



Brownsville Independent School District
Fine Arts Department
708 Palm Blvd., Brownsville, Tx. 78520
956-982-3730 * Fax: 956-547-8050
Mr. Timothy Jones
Advisor of Color Guard/Theatre Arts

March 22, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

I first saw *The Drama Game File* curriculum program and met Jonas Basom at the annual TETA Theatrefest convention in Houston. Being the advisor for Theatre Arts K-12 for Brownsville ISD, I immediately saw the value of the program and began working with Jonas to convince other administrators in our district to implement the DGF curriculum and training.

We were able to secure federal stimulus money to fund *The Drama Game File* as a key strategy to help us 1) fulfill the mandates of Texas Senate Bill 815 which requires drama to be taught to elementary students, 2) meet the TEKS for K-12 theatre arts instruction, and 3) implement drama as a beneficial teaching method for our mostly ESL student population. We purchased the complete kit (CD/Book/Cards) for one teacher of every grade level for every elementary school in BISD (221 teachers) and two hands-on staff development days of teacher training.

Jonas' professional development in-service training for our teachers received overwhelming appreciation and left the teachers asking for more! On two occasions, Jonas led 120+ elementary teachers for a full day of hands-on experiences that each teacher could easily implement in their classrooms. Jonas kept them engaged and participating throughout the day. They experienced learning through drama and making connections to literacy, social skills, and teaching across the curriculum. Jonas made them feel comfortable to lead drama on their own with a complete classroom management system. With 36 BISD elementary campuses, there are always a few disgruntled individuals that have been-there, done-that and bring a negative attitude to the training. Some of the attendees felt forced to be there by their principal. Their resistance and negativity started the day, but Jonas handled it beautifully. By noon, he had them hooked and they all returned after lunch excited to begin the second session! By the end of the day, Jonas had changed teachers from nervous, inexperienced, and reluctant observers to excited and confident participants who wanted more!

The Drama Game File is an excellent program that accomplishes multiple educational objectives. The lesson plans are clear, concise, and easy for the generalist teacher to implement. The cross referencing helps the teacher find games that integrate with language arts, social studies, science, the arts, and all school subjects. The Character Cards Box Set is sturdy, kid-proof, and is great for building vocabulary and initiating creative expression. This is not an add-on program, but trains teachers how to plug in drama activities as a strategy to reach kinesthetic learners. The games develop key classroom and 21st century skills such as collaboration, imagination, and creative problem solving. The free TEKS supplement available online is user-friendly and shows our teachers where to find material on *The Drama Game File* to meet the theatre TEKS in grades K-12. Overall, we found *The Drama Game File* superior to the SRA Theatre Arts textbooks.

The customer service provided by Jonas and the Drama Education Network has been outstanding. Jonas crafted a powerpoint presentation for me to share with other administrators about the benefits of the program. He provided teacher evaluations and follow-up assignments and surveys to track teacher use of the materials. The attention to follow-through, special requests, and going above and beyond has kept the school district returning for his products and services.

Regards

Timothy L. Jones

Paul Flinchbaugh
Supervisor of Instrumental Activities

Teodoro Estrada
Supervisor of Visual Arts

Dennis Pitcock
Supervisor of Choral Activities