



***Gibbs School Improvement Plan Update - Dec. 2022***

# Agenda

**We are Trailblazers!**  
Our students are  
**Understanding, Unified, and**  
**Unstoppable!**

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- ❖ Introduction to Gibbs School
- ❖ Our Wins
- ❖ Challenges
- ❖ Priorities for 2022 - 2023
- ❖ Key Initiatives and Action Steps
- ❖ Resources to Support Success
- ❖ Q&A

# Introduction to Gibbs School

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The Gibbs School community is an environment where students and adults work cooperatively to strive for academic achievement and social-emotional growth. Our community encourages being **Understanding** of each other and what makes us unique, being **Unified** in our efforts to support one another's abilities to grow and learn and being **Unstoppable** when reaching for our personal and community goals.

# Our Wins: “The First 9 Days” & Transition Norming

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Here's the sneak peek: [Day 1](#) - [Days 2-9](#)

- ❖ We ended the 2021-22 School year reinstating two important Gibbs Norms: Gibbs Administration & Teams Reps visits to each of the district's 7 elementary 5th grade classes; and, the 5th graders visit to Gibbs in June for a brief orientation facilitated by 6th grade trailblazers.
- ❖ Instead of two sessions of Trailblazers' Guide to Gibbs, we held four to allow parents/guardians more flexibility with their summer time management.
- ❖ Last school year, we were very concerned with the number of our students needing more support and teaching regarding their capacity with self-awareness, self-management; social awareness; relationship skills; and responsible decision making. As a result, we created the “First Nine Days” orientation with embedded team building activities and opportunities for staff to introduce our core values for students to learn what being a Gibbs trailblazer looks, feels and sounds like.
- ❖ We are happy and excited to report this year we had a much more positive, fun, enthusiastic and welcoming opening than ever before.
- ❖ Both in Math and ELA our Asian, Multi-Race and White students maintained their academic performance when compared to their MCAS result in 2019 to 2022, indicating that perhaps from an academic perspective COVID might have had no lasting effect on their academic performance. We would also highlight that our Students w/Disabilities (36%) and High Needs (40%) made substantial growth in their MCAS performance.

# Gibbs' Challenges

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As a one grade school, Gibbs School is unique. That one year status also brings and amplifies its own challenges.

Gibbs School requires continuous improvement each year to manage its innovative concept as the sole 6th grade transition school in Arlington. Each year, a new cohort of Trailblazers enters Gibbs with their unique aspirations, fears and needs. It is the Gibbs Team's job to anticipate, recognize and be prepared to use, modify, and improve upon existing practices and protocols to ensure the best year possible for each student. Inasmuch, our school improvement plan objectives focus on how best to tackle these challenges strategically and as timely as possible to benefit each grade during their year at Gibbs.

Another glaring challenge is the gap that persists between the performance of our marginalized students and that of their non-marginalized peers. For example, when looking at the performance of the 4th, 5th and 6th graders sitting for the 2022 MCAS, the gap is similar consistently across the three grades. Last year, 25% of African-American students at Gibbs met or exceeded expectations in ELA. This is in contrast to 71% of their Asian peers, 66% of their multi-race and non-Hispanic peers, and 72% of their White peers.

# **School Priorities & Action Steps**

## **A 3 Year Plan 21/22 - 24/25**

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### **Objective I: Instructional Goal**

Ensure continuity of service delivery and programming at Gibbs for students transitioning from elementary school, and improve on our practices for tier II and tier III reading support.

#### **Action Steps - 22/23**

- ❖ The Gibbs staff will learn how reading is delivered across the seven elementary schools and what programs are being used particularly for students who are still in need of intensive reading instruction by grade 6.
- ❖ Streamline and standardize the process across the seven elementary schools for recommending students for reading services at Gibbs.

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### **Objective II: Equity and School Culture Goal**

Gibbs School teachers and staff will work to improve the culture and climate of the school by focusing on inclusive, equitable, and collaborative practices. We will begin this process by exploring each other's identities and creating a space where all are explicitly welcome and intentionally included.

#### **Action Steps - 22/23**

- ★ Continue to teach Gibbs' core values (Understanding, Unified and Unstoppable) in Advisory, and throughout the school day.
- ★ Implement explicit instruction centered around identity, sense of belonging, and cultural competency. Embed these practices throughout the school day and across the curriculum.

# **School Priorities & Action Steps**

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### **Objective III: Management and Operations Goal**

Given the number of special education programming currently in existence at the elementary schools (Supported Learning Center-Autism, Supported Learning Center-Behavior, Supported Learning Center-Cognitive, Supported Learning Center-Dyslexia); Gibbs School will work on creating, identifying, and maintaining similar programmings to ensure effective and continuing services for all students during their transitional year at Gibbs.

#### **Action Steps - 22/23**

- Identify and create space yearly based on the needs of actual/projected incoming students.
- Review and improve our transition processes; continue to review scheduling practices.



# Resources to Support Success

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- Consultants to coordinate with the district Director of DEI to help facilitate DEI professional development for Gibbs Staff.
- District/School initiative to support staff in taking the IDEAS Course.
- Space to include alignment of special education programs from elementary school.
- Allocation of time(s) in the school day for teachers/teachers; teachers/administrators to learn together and collaborate on the big initiatives of the SIP.
- Budget adjustment to fund those stated initiatives.
- Request for three key additional staff: A Transitional Coordinator; a DEI Curriculum Specialist; and a Full-Time Special Education Team Chair.

**Gibbs SIP 22 - 25 Draft #1 FPM**

## Understanding, Unified, and Unstoppable!

