

Teacher of the Month – October 2026
Banyan Elementary School – Suzan Gainer-Smith

Banyan Elementary School proudly nominates Suzan Gainer-Smith as the October 2026 Teacher of the Month.

For nearly two decades, Ms. Gainer-Smith has been an integral part of the Banyan Elementary family, leaving a lasting impact on countless students, families, and colleagues through her unwavering dedication and service.

Ms. Gainer-Smith is the definition of a committed educator. Her outstanding attendance, exceptional work ethic, and genuine love for children and families have earned her a stellar reputation throughout our school community. Over the years, she has taught multiple generations of Banyan families, and it is not uncommon for parents to request her specifically as their child's teacher because of the positive experiences they had with her themselves or through family members. Families are often excited when they learn their child has been placed in her class, a testament to the trust and respect she has cultivated within the community.

One of Ms. Gainer-Smith's most celebrated contributions is her leadership in organizing Banyan's annual *Black History Show*, a cherished tradition that highlights student talent, cultural pride, and community engagement. Through her passion and dedication, this event continues to be a source of pride for our school.

Beyond the classroom, Ms. Gainer-Smith is a valued colleague who is always willing to lend a helping hand, offer encouragement, and support those around her. As a woman of faith, she consistently uplifts others through prayer, compassion, and kindness. At the same time, she is a strong advocate who is not afraid to speak up for herself, her students, her colleagues, and what she believes is right. Her courage, authenticity, and "feisty" personality make her both respected and admired by those who know her.

Suzan Gainer-Smith embodies the heart of Banyan Elementary. Her years of service, dedication to students and families, commitment to excellence, and positive influence on our school community make her an outstanding and deserving recipient of the Sunrise Teacher of the Month recognition.