

ARABIC FOREIGN LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM GRANT

What is the Arabic Foreign Language Assistance Program grant about?

This grant is awarded to districts seeking to help meet language shortages in Arabic, Chinese and Russian in the private and public sectors. MISD is one of **five** districts in the country chosen to provide Arabic studies. The Arabic Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) grant is funded by the Federal government through the Department of Education. The funding for this grant is a K-16 grant- this means that it provides post secondary opportunities for our students. This grant allows MISD to develop a partnership with the University of Texas at Austin.

Why Arabic?

The Arabic language is listed by the federal government as a “critical language.” This means that our country has a shortage of Arabic speakers and in order to maintain a presence in the Middle East, we need people who not only are proficient in the Arabic language, but also possess knowledge about Arabic cultures and traditions. We are given a unique opportunity to provide students the opportunity to learn Arabic so they can pursue careers in diplomacy and international business.

Why Cross Timbers?

Cross Timbers Intermediate School has the highest percentage of native Arabic speakers in the district. The cultural knowledge that our Arabic students possess will be of great assistance to the development of this program.

What does the 100 minutes per week look like?

Students will receive an average of 20 minutes per day of Arabic language and culture through social studies classes, advisory once a week and intermittently in electives such as technology applications, art and P.E. This grant provides for 100 minutes each week out of 1875 total instructional minutes. They will also have access to Arabic literature in Language Arts, as well as having opportunities for language acquisition through the use of Rosetta Stone and iPod Touches before and after school as well as during the school day.

Can we still cover all of the required social studies TEKS while providing this Arabic instruction?

Yes, the curriculum will meet all state requirements for social studies TEKS in both 5th and 6th grade.

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Will every student be studying Arabic?

Every student will have the opportunity to participate in the program.

What will this program look like across the district?

This grant provides a sequential foreign language program from elementary through secondary levels, starting with the fundamentals at Davis Elementary. This year, Arabic culture and language introduction will occur in 5th and 6th grade at CTIS. Next year and in future years, students will be given the opportunity to take Arabic exploration in 7th grade and Arabic I in 8th grade for high school credit at TA Howard MS. In addition, students may continue their Arabic studies at the high school level to meet their foreign language requirement.

What are the benefits to participating?

- This project is federally funded for \$ 1.3 million dollars over a 5 year period.
- This project adds a critical foreign language option for students in MISD.
- Successful Arabic foreign language studies (Arabic I, II, III) increases college and scholarship opportunities.
- This allows students to be prepared to compete globally for jobs that are not in existence yet.
- This project supports the diversity within MISD.
- This project allows students and teachers to learn about the Arab impact on our country.
- This grant allows for us to develop a partnership with the University of Texas at Austin.