**Name/Title: Game Festival**

**Purpose of Event:** To have students and parents partake in a noncompetitive field day.

**Suggested Grade Level:** K-5

**Materials Needed:** All equipment needed to play the chosen games, teachers and volunteers to work the centers, center signs.

## Description of Idea

At the end of the school year, I review several of the activities we have engaged in during the school year. After a month of practice and review, I plan a **Family Game Festival** which consists of 16 different activity centers around the school.

During the reviewing process, I take students on a tour of the festival layout so they know where every activity will be located. The students are also instructed to plan a meeting place for friends and family when released from class for the festival. I also make sure the students understand they only have 3 choices on **Festival Day**. They should be:

- playing a game
- moving to a new game or resting or
- eating or relaxing with friends at the rest area

The **Game Festival** begins at 8:00 am and ends at 11:00 am. At 8:00 am our school principal announces the beginning of the festival and gives students permission to leave the building. The students then begin wandering freely around school grounds searching for friends, family, and their favorite activities.

The activities are all supervised by a teacher or assistant/volunteer who are assigned a post for 45 minutes, after which, they roam the grounds supervising where they choose or partaking in the activities with the students. Every center is marked with a sign which includes a brief description of the game for the adults supervising and the

parents wishing to participate. The students must know how to play the activity because the teacher/assistant supervising is not able to teach the game. If a student is not sure how to play or creates a problem in a game, he/she is asked to find a new game. The games/activities I use are not limited to a set number of students, so students wandering in and out of the games at anytime is acceptable.

The following is a list of the 16 activities used in the **Game Festival**.

- dance in the gym
- tetherball
- 4 square
- jump rope
- scavenger hunt in the school's land lab
- tic tac toe
- cricket
- bocce ball
- flag tag
- beach ball volleyball
- an obstacle course in the school cafeteria
- prison ball
- triple crown baseball
- relay races
- a rest area

The students roam from game to game and area to area. This setup works well because our school is arranged in families (K-4 in a hallway makeup a family). Within these families, students have buddies or partners from a different grade level which they have worked with all year. Students are encouraged to travel with buddies and older or younger siblings as well as friends.

One week prior to the festival, I send home a letter to parents inviting them to attend and participate as a family. I also include other important information like having students wear hats, tennis shoes, suntan lotion, and having

students bring a sack lunch for the school-wide picnic at 11:00 am and letting parents know that swimsuits are not appropriate. In addition, I include the $.50 cost of concessions sold by one of our "families" as a fund-raiser. Having the **Family Game Festival** helps promote community involvement, parent involvement, and good old fashioned fun!

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Submitted by **Stephanie Faulkner** who teaches at Pecan Valley Elementary School in San Antonio, TX.
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