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Stay connected with us to get the latest District news and events. Visit www.fortbendisd.com and connect with us on social media.
Anticipating Post-Pandemic Normalcy

I feel privileged to serve as the Acting Superintendent in Fort Bend ISD as we embark on the 2021-22 school year, anticipating far fewer restrictions than we have encountered over the past several months. Rest assured that we are moving forward with student and staff safety at the forefront of our planning; however, the return to in-person learning and a sense of normalcy is exciting.

While our schools can once again operate at 100 percent capacity for face-to-face instruction, we recognize that returning will require some adjustments. In Fort Bend ISD, we know that each person acclimates socially and emotionally at their own pace; therefore, we will operate with care and compassion so that all feel safe, secure and supported while on campus.

Many students are looking forward to seeing their classmates in the cafeteria, in the halls, or on the playground, while others may feel more secure socializing in spaces that provide for small, socially distanced gatherings with friends. FBISD will always respect and honor each individual’s personal choices.

Our hearts go out to those community members who have suffered losses during this global pandemic. We have many social and emotional support systems in place for our students and staff members and encourage anyone who needs support to reach out to their teacher, counselor, principal, or visit the Staff Links web site.

Individually, and as a community, we have overcome many daunting obstacles to reach the start of this new school year. Although the struggle has been difficult, TOGETHER we have persevered. Our campus leaders stand ready to welcome families, students and teachers into our schools to inspire and equip students to pursue futures beyond what they can imagine.

As we head into the new school year and all the promise it holds, I am enthusiastic, energized and optimistic about the weeks and months ahead. The search for the new superintendent is under way, our early literacy centers are ready to jump start the academic careers of our youngest scholars, and we have a new elementary school and a new high school under construction.

This is an exciting chapter in Fort Bend ISD history, full of promise and potential. I hope every student, teacher and support staff member is ready to return - resilient, resourceful and re-energized.

Together, there is no limit to what we can achieve!

Diana Sayavedra
Fort Bend ISD Acting Superintendent
Fort Bend ISD is proud to announce its 2021 Teachers of the Year. Both honorees represent excellence in classroom education and leadership and were selected by their peers, based on their commitment to students and dedication to teaching.

Rosa Castille was named Fort Bend ISD’s Elementary Teacher of the Year and Sherman Batiste is the District’s Secondary Teacher of the Year. Get to know each of our educators’ backgrounds and teaching philosophies.

Rosa Castille, Colony Bend Elementary School

Rosa Castille teaches third grade English Language Arts and Social Studies at Colony Bend Elementary School. She has taught for 31 years, 13 of which have been in Fort Bend ISD. Castille believes one of her most significant contributions to education is her dedication and willingness to try new and innovative ideas and change as her students grow. She strives to provide a safe, encouraging and risk-free environment in her classroom where her students are encouraged to ask questions, take ownership of their learning and maintain a growth mindset.

Sherman Batiste, Elkins High School

Sherman Batiste has been a teacher for five years and teaches Personal Finance Literacy, World History and AVID College Readiness at Elkins High School. Batiste was also named a finalist for the Region 4 Secondary Teacher of the Year. He works daily to instill enthusiasm, energy and optimism in his students. In order to guide and shape students academically, he believes that relationships built on trust and respect must first exist. For Batiste, this level of care also extends beyond his classroom.

Traditionally, Teacher of the Year winners are announced during a banquet but because of the pandemic and to ensure that staff were kept safe, winners were surprised individually at their campuses by the Superintendent and District leadership.
A RETURN TO CELEBRATING
FBISD’s Deserving Staff

Finalists for Teacher of the Year are usually celebrated during a formal indoor ceremony but this year, a two-day drive-thru event was held to honor finalists from throughout the District. Teacher of the Year finalists for 2019-20 were also celebrated to make up for last year’s cancellation. Attendees were cheered by District leaders and the Board of Trustees as they drove or walked through decorated tents to receive plaques, plenty of goodies, professional photographs and a delicious to-go meal.

STAFF SERVICE Celebration

The end of the school year is not only a time to celebrate students for advancing to the next grade level, but also a time to celebrate staff members who reached career milestones in the District. The Staff Service Awards had a different look and name this year. A formal indoor event was swapped for an outdoor celebration and a sweet treat delivery.

Staff members who have served 10 and 15 years in the District received hand-delivered cookies and commemorative pins in celebration of their milestones.

Staff members who have served at least 20 years or retired from the District were honored with a safe, drive-thru event at Hall Stadium. Honorees were presented with commemorative awards, professional photographs and to-go dinners in celebration of their accomplishments.
Lindsay Clarke

Lindsay Clarke’s time growing up in Fort Bend ISD is filled with great memories, so it was only natural that she returned to the District to teach.

“I was a student in FBISD from elementary school to high school,” Clarke said. “FBISD introduced me to educators who made an impact on my life. My experience in this district is filled with memories of friendships, sports, learning and school spirit. When I decided to become a teacher, FBISD was where I wanted to teach because this district has shaped me into the person that I am today.”

Clarke began her career in the District five years ago at the elementary school she attended, Pecan Grove Elementary, as a special education paraprofessional. The following year, she moved to Patterson Elementary where she has taught kindergarten for four years. She will teach second grade during the 2021-22 school year.

She also attended Garcia Middle School, Austin High School and was rezoned to Travis High School, where she became part of its first graduating class in 2009.

Milli Patel

First a student, then a teacher, and now a leader in Fort Bend ISD, Milli Patel is proud of her roots in the District.

She graduated from Austin High School in 2002 and currently serves as assistant principal at Barrington Place Elementary School. During her time as a student in FBISD, she remembers being surrounded by people of diverse backgrounds. She believes growing up in such a multicultural community and school district significantly enriched her life.

“Growing up in a diverse community allowed me to become open minded,” Patel said. “Now that I have children, I want them to experience the same type of love, acceptance and equality FBISD showed me growing up.”

The sense of community is what brought her back to the district she loves. Patel credits peers and teachers in FBISD with helping to shape her character and outlook.

“When I walk into a room today, I can actually see people for who they are, without dwelling on what religion they practice or what country they come from or what color their skin is,” she said. “This is something I am incredibly grateful for and owe to the teachers and leaders of Fort Bend ISD.”
Sonal Buchar

Elementary School 53 will be named after the late Sonal Buchar, a former FBISD trustee who was a tireless servant with a long history of community leadership.

Buchar is described as a trailblazer in Fort Bend County and a leader in the field of education. After her long association with the Fort Bend Education Foundation, Buchar was elected to the FBISD Board of Trustees for six years and served as the Board President for two years.

Buchar was appointed to the One Star National Service Commission Board by Governor Greg Abbott in 2015. Up until her passing, she was actively involved as a board member with the Child Advocates of Fort Bend and Parks, Art, Recreation, Culture, and Streetscapes (PARCS). She was a board member for the Literacy Council of Fort Bend, ACCESS Health, Sugar Land Cultural Arts Foundation, Sugar Land Heritage, the Indo-American Charity Foundation and the Texas Medical Association Alliance.

During her tenure with the District, Buchar spearheaded many efforts including chairing the WATCH program (a healthy lifestyle education program for elementary school students), developing the concept for the Fort Bend Education Foundation’s annual International Festival to promote diversity, equity and inclusion within the District, the Student Leadership Program and the Legislative Advocacy Program.

Elementary School 53 is located in the Riverstone community and is scheduled to open in January 2023.

Almeta Crawford

Almeta Crawford is a loving wife, mother, grandmother and a legendary educator who served for 49 years, 39 of which were with FBISD. She retired in 2018. Crawford worked at Dulles High School for more than 30 years and was named Teacher of the Year. Born in Silsbee, Texas, Crawford is a graduate of Texas Southern University and the product of many passionate and influential educators. For her, education is an experience where students and teachers share in the learning process and where student success is measured in growth.

Long before the District adopted its Profile of a Graduate, Crawford instilled the attributes in her students and fellow coworkers. She was a servant leader who remained purposeful in the classroom and dedicated to providing students with the best education possible. Crawford is a lifelong learner who challenged herself and her students to think critically and grow into effective communicators.

Crawford inspired many students to become educators, and a good number returned to FBISD. She was awarded the 2018 Jan DeBlance Memorial Award for Instructional Excellence by Abydos Literacy Learning and was a Diamond-Level Abydos Literacy Learning Trainer as well as a well-known, well-respected educator who is admired by her peers throughout the state.

High School 12 is located on the southeast side of the District on FM 521 and is scheduled to open in fall 2023.

Fort Bend ISD names new campuses after influential women who made significant contributions to the District and Community

Pictured top to bottom: Sonal Buchar and Almeta Crawford
NEW THIS FALL: Updates to lunch, recess and PE
Members of Fort Bend ISD’s School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) worked with FBISD Board members and administration to update the District’s Wellness Policy (FFA Local) with revisions to recess, physical education (PE) and lunch requirements that will go into effect this school year.

New recess guidelines ensure elementary students have the opportunity to participate in at least 30 minutes of recess daily, with a minimum of 20 minutes as unstructured physical activity. Outdoor recess will be offered when weather allows, otherwise staff and teachers will conduct recess indoors.

“Our American Academy of Pediatrics, recess is a necessary break in the day for optimizing a child’s social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development,” FBISD SHAC Chair Melanie Anbarci said.

Middle school students will be given an opportunity to participate in at least 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity daily, or 225 minutes every two weeks, for at least five semesters as part of the District’s physical education program.

In addition, the revised policy states that participation in physical activities during the required time may not be withheld as punishment unless approved by campus administration.

The new guidelines also ensure students have adequate time to eat meals at school. Mealtime schedules will be based on enrollment and cafeteria serving and seating capacities to minimize wait times and allow enough time to eat. Students will have the opportunity to eat breakfast for at least 10 minutes and lunch for a minimum of 20 minutes.

“Although certain campuses may already have some of these practices in place, we are thankful the Board recognizes the importance of formally incorporating best practices into the District’s Wellness Policy to ensure all FBISD students benefit,” Anbarci said.

Next year, each campus will have a wellness committee to coordinate initiatives and help their school stay in compliance with the revised Wellness Policy.

About FBISD’s Wellness Policy

FBISD’s Wellness Policy exists to develop a culture in which students can reach their full potential in a climate that promotes students’ learning, leadership and well-being. Students shall be inspired and equipped with skills to make healthy life choices about nutrition, health, and physical activity during their years in FBISD and throughout their lives.

Throughout the past few years, SHAC has worked with District administration to update the Wellness Policy to national standards and include best practices. The final policy was approved by the Board in April.

Get Involved

The School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) was established by the Board of Trustees to assist the District in meeting its strategic objectives to provide healthy school environments for students, staff and community members, and to teach and promote wellness through healthy lifestyles. The SHAC acts in an advisory capacity to the Superintendent and Board of Trustees.

Community members, parents and District staff who are interested in getting involved in school health and wellness policy programming can volunteer to join SHAC. For more information visit www.fortbendisd.com/SHAC or follow on Twitter @FBISD_SHAC.
Whole Child Health

Whole Child Health, aligned with the FBISD’s Profile of a Graduate, is committed to supporting and developing the mental, behavioral, social, emotional and physical health of all students in the District. Students are best equipped and inspired to pursue futures beyond what they can imagine when these needs and skills are met and developed. The purpose of the Whole Child Health campaign is to increase awareness of FBISD’s various health services and supports and to decrease the stigma around mental health. The District’s commitment to Whole Child Health includes making sure that each student is healthy, safe, engaged, supported and challenged. Visit www.fortbendisd.com/wholechildhealth to learn more.

District expands services for its youngest learners

Starting this school year, the District expands services for its youngest learners. The new Hunters Glen Early Literacy Center will serve monolingual and bilingual students in prekindergarten and Early Childhood Special Education programs who are zoned to elementary schools in the Marshall High School community. Housed in Hunters Glen Elementary, the center will offer multi-tiered interventions unique to each student and innovative programming including preliteracy and numeracy skills, a STEM lab, community garden, afterschool enrichment clubs and family engagement activities.

Dual Language Immersion

Fort Bend ISD is now offering One-Way Dual Language Immersion (DLI) to prekindergarten and kindergarten students enrolled in the District’s bilingual Spanish program. Starting this school year, students will begin the program to build biliteracy in English and Spanish, to increase academic achievement and sociocultural competence. Research has shown that students who have the opportunity to learn in their native language also develop strong academic English proficiency.

Implementation of the DLI in first through fifth grades will be done over the next five school years, beginning with first grade in the 2022-23 school year, followed by the other grades in subsequent years.

Fine Arts – Mariachi & Piano Technician Program

Marshall and Willowridge high school students can now participate in a new music class where they can learn and perform traditional, progressive and contemporary Mariachi music. Students will learn technique, style and interpretation on the guitar, vihuela and guitarrón, and participate in rehearsals and performances outside of the school day. To sign up for this course, students must have taken at least one year of music – Band, Choir or Orchestra – or studied music privately.

Housed at Marshall High School exclusively, students can sign up for the Piano Technician program where they learn to tune, repair and regulate pianos for concert venues, colleges and universities. Students can earn high school credit as well as two industry certifications. Following high school graduation, students may earn a Master Piano Technician certificate from the University of Houston.
Fort Bend ISD will continue its promise of being good financial stewards. The voter-approved 2018 Bond program is an investment in the future of the District and an investment in the future successes of students.

To keep up with the progress of the 2018 Bond, visit www.fortbendisd.com/bond.

New School Updates

**Almeta Crawford High School (High School #12)**

As a result of pandemic-related labor and supply shortages, staff is projecting an opening date for Crawford High School of fall 2023 instead of the previously stated fall 2022 opening date.

**Sonal Bhuchar Elementary School (Elementary School #53)**


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Rebuilds

**Meadows Elementary**

Construction for Meadows Elementary School is complete. Students were welcomed back to the new campus on April 5, 2021. A virtual tour of the rebuild can be found on the District’s YouTube page.

**Lakeview Elementary**

The rebuild for Lakeview Elementary School is scheduled to be 75 percent complete with substantial progress made by October 2021. The elementary school is slated to reopen in January 2022.
Superintendent Search

The Fort Bend ISD Board of Trustees continues to work with the national firm Hazard, Young, Attea and Associates to find the District’s next superintendent and name a lone finalist.

The District has a “Desired Characteristics of a Superintendent” profile that was developed with input from the Board of Trustees, administrators, community members, faculty, parents, students and support staff.

The desired candidate is an innovative individual who has had successful experience as an instructional leader in a uniquely diverse school district and has a track record of success in closing achievement gaps. The superintendent will foster a culture of high academic expectations for all students, be visible and approachable, a continuous learner and a team builder - especially in the development of a relationship with the Board as a Team of Eight.

The District also seeks a leader who is an honest, transparent communicator, who listens carefully, and uses a collaborative process for decision-making and problem solving. The superintendent will also be able to recruit, employ, and retain effective personnel throughout the District and its schools.

Remaining Search Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 9-11, 2021</td>
<td>Board conducts initial interviews (Virtual-tentative)</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 12, 2021</td>
<td>Board meets to identify preferred applicants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 12, 2021</td>
<td>Begin background checks: preferred applicants (takes 7-10 days)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 17-20, 2021</td>
<td>Board interviews preferred applicants (in-person)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 20, 2021</td>
<td>Board meets to identify preferred applicant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 23, 2021</td>
<td>Third-party background check completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 23-25, 2021</td>
<td>Board site visit and reference calls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 26, 2021</td>
<td>Announcement and vote on lone finalist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 16, 2021</td>
<td>Appointment of superintendent</td>
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Fort Bend ISD has secured its lowest interest rate in recent times for its bond programs with a total interest cost (TIC) of 2.16 percent on the District’s fixed rate bond debt, topping the previous rate of 2.40 percent.

The District’s new TIC of 2.16 percent will result in significant savings on the amount of interest FBISD pays for debt issued as part of its voter-approved bond program.

FBISD was able to obtain the 2.16 percent rate by working closely with the District’s financial advisor Hilltop Securities to time the issuance of new debt to align with construction payments, avoiding unnecessary interest costs.

The District maintained its AA+ bond ratings from both Standard & Poor’s (S&P) and Fitch, two of the nation’s top rating agencies. Fort Bend ISD also received a Superior rating for the 17th consecutive year in the Texas Education Agency’s annual Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST) program for the 2019-20 school year.

Strong standings with the rating agencies continue to make bond offerings by FBISD attractive to investors. The AA+ ratings allow the District to receive favorable rates for its financial transactions, which in turn saves money much like when an individual with a high credit score is able to pay less interest on amounts borrowed.

Avoiding higher interest costs allows FBISD to allocate more taxpayer dollars for new buildings and improvements to existing facilities. This directly benefits students, teachers and support staff by creating and maintaining safe, modern, efficient and effective learning spaces and work areas.

“"The Fiscal and Budgetary Strategies approved by the Board of Trustees provide a solid financial foundation for the District,” FBISD Chief Financial Officer Bryan Guinn said. “The strong policy guidance provided by our Board, along with our stellar credit rating and active debt management strategy, allowed us to achieve this low rate, ensuring taxpayer dollars are used efficiently.”

Registration for Fall 2021 classes open August 2, 2021.
Graduation Recap

Fort Bend ISD celebrated the accomplishments of the graduating Class of 2021 during outdoor ceremonies at Hall Stadium from June 3-9, 2021. Graduation marks the end of one journey and the beginning of another and is a culmination of the District's work to develop students who possess Profile of a Graduate attributes. The weather did not always cooperate, but the joy and satisfaction expressed by the graduates and their families made each ceremony memorable and special.

This year's class encountered various obstacles and challenges during its high school career. Freshman year was disrupted by Hurricane Harvey followed by countless weather events. The end of junior year was the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic that affected the learning experience until graduation.

In the face of adversity, the Class of 2021 continued to display resilience, not letting obstacles interfere with their goal of earning their high school diplomas. Over 6,000 students crossed the stage and can now call themselves alumni of FBISD. Best of luck to the graduates and much success as they pursue futures beyond what they can imagine. Congratulations!
Fort Bend ISD’s Enterprise Learning Labs
AT THE JAMES REESE CAREER AND TECHNICAL CENTER
are now open to patrons, giving students real-world experience in automotive, culinary, cosmetology and early education childcare service. The students look forward to the opportunity to serve the community.

The Shop
The Shop earned the Vehicle State Inspection License, which allows students to perform state inspections on vehicles. Additional services include oil changes, tire rotations and more!

The Salon
In need of cutting off some dead ends, a new hairdo or just wanting some spa time? Students at The Salon can take care of you! Services include manicures, pedicures, haircut, blow dry and several other add-ons.

The Grill
No worries about dinner plans. The Grill’s got you covered! Students in the Culinary Arts Pathway are serving it up with some delicious meals for the public at affordable prices. Reservations are appreciated to facilitate a great guest experience.

Early Education Lab
The Early Education Lab is a tuition-based program offering children exposure to Pre-K curriculum by certified teachers. Spots are limited; register today!

Visit www.fortbendisd.com/studententerprise for more information and to schedule your appointment.

Fort Bend ISD
is a great place to work and offers full and part-time opportunities in many areas.

We are looking for…
Certified Teachers • Instructional and Special Education Aides • Substitute Teachers • Crossing Guards • Custodial and Maintenance Staff • Business, Technology and other Professional Staff

Learn more and apply today!
www.fortbendisd.com/careers
There are many ways you can help equip Fort Bend ISD students and families with necessary supports for a successful 2021-22 school year.

Donate
- Donate school supplies to a student
- Donate non-perishable food items to address food insecurity
- Donate new books to promote literacy and build at-home libraries
- Provide Holiday Cheer support for a family during the months of November & December

Volunteer
- Volunteer on a campus to help teachers with needed support
- Be a guest speaker or judge on a campus

Mentor
- Participate in after-school activities
- Read with a student

CollaborativeCommunities
@fortbendisd.com
www.fortbendisd.com/collaborativecommunities
281-634-1109

Support the Fort Bend Education Foundation’s Annual Campaign
Visit www.fortbendisd.com/foundation

Advocate
- Whole Child Health Campaign – Reduce stigma around mental health and provide for the mental, behavioral, social, emotional and physical well-being of students, staff, and families
- Join the School Health Advisory Council to promote wellness and healthy lifestyles
Visit www.fortbendisd.com/Domain/13327