

QUARTERLY REPORT ON PROGRAMMING AND PLANNING

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TASK FORCE UPDATE

The Task Force researches, recommends, informs, and suggests best practices for growing and strengthening the FBISD GT Program aligned to a five-year plan. Membership includes parents, students, administrators, GT department members, district executive leadership, and community members.

In the third quarter, the GT Task Force met in both July and September, opting to take a hiatus for August in order to prepare for the beginning of school. The Task Force subcommittees -- Acceleration, Communications, Curriculum, Secondary Service Design Enhancement, and Student Identification/Program Expansion -- also continued to meet throughout the third quarter, and following are the reports from each subcommittee on the progress made toward major goals:

Acceleration

This quarter, the GT Task Force Acceleration Subcommittee identified specific questions to research the implementation and programming aspects of the **Accelerated Cluster Model Program** scheduled to pilot in Fall 2021. To that end, subcommittee members conducted interviews with additional districts concentrating on the exemplary accelerated model implemented by Irving ISD. The subcommittee began investigating criteria that could be used to determine student placement in the Accelerated Cluster Model Program to ensure the inclusion of Title I students on VISTAS campuses. Their goal is to confirm all FBISD students have equal access to the Accelerated Cluster Model Program. This subcommittee has submitted its most recent work to the full task force twice this quarter to solicit feedback and ensure the subcommittee's work is heading in a positive, clear and feasible direction.

Communications

The Communications Subcommittee has worked to expand communications avenues and provide better contact information for expedited response time to inquiries. **Each campus web page** now has a **Gifted and Talented section** under the **Students and Parents tab** that contains current district events and announcements, as well as campus happenings related to GT programming and evaluation. This tab also has direct contact information for a member of campus staff who can answer GT-related questions. The District GT Department has established a **shared e-mail inbox** for inquiries that can be accessed and addressed by every department member, thus allowing for a faster response time. The Communications subcommittee wrote and published the **Parent Guide for Innovation Hour** in both English and Spanish on behalf of the Curriculum subcommittee, and has also written and published the **Parent Guide for GT Learning Plan** in both English and Spanish on behalf of the Student Identification/Program Expansion Subcommittee.

Curriculum

The Curriculum subcommittee's primary focus this quarter has been Flexible Grouping in Fort Bend ISD. Flexible grouping structures and additional research were gathered from leadership in Spring Branch ISD and Clear Creek ISD. The subcommittee reviewed this information and utilized it to support the development of a **definition of Flexible grouping in FBISD**. To date, the subcommittee established the definition for flexible grouping and determined how it aligns with FBISD's goals and objectives. The subcommittee has outlined and described different forms of flexible grouping offered in Fort Bend ISD. They also discussed the end of year showcase for the gifted and talented department. Based on general task force feedback, the showcase was officially renamed the **Gifted and Talented Showcase** and potential format changes were discussed.

Secondary Service Design Enhancement

During the last quarter, the Service Design Enhancement Subcommittee completed tasks that include developing a **working definition of the word differentiation** as it relates to instruction in FBISD. In addition, the committee developed a survey for secondary students identified for gifted services. This survey will assist the subcommittee with determining **additional GT programming options** for students at the secondary level. This survey will be sent near the end of October to allow time for instructional transitions. Students will have the opportunity to complete the survey during the month of November.

Student Identification/Program Expansion

The Student Identification/Program Expansion Subcommittee created several informational documents for the GT Learning Plan Reimagined webpage. They collaborated with the FBISD Communications Department to create the **GT Learning Plan At-A-Glance** and **GT Learning Plan Comprehensive FAQ**. The committee revised the **GT Learning Plan Parent Information Video** as well as provided feedback about the format and content of the **GT Learning Plan Reimagined webpage** to ensure a user-friendly digital experience. The subcommittee started the process of identifying and defining areas for observation and evaluation of GT services utilizing the Campus Support Team (CST) walk-through to develop a **CST GT Crosswalk Tool**.

PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC)

The members of the GT PAC are committed to ensuring that school policies and programs benefit all students, including gifted learners. The parent representatives serve as liaisons between the GT PAC and their school community, sharing Gifted and Talented programming news with their school communities and providing feedback to the committee from their school communities.

The GT Parent Advisory Committee (GT PAC) hosted its first Open Meeting on August 19, 2020, for all parents interested in joining the GT PAC for the 2020-21 school year. During this meeting, the GTPAC Executive Board discussed the role of the GT PAC in FBISD, as well as the work projects and priorities initiated during the 2019-20 school year. Over 100 parents attended the meeting via Zoom – so many that the GT Department determined the need for larger “Zoom Rooms” for all future meetings! Parents were invited to submit a form expressing their interest in representing their school on the committee. Based on these submissions, 108 parents, representing 59 schools now serve on the PAC.

The PAC held its first closed meeting on September 8, 2020, to discuss the election of the 2020-21 PAC Executive Board. Dr. John Aven, outgoing president, discussed each executive board position and answered questions about the election. Following this meeting, the GT PAC held elections to elect members for the 2020-21 GTPAC Executive Board.

The 2020-21 newly-elected GT PAC Executive Board includes
Kim Hibsich, Neill Elementary, as President,
Wendy Pennings, Meadows Elementary, as President-Elect,
Deepshikha Singh, Brazos Bend Elementary, as Parliamentarian, and
Nadine Skinner, Elkins High School, as Secretary.

At the end of the third quarter, there are 18 schools without GT PAC representation. They include **Armstrong ES, Austin Parkway ES, Blue Ridge ES, Glover ES, Heritage Rose ES, Highlands ES, Mission Glen ES, Patterson ES, Pecan Grove ES, Ridgegate ES, Townewest ES, Bowie MS, Dulles MS, McAuliffe MS, Bush HS, Kempner HS, Marshall HS, and Willowridge HS**. If a campus does not have representation, the GT Department asks that any parent who would like to represent their school contact the GT Department at GTFBISD@fortbendisd.com or the GTPAC at fbisdgtpac@gmail.com. Additional information about the FBISD GT PAC is always available at www.fortbendisd.com/GTPAC.

PILOTS AND CAMPUSES

It is the goal of the Gifted and Talented Department in Fort Bend ISD to continue to develop innovative programming based on current research. As programming is developed, it is "piloted" at level grade levels and campuses in order to collect feedback prior to launching the initiative District-wide. The 2020-2021 pilot programs are Innovation Hour and GT Learning Plan (revised).

Innovation Hour

Participating grade levels: 2nd, 6th, 9th

Participating Campuses: AFE, BRE, CSE, LCE, MYE, JPE, WSE, GMS, QVMS, CHS

The Innovation Hour pilot kicked off with its ten identified campuses. Several forms of support have been made available for all stakeholders. The Gifted and Talented Department has disseminated integral information to all GT administrators and Champions of Gifted Services (COGS) to ensure campus personnel are equipped to support the pilot. Teachers have had access to weekly open labs with the GT Department, and a parent informational meeting was conducted on August 31 to provide details about the pilot and address any questions. The Innovation Hour web page has also gone live within the Gifted and Talented department's web page: www.fortbendisd.com/innovationhour

GT Learning Plan Reimagined (GTLP)

Participating Campuses: WBE, CSE, HRE, EAJ, BJE, JNE, SOE, DCMS, FSMS, AHS, BHS

The Gifted and Talented Learning Plan Reimagined (GTLP) Program has not yet been fully implemented, and the timeline to begin goal-setting with students has been shifted to the second nine weeks based on the impact of Covid-19 and to allow for the transition to face-to-face learning. Students will begin the goal development process in October. Parents have access to informational documents on the GT Learning Plan Reimagined website including various FAQ documents, parent informational video, and examples of goals from last year's GT Learning plans (www.fortbendisd.com/GTLP).
