

Advancing Education Meeting 1/22/26 - Follow Up

Below are some questions, take-aways, and comments from families and caregivers that we want to share with you. Where it's possible and appropriate for you and other staff to respond, families and caregivers would love to hear back.

Community Questions

- Are there any plans for above grade level instruction/activities for students who are ready (such as in small groups)?
- Can the PTSA support this type of acceleration?
- Is there any ability for teachers to communicate with families of HC designated students (or any students who need more challenge) as a group, to share classroom plans and options?

Repeated questions about **the practical applications of depth and complexity**:

- How often do small groups meet?
 - How consistent is differentiated reading across classrooms?
 - How is progress tracked and communicated?
 - Is math differentiation happening beyond iPads, challenge packets, and/or online programs (e.g., SuccessMaker)?
 - What are the constraints for meeting HC math needs— curriculum, materials, staffing, training, access to tutors or PTSA-funded support?
 - How can the PTSA support teachers; what kind of help is appropriate?
 - What ideas do teachers find realistic to implement? What seems to work (or not work)?
 - Where can caregivers help — strategically, not piecemeal?
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Shared Reactions to the Presentation

The overall tone of the conversations happening post-event are positive, validating, and emotionally resonant. Many caregivers described the presentations as heartfelt, moving, informative, and reassuring, and **expressed deep appreciation for BF Day teachers' ability to engage students in meaningful depth, complexity, and thoughtful intellectual partnership**. In contrast to concerns about rigid HC pathways, the presentation helped ease anxiety for many families, with several parents noting a sense of relief at not feeling immediate pressure around HC designation and feeling more confident focusing on their child's learning in the present moment.

Community Comments

This is what is moving through the WhatsApp channel and in discussions among families who prioritize concerns and questions around HC.

Depth & Complexity vs. Acceleration

Key distinction repeatedly raised:

- **Depth and complexity ≠ teaching 1–2 grade levels ahead**, especially in math.
 - Parents are still feeling unclear about what increased depth means in math, without going above grade level.
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Inclusion & Disability Concerns

- Parents of twice-exceptional or potentially HC students raised concerns that some cohort schools are simply not viable options, making it especially challenging if HC needs are not being met.
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Consistency & Transparency

Families and caregivers frequently raise concerns about how to be in conversation with staff in a way that communicates clearly the deep respect and gratitude they feel for the work that our teachers do every day, but is also constructive in addressing concerns. Information gaps fuel skepticism even when great work is being done in the classrooms.

- Parents feel they must **individually communicate** with teachers to access differentiated curriculum, appropriate challenge, and clarity about what's actually happening, and feel a lack of a systematic plan (or communication about a plan.)

Role of PTSA & External Support

- Recognition that **PTSA involvement has often filled district gaps** and that our PTSA seems well positioned to support our teachers in their efforts to meet the needs of all of our diverse learners. While this is not ideal or equitable across the district, it is historically how HC support has survived SPS.

Scope & Purpose of the Advancing Ed Committee

Clarification:

- The committee has primarily focused on:
 - Filling the information vacuum
 - Advocating to strengthen HC supports at B.F. Day
 - Responding to district instability around cohorts
 - Acknowledgment that:
 - Cohorts are **not a universal solution** and the messaging about what makes B.F. Day unique and not a cohort school is important.
 - Honest pros/cons discussions would benefit families
 - More open forums (online or off-site) could allow freer conversation
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What Parents Are Asking For Next

System-level needs:

- A **clear, school-wide HC/ advancing ed framework**, communicated throughout the year
- Transparency about:
 - Role of HC coach
 - Frequency and consistency of differentiation
 - Expectations, plans, and options by grade level
 - Plans and goals for HC support going forward

Community needs:

- Representation from families who:
 - Need acceleration now
 - Have tried advocating and hit limits
- Space for nuanced discussion

