

Special Education NEWS

Volume 1

Issue 2

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Se habla español

Muchas escuelas tienen personal bilingüe que con frecuencia ayudan a los padres que hablan poco inglés.

Si necesita ayuda con la traducción para hablar con el grupo de maestros de educación especial de su hijo, favor de comunicarse directamente con su escuela. Si necesita asistencia adicional, póngase en contacto con el Departamento de Educación Especial de FBISD al (281) 634-1143 para ayudar a facilitar la comunicación entre la escuela y el padre.

The Fort Bend Independent School District, an Equal Opportunity Educational Provider and Employer, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sex, national origin, disability and/or age, military status, genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by law in educational programs or activities that it operates or in employment decisions. Additionally, the District does not discriminate against an employee or applicant who acts to oppose such discrimination or participates in the investigation of a complaint related to a discriminatory employment practice. Employment decisions will be made on the basis of

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16-17 School Year ...Starting off right!

The 2016-17 school year officially started on August 22 as FBISD welcomed back close to 74,000 students. As a department, Special Education welcomed 4,952 returning students. The FBISD Special Education Department started off the 2016-17 school year committed to carrying out the district's vision by providing quality instructional opportunities for all students, beginning with the first day of instruction. FBISD is dedicated to providing an educational system that will enable all students to reach their full potential.

Starting Services in FBISD

The summer is a time when many families re-locate which results in a transfer of services. For families that are moving into FBISD from a district in Texas or from another state, a Transfer ARD is conducted. A Transfer ARD is a legally constituted ARD and required members of the ARD Committee must attend. At this time, FBISD campuses have conducted over 250 Transfer of Service ARDs. This initial meeting is needed to discuss the Special Education services the student was receiving in the previous district and to develop the services to be provided in Fort Bend ISD for an interim period. Another ARD will be held soon after to verify the student's special education eligibility and to create an individualized program for the year based upon current information. For in-state transfers, this timeframe is within 30 school days of the Transfer of Services ARD. Students transferring from another state; the Initial Evaluation Timeline applies. For additional information about transferring your child's special education services to FBISD, contact your campus special education department.

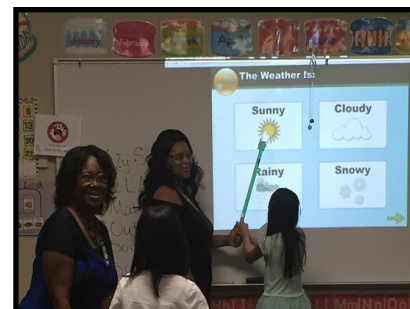
Start Communicating



Effective communication is the most useful tool to establish a positive working relationship with parents or guardians. Fort Bend ISD is committed to providing parents with meaningful participation in their child's educational programming decisions. With an ever growing diverse population, FBISD services students with many different home languages. As a result, many times an interpreter is needed to help facilitate the partnership between the school and parents. The interpreter serves a neutral role with the sole purpose of providing accurate and complete transmissions of messages from one language into another language, allowing the parent and school based members to communicate. There may be some instances where the parent does not feel an interpreter is needed, but the school based members may request one. In this instance, the parent may fully understand English, but the school will rely on the interpreter to assist them in fully understanding the parent's meaning as they work collaboratively to create the student's individualized education program. The use of interpreters allows the barrier of a second language to be removed as school members and parents work collaboratively toward creating positive learning outcomes for our students.



Pecan Grove Elementary teacher Kirby Jan starts the school year off right with an interactive educational experience which engages student Anabel Edwards.



Sugar Mill Elementary teacher Lorry Batiste and para professional Tammie Fajuyigbe started teaching from the moment the students entered the room.

Department Highlights...



Photo courtesy of FBISD's David Hernandez ~ August 2016

Starting a new experience

In Summer 2016, Dana Walker was appointed to the National Certification of Educational Diagnosticians (NCED) Board of Directors ~ Publicity Committee. Dana currently works for the Brazoria-Fort Bend Regional Day

School Program for the Deaf (RDSPD) where she has educated children with a variety of "Abilities" in all subject areas in grades ranging from Kindergarten to 8th grade. While attending Stephen F Austin State University, Dana became interested in sign language and eventually obtained her bachelor's degree in education with a primary focus in Deaf Education. Dana extended her education by attending a summer program at Gallaudet University in Washington D.C. which prepared her to become a certified interpreter for the deaf. After teaching for six years, Mrs. Walker applied to the Educational Diagnostician program at Houston Baptist University and successfully achieved a Masters in Education Degree. For the past 10 years, Dana has served as the RDSPD Diagnostician where she uses her ability to assess and diagnose the learning potential and differences in student's with an Auditory Impairment.

Dana has a strong commitment to being a life-long learner and continually holds herself to a high-standard of practice in all she does. She is both a Registered Professional and Nationally Certified Educational Diagnostician, she has published work for Autism Speaks, written special education blogs and frequently trains parents of children with autism on the importance of safety in the home and community. We are very grateful for the knowledge and expertise Dana has brought to the Fort Bend County area and look forward to seeing her expand her impact on a national level as she carries out her three-year term as an NCED Board of Directors member.

*** WALK NOW FOR *
AUTISM SPEAKS**

**Join Fort Bend ISD for the
2016 Walk Now for Autism Speaks**

at

Minute Maid Park

Sunday, September 18th

Opening Ceremony begins at 12:30 pm

No fees to participate

**To join the FBISD Special Services Team,
click on the following link:**



**For more information, visit the [Autism Speaks](#) website or contact
[Alexis Toupard Greer](#) ~ Program Manager—Autism Support Services**

Walk Now for Autism Speaks is an inspirational and impactful opportunity to raise money and awareness to help change the future for all those who struggle with autism. Participating in Walk Now for Autism Speaks empowers you to make a difference and provides you with an opportunity to honor someone with autism. Everyone is touched by autism in a different way. Join us and share your personal story as we unite our communities and raise funds to: 1) Fund biomedical research into the causes, prevention, treatments, and possible cure for autism, 2) Raise public awareness about autism and its effects on individuals, families and society, 3) Bring hope to all who deal with the hardships of this disorder, 4) Bring together the autism community as one strong voice to urge the government and private sector to take action.

Starting Childcare...

For the 2016 Parent Education Workshops

Parents and children are invited to attend the Parent Education Meetings. Each month we will focus on a particular topic or intervention to assist parents of children with disabilities. As a new service to our families, we will be providing child care. While parents participate in these informative meetings, the children will be supervised by FBISD staff / volunteers and given a snack. Both adult and childcare registration for these meetings is required. Parents wishing to access childcare will be prompted to do so while registering for this event either online or by calling the FBISD Special Education Department. To assist in appropriately planning and staffing for these meetings, parents are asked to register (parent attendance and childcare needs) 5 days before each meeting date.

October 4th from 6:00—8:00 p.m.

Special Education "Gallery Walk"

Location: Sullivan Elementary [Map](#)

Parents will have the opportunity to voice specific topics of interest or need to help strategically drive the focus of our upcoming Parent Education Meetings for the 2016-17 school year.

November 1st from 6:00—8:00 p.m.

Topic to be determined based upon "Gallery Walk"

**Register by September 30th
for the October 4th
workshop.**

**Call 281-634-1143 or
register online by clicking
the following link:**



Take Home Tip...

Performance Starts With Sleep

Age	Sleep Needed	Bed Time	Lights Out	Wake-Up Time
4	11.5	7:00	7:15	6:45
5	11	7:30	7:45	6:45
6	10.75	7:45	8:00	6:45
7	10.5	8:00	8:15	6:45
8	10.25	8:15	8:30	6:45
9	10	8:30	8:45	6:45
10	9.75	8:45	9:00	6:45
11	9.5	8:30	8:45	6:15
12 & 13	9.25	8:45	9:00	6:15
14	9.0	9:00	9:15	6:15
15	8.75	9:15	9:30	6:15
16	8.5	9:30	9:45	6:15

*Typical Sleep Requirements in Childhood. From *Solve Your Child's Sleep Problems*, by Richard Ferber, M.D., Director, Center for Pediatric Sleep Disorders, Children's Hospital, Boston. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1985.

Good sleep is important for children as it directly impacts mental and physical development. Many times, a child's performance in daily activities is directly impacted by the amount of sleep they have gotten. How much sleep is enough depends on your child's age (refer to above chart).

Sleep deprivation is common for many children and youth. However, not getting enough sleep can cause many problems in children, teens, and young adults. Common problems include: irritability, mood swings, difficulty following directions, poor attention / concentration, and inconsistent school performance.

As children age, there is an increasing demand on their time from school, homework, sports, and other extracurricular or social activities. Experts say the primary key is creating an environment for your child that is conducive to sleep (dark, cool, and quiet). Here are a few additional tips you can do to ensure your child / teen is getting enough quality sleep:

- Set a regular bedtime and consistently stick to it (even on weekends)
- Take away technology – keep electronics out of the bedroom. Create a "charging station" in the kitchen so that your teen is not distracted or woken by text messages, phone calls, or playing games – parents are encouraged to do this with their devices as well to set a good example.
- Quiet activities before bed time is conducive to a good night's sleep – avoid electronics – try reading a book or having a quiet conversation about the day with your child / teen, etc.

Identify barriers to healthy sleep in your child's life and then strive to alter these behaviors and patterns to overcome these factors. Work with your child to develop good sleep habits so that they grow up with a healthy appreciation of the benefits and importance of quality sleep.



Special Olympics

The FBISD Special Olympics Team "The Falcons" is open to FBISD students ages 8-22 (students ages 6 & 7 may begin a training program but cannot compete).

Special Olympics is designed for students who have been identified as having an intellectual disability both in general learning and in adaptive skills or a developmental disability with significant functional limitations in both general learning and adaptive skills. Participation in Special Olympics requires a completed Medical Release and Emergency Contact form to participate in both games and practices. Below is the Special Olympics schedule for the remainder of the 2016-17 school year:

Volleyball*	Now—November / Wheeler Field House	Contact
Bowling	October—December / Stafford Lanes	Contact
Basketball	January—March / Lake Olympia M.S.	Contact
Soccer	March—May / Quail Valley Elementary	Contact
Track	March—May / Dulles High School	Contact

(*If interested in Volleyball, email the contact prior to 9/21 to be eligible for competition play.)

For a copy of all Athlete forms, additional contact information / schedules or to find further information on volunteering for Special Olympics in Fort Bend, visit the website at the following link:

[Fort Bend Falcons Website](#)

Parent Perspective: *Starting this School Year*

Below is an encouraging note from some wonderful parents about sending their children back to school. This is their perspective on how they purposefully cultivate a relationship with the school so that their children experience success from the beginning.

"The start of school is an exciting and stressful time for every family. For families with a special needs child, the start of school can also be a scary time. As parents of a child with unique learning and physical needs, we know that the "normal school schedule" doesn't always apply. There are accommodations and modifications that are essential to success, there may be personal health needs and social skills assistance that will be needed from day one. This is where we feel communication comes in. Instead of sitting and worrying and trying to troubleshoot every unknown ourselves, we open the lines of communication early with our school. We call administration with questions, and we make sure to meet teachers and talk about the upcoming year. Every year we are at Sugar Mill, we are reminded that we aren't alone. We are always met with teachers and staff who are totally committed to our child's success. It's hard to let your baby go back to school on the first day, but we know that all of our children are going into an environment built for their success because we have all worked together to make it happen!"

~ Sugar Mill Elementary Parents

Around Town...

Activities

If you are looking for fun family activities to do that accommodate to your exceptional child, your family may consider the following:

NEW Fort Bend Children's Discovery Center [Website](#)

This wonderful museum opened its doors in August and is located at the historic Imperial Sugar Plant. The museum is committed to reaching all Fort Bend county residents and therefore caters to families with special needs children. The museum partnered with the Westview School to create a downloadable Social Story (with pictures and without pictures) for children that benefit from being prepared for new experiences, new places, and new people. The museum also provides ear defenders for children with noise sensitivity. Families will find hands-on activities with step by step directions and visual supports to make the museum interactive and accessible to a wide range of children. For ticket information, museum hours of operation, details on the accessibility options and a calendar of upcoming interactive events for children, visit their website at the link above.



Fort Bend County Fair's 2016 Exceptional Rodeo



The 2016 Exceptional Rodeo is specially designed for students age PPCD through middle school. Children will be paired with professional cowboys, cowgirls and volunteers to participate in fun non-competitive rodeo activities. The Exceptional Rodeo is **September 30th** beginning at 10:00. To reserve a spot or for additional information, contact Barbara Magana Robertson at (281) 723-5995, or click on the following [email link](#).

Hope for Three's Parent Time-Out—October 14th [Website](#)

Hope for Three's Teen Huddle organizes an evening of fun activities for children on the autism spectrum and their siblings giving parents a much needed night to themselves. Contact the Hope for Three office or visit their website for additional information or to register for this evening of fun.



If your student has a disability that will affect their performance on a College Board exam (SAT, PSAT, AP exams), they may be eligible to receive accommodations while taking the exam. Accommodations require College Board approval which will take several weeks. Be sure to start preparing early for your student's participation in these exams by understanding the allowable accommodations, the request process and knowing the request submission deadlines for each exam. For additional information, please contact your campus Special Education Department, the School Counselor or click on the following links:

[Accommodations & Approval Process](#)

[Accommodations Request Deadlines](#)

Community Resources

Government

Texana—Child Services

Local: (281) 239-1300

[Website](#)

Non-Profits

The ARC of Fort Bend County

Local: (281) 494-5959

[Website](#)

Hope for Three—Autism

Local: (281) 245-0640

[Website](#)

Family to Family Network at

Eldridge

Local: (713) 466-6304

Bo's Place

[Website](#)

Gi Gi's Playhouse—Sugar Land

Local: (832) 939-9919

[Website](#)

FEAT—Houston

Local: (281) 361-3328

[Website](#)

Mental Health America of Fort Bend County

Local: (281) 207-2480

[Website](#)

Tourette Texas

Support Group 2nd Wednesday of the month

[Website](#)

[Contact](#)



Special Education Parent Advisory Committee (SEPAC)

Monthly Special Education Parent Advisory Committee (SEPAC) meetings are held to continue to build the bridge in relationships between the special education department and families of students receiving special education and related services in FBISD. These meetings are by invitation only to campus representatives who are appointed to serve for a two-year term. Upon completion of building renovations, the locations of the meetings will be at our very own M. R. Wood Education Center.

At this time, the following campuses do not have a SEPAC representative: Armstrong, Blue Ridge, Brazos Bend, Briargate, Burton, Colony Bend, Fleming, Glover, Heritage Rose, Lakeview, Lantern Lane, Lexington Creek, Mission Glen, Mission West, Rosa Parks, Quail Valley, Ridgeway, Schiff, Bowie MS, First Colony MS, Hightower HS, Marshall HS, Missouri City MS, Quail Valley MS, Ridge Point HS and Sartaria MS. Parents of students receiving special education services at the above campuses will be sent an email detailing the application process. If you are interested in representing your campus, your response must be submitted by September 21st. A notification will be sent on Thursday, September 22nd to all new SEPAC members. The **2016 SEPAC Fall Meeting Dates** are :

September 27th—Sullivan Elementary [Map](#) / 6:00 pm—8:00 pm

October 25th & November 29th —Location TBD / 6:00 pm—8:00 pm

September 2016