

## **DISCUSSION AND REPORT ITEMS**

### **Agenda Item 4: Acceptance Of Board Monitoring Update: Presentation Of Goal 3 Progress Measures 3.4 And 3.5, And Goal 4 Progress Measures 4.1 And 4.2 • May Goal Progress Report**

#### GPM 3.4

1. Root Cause Analysis: The SOR enhancements generally address Elementary age students. Please describe a strategy for Middle school students.

To complement in-person instruction, NES and Focus campuses are leveraging Boost Reading in Grades 6 - 8, a digital resource designed to provide personalized, adaptive practice for struggling readers. This tool enables students to engage in close reading focused on building student understanding of vocabulary, syntax and structure, literary and argumentative devices, and themes and central ideas. In addition, the curriculum team applies a continuous improvement cycle to refine secondary ELA resources based on teacher feedback, student performance data, and implementation trends. This ensures the curriculum remains aligned to best practices, responsive to campus needs, and supportive of differentiated instruction for all students.

#### GPM 3.5

2. Please share the list of 10 HISD schools that are piloting accelerated math pathways. When will the pilot conclude? What do the results of the pilot need to illustrate to expand this pilot to other campuses?

The following 10 HISD middle school campuses are currently in the accelerated math pilot: Black, Chrysalis, Clifton, Forest Brook, Hartman, Ortiz, Revere, Sugar Grove, McReynolds, and Williams. The pilot is a three-year rollout, beginning with Grade 6 in the 2024–2025 school year, expanding to Grade 7 in 2025–2026, and culminating with Grade 8 in 2026–2027. The overarching goal is for 100% of participating pilot students to be enrolled in Algebra I in the 2026–2027 school year while enrolled in Grade 8. The current scope of the pilot is intentionally maintained at these 10 campuses to allow for focused implementation, monitoring, and support. This initiative aims to provide students with earlier access to advanced math content, coupled with scaffolding and differentiation to ensure deep conceptual understanding and long-term success. To support expansion to additional campuses, students enrolled in math acceleration classes at the pilot campuses must demonstrate strong evidence of academic

Houston ISD Board Meeting

Q+A Document

growth and mastery of advanced mathematics content, as indicated by NWEA MAP and STAAR. These results will inform districtwide scaling decisions for future years.

3. What adaptive digital resources are being used and have some shown to be more successful in increasing outcomes than others? Elementary vs Middle School? Do all PUA and NES have access to them?

Three district-provided digital resources are currently being used to support student learning and improve academic outcomes. Zearn math (K–8) has been made available to all K–8 campuses districtwide to support math development. Additionally, Amira (K–5) and Boost Reading (6–8) have been provided to NES and PUA Special Focus campuses to support literacy development. Each year, Academics conducts an evaluation of the effectiveness of these three digital resources on increasing outcomes prior to making budget and purchasing decisions for the following year. The evaluation compares the MOY MAP scores of students who use the platform at the required usage rate with a set of matched peer students who do not use the resource. The evaluation results for the three centrally supported resources were positive for SY23-24, so HISD plans to continue to use them for SY25-26.

GPM 3.4, Figure 3; GPM 3.5, Figure 6

4. GPM 3.4, Figure 3 and GPM 3.5, Figure 6 both reflect a 1 percent increase in 5<sup>th</sup> grade performance in NWEA Reading and Math. Compared to performance in other grades, this rate of increase is slow. Are there any strategies, tactics, or root causes that could improve student outcomes for 5<sup>th</sup> grade students?

As students' progress from 4th to 5th grade, both reading and math content become more abstract and cognitively demanding. For example, students move from understanding basic fraction concepts in 4th grade to multiplying and dividing fractions and decimals in 5th grade. In reading, they must demonstrate mastery of text analysis with increased depth and complexity. Because of this shift in rigor, growth patterns may differ from earlier grades and require additional time to show larger gains. Additionally, as students improve proficiency level in earlier grades, that will help improve results in fifth grade given they will have a stronger grasp of foundational concepts needed to access 5th grade content. In designing the HISD Curriculum, we ensure lessons stay aligned to the rigor of the grade-level in reading and math.

5. For both GPMs, BOY and MOY are identical. What does this tell us? For new teachers and campus leaders, what development exists to aid in their

## Houston ISD Board Meeting

## Q+A Document

effectiveness? Is it differentiated from experienced teachers and campus leaders? Besides teachers, what other supports exists for students who want additional opportunities to “practice” independently.

Proficiency increased at BOY and MOY for reading. In Math, proficiency increased from MOY and EOY last year but remained flat compared to BOY this year. While we have seen growth compared to last year, the flat growth since BOY signals the importance of both targeted instructional support and aligned professional development to help teachers and leaders respond to these academic shifts. Professional learning continues throughout the school year via scheduled district-wide Staff PD Days and tailored on-campus support that meets specific campus needs. Additionally, NES campuses provide LSAE time that provides students with added opportunities to practice and reinforce skills. PUA campuses have the autonomy to allocate additional instructional time for targeted student practice. Finally, HISD curriculum is designed to support all new teachers with quality instruction given all the resources are developed for them so they can focus their planning time on lesson internalization – lesson internalized is a key ingredient for student learning. More advanced teachers may choose to further customize the curriculum for their student’s needs.

**ITEMS PULLED FROM CONSENT AGENDA****Agenda Item 5: Consideration And Approval Of New Goal Progress Measure Targets • 2025 MAP Data Refresh & GPM Target Reset**

6. Please describe the links/correlation between the new proposed yearly targets for GPMs and projected STAAR proficiency/goal progress. What data supports that these new proposed yearly targets for GPMs, as opposed to the former version(s), will accurately reflect progress towards our goals for our students?

The newly proposed yearly targets for GPMs are intentionally aligned with the STAAR goals set for 3rd grade. Specifically, for any GPM that falls under a STAAR-aligned goal, the targets have been backward mapped from the 2028 STAAR proficiency target. This is consistent with the original methodology shared in March. For example, Board Goal 1 and GPM 1.1 both have a target of 56% of HISD students meeting grade level or above in reading on STAAR and MAP respectively by 2028. Board Goal 2 and GPM 2.1 follow a similar methodology. For GPMs where the metric selected is not directly comparable to the metric being used for the overall Goal, the following approach was used to set targets:

**NES-Focused GPMs (1.2, 2.2):** The targets for the NES GPMs follow the same annual growth trajectory as GPMs for all students (1.1, 2.1), with targets established from the NES only baseline

**Houston ISD Board Meeting**

Q+A Document

data. For example, GPM 1.1 requires students to grow 9 percentage points from EOY 2024 baseline to 2028 to align with the STAAR goal. GPM 1.2, which focuses only on NES schools, also has a target that requires 9 percentage point growth from EOY 2024 to 2028. This approach ensures equity in expectations in NES compared to the full district while acknowledging lower proficiency starting points at NES.

**2nd Grade Proficiency Growth (GPMs 1.3, 2.3) 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade Proficiency (NEW GPMs 3.4, 3.5):** These GPMs are set to increase by 2 percentage points annually. This is a rigorous target compared to state and urban district trends in proficiency growth. In the past year for example, the state percent of STAAR 3 – 8 meets declined in all grades for Math and declined or stayed flat in 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> in reading. Urban Texas districts also mostly saw declines in proficiency scores. This demonstrates the difficulty and rigor of a 2-percentage point annual growth target.

The rationale stated above is also outlined in the "Rationale for Target Growth Rates" column of the Goal Progress Measure (GPM) Target Proposals table in the GPM\_UpdatedTargets\_MAP Refresh attachment.

**7. Has our LSG Coach reviewed these GPMs, and do they understand and agree to the modification of them at this time and in this manner?**

Yes, the LSG Coach has reviewed the modifications to the GPM targets and supports the proposed changes.

**8. Were the NWEA MAP linking studies considered in connection with the adoption of GPMs which were recommended, and which the Board adopted, in March?**

HISD was aware that a new NWEA MAP linking study had been released to improve future MAP projections for STAAR, but we did not initially realize that NWEA would retroactively update SY23-24 BOY, MOY and EOY historical data as part of that study. The original targets proposed in March were set using SY23-24 EOY data that was produced before the linking study was released.

Once we realized historical data could be updated, HISD re-pulled the baseline data using the new linking study to ensure the baseline could be comparable apples-to-apples with future MAP projection results. Targets were then updated as needed based on the updated baseline.

**9. During the meeting in February 2025 regarding adoption of new GPMs, Chief Hole described the HISD correlation studies of MAP and STAAR. Were the**

**Houston ISD Board Meeting**

Q+A Document

results of those studies significantly different from the NWEA MAP linking study? If so, how?

The HISD Research and Evaluation team completed a correlation study using MAP results prior to the new linking study being released. The study demonstrated strong correlations between MAP projections and STAAR results ranging from .7 to .8.

This HISD team has not yet completed a correlation study using the updated MAP projections based on the new MAP linking study. The HISD team has also not yet compared the differences between the HISD correlation study and the MAP correlation study.

**Agenda Item 11: Approval Of Districtwide Use Of District-Developed Curriculum**

10. In a previous board meeting, it was mentioned that teachers have the ability to provide feedback on the HISD Curriculum. What have been the top 3-5 general suggestions?

Overall, teacher feedback on the curriculum has been largely positive, with appreciation for the clarity of instructional materials, alignment to standards, and embedded supports for differentiation. However, several consistent suggestions have emerged across grade levels and content areas and the curriculum team has implemented the feedback. Common trends are included below:

- Recommendations to streamline and remove some material in the daily lesson to help teachers get to the objective more quickly and get through the full lesson in the allotted for instruction
- Recommendation to add and embed visual cues in the slides to help support teachers with the appropriate pacing of the lesson (e.g., easy way to see if teacher is at beginning, middle or end of lesson relative to the amount of time left for instruction)
- Recommendation to add novels to the curriculum in Reading Language Arts
- Recommendation to add differentiation to **support Gifted and Talented students within Tier 1 instruction** and LSAE materials. For example, curriculum writers will embed additional prompts and questions that push extended learning for students during the core lesson.

11. Has the HISD curriculum's effectiveness been evaluated vs other HQIM?

Houston ISD Board Meeting

Q+A Document

The HISD Curriculum has demonstrated strong effectiveness, particularly on NES campuses where it has been implemented with fidelity, as evidenced by notable student growth on interim and summative assessments. While a direct comparison to other high-quality instructional materials (HQIMs) is not available due to inconsistent implementation across campuses prior to the HISD Curriculum implementation, the HISD Curriculum is grounded in the research-based practices outlined by TEA quality rubrics and fully meets all course standards. Its design ensures both academic rigor and alignment to Texas state academic expectations.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**Agenda Item 13: Approval Of Vendor Award for Purchases Which Cost \$1,000,000 Or More And Purchases Associated With A Board-Approved Cooperative Or Intergovernmental Interlocal Agreement**  
• **Purchasing Requests**

12. On 25-01-04 RFP for Magnet Schools Assistance Program, can you please tell us what the MSAP grant is and the annual value in dollars that is proposed to be administered by the recommended vendor? Please explain the need for the hiring of a consultant to administer it, including whether they have specialized knowledge regarding the same, and whether we have used a similar administrator previously.

The Magnet Schools Assistance Program, MSAP Grant, provides grants to eligible local education agencies to establish and operate Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) and Science, Technology, Engineering, Math, and Medical (STEM +M) magnet schools, with special curricula, to attract a diverse group of students and desegregate public schools. This federal funding provides \$15,000,000 over a 5-year cycle to the 6 Houston ISD Middle Schools aligned to this project.

Grant funds are dispersed yearly in the following amounts: Year 1: \$4,460,382, Year 2: \$3,331,482, Year 3: \$2,865,797, Year 4: \$2,369,332, Year 5: \$1,973,005. Through financial assistance, MSAP is designed to bring together and support LEAs, Local Education Agencies, operating magnet schools at a high-performance level after Federal funding for the magnet schools has ended.

Through strategic partnerships with Baylor College of Medicine (BCM), STEM, STEM +M, and CTE specialists and instructors in each of the MSAP schools will receive extensive training in thematic content and emerging technologies in the areas of engineering, coding, robotics, and medical and health science. An integral Houston ISD partner since 1972, BCM supports and

## Houston ISD Board Meeting

## Q+A Document

develops specialized curricula for three prominent and nationally awarded medical STEM-focused campus programs across Houston ISD.

The advantages of this contracted partnership are numerous, including: (1) Specialized curricula developed by teams of scientists and educators that form the basis for specialized courses; (2) Access to the world's most cutting-edge medical institutions and professionals in its one million plus-square-foot basic science and computational research space, 26 scientific and clinical departments, more than 35 interdisciplinary research centers, and 26 Advanced Technology Core Labs; (3) A full-time, on-campus BCM STEM Specialist; (4) Educational field trips for students to the Texas Medical Center; and (5) SMART, an 8-week paid summer research program.

The term of this Contract/Partnership shall be from the last date of signature and end on March 31, 2025. The term may be extended by mutual agreement. of both parties for an additional four one-year terms not to extend beyond March 31, 2029. Please see the table below for a breakdown of program costs.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	TOTAL
<b>PERSONNEL - DIRECT COSTS</b>						
A. Personnel salaries	\$60,062	\$61,863	\$63,719	\$63,975	\$65,894	\$315,513
B. Fringe Benefits	\$18,737	\$19,779	\$19,933	\$19,979	\$20,313	\$98,741
<b>PERSONNEL SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>\$78,799</b>	<b>\$81,642</b>	<b>\$83,652</b>	<b>\$83,954</b>	<b>\$86,207</b>	<b>\$414,254</b>
<b>OTHER - DIRECT COSTS</b>						
A. Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
B. Travel (mileage)	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$6,000
C. Materials and Supplies	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$6,000	\$38,000
D. Consultants/Contractual	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
E. Technology	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
F. Other Expenses (parking for teachers)	\$3,750	\$3,750	\$3,750	\$3,750	\$3,750	\$18,750
<b>OTHER DIRECT COSTS SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>\$12,950</b>	<b>\$12,950</b>	<b>\$12,950</b>	<b>\$12,950</b>	<b>\$10,950</b>	<b>\$62,750</b>
<b>INDIRECT COSTS**</b>						
(Limited to 0% of the amount of Total budget)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET</b>	<b>\$91,749</b>	<b>\$94,592</b>	<b>\$96,602</b>	<b>\$96,904</b>	<b>\$97,157</b>	<b>\$477,004</b>

**Agenda Item 15: Consideration And Approval Of A Resolution Authorizing The Issuance, Sale, And Delivery Of Houston Independent School District Maintenance Tax Notes As Term Rate Notes Or Fixed Rate Notes, In One Or More Series; Authorizing An Authorized Representative To Approve The Terms Thereof; And Containing Other Matters Related Thereto • Resolution**



## Houston ISD Board Meeting

## Q+A Document

**13. How did the administration arrive at the “up to \$120,000,000” aggregate par amount?**

The “up to \$120 million” figure represents the amount the administration believes may be needed over the next year to address a broad range of critical infrastructure needs across the district. This number was arrived at after an internal review of current and anticipated maintenance demands, including aging facilities, safety and security upgrades, deferred maintenance, essential equipment, the replacement of our enterprise resource planning (ERP) system at end-of-life, and CTE/CCMR academic program support.

**14. Is this a standard practice across Texas school boards?**

Maintenance Tax Notes are a financing tool available to Texas school districts to help fund capital needs. Authorized under state law (Texas Education Code Section 45.108), these notes allow districts to borrow money for projects for capital needs.

**15. Please describe planned expenditures for the \$120M in notes, including timing.**

**Planned Expenditures:**

- CCMR and CTE improvements \$12,000,000
- Barbara Jordan upgrade \$20,000,000
- Transportation System revamp \$5,000,000
- Health and security capital improvements \$40,000,000
- IT infrastructure upgrade \$33,000,000
- Timing: Plan is to sell beginning of FY 2025-2026

**16. Please describe the timing of the issuance of the notes and receipt of funds.**

The pricing preliminary official statement and official statement should take no more than 30-40 days to complete. Funds should be received the next day. Included in the 30-40 days is the bond rating agency review, the production of the preliminary official statement and the sale of the bonds.



**Agenda Item 16: Annual Review And Adoption Of Investment Policy And Strategies • Resolution • Cash Management & Investment Policy**

17. Has this changed YOY? If so, please identify key differences or redline against prior version if similar.

No modifications are needed as the investment policy currently adheres to legal requirements and best practices. It has been awarded a Certificate of Distinction valid until 2027; thus, no changes have been proposed.