Welcome to the 2022-2023 school year! My name is Khechara Bradford, and I have been an educator for 21 years. I am excited to be an “anchor” for students and families being served in the Office of Special Populations. We have spent the summer collaborating with various departments to ensure we address all the needs of our students with special learning needs. Our department is committed to supporting the superintendent's strategic five-year plan. We will work this year to deliver effective services and supports to students with exceptional needs. Please click here to view the plan in detail.

In the Office of Special Populations, we serve a diverse group of learners. Our students possess a variety of abilities and we strive to ensure excellence for all students with specialized learning needs. Our department is divided into five areas of specialization: Multilingual Education, Gifted & Talented, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), Dyslexia and Special Education. This newsletter will offer you a glimpse into our staff and our work. We look forward to partnering with you, as we serve close to 60% of the district's 194,000 students. Please click here to view the most recent facts and figures.

We operate in excellence by meeting the needs of all students. Throughout the year, we will focus on the following three pillars: communication, compliance, and positive student outcomes. We believe by partnering with parents, providing timely resources, and supporting the district's campuses, our students will graduate and be career, military, or college ready. The Office of Special Populations' leadership team is ready to support the district's students. Please continue reading to learn more about our directors and the work they are leading.
**DYSLEXIA OFFICE**

**Highlights**

During the 2022-2023 school year, the Dyslexia/Section 504/ADA Office will serve as a stand alone department. The focus of the Dyslexia/Section 504 Office is assisting students with mastering the ability to read, spell, and write, which is fundamental to achieving academic success. Students with dyslexia struggle with those skills despite receiving the same classroom instruction that benefits most students and having adequate intelligence. HISD is committed to providing students identified with dyslexia with instruction that is individualized, intensive, and includes phonetic methods and a variety of writing and spelling components as outlined in the Texas Education Agency (TEA) handbook.

**For more information, email dyslexiaoffice@houstonisd.org or visit our website.**

**Upcoming**

Stay tuned for information regarding Dyslexia Awareness Month in October!

**Resources**

Access additional information by clicking on the links below.

- [Texas Dyslexia Handbook, 2021](#)
- [2021 Dyslexia Handbook Important Changes for Families](#)
- [2021 Cambios Importantes que las Familias Deben Entender](#)
- [Signs of Dyslexia - Yale Center for Creativity and Dyslexia](#)

**Did You Know?**

- Dyslexia affects 20% of the population and represents 80-90% of all those with learning disabilities.
- Many scholars with dyslexia perform very well in school due to early identification, evidence-based dyslexia instruction and accommodations.

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**MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT**

**Highlights**

The MTSS Office collaborates with groups across the district to share knowledge, support students and schools, and promote best practices around interventions. We support the whole child by using the MTSS framework (**Multi-Tiered Systems of Support**). The MTSS framework supports research and evidence-based practices. Our department would like to highlight the **Science of Reading** and **Positive Behavior Interventions** supports this quarter. We look forward to providing you with everyday resources that will promote student academic and behavior growth in both the home and school settings.

**For more information, email hisdinterventions@houstonisd.org or visit our website.**

**Upcoming**

Please visit our website for our new design and framework:

[MTSS Department](#)

**Resources**

Access additional information by clicking on the links below.

- [What is the Science of Reading?](#)
- [Center on PBIS | Family](#)
- [Resource Data Based](#)
- [FCRR Student Center Activities](#)
- [Imagine Learning Resources](#)

**Did You Know?**

- Children learn 4,000 to 12,000 words per year through reading.
- On average, it takes at least 66 days for a new behavior to become automatic.
- MTSS’s Director Stacey Court was the City Bowling Champion of Rock Springs, Wyoming in 1991.
**GIFTED & TALENTED OFFICE**

### Highlights

Houston Independent School District provides two program options for Gifted & Talented (G/T) students. Option one is the Gifted & Talented Neighborhood Program, designed to meet the needs of G/T students in grades K-12 at their neighborhood (zoned) schools. Option two are the Vanguard Magnet programs, designed to meet the needs of G/T students in grades K-12 at their Vanguard Magnet school. Students must meet specific criteria to gain acceptance into one of the Vanguard Magnet programs. Click [here](#) for a list of Vanguard Magnet schools.

For more information, email [giftedandtalented@houstonisd.org](mailto:giftedandtalented@houstonisd.org) or visit our [website](#).

### UPCOMING

- Gifted & Talented Education Supporters (G.A.T.E.S.) meeting November 16, 2022
- Virtual Parent Information Session October 12, 2022 & November 9, 2022
- Texas Association for the Gifted & Talented (TAGT) "Gifted22 Conference" November 30, 2022 - December 2, 2022

### RESOURCES

Access additional information by clicking on the links below.

- English Learner Portal - Home Page ([txel.org](http://txel.org))
- TELPAS Resources | Texas Education Agency
- Content-Based Language Instruction (CBLI) Quick Guide ([texas.gov](http://texas.gov))

### DID YOU KNOW?

- You can find characteristics of giftedness by clicking [here](#).
- The window to refer a student for G/T testing is from August 22, 2022, through January 13, 2023.
- A student may be gifted in reading but not math.
The Office of Special Education Services (OSES) provides support and guidance to parents, teachers, campus leaders, and other stakeholders that directly improves student outcomes. We also strive to remove barriers and raise expectations for students with disabilities. The vision of the OSES is for students with disabilities to receive an exceptional education that will allow them to achieve their highest educational level and reach their greatest potential as caring, responsible, and independent citizens. The OSES framework is a fluid framework that guides the services we provide to parents, teachers, campus leaders, and other stakeholders. We believe this framework illustrates the true collaboration needed to make every student a successful learner.

For more information, email specialeducation@houstonisd.org or visit our website.

### Upcoming
- Region 4 virtual training opportunities for parents of students with disabilities
- The OSES Fall 2022 Virtual Parent Summit, November 12, 2022

### Resources
- Parent Guide to the ARD Process
  - English and Spanish
- Notice of Procedural Safeguards
  - English and Spanish
- Senate Bill 139
- Notice to Families | Texas Education Agency
  - English and Spanish

### Did You Know?
- Over 1 billion people have some form of a disability.
- Students with disabilities are general education students first.
- OSES Director Ardalia Idlebird has served Houston ISD for the last 45 years in various capacities.

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The primary responsibility of the Office of Special Populations is to provide quality programs and services to students that promote equity and success and contribute to preparing students for college and/or careers. We ensure district and campus leaders are provided with the appropriate resources, services, and programs to assist students who are identified as Emergent Bilinguals (EBs), Immigrant, Refugee, Migrant, Gifted & Talented (G/T), and students referred to the Offices of Special Education (SPED), Multi-Tiered Systems of Support and Dyslexia.

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713-556-7122

Multilingual Office
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Houston, TX 77092
713-556-6961

Gifted & Talented Office
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713-556-6954

Special Education Office
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