such as visits to farms, museums, or nature areas.
- Staff wanted to build a sense of community at the newly opened school.

*Procedures*

- The school applied for and received a \$30,000, three-year grant from a foundation.
- In the first year of the project, the campus identified a task force that created student design guidelines for determining the location, content, and layout of the outdoor classroom.
- Students then submitted designs, and teachers integrated development of the project into all curriculum areas and grades. For example, mathematics classes took measurements around the school to determine possible sites for the classroom. Writing classes reported on the project. Science classes investigated different types of plants as potential crops for the project.
- The school designed ways for community members to be involved in the project. Parents, staff, students, and community volunteers provided many hours of work in developing the site.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instructional activities in the second year of development focused on scientific observation. Each grade selected an area of the classroom and a crop to cultivate. Over the year, students observed crops and collected data.</li> <li>• Future plans included the creation of a small amphitheater, art displays, benches, picnic tables, and more walkway area.</li> </ul>		
	<p><b>CAMPUS/DISTRICT STAFF</b></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>Aileen Martina, Principal</b>                      Seminary Hills Park Elementary School                      Fort Worth ISD                      5037 Townsend Dr.                      Fort Worth, TX 76115                      817-920-1270</p> <p><b>Jerri Harris, Assistant Principal</b>                      Seminary Hills Park Elementary School                      Fort Worth ISD                      5037 Townsend Dr.                      Fort Worth, TX 76115                      817-920-1270</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top; border-left: 1px solid black;"> <p><b>Dr. Melody Johnson, Superintendent</b>                      Fort Worth ISD                      100 North University Drive                      Fort Worth, TX 76107                      817-871-2000</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><b>Aileen Martina, Principal</b>                      Seminary Hills Park Elementary School                      Fort Worth ISD                      5037 Townsend Dr.                      Fort Worth, TX 76115                      817-920-1270</p> <p><b>Jerri Harris, Assistant Principal</b>                      Seminary Hills Park Elementary School                      Fort Worth ISD                      5037 Townsend Dr.                      Fort Worth, TX 76115                      817-920-1270</p>	<p><b>Dr. Melody Johnson, Superintendent</b>                      Fort Worth ISD                      100 North University Drive                      Fort Worth, TX 76107                      817-871-2000</p>
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*The Texas Education Agency (TEA) is seeking feedback about the best practice summaries.*

*Please take one minute to answer the feedback survey (six questions).*

[Best Practices Feedback Survey](#)