



Harvey Public Schools District 152

QUARTERLY
NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2021

Mission Statement

Striving toward excellence to develop students to fulfill their roles as responsible citizens in a global Society.

Vision Statement

The District will provide the students with an enriched and integrated curriculum with instructional experiences to promote 21st Century skills that include inquiry, skillful decision-making, effective communication, multicultural appreciation, academic success and the joy of learning.



From the Board President Janet Rogers

Greetings to the Citizens, Staff, and Students of Harvey School District 152! The Board would like to extend a special farewell to one of our very own, Mrs. Gloria Johnson. Mrs. Johnson has served on the Harvey 152 Board of Education for 28 years. During her tenure, she achieved the "Fellow Board Member" recognition, which is the Illinois Association of School Board's highest distinction for a school board member. This honor is a true reflection of Mrs. Johnson's time, effort, and dedication devoted to the leadership of public education. Although it's hard to say goodbye, we wish Mrs. Johnson nothing but the best on her future endeavors! Mrs. Johnson's remaining term will be completed by the newly appointed interim board member, Ms. Teresa Cameron.



Providing our students with high quality learning experiences in the safest way possible, will remain our top priority. We promise that

with every decision we make, the needs of the students and citizens of Harvey will continue to be our focus. Upon opening the doors to the 2020-2021 school year, we knew there would be challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, the doors to the new school year opened with confidence that we, the staff, administration, and Board of Education, would be able to meet the academic and social/emotional needs of our students. Although this year has been challenging, we are proud of the progress we've made with improving our remote instructional program, acquiring more technology tools and equipment, and enhancing our schools with health and safety protocols in compliance with CDC guidelines.

We recognize that even though our staff rose to the challenge of continuing the education of our students during the pandemic, we would not have been successful without the support of the parents, guardians, volunteers, and external stakeholders. On behalf of the Harvey Public School District 152 Board of Education, we thank you for your continued support and encouragement!

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Secretary



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*Director of Buildings and
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Principal, Maya Angelou

Mr. Durrell Anderson
Principal, Bryant

Mrs. Carlene Matthews
Assistant Principal, Bryant

Ms. Doelynn Strong
Principal, Holmes

Mrs. Julie Mahorney
Assistant Principal, Holmes

Dr. Dominique Effs
Principal, Whittier

Mr. Darnell Garner
*Assistant Principal,
Angelou & Whittier*

Mr. Robert Rizzo
Principal, Brooks Middle School

Mr. Curtis Young
Assistant Principal, Brooks



From the Superintendent of Schools

Mr. John F. Thomas

As we have communicated during this unprecedented time of the COVID 19 pandemic, your safety and well being is our top priority. As such, we implemented our remote learning plan early on. We have continually assessed the safety and likelihood of returning to in person learning with stakeholders involved throughout our decision-making analysis over the past several months. Additionally, we have assessed the effectiveness of our remote learning plan implementation.

It is without question that we all would like to resume in person learning for the maximum benefit of our students; however, **the decision has been made to extend our remote learning plan through April 30, 2021. In-person instruction will begin on May 3, 2021.**

This decision was not taken lightly, and we truly understand the implications and sacrifices our school and community are making during this time. Although this decision is fluid and can change based

person coordination should the assessments not receive a waiver from the Illinois State Board of Education. We will continue our updates as new information becomes available.



on new data, we are currently developing a student assessment logistics plan to ensure our students can safely take our State Assessments appropriately. This may require in

Finally, we truly recognize and appreciate your unwavering patience and support. Together, we will get through these unimaginable times.

***“In-person instruction
will begin on May 3, 2021.”***



21st Century Technology Tools

We've successfully deployed over 1500 Chromebooks to support our 1:1 technology initiative and rapid shift to remote learning. All Pre-K students were assigned an iPad, Kindergarten and 1st grade students received touch-screen chromebooks, and 2nd - 8th students received standard chromebooks. We have also deployed

over 100 hotspots to support families in need of internet access. If any students' device is damaged or malfunctioning, please be reminded to email the school's Lab Assistant or visit the District Office (M-F) from 9am - 2pm for onsite tech support.

In addition to increasing students' access to devices,

we are updating our classrooms with 21st century technology equipment, which includes new 75" interactive BenQ Boards, digital document cameras, and pre-wired ipad and chromebook carts. We are anxiously awaiting a return to in-person to begin utilizing this state of the art equipment with our students!

Remote Learning

People always say kids are resilient, but with remote learning, educators are showing that they are too! Teachers have been working tirelessly to master best practices in a digital world that will carry back into the classroom setting.

Since late July, the Department of Teaching & Learning has hosted over 100 hours of virtual teacher training focused on remote learning in the form of a two-week summer Boot Camp, Virtual Institute Days, Remote Learning Planning Days, and after school workshops. These workshops have trained our teachers to use a wide variety of innovative tools and digital products to engage students and enhance instruction online. Some favorites include Google Suites for Educators, Seesaw, Bitmoji, Nearpod, Jamboard, Screencastify, We Video, and Kami. Additionally, we made all classroom curriculum, textbooks, and learning materials available in digital format so that all students are able to access content and continue learning from a distance.

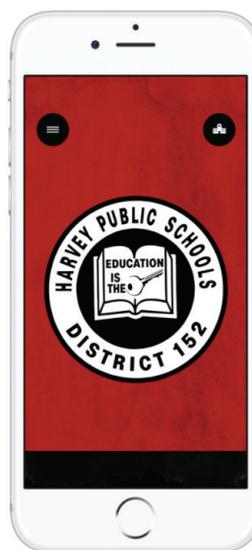


DOWNLOAD OUR NEW APP

We have updated our website and implemented a mobile app that you can download on your smartphone from the Apple Store or Google Play Store. Simply search for "Harvey 152" and you can have information about your child's school at your fingertips!

It's everything Harvey SD 152, **in your pocket.**

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Although this year has been remote, it has been exciting to see teachers and students continue to grow and learn. One of the best things that has happened is the parents' increased involvement in the classroom setting. As a result of our strong partnership with parents, we are averaging a 96% daily attendance rate for remote learning. Parents, your dedication and support has been unwavering and much appreciated by the staff!

Prioritizing STEM Education

For the past three years, we have embarked on a new journey to engage all K - 8th grade students in STEM educational opportunities. We established a goal to equip all schools with state of art STEM Labs for students to explore Science, Math, Engineering, Social Studies, Language Arts and Fine Arts through projects rich in applied technology. These learning opportunities will develop skills for college and career readiness in the areas of critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, communication, project management and

time management. We successfully completed Phase 1 in 2018, which included the construction of three STEM labs at Brooks Middle School, which includes a Smart Lab, Communications Media Arts Lab, and a Broadcasting Studio. Phase II was completed last year, which included the construction of a Smart Lab at both Bryant and Holmes Elementary Schools. We are currently completing our final phase of constructing Smart Labs at Angelou and Whittier Elementary Schools.



As a result of this initiative, all K-8 grade students are now receiving core instruction in various STEM areas that include circuitry, computer graphics, digital communications, mechanics and structures, robotics, scientific data analysis, software engineering and power efficiency. We are excited about these learning opportunities and the skills our students are developing. Although schools are closed, our students are still fully engaged in STEM projects remotely.

Some include:

- ✓ *Emulating architects and engineers by designing structures*
- ✓ *Writing code to program games and simulate objects*
- ✓ *Creating websites using Google*
- ✓ *Using storyboards to create movie scenes*
- ✓ *Producing music and video editing*
- ✓ *Designing logos for companies*

STEM



Taking this Mission to Heart

We are elated to share the accomplishment of one of our very own STEM teachers, Mrs. Cynthia Banks-Reynolds from Angelou and Holmes Schools. Mrs. Banks-Reynolds is the recent recipient of the Face the STEM Gap Sweepstakes, sponsored by Proctor and Gamble!

Mrs. Banks-Reynolds was selected because of the support she provides black and brown underserved elementary age students with introducing and normalizing STEM careers. Due to this honor, Mrs. Banks-Reynolds was featured on Good Morning America on February 11, 2021, where she discussed the importance of introducing STEM related experiences and careers to young women.

The district is filled with pride and congratulates Mrs. Banks-Reynolds for her dedication and achievement.



"We must prepare all students, including girls and minorities who are underrepresented in [STEM] fields to be proficient in STEM subjects. And we must inspire all students to learn STEM and, in the process, motivate many of them to pursue STEM careers."

- President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, September, 2010

STEM & Beyond!

The success of our STEM program has reached far beyond the boundaries of Harvey 152! We recently hosted Evergreen Park School District 124 and other guests to visit our STEM labs and learn about the amazing instructional opportunities we are providing our students. We shared samples of student projects, our curriculum initiatives, STEM funding strategies, construction processes and opportunities for growth. We are extremely pleased that other districts are impressed with our program's success and learning from our district!





2020 Summative Designations

Exemplary –

Schools performing in the top 10 percent of schools statewide with no underperforming student groups.

Commendable –

A school that has no underperforming student groups, a graduation rate greater than 67 percent, and whose performance is not in the top 10 percent of schools statewide.

Targeted –

A school in which one or more student groups is performing at or below the level of the “all students” group in the lowest performing 5 percent of schools.

Comprehensive –

A school that is in the lowest-performing 5 percent of schools in Illinois and any high school with a graduation rate of 67 percent or less.

Illinois State Board of Education School Success Ratings

In 2015, the federal government reauthorized the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Under NCLB, school success ratings were based on a single indicator of students meeting grade level proficiency standards. The impact of this “one size fits all” model was far more negative than positive, and eventually deemed ineffective for rating school performance.

Under the new ESSA model, there is less focus on meeting grade level proficiency standards and more focus on academic growth. In addition to academic growth, school success is also rated upon school quality indicators related to attendance and the 5 Essentials climate survey.

ESSA recognizes equity in education, values the expertise in local context, and takes into account the needs of the whole child according to the school’s demographics. ESSA’s summative designations rate how well schools are serving all students accord-

ing to the following four categories: Exemplary School, Commendable School, Targeted School, and Comprehensive School. ISBE includes these school designations annually in the Illinois Report Card at www.illinoisreportcard.com. The most recent designations for the district’s schools are as follows:

ANGELOU	•————•	Commendable
BRYANT	•————•	Commendable
HOLMES	•————•	Commendable
WHITTIER	•————•	Commendable
BROOKS	•————•	Targeted

ESSA. Over the past five years, both Reading and Math scores have consistently increased annually. In Reading the district’s score is currently 19% compared to the State’s average of 38%. In Math, the district’s average is 13% compared to the State’s average of 32%. Although our proficiency rates are not as

Brooks missed “Commendable” due to Special Education students not meeting their cut scores by an extremely low margin of 2.62 points. We are certain that they will join the other schools and receive the “Commendable” status they deserve after the next assessment.

All of our schools are making strides with improving student proficiency in Reading and Math on the mandated Illinois Assessments of Readiness (IAR) under

high as we would like, the district is experiencing tremendous amounts of academic growth in both Reading and Math. Performance on the two most recent IAR assessments demonstrated that 51% of our students grew in Reading and 48% grew in Math. We are expecting even more growth when students complete their 2021 IAR assessment this Spring! As we continue on this positive trajectory of academic growth, proficiency rates are sure to increase significantly!



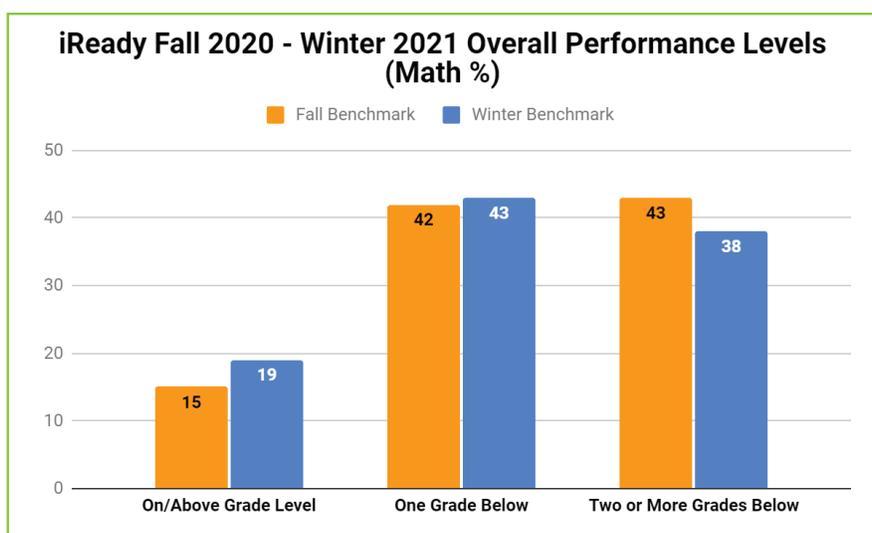
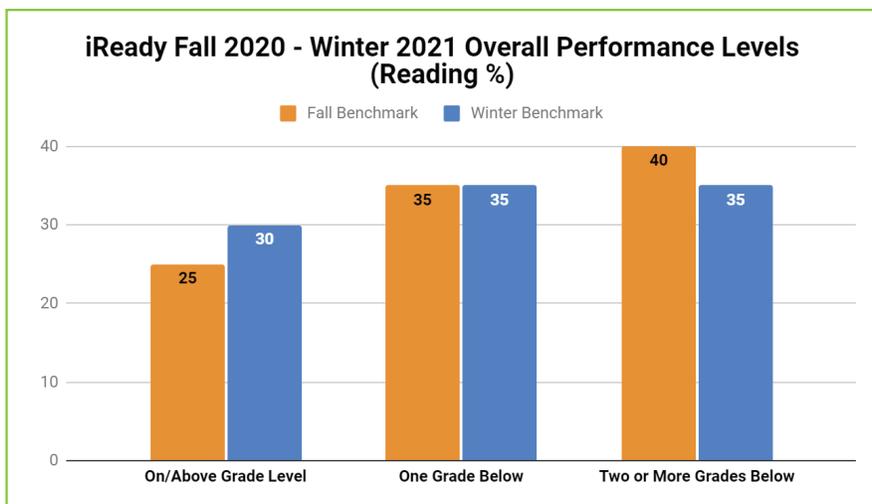
51%
of students
grew academically
in **READING**



48%
of students
grew academically
in **MATH**

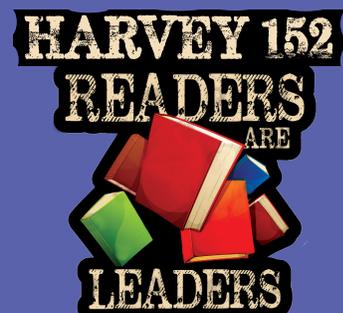
iReady Winter 2021 Performance Results

In addition to students completing the mandated IAR assessment, they also complete the local iReady Assessment three times per year to help identify learning gaps and academic growth. This is our first year utilizing this assessment remotely and our students and teachers have done a wonderful job with test administration. Students completed the Fall Benchmark assessment in September 2020, and recently completed the Winter benchmark assessment in January 2021. Performance results indicate a 5% increase in the students on grade level in Reading and a 4% increase in Math from the Fall to Winter assessment. We are especially proud of the students at Brooks Middle School where 92% of the students are in progress of meeting their growth targets in Reading and 62% in Math. Outstanding job Brooks students and staff!



After students are assessed they are placed in academic tiers to receive individualized support. Students in Tier 2 receive intervention instruction from their classroom teacher in small groups. Their instruction is targeted towards a specific skill that needs improvement according to the iReady assessment. Students in Tier 3 receive intensive support specific to their targeted need from an Interventionist. In addition, building teams are working together to create individual plans for students as needs present themselves. Teachers and interventionists are also taking into account the learning gaps that may exist due to the unique circumstances of the current pandemic. Although we are faced with extraordinary challenges, the students and teachers have truly demonstrated their resilience.

Library/Media News



To date, our students have read over 5,000 e-books this year through our MyOn Reader program! Students are encouraged to read daily and participate in the following E-Learning Library Reading Initiatives at their respective school:

Angelou- Pizza Hut Book It Reading Incentive Program- readers can earn a free pizza!

Brooks- The top five readers (based upon time spent reading in MyOn) in each grade for Quarter 3 will receive a gift of two new books delivered to their homes.

Bryant- Top readers will have a chance to earn bookmarks and certificates of recognition delivered to their homes.

Holmes- Weekly top reader can choose the next book of the week for the virtual read-aloud!

Whittier- Students who pass 5 of their AR tests with a 100% will receive a \$5 gift card. The students who read 10 books on MyOn for the month of January will receive a \$10 gift card.

5 Essentials Survey

Parents, we need you to complete the **5 Essentials Survey** for your child's school by **April 2, 2021**.

The 5 Essentials survey provides parents, teachers, and students an opportunity to have a voice in improving their school. The survey results are also used by the Illinois State Board of Education to help determine a school's Summative Designation Rating.

Our goal is to get 20% of the families to complete the survey. Please visit the district's website, www.harvey152.org, to take the survey. If you have any questions, please contact the Principal of your child's school.



Professional Learning Communities

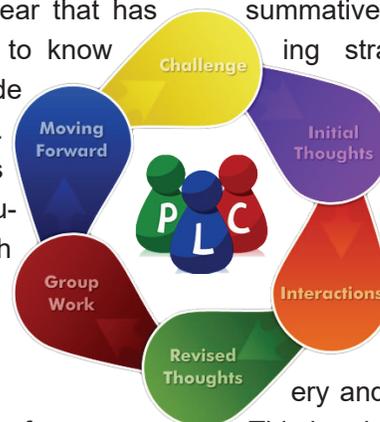
Teachers have embarked on a new PLC (Professional Learning Communities) initiative this year that has allowed them to get to know other teachers outside of their own buildings. This process affords instructors the opportunity to collaborate with their grade level colleagues on a regular basis.

Collaborative efforts focus on brainstorming innovative ways to improve learning, analyzing current levels of achievement, setting

achievement goals, developing and enhancing common formative and summative assessments, sharing strategies and resources, co-planning lessons, and researching best practices.

Whether remotely or in person, district-grade level PLCS will improve instructional delivery and performance outcomes.

This has helped to build a more cohesive curriculum across the district and develop stronger relationships amongst district staff.



Violence Prevention Reduction Program



The district recently acquired a grant in partnership with the Southland Juvenile Justice Counsel to provide targeted support to at risk youth.

The program is designed to help these students reach their full potential through the following services: youth mental health, chronic absenteeism support, mentoring, extracurricular activities, and violence intervention.

This program will assist in achieving our mission to create safe schools where all students feel a sense of belonging. The program also has a strong focus on restorative practices as a useful method of keeping students in school while promoting positive relationships.

We currently have 37 of our 4th - 8th grade students participating

in the program. These students are dedicating their Monday and Wednesday evenings, and Saturday mornings to become the best version of themselves.

Parents of students interested in participating should contact Mr. Woodson at swoodson@harvey152.org.

News from the Bilingual Department

The 2020-2021 school year has brought many challenges, and our priority is the health and safety of our students, staff, and parents.

Our English Language Learners (EL) students will continue receiving services from their EL teacher alongside their homeroom teacher. Our EL resource teachers plan and create lessons in collaboration with the homeroom teacher in order to support our EL students.

EL resource teachers create and adhere to schedules that include break-out sessions to personalize lessons and to also strategically work with our students. Communication with

families has also been key in providing necessary services for our EL students.



Harvey School District 152 will be participating in the 2020-2021 Literacy Squared Cohort. The Literacy Squared model includes authentic instructional approaches in Spanish and English that respect and focus on the internal structures of each of

the languages, emphasizing direct, explicit, and collaborative instructional approaches that have proven to be beneficial for emerging bilingual children. This is a wonderful professional development opportunity that will strengthen our Bilingual Program.

Mrs. Teresa Mezzich from Holmes Elementary School and Mrs. Sandra Ayala from Bryant Elementary School have accepted the commitment to participate in this year-long professional development activity. We appreciate both teachers for committing to this cohort and bringing back a plethora of knowledge to our District.

News from the Department of Special Services

We have trained all teachers on the Second Step program. This is a research-based social-emotional learning program that improves the lives of students at Harvey 152.



When students are better equipped to manage their own emotions, form healthy relationships, make good decisions, and cope with everyday

social and academic challenges, they're better equipped to learn.

We are also implementing a new supplemental reading program for students with disabilities to help with reading. Fast ForWord is an online language and reading intervention software that targets learning struggles at their core, starting in the brain.

Brooks, Bryant, and Whittier are participating in a Trauma Responsive Pilot Program through the Center for Childhood Resilience (CCR) at Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago. The program is designed to support schools to become trauma-responsive and to evaluate levels of external consultation support. The goal of the pilot is to identify an

effective, sustainable and scalable model of consultation.

The CCR TRS-D pilot has two phases and will support 30 Illinois schools in a process to become more trauma responsive. During Phase I (February – December 2020), we engaged in professional development on trauma and its impact on students, completed a collaborative trauma-responsive schools need assessment, and developed a data driven action plan. In Phase II, participating schools will receive funding to implement their action plan (contingent upon available funds), and monitor their progress via the trauma-responsive schools assessment tool.

During these extraordinary times, we look forward to an exciting second half of the school year with expectations of growth for all students.

School News



BROOKS Middle School

Gwendolyn Brooks Middle School would like to say Happy New Year and welcome back to the second half of the school year! We are working diligently to prepare our building, staff, and students to return to in-person learning. Presently, GBMS has a high rate of online attendance (+95%), and all our students have chromebooks and internet options. We want ALL students to become successful through consistent attendance, utilizing assistance from our faculty, and working diligently at home to maintain their academic standards. This is a recipe for success because these traits will build phenomenal habits that will carry them profitably throughout their life.

We are proud to announce that Gwendolyn Brooks Middle School has seen tremendous growth/progress from our students based on our iReady assessment data: 92% of our students are on target to meet their Reading Growth Goals, and 63% are on target to meet their Math Growth Goals. We are proud of the Brooks students for demonstrating the highest growth in the district!

Our teachers and staff consistently analyze data, conduct meetings to discuss data, and implement new strategies to ensure that we reach every student. Without the dedication and flexibility of our family members, community members, staff, and students this would not be possible. As we move through the second semester, the teachers, administrators, staff members, and parents will continue our vision of "Growing Together!"



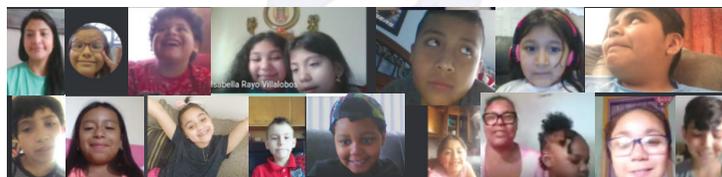
We invite you to subscribe to the Brooks Broadcasting Club on YouTube to see our student journalists in action providing you with the latest Brooks news.



HOLMES Elementary

Each day at Holmes, we begin the morning reminding students to "Have a great day at Holmes School, where we come to LEARN," even remotely! We have continued to implement activities in a remote setting including our PBIS program, which supports our students' positive behavior and social-emotional needs. Weekly videos are conducted on topics such as How to Actively Listen and Calming Self-Talk, and students create video responses to these topics using Flipgrid.

Our asynchronous learning Fridays recently began, offering extra tutoring in Reading & Math to students in need of additional support. Be sure to regularly check Class Dojo for messages & scheduling changes related to asynchronous Fridays. We are also excited to begin our Polished Pebbles Girls' Mentoring program, where girls learn positive life skills and develop social skills in online mentoring sessions twice a week, and we hope to continue this program and offer something similar to our boys.



As we are beginning the 3rd quarter, our virtual Honor Roll assemblies will occur later in February, and we hope to have school pictures done by appointment in early March. Students, parents, and teachers will complete the 5Essentials Survey, which gives us valuable information about how our school prepares students for successful learning. Please look for follow up messages on Class Dojo regarding completing these very important surveys and sharing your feedback about your child's learning experience. As always, feel free to contact Principal Strong via cell phone or email at dstrong@harvey152.org. We look forward to an exciting second semester at Holmes, where we come to LEARN!



BRYANT Elementary

Bryant Elementary is proud of the work that our students and staff continue to do. This has been a very challenging time for our students' in remote learning. Our first goal will always be the safety and well-being of the entire school community. We continue to be committed to a standard of excellence both with safety and academic integrity, and always place people as our top priority. As the situation with COVID-19 is serious, we will continue to make proactive decisions that are grounded in care for our families and staff.

Our awesome staff has been working diligently to provide quality remote instruction. We believe that all students can learn in any environment. As educators, we will continue to

discover how each child learns in order to differentiate our instruction to support diverse learning styles. In a collaborative effort, we want children to thrive in all ways possible. Student success is attributed to the partnership and the relationships we build within our community and this is most important now more than ever. It truly does take a village and at Bryant we value teamwork and collaboration!

Remember, education is a joint venture and Team Bryant greatly appreciates the support you provide for your children at home and at school to help them meet their learning targets. We are dedicated to providing your child(ren) a memorable, interactive, engaging distance learning experience. We look forward to seeing you when we return in-person.... hopefully soon!

School News



Maya Angelou Elementary

This has certainly been a unique school year at Angelou Elementary School! Our dedicated district and school staff continues to work diligently and creatively to provide student-centered virtual learning experiences that will continue when we return in person. Despite the mode of instruction, our staff will ensure that our students remain motivated by providing school-wide recognition and incentives similar to what we have implemented in previous school years (i.e. PBIS, reading goals, benchmark assessment goals, honor roll, perfect attendance/attendance incentives, and more).

We have also been fortunate to maintain partnerships with community stakeholders who share our dedication in meeting the best interest of our students. Last semester we conducted "Family Virtual Bingo Night, My Joyful Heart Gift Donation, and a Holiday Drive Up Gift Event," as a result of the ongoing collaboration with the Angelou staff and community. We would like to extend a special thank you to the Harvey-Markham Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated and Calling All Scholars E-Learning Lab for the support you provide to our students and community.

Thank you Angelou families for your unwavering support of our school, staff, and students! We are honored to serve your child and look forward to continuing our partnership. Please stay connected by monitoring updates to our district website, District 152 Facebook, Angelou's Classroom Dojo, automated phone calls, and your child's email, Google Classroom, or Seesaw notifications. We miss you and can't wait to see your smiles!



Whittier Elementary

Happy Black History Month and welcome to the second semester! It's hard to believe that we are at the halfway mark. We have taken on e-learning with all the ferocity of in-person learning, and Whittier students continue to achieve. Whittier students have read over 7,000 books and is currently the leading elementary school in the district for the number of books read!

In an attempt to continue a sense of normalcy during the pandemic, students were invited into the building to take Fall pictures and complete their iReady assessments. We're excited to announce the opening of our new school store, where students were invited to come in and shop for the holidays. The Whittier family thanks the Harvey/Markham Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. for partnering with us to provide Thanksgiving baskets to families in need. We also extend our thanks to Little Scholars, Inc., who has opened an e-learning center that serves several of our students.



While this year has been met with many challenges, our students, staff, and parents have truly risen to the occasion. Whittier students continue to engage in remote learning and are showing up daily ready to learn. Whittier teachers are creating new and exciting ways to keep students engaged throughout the day. I am honored to lead a school with such brilliant students, dedicated staff members, and supportive families into the second semester of the school year. I am committed to continuing the tradition of EXCELLENCE that you have grown accustomed to!

Parents, we invite you to attend the virtual "Parent-Principal Chat" on the fourth Thursdays of each month. Parents are entered into a raffle to win prizes for their participation. We also encourage parents to continue visiting the district website, and checking ClassDojo and your to receive the most up-to-date information. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Principal Effs via phone or by email at deffs@harvey152.org. We look forward to a great second semester and hopefully we will see one other in person soon!



Harvey Public Schools District 152

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Riley Pre Kindergarten

We all know that this year has been a challenge, but for us, we have met this challenge with success thanks to the hard work of staff and the support of our amazing families! We remain committed to a standard of excellence both with safety and academic integrity, always placing students as our top priority. In addition to providing a high-quality preschool experience for all students, we will also increase our efforts to provide support and community resources while focusing on the following:

- ❖ Increase of Social Emotional Support/Activities/Resources for our students, parents, and guardians.
- ❖ Increase of Community Resources to our families that will support the following areas: Medical, Mental Health, Parent Education, Housing Assistance, Job Assistance, and Food Assistance.
- ❖ Additional Parent Café Workshops focusing on Health, Self-Care, and Early Childhood Development.

Staff members have done a wonderful job during the fall semester and we can't wait to see what this second semester brings. We truly appreciate the support and understanding of our parents with complying to the new requirements schools must follow due to COVID. We understand this is an adjustment compared to previous operational procedures, and we thank you in advance for your flexibility and support. Our goal is to keep your child safe and healthy and we look forward to hopefully seeing you and our students in person soon. We will continue to have additional exciting parent involvement events as we continue to believe and model that parents are a child's first and most important teacher!