



Spring Newsletter

## Instrumental News James Drew, Director

### Fort Bend ISD's Music Education Program Receives National Recognition for the 11th Consecutive Year



Fort Bend Independent School District has been honored with the Best Communities for Music Education designation from The NAMM Foundation for its outstanding commitment to music education.

Now in its 21<sup>st</sup> year, the Best Communities for Music Education designation is awarded to districts that demonstrate outstanding achievement in efforts to provide music access and education to all students. To qualify for the Best Communities designation, Fort Bend ISD answered detailed questions about funding, graduation requirements, music class participation, instruction time, facilities, and support for the music programs. Responses were verified with school officials and reviewed by The Music Research Institute at the University of Kansas.

"The Arts, including Music, are an essential part of the FBISD curriculum. Music plays an integral part in educating the whole child and cultivating the attributes described in the District's *Profile of a Graduate*," said FBISD Director of Fine Arts, James Drew. "Receiving the Best Communities for Music Education designation for the eleventh consecutive year affirms the quality of our District's music education programs and supports the FBISD Fine Arts Department mission of inspiring artistry and equipping all students to reach their full potential, thus creating opportunities without boundaries."

This award recognizes that FBISD is leading the way with learning opportunities as outlined in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The legislation guides implementation in the states and replaces the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which was often criticized for an overemphasis on testing-while leaving behind subjects such as music. ESSA recommends music and the arts as important elements of a well-rounded education for all children.

### All-State Band and Choir Musicians



Twenty-two student musicians from Fort Bend ISD schools performed with the Texas All-State Band and Choir in San Antonio, Saturday, February 15, 2020 as part of the 2020 Texas Music Educators Association Clinic/Convention. These students were chosen for this prestigious honor through a competitive process held this year across the state at District, Region, and Area levels. Earning a place in the All-State groups from Fort Bend ISD were:

Austin High School: Tristan Nigos (Band)

Bush High School: Minson Vo (Band)

Clements High School: Dhanya Jagannathan (Band), Joshua Ho (Band), Ben Kelley (Band), Abraham Mughal (Band), Dewey Palmer (Band), Kyle Yu (Band), Sofie Marino (Choir), Hasan Hammoud (Choir)

Dulles High School: Anya Johnson (Band)

Elkins High School: Abigail Wade (Band), Kavi Shah (Band), Pari Dhawan (Choir), Faith Eapen (Choir)

Ridge Point High School: Brandon Benson (Band), Aaron Price (Band), Sean Bracher (Choir), Alex Reichert (Choir), Rohin Scaria (Choir), Sarah Tassin (Choir), Christy Thomas (Choir)

These students' Band and Choir Directors, who are members of the Texas Music Educators Association, a 19,000+ member organization headquartered in Austin, include:

Austin High School: Ryan Demkovich, Logan Nagai, and Andres Aya (Band)

Bush High School: Don Christian, Carlos Cruz, and Thomas McGuire (Band)

Clements High School: Daniel Galloway, Jeff Johnson, Leslie Collins, and Bryan Waites (Band); Janet Menzie and Ryan Bogner (Choir)

Dulles High School: Joe Pruitt, Arnel Dayrit, and Spencer Clayton (Band)

Elkins High School: Chad Collins, Joseph Chen, and Christopher Dial (Band); John Richardson (Choir)

Ridge Point High School: Luis Saldaña, William Burson, and Christopher Baños (Band); Saleel Menon and Chelsea Berner (Choir)

All-State is the highest honor a Texas music student can receive. 1,795 students are selected through a process that began with over 66,800 students from around the state vying for this honor to perform in one of 15 ensembles (bands, orchestras, and choirs). Only the top 2.6% of musicians who initially audition become All-State musicians. Texas Music Educators Association, an association of over 13,500 school music educators dedicated to promoting excellence in music education, sponsors the Texas All-State competition. These All-State students participate in three days of rehearsals directed by nationally recognized conductors during the TMEA Clinic/Convention. Their performances for thousands of attendees bring this extraordinary event to a close. The 2020 convention was even more distinct because TMEA is celebrating 100 years as a music educators association.

## **New Piano Technician Program at Thurgood Marshall High School**



The Fine Arts Department would like to share exciting news about a new opportunity recently approved by the FBISD Board of Trustees starting this fall: the Piano Technician Certification Program, the first of its kind in any high school in the nation!

In this innovative program of choice, students will develop the necessary skills to work as a professional piano tuner or piano technician upon graduation. Piano technicians tune, repair, and regulate pianos (adjust the timbre of the strings) at concert venues, as well as colleges and universities. Due to a lack of training programs, these professionals are in great demand across the world. The starting salary for a piano tuner is \$45,000 and piano technicians earn \$60,000+ annually. There are no gender or physical limitations for piano tuners and piano technicians beyond the ability to use hand tools and distinguish pitch. Students wishing to pursue a career in music can use their piano tuner/technician skills to pay for their college education.

The Piano Technician program will be housed and taught at Marshall High School as a series of four one-year courses to any interested FBISD high school students. Students will earn high school credit as well as two industry certifications upon high school graduation and may pursue post-secondary training and certification as a Master Piano Technician at the University of Houston. There are opportunities for additional training and apprenticeships through piano retailers and manufacturers. *FBISD Department of Fine Arts is proud to offer this first-of-a-kind Piano Technician Program!*

## FBISD String Fling 2020



The Fine Arts Department hosted its annual String Fling Concerts on February 5 and 6 in the Wheeler Field House. The February 5, 2020 event showcased over 450 beginning orchestra students from six FBISD Middle Schools: Baines, Crockett; First Colony; Fort Settlement; Garcia, Missouri City; and Sugar Land. On Thursday, February 6, 2020, the event highlighted another 450 beginning orchestra students from seven additional FBISD Middle Schools: James Bowie; Dulles; Hodges Bend; Lake Olympia; Quail Valley; Sartartia; and Ronald Thornton. This year's String Fling guest performers were Alexa Thomson, violist, and David Connor, double bassist, both Community-Embedded Musicians with the Houston Symphony. Ms. Thomson and Mr. Connor have appeared as guest performers at the FBISD String Fling in previous years.

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## Choir & Elementary Music News Gene Holkup, Assistant Director

## FBISD Choirs Perform at State and Regional Music Conferences

Fort Bend ISD choral programs earn national recognition at two prestigious music conferences, the Texas Music Educators Association and the Southwestern Division of the American Choral Directors Association. The **Clements HS Varsity Mixed Choir** and the **Clements HS Chorale Women**, under the direction of Janet Menzie and Ryan Bogner, and the **Garcia MS Varsity Women's Choir**, under the direction of Kelsey Appleby, were the first FBISD Choirs to earn this distinction. The groups were selected through a competitive blind-audition process for the privilege to perform for these esteemed professional music conferences.

The **Clements High School Varsity Mixed Choir** performed brilliantly on their Valentine's Day concert at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio during the Centennial Texas Music Educators Association (TMEA) convention in February 2020. TMEA is the premier conference for music education in the United States with an attendance of over 31,000 teachers, students, parents, and members of the music industry. Clements performed for a full capacity audience and received a resounding standing ovation for their stellar performance.

In addition to this honor, two FBISD choirs performed for an audience of choral directors at the 2020 Southwestern American Choral Directors Association conference in Little Rock, Arkansas just prior to Spring Break in March 2020. The **Garcia Middle School Varsity Women's Choir** performed on the opening concert session and the **Clements High School Chorale Women** performed on the Friday afternoon concert session in the beautiful Robinson Center Performance Hall. Both choirs gave exceptional performances and received well-deserved standing ovations.

The **Garcia Middle School Varsity Women's Choir** performed an eclectic program in four languages which reflected the diversity of the GMS choirs. Their performance was accompanied by GMS Band Director, Ms. Nicole Elias, on recorder and featured twin orchestra students, Lena and Lucy Tran, who are GMS alumni and are members of the Austin High School Orchestras. Kelsey Appleby has been the Head Choir Director at Garcia MS since the fall of 2014.

The **Clements High School Chorale Women** featured the premiere performance of **I Count It All Joy** written by nationally renowned composer, Jocelyn Hagen. The composition is dedicated to the memory of the director's daughter, Heather Michelle Menzie (1991-2015) and was commissioned by the FBISD Department of Fine Arts for this performance. Janet Menzie has been the Head Choir Director at Clements HS since the fall of 2016, and Ryan Bogner has been the Assistant Choir Director at Clements HS since the fall of 2017.



Clements High School Varsity Mixed Choir TMEA Performance





Garcia School Varsity Women's Choir SWACDA Performance



Clements High School Chorale Women SWACDA Performance

### **UIL Middle School Choir Contest Results**

Forty Middle School Choirs from FBISD competed at UIL Region 13 Middle School Choral Concert & Sight Reading Evaluation held March 4 through 6 at Christ Church in Sugar Land. Twenty-one MS Choirs earned Sweepstakes Awards for First Division (Superior) Ratings in Concert and Sight Reading along with an additional nine choirs earning First Division Plaques in either Concert or Sight Reading and six choirs earned a Second Division (Excellent) rating in Concert or Sight Reading or both.

### **24 FBISD Elementary Schools Add a Second Fine Arts Teacher Position**

Fort Bend ISD continues to grow and in keeping with our commitment to excellence and equity in Fine Arts Education at the foundational level, Fort Bend ISD Board of Trustees has approved a second music teacher at campuses where enrollment exceeds 750 students and a second visual art teacher at campuses where enrollment exceeds 950 students. We are so pleased that this will add an additional 17 Music Teacher positions and an additional 7 Visual Art Teacher positions. The second dedicated Music Teacher positions will be at Commonwealth, Cornerstone, Drabek, Heritage Rose, Holley, Leonetti, Madden, Neill, Oakland, Oyster Creek, Patterson, Scanlan Oaks, Schiff, Settlers Way, Sienna Crossing, Sullivan and Walker Station Elementary Schools. The second dedicated Visual Arts Teacher positions will be at Commonwealth, Cornerstone, Heritage Rose, Leonetti, Neill, Sienna Crossing and Sullivan Elementary Schools. We are so excited for this wonderful opportunity to improve Fine Arts education at the Elementary level.

### **Clements HS Choir Director Selected as the FBISD 2020 District Secondary Teacher of the Year**



Fort Bend ISD's 2020 District

# Teachers of the Year



**Kelly Stavinoha**  
Madden Elementary  
Elementary Teacher of the Year



**Janet Menzie**  
Clements High School  
Secondary Teacher of the Year

Congratulations to the FBISD Teachers of the Year! We are so proud to have a Fine Arts Teacher selected as the 2020 FBISD Secondary Teacher of the Year. Janet Menzie serves as the head choir director for Clements High School. Her goal as an educator is to prepare her students to have a productive and meaningful adulthood; she understands that many of her students will not pursue a music degree in college, but her hope is that they will find a place to continue their passion for singing. It is important to her that they use the lessons they have learned in the choir program to express themselves and work hard for their goals and dreams. Mrs. Menzie's Clements HS Choirs were selected to perform for two prestigious music conferences—TMEA and SWACDA.

## Theatre & Dance News Travis Springfield, Assistant Director

### Tommy Tune Nominations

The Tommy Tune Awards Program celebrates the educational value, artistry, and community of high school musical theatre in the Greater Houston area through adjudication, healthy competition, and creative programming. This program offers an opportunity for students and educators to share their creative accomplishments while instilling in young people the value of engaging in the performing arts as a lifelong pursuit. Every year, Houston area High Schools produce a full-length musical in order to compete in 15 categories: Leading Actor, Leading Actress, Supporting Actor, Supporting Actress, Featured Performer, Ensemble, Scenic Design, Lighting Design, Costume Design, Stage Crew & Technical Execution, Orchestra, Musical Direction, Choreography, Direction, and Overall Best Musical. Each school is adjudicated by a team of volunteer Adjudicators who are professional Houston-based performers, directors, designers, musicians, arts educators, etc. Productions are evaluated in each category based on a 100 point scale rubric. This process runs from October to March, and the top scores are nominated and announced mid-March.

This year, FBISD has received a record 12 nominations in 8 categories. Those campuses and students being considered for awards are as follows:

Lead Actress:

Atara Romero Wilson: **Aida** - Bush HS

Supporting Actress:

Lauren Beaman: **Urinetown** - Ridge Point HS

Naomi Adams: **Aida** - Bush HS

Supporting Actor:

Evan Blackwell: **Urinetown** - Ridge Point HS

Lighting Design:

Clements HS - **Heathers**

Dulles HS - **Bonnie & Clyde**

Scenic Design:

Clements HS - **Heathers**

Dulles HS - **Bonnie & Clyde**

Costume Design:

Clements HS - **Heathers**

Dulles HS - ***Bonnie & Clyde***

Stage Crew & Technical Execution:  
Dulles HS - ***Bonnie & Clyde***

Choreography:  
Clements HS - ***Heathers***

The directors of the campuses being recognized are:

Bush HS - Destyne Miller & Josh Singleton

Clements HS - Gavin Mundy & Tim Sperlak

Dulles HS - Blake Minor & Nichole Duga

Ridge Point HS - Brook Lemley & Jason Quach

The awards program will be broadcasted online on Tuesday, April 28 at 7:30pm. Best of luck to all of our FBISD nominees!



***Bonnie & Clyde*** - Dulles HS



***Aida*** - George Bush HS





***Heathers*** - Clements HS



***Urinetown*** - Ridge Point HS

## **Dance DEAL Assessment Results**

The Texas Dance Educators Association or TDEA is dedicated to promoting quality dance education across the state of Texas. As part of that dedication, TDEA sponsors the Dance Educators Assessment of Learning. The purpose of DEAL is to identify exemplary dance practices aligned with the state TEKS to promote student achievement and success in the Art of Dance Education. The information gained through participation in DEAL will help educators design best practices to implement within their dance programs to enhance student learning and progress in the art of dance.

How does DEAL work? Dance 1 students participate in an adjudicated learning process working new choreography in front of a panel of judges much like the sight-reading component of UIL Music evaluations. The breakdown of a DEAL assessment includes:

1. Students and teacher learn level appropriate technique-based choreography from the DEAL Instructing Choreographer.
2. The campus dance director works with their students on the new choreography.
3. Students present the practiced combination to the Adjudicators without their director.
4. Students and director receive written/oral Adjudicator feedback on all sections immediately.
5. The assessment is a total of 45 minutes.

All FBISD high school dance programs completed the DEAL assessment process prior to Spring Break in March and 10 of our 11 campuses earned a Division 1 rating, the highest designation possible. Congratulations to all of the amazing students and directors on this significant accomplishment.

Schools and directors earning the Division 1 Ratings included:  
Austin HS - Mysya Corb and Ashlee Williamson



Bush HS - Kirsten Sosa and Dalanah Wafer  
Clements HS - Michelle Barth and Alina Mitchell  
Dulles HS - Rachel Caldwell and Kayla Sokoloff  
Elkins HS - Eboni Toler and Torri Clark  
Hightower HS - Brittany Lane and Jossina Nicholson-Mark  
Kempner HS - Rebecca Belter and Taylor Shank  
Ridge Point HS - Miranda Richter and Emily Wendt  
Travis HS - Gina Toler and Katherine McMullin  
Willowridge HS - Melissa Jones and Bailey Sherrets

Strong dance instruction is alive and well in Fort Bend ISD!! Congratulations again to all of these programs!



## Visual Arts News Fahmi Khan, Coordinator

### FBISD Rodeo Art Show

The FBISD Rodeo Show was held at the start of January 2020 at Macario Garcia Middle School, where approximately 600 pieces of student artwork from K-12 were displayed and judged by a professional artist, and a total of 45 artworks were forwarded to the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo where they competed against thousands of other entries.



### Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo

Approximately 200,000 students from 101 public schools and 53 private schools participated this year at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Art Contest. In the final judging, 72 pieces of artwork were selected as winning pieces that would be featured in the auction in March. Clements High School student Amaris Shi's colored pencil drawing "Roped In" was crowned the 2020 Reserve Grand Champion.



Congratulations are also due to Clements High School student Michelle Wang, who won the *Reserve Class Champion* in the Rodeo Quick Draw Contest.

### Fort Bend County Fair

The following students' artwork were selected for Fort Bend County Fair School Art Auction, with the students receiving scholarships:



**Rachel Poche** – *Knitting The Day Away*  
Best of Class Monochromatic



**Amaris Shi** – *The Chase*

### National Scholastic Arts & Writing Awards

The Scholastic Art & Writing Awards are presented by the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers. The Alliance is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to identify students with exceptional artistic and literary talent and present their remarkable work to the world through the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. The Awards give students opportunities for recognition, exhibition, publication, and scholarships. Students across America submitted nearly 320,000 original works this year in 29 different categories of art and writing. Since their founding, the Awards have established an amazing track record for identifying the early promise of our nation's most accomplished and prolific creative leaders.

Alumni include artists Andy Warhol, Philip Pearlstein, Cy Twombly, Robert Indiana, Kay WalkingStick, Mozelle Thompson, Hughie Lee-Smith, and John Baldessari; writers Sylvia Plath, Truman Capote, Bernard Malamud, Marc Brown, Myla Goldberg, and Joyce Carol Oates; photographer Richard Avedon; actors Frances Farmer, Robert Redford, Alan Arkin, Lena Dunham, and John Lithgow; fashion designer



Zac Posen; and filmmakers Stan Brakhage, Ken Burns, and Richard Linklater.

More information can be found at <https://www.artandwriting.org/>.

### FBISD National Scholastic Arts & Writing Winners

STUDENT	TITLE	AWARD	SCHOOL
Bence, Elizabeth	Bad Grip	Silver Medal	Clements HS
Yu, Yvonne	Introspection	Silver Medal	Clements HS
Zhang, Jessica	Scarlet Glare	Gold Medal	Clements HS
Zhang, Jessica	Incomprehensible	Gold Medal	Clements HS
Rami, Norah	Concrete Dreamers	Gold Medal	Clements HS
Moorehead, Ashley	Reflective Glow	Silver Medal	Ridge Point HS
Li, Aliza	D`ej`a reconté`	Silver Medal of Distinction	Austin HS
So, Teresa	Unspoken Blues	Gold Medal. American Visions Medal	Austin HS
Tso, Cindy	The Prayer	Silver Medal	Fort Settlement MS

### 2020 Texas Commission on the Arts Young Masters

Texas Young Masters is a program awards grants to talented young artists to further their studies in their chosen field. The most talented young artists will receive the title of Young Master and will be awarded grants of \$5,000 per year to further their studies in their chosen arts disciplines. Students are to receive the grant for up to two years and this program is available every other year.

Please congratulate **Michelle Wang** of Clements High School as one of the only 15 recipients of **2020 Texas Commission on the Arts Young Masters**.



### Texas Art Education Association – Visual Art Scholastic Event (State VASE 2020)

Please congratulate the following students for receiving the prestigious Gold Seal Award for their artwork for the State VASE 2020. The High School State VASE entered around 35,000 art pieces from all over Texas. Students create artworks and write about their creative processes and understanding of visual art.



NAME	TITLE	AWARD	SCHOOL
Jaydan Kisinger	Worm Hole	Gold Seal	Elkins HS
Tianyu Wang	Recall the Past	Gold Seal	Dulles HS
Grace Andrews	The Sound	Gold Seal	Clements HS
Sarah Chang	Growing Up	Gold Seal	Clements HS
Wai Hin Trevor Cheung	Thoughts	Gold Seal	Clements HS
Grace Guo	Hua Yao Hua	Gold Seal	Clements HS
Sophia Ni	House	Gold Seal	Clements HS
Amber Qu	Hidden	Gold Seal	Clements HS
Viki Shi	Lazy Day	Gold Seal	Clements HS
Richard Zhang	The Temple Lost in Time	Gold Seal	Clements HS
Selina Zhang	The Cozy Cabin	Gold Seal	Clements HS
Brenda Macedo	Open Doors	Gold Seal	Bush HS
Fiona Chien	Appetite for Contentment	Gold Seal	Travis HS



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