

The School Archive Project involves a large vault secured in a well lighted, central location of the school passed several times each school day by all students. Every new student is introduced to this Achievement & Goals Archive when they enter. They will know that before they graduate from the 8th grade they will be writing a letter to themselves to be added to the letters already stored in the Archive from previous classes. Their letters will be available to them the week of Thanksgiving the 10th year after their graduation from middle school. When they return to pick up their letters at their class reunion they know they will also be invited to share their recommendations for success with students in the school at that time, their "10 years of wisdom talk."

The letter 8th grade students write may become a valued family history document. It should be a snapshot of their lives to date, a part of their written history. It will include stories about their friends, family, neighborhood, and school, as well as anything else from the history of their lives to date. They also write about their goals for the future. The letter should be limited to 4 sheets of paper, front and back if needed, so it will fit inside a normal business size envelope. They address the envelope to themselves either at their current home address, or, in care of a relative or friend, someone who will probably still be at the same address in 10 years. Alumni no longer able to receive mail through the old address they had placed on the envelope will need to contact the school between Thanksgiving and May of that 10th year to either pick up their letter or to provide a correct address for mailing.

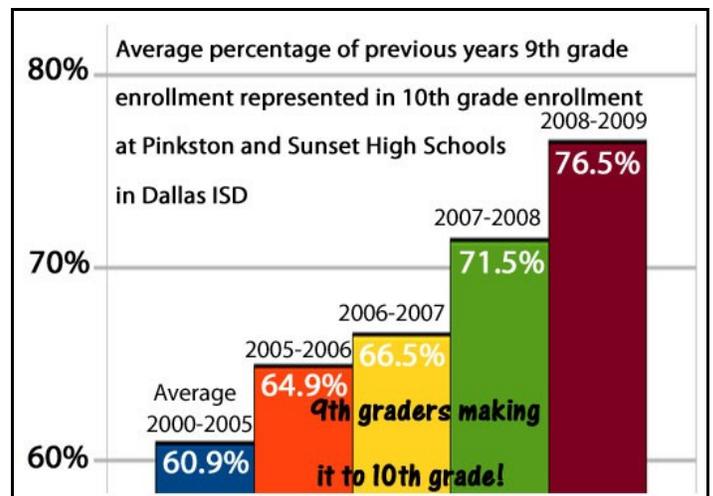
Nobody can promise a student that they will be the ones who open up their letter in 10 years. There are accidents in life. Two Quintanilla students died tragically the summer and fall of 2005, one in a drowning accident during the summer and another in an automobile accident that fall. Such realities of life must be spoken of before students write their letters. In a situation when a student dies this letter may become an especially valuable family possession for a grieving family. **Students must know this letter may become a treasured part of their written family history. Most probably they will share it someday with their spouse, children, and grandchildren.**

The "Ten Years of Wisdom Talk" mentoring component will start once Quintanilla alumni begin

returning to their 10-year class reunion to pick up their letters. In October of 2014 notices will be mailed to each of the addresses on the envelopes addressed by the graduates from 2005. The notice will welcome those graduates back to pick up their letters giving the date and time during Thanksgiving week of the opening of the Achievement & Goals Archive. At this reunion they will also be asked to share with the current students any wisdom they have gained of life during the past 10 years. Thinking of giving this "10 years of wisdom talk" will encourage and direct alumni as the years pass leading toward their return. This talk is planned for November so the 8th grade students will have more to consider during the 6 months before they write their own letters for the Achievement & Goals Archive in May.

The Letters remaining in the vault and not picked up will be mailed by the 10th anniversary of their writing to all students who have not yet picked them up. The letters will be mailed in May to the addresses placed on the envelopes 10 years earlier, or to corrected addresses received. This will allow for room in the Archive for the new letters current Quintanilla 8th graders will write by the end of May to continue the tradition.

Beginning in 2006 photos were taken of each Language Arts class as they posed in front of the School Archive before each placing their letter into the Archive themselves. Copies of this photo, with information about plans for their 10-year reunion on the back, quickly became prized student possessions.



Most Quintanilla students attend high school at Pinkston or Sunset where dropout rates have been going down since the Archive Project started!

These guidelines are for any school to freely modify and use for setting up their own School Archive Project. A focus on personal history & plans motivates students to work harder.

See www.StudentMotivation.org.