

**Superintendent's Communications Council**  
**Campus Questions**  
**October 23, 2023**

**ELEMENTARY**  
**Cheney Hills**

1. **Is there a way to have more subs help cover when teachers are BAS/SLA testing?**
  - A. The number of subs is directly tied to the number of students in grades 3–5. As a result, the more students you have, the more subs are provided. Campuses have the flexibility to request additional support through their principals.
2. **If the district will not allow us to use accelerated reader as a reading incentive program, what program can we use as a reading incentive?** Please mention that 90% of the students do not view RAZ Kids as any type of incentive.
  - A. RAZ Kids is our reading incentive program that allows students to be on a learning path based on their ability. In addition, teachers have a dashboard that assists them with monitoring student activity. The RAZ Kids program provides a more personalized option than the accelerated reader program because it is tied to the individual student level. Thank you for the feedback that RAZ Kids is not the preferred choice of students. We will study this further.

**Green Valley**

3. **How was it determined which SPED teachers would get stipends? Why were the Resource teachers not included for the stipend?** Resource teachers have very large caseloads which means: more planning/prep time, more monitoring, overlapping sped group times so all student's minutes get met, more paperwork to complete for ARD meetings and Progress Reports, teaching dyslexic groups, and most of us don't have enough help. Just curious why.
  - A. Due to funding concerns, we started with PASS, TEAMS, and SEEC due to the behavior challenges in those classes. Then last year, we added AABLE, ACCESS and OMEGA. We hope to add more stipends in future years as funds are available.
4. It seems as though decisions are made early on eliminating sections based on spring numbers, and after school begins, we are creating overly packed rosters in small spaces or overflowing families zoned for us. **Has there been any thought to tracking numbers in the trend of students enrolling after the start of school?**
  - A. While we do review staffing in the spring for planning purposes, hiring and recruiting; we also monitor student enrollment throughout the spring and summer. While the forecasting will never be exact, it has prepared the District and campuses to have minimal movement after the school year begins.

**Superintendent's Communications Council**  
**Campus Questions**  
**October 23, 2023**

**ELEMENTARY (continued)**  
**Green Valley #4 (continued)**

There are two main variables that create the packed classrooms and overflow that are difficult for the District to prepare for: 1) Late enrollment; and 2) Classroom availability at certain campuses. We feel the aforementioned staffing processes have limited the burdens to a minimum. As our numbers begin to stabilize following COVID, we will continue to fine tune our processes.

We also meet again prior to school beginning and continue to do so after school to address enrollment and class size. Often, staffing is adjusted to meet the needs of the campus.

5. For the 2024–2025 school year, **what will be the district's method of determining staffing based on projected class sizes to ensure the best learning environment for scholars in a classroom that does not exceed state guidelines and without asking for waivers?**
- A. A team including leaders from SPED, Intervention Services, Multilingual Services, Business and Finance, and Elementary and Secondary Campus Support meet individually with every campus principal to discuss and review student membership and campus needs to determine class sizes. It is always the intent to not staff over the state guidelines; there are times that may not be possible.

**Mullendore**

6. **Why does the BISD Elementary Social Studies curriculum not align with the TEKS?**
- A. All BISD Elementary Social Studies curriculum aligns all standards from all grade levels with the state Social Studies standards (TEKS) and can be seen in our Scope & Sequences as well as our Year-At-A-Glance documents. Since the District rollout of the new Field Guides this fall, there has been some inquiry and confusion when it comes to those for Elementary Social Studies. Lead4Ward presents the Social Studies standards in their eight independent strands of:
- History
  - Geography
  - Economics
  - Government
  - Citizenship
  - Culture
  - Science, technology, and society
  - Social studies skills

**Superintendent's Communications Council**  
**Campus Questions**  
**October 23, 2023**

**ELEMENTARY (continued)**  
**Mullendore #6 (continued)**

However, this is not how they are taught in a curriculum. A curriculum presents these eight concepts as well as Social Studies Skills in integrated, spiraled themes for students to best relate to them and utilize critical thinking skills. This is guided by Chapter 113: Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Social Studies in the provisions of §§113.11–113.16, where it states in subchapter 3 of each section:

“The eight strands of the essential knowledge and skills for social studies are intended to be integrated for instructional purposes. Skills listed in the social studies skills strand in subsection (b) of this section should be incorporated into the teaching of all essential knowledge and skills for social studies. A greater depth of understanding of complex content material can be attained when integrated social studies content from the various disciplines and critical-thinking skills are taught together.”

To see how these look in the BISD curriculum, you can look at the Year-At-A-Glance Extension Document for each grade level, where all standards are listed.

- Kindergarten YAG
- First Grade YAG
- Second Grade
- Third Grade
- Fourth Grade
- Fifth Grade

To ensure all standards are in the curriculum, you can also see them here in the Scope & Sequence documents:

- [Kindergarten Scope & Sequence](#)
- [First Grade Scope & Sequence](#)
- [Second Grade Scope & Sequence](#)
- [Third Grade Scope & Sequence](#)
- [Fourth Grade Scope & Sequence](#)
- [Fifth Grade Scope & Sequence](#)

**Superintendent's Communications Council**  
**Campus Questions**  
**October 23, 2023**

**ELEMENTARY (continued)**

**Mullendore (continued)**

7. **Will the district work to better align staff contract-specified hours with the hours teachers are effectively required to work?** Several changes over the past few years have worsened this discrepancy.
- A. BISD Employee Handbook (pg. 17): Full-time employees are expected to work a minimum of eight hours daily. Supervisors and principals will determine specific duty hours, including acceptable arrival time and departure time for departure for respective employees under their supervision in accordance with requirements at the place of duty. Specific hours are not listed in teacher contracts. Board Policies (DEAB, DK, DL)

**Porter**

8. **Is there a way to ensure fair stipends are given for elementary teachers who do extra activities outside of school hours?** We are currently allotted a fixed amount per campus and it is divided up evenly between the Choir teacher, National Elementary Honor Society (NEHS) sponsor, Battle of the Books coaches, etc., which came out to just over \$100 per person for the 2022–23 school year. **Can we revisit this so that each activity is given a specific amount that is appropriate for that position?** Several of these things take several hours on a weekly or monthly basis, often involving nights or weekends. Secondary coaches are given stipends for athletics. Could that same mindset apply to elementary “coaches” as well?
- A. Every year we consult with the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) to review all compensation including stipends. We are certainly willing to review those again at the elementary level for the 2024–25 school year and consider recommendations from the campus principals and department directors. The state legislature has not allocated any new funds for school districts in over four years. All raises that BISD has approved since this time have come from school district reserves better known as fund balance.
9. **What is the rationale for bolting classroom windows shut?** If there was a fire, teachers and students would be unable to exit safely. This seems to go against what our local firefighters said to us when they were on our campus.
- A. Windows are never meant to be exits during an emergency. Bolting them shut provides additional safety measures and improves air quality. It also helps better manage temperatures in the buildings. We will follow up with the Hurst Fire Department to make sure this isn't a fire code issue.

**Superintendent's Communications Council**  
**Campus Questions**  
**October 23, 2023**

**ELEMENTARY (continued)**

Spicer

**10. Will ECSE get a stipend in the future?**

- A. Possibly. Due to funding concerns, we started with PASS, TEAMS, and SEEC due to the behavior challenges in those classes. Then last year, we added AABLE, ACCESS and OMEGA. We hope to add more stipends in future years as funds are available.

Walker Creek

**11. When a NON-Title 1 school receives overflow from a Title 1 school does the NON-Title 1 school receive appropriate funds/services and if not, is this being investigated?** It seems a disadvantage to both the student and school for the district to not provide appropriate funding and services in this matter yet expect similar results.

- A. Yes, we do consider these transfer students. The transfer student's free/reduced status would be counted at the receiving school. If this places the campus at 40% economically disadvantaged or higher, they would qualify for Title 1 and receive additional funds/services. A school is only eligible for Title 1 funding if at least 40% of students qualify for free or reduced lunch. From that starting point, complex formulas are used to determine Title 1 funding per pupil based on enrollment at a Title 1 school. Title 1 funds are distributed by the federal government and cannot be used at non-Title 1 campuses. The District will continue to evaluate staffing and services each year.

**12. The referral system for Special Education, PASS, TEAMS, etc. appears to be fabulously slow, from my perspective. Once again, this creates an incredible disadvantage for the school, intended student, and peers. **Is there a plan or action the district is following to address this?**** Yes, teacher shortage (especially Special Education) can be a reason, but we have students in classrooms that cannot function without significant instructor attention. There are students who will be in the classroom for 9 or more weeks, disrupting instruction for the entire class. This is unfortunate for the student needing the special instruction; the remainder of the class – who are now academically behind or uncomfortable in certain loud/violent situations; and the teacher whose spirits and energy are sapped every day in frustration.

**Superintendent's Communications Council**  
**Campus Questions**  
**October 23, 2023**

**ELEMENTARY (continued)**  
**Walker Creek #12 (continued)**

**A. Student Moving to PASS/TEAMS**

- There are many factors that affect processes and timelines – each situation is unique, and each child's circumstances are different.
- Special Education is considered after campuses follow the series of processes outlined in the BISD MTSS Handbook for academic and behavioral intervention.
- Once a student qualifies for special education, ARD committees are charged with considering the potential harmful effects and potential benefits of any services, support, or placements.
  - ◆ Legally we are required to educate students in the least restrictive environment.
- The District has a process in place for providing support in the least restrictive environment via the Behavior Support Request (BSR or "behavior ticket") for students who are already receiving special education services and require additional behavior support.
- When students are not being successful in a less restrictive setting, the Consideration for Change of Placement (CPC) process is in place which involves the campus staff providing supporting data and documentation that shows the need to consider a change in services, supports and/or placement.
- Ultimately, a student's IEP is individualized based upon their unique strengths and needs and all decisions regarding eligibility, services, placement, etc. are made by an ARD committee, including the parent/guardian who must agree to all plans and changes.

**Student Initial Evaluation**

- TEA requires that all data for a student be reviewed by a multi-disciplinary team prior to moving forward with recommendation for referral.
- Data indicating Tier 3 interventions and progress/lack of progress must be reviewed.
- All other options must be considered and attempted prior to a referral for Special Education.
- Timelines are specifically outlined by TEA.
  - ◆ 45 school days from receipt of signed consent to complete the evaluation, then
  - ◆ 30 calendar days to hold the ARD

**Superintendent's Communications Council**  
**Campus Questions**  
**October 23, 2023**

**ELEMENTARY (continued)**  
**Walker Creek #12 (continued)**

- Current legislation regarding the move of Dyslexia from 504 to SpEd has resulted in an unprecedented number of referrals:
  - ◆ 2020–21: 536 referrals
  - ◆ 2021–22: 939 referrals
  - ◆ 2022–23 1250 referrals
  - ◆ 2023–24: as of 10/13/23 we have received 330 initial referrals
- Diagnosticians also have their reevaluation caseloads in addition to the referrals noted above.

We appreciate your hard work. We are equally frustrated by the time intensive and new unfunded mandate placed on us by TEA. We continue to operate in compliance with the law.

**MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
**Haltom**

**13. Has there been any discussion regarding a Fall Break similar to the one that Keller ISD now has?**

- A. The Calendar Committee meets every year to discuss possible options for the upcoming instructional calendar. We collect calendars from surrounding districts and try to fit certain aspects into one of our many drafts. Limitations such as graduation dates that are determined years in advance, the start of school and how long our Thanksgiving and Winter breaks are play a significant role in our calendar development. We have considered the week-long fall break in the past and certainly will consider again for the 2024–25 school year.

**Smithfield**

**14. With the changes being implemented due to HB3928, what is the district's plan for providing time for case managers, dyslexia interventionists, and diagnosticians to be able to meet in order to complete the referrals and dyslexia goals?**

- A. With HB3928, our students with dyslexia will have additional support under IDEA. It is encouraged for each campus to align schedules and establish campus processes that will allow for collaboration among staff. Special education received no additional funding. Yet, our numbers increased 21% this year. We have similar concerns. We are in the third special session of the 88<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session. We encourage you to contact your elected officials to appropriately fund public education.

**Superintendent's Communications Council**  
**Campus Questions**  
**October 23, 2023**

**MIDDLE SCHOOL (continued)**  
**Smithfield (continued)**

**15. What is the district's plan for providing case managers and dyslexia interventionists with time in our classrooms to satisfy administrative tasks such as writing and managing special ed IEPs, preparing for ARDs and testing while also continuing with our other every day responsibilities as teachers?**

**A.** This can't be said enough. We have similar concerns. We are in the third special session of the 88<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session. We encourage you to contact your elected officials to appropriately fund public education. It is certainly true that specialized teachers spend time planning and grading as all excellent teachers do, regardless of the grade level and content taught. If it were possible, all teachers would have more time to plan, prepare, and provide quality feedback to students. Each classroom teacher is entitled to 450 minutes within each two-week period for instructional preparation, including parent-teacher conferences, evaluating students' work, and planning. We will continue to review all the expectations of our specialized teachers.

**Watauga**

**16. It's nice that the board approved raises for teachers but this raise was canceled out by the health insurance premium hike for employees with families. **Are there any plans for meaningful raises to help offset the rise in inflation?** It is becoming increasingly unsustainable to support a family with a teacher salary.**

**A.** We have the same concerns. The District has not received an increase in the per pupil allotment from the state since 2019. Districts only receive funding based on student attendance. Increased property values do not increase the overall revenue the District receives. Inflation has also impacted us with rising property insurance premiums, utility costs, fuel costs, etc. The Board of Trustees approved a four percent raise for teachers for 2023–24 and used fund balance to pay for it. We will continue to explore ways to generate revenue and reduce costs. We can ensure all staff are paid competitively. However, significant change can't be made outside significant legislative changes. Again, we are in the third special session of the 88<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session. We encourage you to contact your elected officials to appropriately fund public education. [Find Your Representative Here](#)

**Superintendent's Communications Council**  
**Campus Questions**  
**October 23, 2023**

**MIDDLE SCHOOL (continued)**  
**Watauga (continued)**

**17. Why doesn't the district take a more proactive stance when educating the public about decisions our state elected officials make regarding public education? Maybe voter registration drives? Or non-political voter guides that educate citizens and teachers on how state legislation directly affects our public schools?**

- A.** BISD can't use district resources to advocate for or against various political campaigns. However, we hope our staff will follow the informational resources provided through their various professional organizations. Though you can't use district resources, you can participate in making your voice heard to your elected officials outside of your work hours, using your personal email, and personal resources. [Find Your Representative Here](#)

The District did have a voter registration drive last fall. In addition, each year we are required to have a voter registration drive with all our high school seniors before they graduate.

**HIGH SCHOOL**  
**Richland HS**

**18. Can District employees get reimbursed for part of their cell phone bill?** Each school year things are being added to our plates that required us to use our personal cell phones. I know that I have the rankone, Navigate 360, TX high school golf, weather, remind apps that are all school related/required not to mention that I have to use my cell to authorize access to my school email and google accounts. All of this does not include all of the text messages that we get that are directly related to school.

- A.** We focused our efforts on raises for all staff that address needs today and for their future. When possible, we encourage employees to use District Wi-Fi instead of their personal data plans. District provided laptops can also be used in place of a cell phone for most of the apps mentioned.