

FBISD Listening Tour FAQ
Marshall High School
October 10, 2016

Fort Bend ISD's Board of Trustees welcomed more than 100 parents at its first "Listening Tour" at Marshall High School on Monday, October 10, 2016. Designed to provide parents and community members a chance to talk to the Board in a more intimate setting, the event is part of a four-stop tour throughout the District. Members of the audience are able to write down their questions and take them to roundtables in order to have them answered by Board members and members of the Executive Leadership Team. Below are questions gathered from parents and staff at MHS.

Facilities

- 1. The MHS track team is in dire need of a new high jump mat/system and better quality starting blocks. We have produced many All Americans and would love to have quality equipment.**

The pole vault pit at MHS was purchased in 2014. The high jump pit is also fairly new, but was vandalized last spring. The Facilities Department is currently working with our vendor to repair the pit, and it will be refurbished prior to track season.

Coaches have the opportunity to purchase starting blocks each year in the annual procurement process. The purchase of starting blocks will be prioritized this year.

- 2. Tennis Courts at MHS are a mess. They actually have a team but the surface is uneven and needs repair, nets are crumbling and they have no screens.**

Renovation and upgrades to the tennis courts at MHS were approved by the Board of Trustees in September 2016. Approximately \$48,500 was allocated to the project and procurement activities are now in place. Estimated start time on this project is mid-November. The work will be completed in time for spring tennis season.

Technology

- 1. In the near future, do we have an allowance for more relevant technology in the classroom? Technology and computer programs such as iStation, Reflex Math and Learning.com are all required training for students. Campuses are even graded on surveys for the use of them and how often. What is a realistic expectation when an average of three computers is in a classroom?**

The 2014 Bond designates funding for our Information Technology Department to provide Fort Bend ISD campuses and classrooms with an infrastructure capable of supporting new technologies. The Educational Technology Master plan presented to the Board of Trustees in May 2016 will provide the framework for the District to create projects to equip our classrooms with the latest classroom toolset. The first stage is creating a learning management system and populating it with the necessary digital components. From there, the District will work with teachers and the administration to determine and provide the appropriate device(s) that will support and complement the learning management system and assist teachers in their instructional efforts. The District estimates this effort will take about 24-36 months.

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2. Why do some teachers have the benefit of a Smartboard and others do not?

Currently, we have approximately 1,200 Smartboards throughout the District, excluding Madden and Sullivan Elementary schools. The purchase of the Smartboards was dependent on the ability of the campus to fund these devices. Some campuses may have acquired those using their campus budget or new campus build-out fund (such as Madden and Sullivan). Other campuses may have participated in certain campus-based programs that may have had funding contribution from Digital Learning or through previous technology programs, based on the availability of funds and requests.

The Smartboard has not been the standard issued device to the classroom; however, a regular projector is included. A smart projector is now part of the recommended devices in our Educational Technology Master Plan. It serves as the projector that has all the functionality of a Smartboard. We are working with Curriculum and Instruction (C&I) to come up with the identified usage and application for these smart projectors.

3. Are there any plans to increase technology support staff for schools? Current technology support has difficulty keeping up with the tickets opened by teachers and staff. Their response time does not keep the pace of schools.

The District does not have plans to increase campus technology support staff at this time. Projects are currently underway to upgrade the District's infrastructure and technology tools. Once these are in place, the need for technology assistance will decrease.

4. What is the process for upgrading technology in the schools? Marshall has outdated computers which is inconsistent with other schools?

The District is currently in the process of replacing computers in labs, starting with the oldest labs first. Marshall will receive new computers as a part of the replacement plan.

School Leadership

1. Does the District provide cultural awareness training for its staff?

Yes, the District provides cultural awareness training sponsored by the Department of Justice for all teachers new to the district. The training focuses on the small slight subtle discriminations and tiny injustices that occur every day. The purpose is to raise awareness and emphasize the importance of maintaining a thoughtful and respectful environment while sharing the key concepts for creating an inclusive environment. The training is also available for campuses upon request.

2. How does the District develop teachers to address the whole child equitably?

The District's instructional focus for 2015-16 was Differentiated Instruction. All campus

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teachers received a half day of training on Differentiated Instruction to start the year. The 14 bilingual campuses continued this focus through three days of SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol) training. While the remaining campuses had two days of follow up training to prepare them to differentiate instruction and meet the needs of each learner. This school year, differentiated instruction is part of the protocols we are using within our Professional Learning Communities to support planning instruction to meet the needs of the whole child and to review assessment data to make instructional decisions.

3. How does the District measure the progress of minimizing the disparate treatment of black students?

The demographics of Fort Bend ISD have changed considerably over the last several years. Currently, FBISD is 33 percent African American; 27 percent Hispanic; 22 percent Asian; 15 percent White; and 3 percent other. It is a continual goal of the administration to work with district leaders and teachers for cultural sensitivity, equity and the creation of a positive culture and climate for all students.

Student Performance: The progress of African American students is measured and monitored using multiple data points which include truancy, discipline, District Alternative Education Placement (DAEP) referrals, performance on STAAR, participation and performance on SAT and AP exams, college enrollment, completion of Career and Technical Education (CTE) coherent sequence of courses and industry certifications. District departments and campuses use this data to measure the effectiveness of interventions and programs targeted at closing the opportunity gaps that many of our African American students face.

Discipline: Procedures regarding discipline have been modified so that the lead principal, and even the assistant superintendent at times, must sign off on all suspensions. The Director of Student Affairs must approve all DAEP placements. When considering removal from the classroom, the student's discipline history, age, grade, intent and severity of the offense are taken into consideration. Mandatory offenses are still placed based on the offense in terms of the Texas Education Agency's appendix E: Discipline Standards.

Truancy: After the 84th legislative session and in preparation for the 2015-16 school year, the District has been allowed to take certain factors into consideration. Beyond the four factors listed in HB 2398: a student in foster care, pregnant, homeless, or the primary income earner; the District/Campus makes personal contact with the student and parent, home visits and tries to understand the root cause for absences in order to support the student and family to ensure the student can attend school on a regular basis.

Discipline and Truancy

1. What is the District doing to avoid sending students to court and alternative school for nonviolent offenses?

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Fort Bend ISD administrators investigate and assign discipline in accordance with the FBISD Student Code of Conduct. For some specific offenses, students are assigned to the DAEP (District Alternative Education Program). The assignment to the DAEP is the consequence from the school district based on state and local policies and procedures.

It is important to note that the FBISD Police Department investigates potential criminal offenses separately, and when necessary, assigns a criminal referral that is referred to the District Attorney's office. Outside law enforcement agencies have open communication with FBISD Police to ensure the safety of all students, staff and facilities.

2. What is the District doing to reduce truancy?

The District has processes designed to address students individually to better understand and address the underlying causes of absenteeism. Phone calls and emails are made anytime a student is absent, and letters are mailed home regarding unexcused absences. Campus administrators also speak with students and parents to get to the root of the problem and offer support. Additional campus personnel such as counselors, drop-out preventionists, social workers and Fort Bend County caseworkers speak with students to better understand the nature of the issues preventing them from attending school. The District employs Student Attendance Specialists who visit each of our higher volume campuses weekly to participate in intervention efforts with students. Information Systems Specialists who focus on attendance integrity and accuracy are at nine high school campuses and each high school has two attendance clerks. This year a Social Worker was added to address truancy at two of the high volume campuses, including Marshall. The overall focus is to better serve our students and their families by getting to the root of the issues and assisting prior to referring to the court systems. Students, however, do need to attend school in order to attain credits necessary for graduation.

3. There are kids who do not live in the attendance zone where they attend school. What steps are being taken to correct this problem?

At registration, a campus registrar verifies the student's address using a lease or deed and a utility bill. The registrar also checks the appraisal district when a Dual Residence or Power of Attorney is submitted to ensure the parents don't own a home in our District. Also, when campuses receive returned mail, someone at the campus will contact parents for an updated address and do a residency check, if needed.

If the campus receives returned mail or any information indicating that a student does not live in the address provided to the school, they will investigate. These investigations often involve a home visit. Anyone found guilty of falsifying documents can be prosecuted and FBISD takes this very seriously.

Special Education

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- 1. What is being done to show teachers and staff that work with special education students how to appropriately instruct and implement modifications and accommodations in the general education classroom?**

The District provides training for all new general and special education teachers at New Teacher Orientation. The training includes an overview of special education services and provides specific examples of how to implement and document accommodations and modifications. On an annual basis, all teachers are required to complete an online training module on implementing accommodations and modifications. Each campus is assigned a resource/inclusive services program specialist that provides direct assistance to general and special education teachers to meet specific student needs. Last year the district professional development days were focused on differentiating instruction (DI) for all students. General and special education teachers participated in DI training.

- 2. What training is being offered to teachers that equips them on how to better support students who do not qualify for special education due to low IQ (DNQ – do not qualify)?**

All general education teachers participated in differentiated instruction training last school year. Campuses provided multiple days of training on strategies to differentiate instruction to reach all learners. These practices are modeled in trainings throughout the year. The Learning Support Services team in collaboration with the Curriculum Department provides guidance to campuses on Response to Intervention (RtI) strategies and Intervention programs to assist struggling learners.

- 3. What services are offered for DNQ (do not qualify) students?**

If a student does not qualify for Special Education services a meeting is held with campus staff to include the general education teachers to review strategies and recommendations from the Full Individual Evaluation. The Learning Support Services team in collaboration with the Curriculum Department provides training and guidance on Response to Intervention strategies and programs available to all students.

Transportation

- 1. How does FBISD determine which routes are used for Gold Star vs. FBISD buses?**

The 174 square miles of FBISD is divided into three regions to better serve the community. Due to the volume of routes needed, FBISD contracted with Gold Star to provide a third transportation center. The routes that were chosen for Gold Star were based on the shortest distance to where Gold Star found a location to place their facility. The location they were able to obtain is located near the intersection of FM 2234 Road and Fort Bend Toll Road. The closest campuses to this facility are Marshall High School, Willowridge High School and Hightower High School and their respective feeder patterns of middle and elementary campuses. For extracurricular activities, the District tries to use the facility that normally operates the assigned

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feeder patterns, because the buses and routes are closest in proximity to those campuses. Many of the Gold Star buses are in high demand as they have air conditioning and several other buses in the District do not.

2. Is there a FBISD marking on the Gold Star buses? If not, why not?

In order to be transparent, the leadership in transportation and administration agreed to place the Gold Star name on the buses so the public could see and easily identify the partnership of a contractor with the District. Each of the Gold Star buses have FBISD brand stickers that are on all of the FBISD buses. FBISD is considering other ways to identify these buses as part of the FBISD transportation system.

Marshall High School

1. Marshall High School has very low enrollment and to my understanding several of the local students attend other schools with special programs such as engineering and cosmetology. Is the district doing anything to assist with low enrollment?

Staff reviews student enrollment and enrollment projections on an annual basis to determine whether or not changes need to be made to programming or attendance boundaries. This fall staff will engage with the community around attendance boundaries for the new schools coming on line and study possible future boundary considerations based on over and underutilization of campuses in the district. At this time, there is not a plan to add students to MHS in the near future.

Missouri City Middle School

1. What extracurricular activities are available to students at Missouri City Middle School?

Clubs and Organizations

- Chess Club
- Robotics & Coding Club
- Table Top Games Club
- Book Club
- Yearbook Club
- Art Club
- Teens Against Tobacco Use
- Move It Club
- Criminal Justice Club
- Intramural Soccer
- History Club
- Spanish Club
- 6th Grade Leadership Team

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- Student Council
- National Junior Honor Society
- Pep Squad
- Cheerleaders
- Dance Team
- Project Manhood
- Theater Performances (open auditions for all students)

UIL Sports Teams for 7th and 8th graders

- Football
- Volleyball (tryouts required)
- Basketball (tryouts required)
- Track & Field
- Soccer (tryouts required)

Courses with Student Involvement Focus

- Teen Leadership
- PALS

Curriculum and Instruction

- 1. Now at Hunters Glen they are asking the kids to read online books. My Wi-Fi and computer is not working. What do you suggest?**

Currently, there are no online books that are required reading for HE students. Hunters Glen uses a supplemental program called Accelerated Reader (AR) to support student's academic growth as readers. AR books are traditional books that students check out from the library or teachers' have in their classrooms. Once students finish reading a book, they take an online test to measure comprehension. These tests must be taken at school. Opportunities to test are provided before and after school as well as during class time.

- 2. Why don't we have reading or math specialists at the elementary schools so that kids that need more help can attend. The teacher has to choose a certain number of people to attend. Also, during the summer why can't enrichment be for all kids unless they are A student.**

Fort Bend ISD does have reading and math Specialists at elementary schools. Their role in intervention is determined based on data and in conjunction with the campus principal. At this time, we do not have plans to offer enrichment during summer school.

- 3. How are parents supposed to work with our children if we don't have physical book or sometimes we don't have the information to access books online? Where do we find login/ID's and passwords?**

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All students have access to the online textbook. Each teacher provides these login credentials through parent communication at the beginning of the year. Parents who did not receive this communication, should contact the campus teacher to receive login and password information.

4. What is being done to monitor the percent of failing grades on assignments in a teacher class. Example when the overall average on an assignment is a F.

Teachers are responsible for monitoring their students' academic progress and failure rates on assignments and tests. Skyward does provide teachers with a high, low, mean, and median scores on assignments. Teachers will monitor their class assignments and should respond to student needs based on grade data. District grading procedures also require that students have opportunities for reteaching and reassessment or progressive testing on major assignments. Principals will monitor grade distribution at progress reports and at the end of each grading term.

5. Can pacing be slowed in order to allow depth of learning and understanding?

Teachers have some discretion when data indicates a need to reteach or reassess content within a course. Professional Learning Communities should be reviewing data frequently in order to make pacing decisions. It is expected that teachers will follow the scope and sequence in order to provide students access to all curriculum topics.

6. Where can I get the guidance/teaching materials for the parent?

Online access to the textbooks provides some support for parents. Individual classroom teachers often have additional suggestions to support their content area. Please check the teacher's website for additional resources. FBISD will offer more opportunities for parents to access resources through our new learning management system.

College and Postsecondary Readiness

1. When are we going to implement an early college program in our High School curriculum?

Due the accelerated growth of HCC dual credit courses offered in FBISD with free tuition for all students throughout the district, we are convening a Dual Credit Task Force with the first meeting in November. A critical part of this work will be to develop a sustainable and systematic growth plan which will include dual credit pathways leading to an Associate Degree and Early College High School possibilities. We'll have a better idea of a timeline by the end of the Task Force's work in May of 2017.

2. Will college readiness be implemented at the elementary level?

Elementary principals, teachers, and counselors are already engaged in college and career readiness activities and lessons. This involves creating the most rigorous learning environment to ensure all students have the academic foundation to accomplish their postsecondary goals. They also create a college going culture with an emphasis on awareness and developing a mindset that all students can go. This can be seen all over the elementary campuses on College

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Bulletin Boards, teachers posting their college on doors and in classroom, and having college hall decorating contests. Elementary counselors are required to have one Career Fair, where students are exposed to a wide variety of careers, along with a developmentally appropriate guidance lesson to all grade levels about college and career readiness. Naviance is working on expanding their college and career readiness platform to the elementary level which we are keeping an eye on for future use depending on quality and relevance to our diverse student body.

3. Now that the new HCC campus is planned for this area what if any will be the relationship with FBISD?

HCC leadership and instructional staff are also participating in our Dual Credit Task Force. We will certainly discuss how we can utilize their new facility to maximize our partnership and to increase opportunities for our students.

4. Did I read somewhere that FBISD and Stafford ISD are doing a tech Ed joint venture? How will this work?

Fort Bend ISD is in the design phase of the new Career and Technical Education Center. Currently, FBISD team members are working with both Texas State Technical College and Houston Community College to develop partnerships which will result in dual credit courses in multiple program areas that will service FBISD students and other community members.