

## VII. CURRICULUM

HISD provides a well-balanced, challenging curriculum that specifies what should be taught at each grade level and subject area to meet the state guidelines, prepare for the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skill (TAKS) and other HISD assessment programs, and support student academic growth and achievement. The required curriculum is divided into:

- a foundation curriculum consisting of reading, language arts, (writing, listening and speaking, viewing and representing), mathematics, science, and social studies, and
- an enrichment curriculum consisting of languages other than English, health, physical education, fine arts, and technology applications.

The HISD curriculum defines the expectations for student learning district wide. Teaching the HISD objectives is not an option. HISD objectives are based on the state framework of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), mirror the language of the state student expectations, and provide additional specificity in teacher-friendly language to ensure all teachers understand what students must know and be able to demonstrate for each grade level content area and course.

The following three curriculum tools support grade level/course instructional planning and assessment for total instructional alignment:

- The **Vertical Alignment Matrix** provides a developmental map of HISD curriculum PK-12. These documents, available by content area grade spans, delineate the responsibility of instruction and support the district's college-bound culture by outlining accountability for student learning by grade level. The Vertical Alignment Matrix provides teachers, parents, board members, the business community, and all other stakeholders a general idea of the flow of the HISD curriculum PK-12.
- The **TEKS/TAKS Correlations** document illustrates the relationship between HISD objectives, TEKS student expectations, and alignment to TAKS. When instruction is based on the HISD objectives, teachers can be confident they are teaching the TEKS. Knowledge, skills and concepts from the state's framework are embedded in HISD objectives.
- The **Horizontal Alignment Planning Guide (HAPG)** is organized by grading periods and serves as a guide for planning instruction by bundling objectives into instructional units. The HAPG outlines the district's recommended sequence of instruction and serves as the scope and sequence for the course/content area.

HISD curriculum documents define what should be taught but leave the delivery of instruction to the teacher's discretion. Since students think and learn in different ways, good instructional delivery includes a variety of strategies based on current research, best practice, and the teacher's own experiences in capitalizing on different kinds of intelligences. Learning is enhanced when it is integrated rather than fragmented; therefore, teachers are encouraged to plan together and implement a unit approach in which students learn skills and concepts within a context relevant to their lives. To integrate learning across as well as within content areas, teachers are encouraged to plan for interdisciplinary instruction supported through collaboration among teachers with different content area specialization. Hands-on, experiential learning where students take an active role and assume increasing responsibility for their own work is highly recommended. Teachers must incorporate strategies for engaging students in reflection on those processes. The intent is to ensure students learn how to learn.

A standards-based curriculum means nothing without a strong link to assessment. Instruction based on the curriculum must be tied to daily practice of classroom assessment along with descriptive feedback and encouragement.

HISD Curriculum includes recommendations and accommodations for the instruction of students with disabilities. These recommendations should be used by general education teachers and teachers of students with disabilities.

### **Preschool Program for Children with Disabilities (PPCD)**

- PPCD instructional services are available to children ages 3-5 who meet the special education eligibility criteria as determined by the Admissions, Review, Dismissal (ARD/IEP) Committee.
- The integration/inclusion of young children with disabilities (ages 3-5) with non-disabled students is critical. Therefore, collaboration between Prekindergarten and PPCD teachers is strongly encouraged to plan for inclusion. Instructional materials to facilitate inclusion are available from the Special Education Resource System (SERS).
- The ARD/IEP committee must consider integration of these children into prekindergarten and kindergarten classes prior to placement in the PPCD program.
- The early childhood classroom (PK-2) and Preschool Program for Students with Disabilities (PPCD) should be set up in workstation learning centers to facilitate the implementation of developmentally appropriate practices. Located within each workstation-learning center should be a variety of activities, materials, and equipment for a range of developmental stages and abilities. These areas should support learning in language including all of **A Balanced Approach to Reading** components, language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and fine arts and should address physical development as well as social/emotional development in addition to academics. The HISD curriculum facilitates the use of workstation learning centers in the prekindergarten and PPCD classroom.

## **Prekindergarten**

- Prekindergarten is a full-day program in HISD. In prekindergarten programs, the hours of attendance for prekindergarten are the same as for the other students within that particular school.
- In prekindergarten bilingual classes, instruction in language arts, mathematics, and other content areas must be provided in the student's native language. English must be used daily as a language of instruction for no less than 90 minutes, including ancillary subjects. The 90 minutes should be comprised of 45 minutes of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English and 45 minutes of English language development through ancillary subjects such as music, art, physical education, library, etc. An additional 35 minutes of English instruction may be used to reinforce math/science/social studies/health concepts, which have been mastered in Spanish. For additional information, refer to the Bilingual/ESL Program Guidelines.
- In ESL classes, all subjects must be taught in English using second language teaching strategies.
- The state has published Prekindergarten Guidelines for prekindergarten that form the basis for the district's prekindergarten curriculum documents. HISD curriculum will be used as the basis for planning instruction.

Full-day prekindergarten schedules must include thirty to forty-five minutes for a quiet rest time and thirty minutes of outdoor activities, weather permitting.

- The ratio of children to staff must not exceed 22:1 unless the district contracts with a private entity for the operation of the prekindergarten program, and in that case, the ratio of children to staff must not exceed:
  - 15:1 if the youngest child in the group is age three
  - 17:1 if the youngest child in the group is age four
- Upon enrollment in prekindergarten, a child must attend school regularly and will be subject to school attendance rules and regulations.

## **Kindergarten**

- Kindergarten is a full-day program in HISD. The hours of attendance for kindergarten are the same as for the other students within that particular school.
- Kindergarten daily schedules must include thirty minutes for a quiet rest time and thirty minutes of recess.
- The curriculum should be well-balanced and integrated to help children make connections across content areas. Often the curriculum is organized around themes which include language arts (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), mathematics,

fine arts, health, science, and social studies integrated throughout the school day. The HISD curriculum will be used as the basis for planning instruction.

- In Kindergarten, the HISD Reading Instructional Program in general and special education will provide an appropriate, dedicated time daily for reading instruction (recommended **90** minutes per day).
- **Students in K-6 should be provided daily instruction in science.** Forty percent (40%) of the learning in science should occur through hands-on experiences.
- For students with disabilities, a multisensory approach to reading has been identified as a best practice in the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).
- In accordance with the state's Accelerated Reading Instruction Program, an additional 30 minutes of daily reading instruction will be provided for students at risk for reading failure in grades K-2.
- Instruction shall be provided daily in other language arts (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), mathematics and physical education (at least 30 minutes daily or 135 minutes weekly).
- The weekly schedule shall include instruction in fine arts, health, science, and social studies.
- Instruction in other languages may be included in language arts instruction.
- Some instructional activities such as field trips, visits to museums or historical sites, and resource speakers may necessitate occasional deviations from the elementary daily or weekly schedule. In scheduling such activities, the campus must use professional discretion to ensure the activities have a specified instructional purpose and are directly tied to HISD curriculum objectives.
- In bilingual classes, instruction in language arts, mathematics, and other content areas must be provided in the student's native language. English must be used daily as a language of instruction for no less than 90 minutes, including ancillary subjects. The 90 minutes should be comprised of 45 minutes of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English and 45 minutes of English language development through ancillary subjects such as music, art, physical education, library, etc. An additional 35 minutes of English instruction may be used to reinforce math/science/social studies/health concepts which have been mastered in Spanish. For additional information, refer to the Bilingual/ESL Program Guidelines.
- In ESL classes, all subjects must be taught in English using second language teaching strategies.
- The ratio of children to staff must not exceed 22:1. (TEC §25.112)
- Upon enrollment in kindergarten, a child must attend school regularly and will be subject to school attendance rules and regulations.

### **Grades One - Three**

- The HISD Reading Instructional Program in general and special education will provide an appropriate, dedicated time daily for reading instruction (recommended 90 minutes daily). The ARD/IEP Committee may approve more time for students with severe reading disabilities. Alternate instructional materials may be used as identified by the Special Education Department.
- Instruction shall be provided daily for a recommended 60 minutes in other language arts (listening, speaking, writing, spelling), physical education (by state law, at least 30 minutes daily or 135 minutes weekly), and mathematics instruction shall be at 60 to 90 minutes daily. Basals and textbooks shall be used as only one resource for student learning.

Instruction shall be provided in science and social studies to complete instruction in HISD Curriculum and the state-mandated Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Instruction in fine arts and health shall be provided weekly in a schedule that is equivalent to weekly instruction in a well-balanced curriculum. Textbooks shall be used as **one** resource for student learning.

- **Students in K-6 should be provided daily instruction in science.** Forty percent (40%) of the learning in science should occur through hands-on experiences.
- Some instructional activities such as science field trips, visits to museums or historical sites, and resource speakers may necessitate occasional deviations from the elementary daily or weekly schedule. In scheduling such activities, the campus shall use professional discretion to ensure the activities have a specified instructional purpose and are directly tied to HISD curriculum objectives.
- In **bilingual classes**, instruction in language arts, mathematics, and other content areas must be provided in the student's native language. (The amount of time spent on these subjects shall be the same as specified for regular students.). In addition, English must be used daily as a language of instruction as follows:

#### **Grades 1 and 2 (155 minutes daily)**

- 60 minutes of ESL through listening, speaking, reading, writing;
- 45 minutes of English language development through ancillary subjects such as music, art, PE, library, etc.; and
- An additional 50 minutes of English through ESL content (math, science, social studies, health) focusing on reinforcing concepts/vocabulary which have already been mastered in the primary language.

#### **Grade 3 (175 minutes daily)**

- 75 minutes of ESL through listening, speaking, reading, writing and

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- 45 minutes of English language development through ancillary subjects such as music, art, PE, library, etc.
- An additional 60 minutes of English through ESL content (math, science, social studies, health) focusing on reinforcing concepts/vocabulary which have already been mastered in the primary language.
- All LEP students shall participate with English-speaking students in ancillary subjects.
- In ESL classes, all subjects must be taught in English using second language teaching strategies.
- The ratio of children to staff must not exceed 22:1. (TEC §25.112)

TAKS-tested TEKS for grade 3 are listed in the in the TAKS Information Booklet available from the Student Assessment Division at TEA (<http://www.tea.state.tx.us>)

### Grades Four - Five (Six)

- The HISD Reading Instructional Program in general and special education will provide an appropriate, dedicated time daily for reading instruction (recommended 90 minutes per day). The ARD/IEP Committee may approve more time for students with severe reading disabilities. Alternate instructional materials may be used as identified by the Special Education Department.
- Instruction shall be provided for a recommended 60 minutes daily in other language arts (listening, speaking, writing, spelling, viewing and representing), physical education (by state law, at least 30 minutes daily or 135 minutes weekly), and mathematics instruction shall be 60 to 90 minutes daily. Basals and textbooks shall be used as only **one** resource for student learning.
- **Students in K-6 should be provided daily instruction in science.** Forty percent (40%) of the learning in science should occur through hands-on experiences.
- Instruction shall be provided weekly in social studies, health, and fine arts or in a schedule that is equivalent to weekly instruction in a well-balanced curriculum. Textbooks shall be used as **one** resource for student learning.
- Each school is **strongly** encouraged to offer instruction in other languages.
- Some instructional activities such as science field trips, visits to museums or historical sites, and resource speakers may necessitate occasional deviations from the elementary daily or weekly schedule. In scheduling such activities, the campus shall use professional discretion to ensure the activities have a specified instructional purpose and are directly tied to HISD curriculum objectives.
- In bilingual classes, instruction shall be provided in all subjects according to time recommendations for regular students. The language of instruction used for each of those subjects shall depend on the type of bilingual program being implemented at the school. In general, LEP students in grades 4-5/6 shall receive reading, language arts, and mathematics in the same language, either Spanish or English, depending on the type of bilingual program model implemented at the school. Refer to the Bilingual/ESL Program Guidelines for further details on which subjects are taught in English or Spanish.

- In the Traditional Bilingual Programs, Gr. 4-5, there are 2 phases:
  - The “Continued Bilingual Phase for Recent Immigrants is for LEP students who enter bilingual programs at Gr. 3 or beyond. These students shall receive instruction in all core subjects in their primary language. They also receive daily ESL instruction as follows: 75 minutes LSRW, 45 minutes in ancillary subjects, and 60 minutes of additional concept reinforcement for content concepts already mastered in the primary language.
  - The “Bilingual Pre-Exit Phase” is for LEP students who entered a bilingual program in Gr. 2 or before. These students shall receive instruction in all core subjects in English through ESL methods. They also receive daily Spanish instruction in all subjects to introduce or reinforce concepts. The Spanish instruction is graded as a Spanish Concept Development supplemental course. Refer to the Bilingual/ESL Program Guidelines for further details.
- In the Developmental and Two-Way Bilingual Program, Gr. 4-5, students receive half of their subjects in English and half in Spanish, with reinforcement of mastered concepts in the non-target language. Refer to the Bilingual/ESL Program Guidelines for further details.
- All LEP students shall participate with English-speaking students in ancillary subjects.
- In ESL classes, all subjects must be taught in English using second language teaching strategies.
- The ratio of children to staff in the fourth grade must not exceed 22:1 and in fifth and sixth grade the ratio must not exceed 29:1. (TEC §25.000)

## READING

The goal of the Houston Independent School District Reading Initiative is for all students to read on grade level by the end of third grade, and to continually read on grade level throughout their academic careers and lives.

In February 1996, a **PEER (Peer Examination, Evaluation, and Redesign) Committee** was established to review the reading program of the Houston Independent School District. This committee developed the philosophy of reading found in the Board Policy of June 1996. It states that the instructional programs for Grades K through 5 (Grade 6 when located in an elementary school setting) will include a period of time daily for reading instruction and practice in the classroom. The recommended allotted time is 90 minutes per day. The **PEER** Committee believes every school should have a comprehensive, balanced reading program; one that is research-based and combines phonological skill development within a language and literature-rich learning environment and comprehension strategies. The recommendations in the **PEER** report are aligned with reading initiatives established at both the federal and state levels. These initiatives challenge us to examine our efforts and make any and all changes necessary to ensure that **all** children learn to read.

In 2001, No Child Left Behind identified 5 Critical Components of Reading: Phonics, Phonemic Awareness; Fluency, Vocabulary; Comprehension. These components correspond to those identified by the PEER Report. Over the years, A Balanced Approach to Reading has been modified to incorporate all elements of NCLB and all state reading requirements.

Beginning with the 2008-2009 school year, HISD will focus on PK-12 literacy through Literacy Education (ABLE), a comprehensive 3 day training designed to encompass reading essentials every HISD elementary teacher needs to know regarding current reading research, district reading assessments, the state-mandated Student Success Initiative, Accelerated Reading Instruction, small group instruction, HISD curriculum documents, and research content-area literacy strategies (Literacy Leads the Way Best Practices).

Every elementary school must have literature and language-rich activities with the following critical components: phonological awareness, print awareness, alphabetic and orthographic awareness, comprehension strategies, and reading practice.

**Phonological awareness** is the ability to attend to the sound structure, as distinct from the meaning, of spoken language. Elements of the sound structure most relevant to beginning reading are words, syllables, and phonemes.

**Print awareness** is the ability to attend to the conventions and formats of print, such as left to right and top to bottom for English, variability in the letters' shapes, spaces between words, placement of captions and titles, and layouts for different genres (e.g.,

poetry versus prose). Central components of print awareness are the recognition and production of letters.

**Alphabetic awareness** is essential to demonstrating proficiency in alphabetic writing systems, such as English and Spanish. These alphabetic systems operate on a fundamental principle called the *alphabetic principle*. This is the principle that written words are composed of letters of the alphabet that are intentionally and conventionally related to segments of spoken words.

**Orthographic awareness** refers to an understanding of the writing conventions of English (or any other language, such as Spanish). In alphabetic orthographies, this understanding starts with familiarity with letters and letter clusters and progresses to such complexities as when to double final consonants when adding inflectional endings.

**Comprehension strategies** involve inferential and evaluative thinking about connected text both in narrative and expository. Comprehension strategy instruction should include activities that help students understand the factors involved in the construction of meaning.

**Reading practice** takes place in many formats (e.g. shared, guided, and independent reading) and allows the reader to develop comprehension strategies. These strategies are essential if students are to shift from *learning to read* to *reading to learn*.

Instruction in *A Balanced Approach to Reading* will be taught in Spanish Reading and to students learning English as a Second Language (ESL).

The district requires all teachers and professional staff members to consistently implement the campus-level, balanced, comprehensive reading program for grades K through 5. The district also requires all principals and assistant principals to monitor the implementation on a regular basis to ensure continuity.

A critical component of *A Balanced Approach to Reading* is direct systematic instruction:

- in phonemic and phonological awareness and letter-sound knowledge in kindergarten and first grade,
- in alphabetic code and blending in first grade where the opportunity to practice the principle taught is maximized by the use of (a) controlled text and (b) oral reading,
- in spelling,
- in comprehension strategies, and
- in vocabulary instruction.

A parental involvement component that encourages parents to participate in the instructional lessons at home is essential.

While reading occurs throughout the entire school day, significant time must be provided for and dedicated to reading instruction and reading practice. *A Balanced Approach to Reading* recommends that campuses dedicate a substantial amount of time each morning for reading instruction (e.g., **90** minutes or more). Additional assistance is provided through tutorials for those students needing additional instruction.

## Early Reading Assessment

Beginning with the 1998-1999 school year, every Texas school district was required to implement a reading diagnosis program for kindergarten, first, and second grade. The diagnostic instrument must be selected from the commissioner's adopted or district adopted list and be administered according to state guidelines. The Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI) is the instrument selected from this list for HISD for English and Tejas LEE is the instrument selected for Spanish. The results of these tests will be reported to parents, the HISD board of trustees, and the Texas Education Agency. State funds will pay for only those reading instruments adopted by the commissioner. In addition, the High Frequency Word Test will be administered to students in the first and second grades.

## High Frequency Word Evaluation

The HFWE assesses reading ability by having a child read and then say aloud words that are shown by the teacher. The HFWE, a HISD promotion standard, is administered in English and Spanish depending on the language of reading instruction.

## Accelerated Reading Instruction

Accelerated Reading Instruction (ARI) is an additional 30-45 minutes of reading intervention for students in grades K-8 who have been identified as at-risk for having reading difficulties, including dyslexia. Instruction must be focused on phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension intervention is **in addition** to the required daily time allotment for reading (HISD 90-minute reading block)

- TEA has mandated a daily **30- 45 minute in-class tutorial**
- HISD recommends 30-45 additional minutes of targeted reading instruction
- Intervention must be systematic and explicit

## Student Success Initiative

The Student Success Initiative (SSI) was implemented in 2003 for students in grade 3 and in 2005 for students in grade 5, and will be implemented in 2008 for students in grade 8. Students in grades 3, 5, and 8 must pass the TAKS reading and students in grades 5 and 8 must also pass the TAKS mathematics test to be promoted without the consultation of the grade placement committee. Students have three testing opportunities. For guidelines and other information regarding SSI, consult the TEA web site (*Student Assessment Division*, link to *Student Success Initiative*) at: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/resources/ssi/index.html>

## **Core Reading Programs in the Houston Independent School District**

Several core reading programs are utilized as part of the *Balanced Approach to Reading* initiative in the Houston Independent School District. The following is a list of core reading programs used in HISD:

### **English Speaking Classrooms**

***Harcourt Collections***  
***Harcourt Trophies***  
***SRA Open Court***  
***SRA Reading Mastery***  
***Success for All*** (English)

### **ESL Classrooms**

Students in an ESL Program (no native language instruction) must receive instruction through the use of the ESL state-adopted materials, regular English curriculum, and other appropriate supplemental materials. In using the regular English curriculum, teachers must employ ESL methodology. **Documentation of use of ESL methods as well as the ESL state-adopted system is required on teacher's lesson plans.**

In the spring of 2004, the following ESL systems were selected by the ESL Adoption Committee as the new ESL Adoption.

ESL Gr. K-2	<b>“Avenues”/ Hampton Brown</b>
ESL Gr. 3-5	<b>“Avenues” / Hampton Brown</b>

Teachers should check with the school textbook coordinator to identify the ESL textbooks used at their respective schools. Future ESL adoptions will be posted on the Multilingual Department Intranet website.

### **Bilingual Classrooms**

***Scott Foresman Lectura***  
***Success for All*** (Spanish)

## Reading Instruction for Students with Disabilities

The majority of students eligible for special education services are identified as students with learning disabilities. It is estimated that at least one-half of these students have a reading disability. Therefore, reading instruction for students with disabilities is based on the following premises:

1. Students with disabilities can learn to read provided that assessment data is utilized to identify a correct match between student needs and instructional strategies.
2. Teachers should use a variety of instructional techniques/strategies to ensure the implementation of instruction that addresses the unique needs of the diverse student population.
3. The use of research-based multisensory instructional strategies and programs should be the primary basis for instruction.
4. Special education teachers receive staff developmental training in the areas of reading diagnosis, reading remediation, alternative instructional strategies, and best practices for teaching reading by utilizing research based reading programs.
5. Student progress on the Individual Education Program (IEP) for reading must be substantiated by data obtained through frequent and annual assessment of student progress.
6. Data on student progress will be analyzed to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional services and document student achievement in reading.

Increasing student achievement in reading is a priority for the Houston Independent School District. The Office of Special Education Services likewise seeks to increase achievement in reading for students with disabilities. Special Education Services provides staff development training for general and special education staff and parents on utilizing research based instructional materials/technology, and documentation of student progress over time. Teachers must have the necessary tools to provide sound pedagogical experiences in reading to diverse learners.

The Office of Special Education Services provides extensive staff development training in multisensory instructional techniques for special education teachers of reading and purchases specific instructional materials for reading instruction. **Special education teachers are expected to utilize these instructional strategies and identified materials on a daily basis to enhance achievement in reading for students with disabilities. Students should receive the recommended allotted instructional time of 90 minutes per day of reading instruction in general and/or special education.** In addition, the special education reading teacher conducts annual and benchmark assessments to monitor student progress, and identifies appropriate IEP objectives and instructional strategies to address the individual needs of students with disabilities.

## **Reading Instruction in the Preschool Program for Children with Disabilities (PPCD)**

The Preschool Program for Children with Disabilities (PPCD) is uniquely adapted to meet the needs and interests of young children with disabilities. Educational support services are provided to increase preliteracy-reading readiness skills for children with disabilities from ages 3 to 5.

As children are active learners, they build meaning and understanding through full participation in their learning environments. PPCD services provide a child-centered program that combines high expectations for each child with respect for individual development. Instructional objectives and strategies are customized and based on individual student information.

For young children, language development is closely related to literacy development. Exposing young children to print rich environment including a multitude of activities and interactions fosters early literacy skills. By creating a literacy rich environment filled with activities that are specific and integrated across the developmental domains, younger children will be able to explore, investigate, and construct language and knowledge in ways that are meaningful for them.

Preliteracy instruction in PPCD services is based on the following premises:

- The use of research-based, multisensory instructional strategies and materials are the primary basis for instruction.
- Teachers use a variety of instructional techniques/strategies and identified core materials to address the unique needs of each student. The identified core materials should be used district-wide to increase preliteracy skills in PPCD services.
- PPCD services teachers receive staff development training in ongoing assessment of student progress, phonological awareness, inclusion strategies, multisensory instructional strategies in reading and managing an early literacy classroom.
- Student progress on the Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals in preliteracy is documented through frequent, ongoing assessment of student progress.
- It is imperative that all children have access to high quality early educational experiences to help them become lifelong learners. The curriculum will allow the children to explore their environment and build foundations for learning to read and write.

## **LANGUAGE ARTS**

Language Arts includes listening, speaking, writing and reading in grades K-6. In grades 4-6, viewing and representing are also strands in the language arts program. Proficiency in these areas is fundamental to student's academic success. It is recommended that students engage in 60 minutes of "other" language arts instruction daily (beyond the 90-minute requirement for reading). Teachers must provide appropriate instructional strategies and activities to build a strong language arts foundation so that all children will read on grade level by the end of third grade, continue to read to learn for a lifetime, and have the literacy skills necessary to support continued academic and social growth.

### **Language Arts in the Bilingual Classroom**

Language arts in the bilingual classroom must be developed in two languages. Full proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in the student's native language (i.e. Spanish, Vietnamese, etc.) is fundamental to the student's academic success. Development of these skills in the student's second language (i.e. English), although essential, should be presented holistically (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and in incremental amounts during pre-established allotments for English instruction and commensurate with the student's ability throughout the elementary grades.

To support Spanish language arts and ESL instruction in elementary bilingual classrooms, PK-5 Spanish Language Arts curriculum documents are available through the Curriculum Department.

### **Language Arts in the ESL Classroom**

Language arts in the ESL classroom include listening, speaking, and reading and writing (commensurate with student's level of English). Development of these skills in the student's second language (i.e. English), although essential, should be presented holistically (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and in incremental amounts commensurate with the student's ability throughout the elementary grades.

To ensure that the ESL classroom instruction includes TAKS objectives, the ESL teacher should use the TAKS Information Booklets available from the Student Assessment Division of TEA at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us>

## Writing Instruction for Students with Disabilities

Writing instruction for students with disabilities should result in achievement that reflects mastery of the goals and objectives identified in the Admission, Review, Dismissal/Individualized Education Program (ARD/IEP). Students with disabilities receive instructional services in general and/or special education. In order to facilitate achievement in writing skills for diverse learners, teachers must implement a service delivery model of alternative instructional strategies at all levels. It is important that teachers utilize a multisensory approach that is appropriate for each individual student in the least restrictive environment (LRE).

A major goal for the Houston Independent School District is increasing student achievement in writing. To support the district's continued focus to improve student achievement, the Office of Special Education has implemented a collaborative, comprehensive writing initiative, **Writing Increases Student Excellence (WISE)**. The goals of the **WISE** initiative are to:

1. Ensure that special education language arts teachers are knowledgeable of the district's focus on improvement in writing instruction;
2. Ensure mastery of Individualized Education Program (IEP) writing benchmarks for students with disabilities through reviewing current TAKS/TAKS-I/TAKS-M/TAKS-Alt.
3. Determine appropriate writing instructional strategies to address students' needs at all levels;
4. Utilize quantitative assessment data from program-related benchmarks and/or TAKS/TAKS-I/TAKS-M/TAKS-Alt writing scores to document student progress at annual ARD/IEP committee meetings.

Alternative approaches to enhance writing instruction are necessary to meet the needs of students with disabilities who have not mastered basic writing concepts through conventional instructional strategies. The Office of Special Education Services provides the on-going staff development training for special education and general education staff, and parents in alternative instructional writing techniques. Special Education Services also provide specialized research-based writing programs and supporting technology for classroom instruction. Special education teachers attend training sessions on administering diagnostic and benchmark assessments to document student progress over time. They are expected to use the specialized instructional strategies and corresponding instructional materials to provide instruction in writing on a daily basis for students with disabilities.

General and special education instructors must use various instructional tools to assist students with disabilities to master the writing skills necessary to become productive members of society. CLEAR includes suggestions for instructional planning for students with disabilities. A listing of modifications/accommodations is provided for all writing objectives at each grade level, K-8.

## MATHEMATICS

### Mathematics Education Grades K-5

Mathematics education as outlined by the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) statements is aimed at building a foundation of basic understandings in number, operation, and quantitative reasoning; patterns, relationships, and algebraic thinking; geometry and spatial reasoning; measurement; and probability and statistics. Within a well-balanced mathematics curriculum, the primary focal points at each grade level are:

- **Kindergarten** students develop whole-number concepts and use patterns and sorting to explore number, data, and shape.
- **Grade One** students build number sense through number relationships, add and subtract whole numbers, organize and analyze data, and work with two- and three-dimensional geometric figures.
- **Grade Two** students develop an understanding of the base-ten place value system, compare and order whole numbers, apply addition and subtraction, and use measurement processes.
- **Grade Three** students multiply and divide whole numbers, connect fraction symbols to fractional quantities, and standardize language and procedures in geometry and measurement.
- **Grade Four** students compare and order fractions and decimals, apply multiplication and division, and develop ideas related to congruence and symmetry.
- **Grade Five** students compare and contrast lengths, areas, and volumes of two- or three-dimensional geometric figures; represent and interpret data in graphs, charts and tables; and apply whole number operations in a variety of contexts.

Throughout K-5 mathematics, students develop numerical fluency with conceptual understanding and computational accuracy. K-2 students use basic number sense to compose and decompose numbers in order to solve problems with increasing accuracy, efficiency, and flexibility. Students build on an extensive use of patterns and representations with concrete objects to express relationships and make generalizations and predictions that lead to the understanding of number and operation. Grade 3-5 students use knowledge of the base-ten place value system to compose and decompose numbers in order to solve problems requiring precision, estimation, and reasonableness.

Problem solving, language and communication, connections within and outside mathematics, and formal and informal reasoning underlie all content areas in mathematics. Students use these processes together with technology and other mathematical tools such as manipulative materials to develop conceptual understanding and solve meaningful problems as they do mathematics.

Elementary mathematics instructional programs should incorporate the following high yield mathematics components: implementation of the HISD Curriculum; use of classroom routines that encourage students to participate in dialogue about important mathematical concepts and record their mathematical ideas; concrete and pictorial representations; problem solving; individual, pair, share; and use of technology.

- **CLEAR Curriculum** is the basis for instructional planning in HISD. To assist with instructional planning, HISD's curriculum documents, including the Vertical Alignment Matrix (VAM), Horizontal Alignment Planning Guide (HAPG), and TEKS/TAKS Correlations are available through CLEAR Online. Teachers with students from special population groups such as ESL, bilingual, Special Education, and G/T shall apply methodologies and strategies specific to the special population group.
- **Classroom routines**, such as Number of the Day and Number Talks/Mental Math, are an essential component of each grade-level HAPG. Students engage in dialogue about specific mathematical concepts in whole group, small group, or partner situations, and may record their mathematical ideas in journals, problem solving mats, slates, or other appropriate media.
- **Concrete and pictorial representations** allow mathematical concepts to be developed and refined using manipulatives and drawings. Recommended grade level specific manipulatives are listed on the HISD Mathematics webpage at <http://dept.houstonisd.org/curriculum/math/content/AMIResources.pdf>
- **Problem solving** is an important component of daily instruction. With pictures, words, and symbols, students use a graphic organizer in order to understand the problem, make a plan, carry out the plan, and evaluate the solution for reasonableness. Through a live link on each grade-level HAPG document at <http://dept.houstonisd.org/curriculum/math/content/PSOLVINGBOARD2.doc>, teachers can access a variety of HISD Problem Solving Boards.
- **Individual, pair, share** strategies allows students to solve problems individually, then with a partner, and whole group.
- **Technology** is an important component of a well-balanced mathematics curriculum, and includes interactive and student-centered workstations using math intervention software, monitored websites, and/or appropriate use of calculators.

Significant time must be provided for and dedicated to mathematics instruction and practice daily. Students in Kindergarten should receive 60 to 90 minutes of mathematics instruction/practice daily, while students in Grades 1-5 should receive 90 minutes of daily instruction/practice in mathematics. Additional assistance is provided through tutorials for those students needing additional instruction.

Textbooks are available in English and Spanish for grades K-5. Teachers are to use manipulatives, and are encouraged to use calculators and other resources to supplement and enhance learning. TAKS-tested TEKS for Grades 3-6 are listed in the TAKS Information Booklets by TEA available from the Student Assessment Division at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us>.

### **Student Success Initiative**

The mathematics portion of the Student Success Initiative (SSI) was implemented in 2005 for students in Grade 5. Grade 5 students must pass the TAKS mathematics test to be promoted without the consultation of the grade placement committee. Grade 5 students have three testing opportunities. For guidelines and other information regarding SSI, consult the TEA web site (*Student Assessment Division*, link to *Student Success Initiative*) at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/resources/ssi/index.html>.

### **Accelerated Mathematics Instruction**

Accelerated Mathematics Instruction (AMI) is an additional 30-45 minutes of mathematics intervention for students in Grades K-5 who have been identified as at-risk for having mathematics difficulties. Intervention is **in addition** to the required daily time allotment for mathematics.

To participate in AMI funding, school districts must select assessment instruments to identify struggling mathematics students in Kindergarten through Grade 8. HISD has selected *Assessing Math Concepts/Kathy Richardson* student interviews as the assessment instrument in addition to the use of campus-based common assessments for identifying struggling mathematics students for Kindergarten to Grade 2. To identify struggling mathematics students for Grades 3-8, HISD has selected to use TAKS data, Curriculum Benchmark assessments, and campus-based common assessments. Additional assessment throughout the program should be used to measure progress and inform instruction.

Additional HISD AMI guidelines and information can be downloaded at [http://dept.houstonisd.org/curriculum/math/content/AMI\\_Handbook\\_0607.pdf](http://dept.houstonisd.org/curriculum/math/content/AMI_Handbook_0607.pdf).

## **Mathematics Instruction for Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities must have access to learning that is participatory, sequential, and research based to increase achievement in mathematics. It is necessary to provide a multisensory instructional framework of sound instructional strategies to motivate students with disabilities to participate in the learning process and to increase achievement in mathematics skills. Students must be motivated to take an active role in assuming responsibility for their own learning and in learning how to learn.

Special Education Services has implemented a comprehensive mathematics initiative to promote achievement for students with disabilities with the focus on addressing the multi-faceted needs of students with disabilities. Inservice training on best practices for implementation of multisensory instructional strategies using research based programs, technology, and systematic assessment to document longitudinal student progress are provided for general and special education staff, and parents. The Office of Special Education Services provides these training activities and purchases specific instructional materials for mathematics instruction. In accordance with state and federal requirements, students with disabilities must receive instructional services in the Least Restrictive Environment, (LRE); therefore a variety of service delivery models in general and special education are required. These services provide effective educational experiences that extend and improve learning opportunities for students with disabilities. Special education teachers are expected to utilize these instructional strategies and identified materials on a daily basis to enhance achievement in mathematics for students with disabilities.

An analysis of assessment data provides documentation of a disability, deficit areas for remediation, as well as instructional objectives, and measures of long-term progress for students with disabilities. Special education teachers are expected to use the results of diagnostic tests to track long-term student growth, and make recommendations based on the individual needs of the student that can be translated into effective and efficient instructional techniques. Student performance on all assessment instruments is “the driver” for the education planning conducted by the ARD/IEP committee for students with disabilities.

General and special education teachers must meet the challenge to successfully connect classroom experiences to the meaningful application of mathematics in the real world of home, work, recreation, and leisure activities in the new millennium.

## SCIENCE

The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for Elementary Science requires that specified scientific processes and science concepts be taught in grades K-6. The Elementary Science Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), given at grade five, includes specific scientific processes and concepts from grades 2, 3, 4, and 5. The Elementary Science TAKS, given at grade five, is based on the premise that students have received a strong hands-on inquiry-based science foundation which began in prekindergarten and has continued each year through grade five. The elementary science curriculum has moved away from facts, content coverage and passive learning to an emphasis on hands-on, process oriented, inquiry-based experiences. The elementary science curriculum should address all of the following criteria:

- **Students in grades PK-6 should be provided daily instruction in science.**
- In bilingual classes, science shall be taught in Spanish in grades PK-3. Concepts may be reinforced in English once they have been mastered in Spanish.
- In bilingual grade 4 or 5 classes, science shall be taught in the same language used for reading/language arts instruction, and according to the bilingual program model being implemented at the school. Refer to the Bilingual/ESL Program Guidelines to determine language of instruction for science.
- For LEP students in ESL classes (and those in regular classes due to the shortage of teachers), science shall be taught in English using second language teaching strategies.
- The elementary science curriculum must focus on concepts and scientific principles taught through inquiry-based, hands-on, real-world, problem-solving approaches.
- The elementary science curriculum must include numerous opportunities for students to develop process and inquiry skills such as observing, classifying, measuring, collecting and interpreting data, inferring, proposing hypotheses, identifying variables, and drawing conclusions.
- The classroom teacher is responsible for using technology and instructional strategies and models for teaching science that require students to participate in manipulating objects, making discoveries, and describing and discussing findings.
- The science curriculum should include field studies, library research, and visits to museums, nature centers and other informal science settings.
- The elementary science curriculum calls for the integration of the science disciplines and the integration of science with other content areas.

- Science specimens may be ordered free of charge from the **HISD Marcile Hollingsworth Science Resource Center**. These specimens should be used in teaching concepts such as life cycles, adaptation and diversity.
- The science curriculum requires an annual allocation of funds for purchasing equipment and instruments specified in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills as well as a sufficient number of other supplies needed to teach hands-on, process-oriented, inquiry-based science.
- The science curriculum should include a variety of short-term and long-term individual and small group projects.
- HISD Curriculum documents for science - including the Vertical Alignment Matrix (VAM), Horizontal Alignment Planning Guide (HAPG) and TEKS/TAKS Correlations - will be used as the basis for planning instruction and are available for grades PK-6 through CLEAR Online. These documents also apply to bilingual and ESL teachers.
- Formative assessments should be developed by campus leadership teams.
- Science textbooks are available from the warehouse in English and Spanish for grades 1-5. The science textbook is one of many instructional resources that should be used to enhance student's learning of science. Kindergarten teachers were given copies of the kindergarten science teacher's edition during the textbook adoption process in 2000.
- Supplementary instructional materials for students with disabilities in general education science classes may be obtained from the Special Education Resource System (SERS).
- TAKS-tested TEKS for the elementary science test given at grade 5 are listed in the TAKS Information Booklet available from the Student Assessment Division at TEA (<http://www.tea.state.tx.us>).

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

Social Studies is the integrated study of the social sciences to promote civic responsibility. Within the school program, social studies provides coordinated, systematic study of history, geography, economics, government, citizenship, culture, science, technology, and critical thinking skills. Its purpose is to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions as citizens in a culturally diverse, democratic society and an interdependent world.

- Students in grades PK-6 shall be provided regular instruction in social studies and the instruction must address the essential knowledge and skills of the appropriate grade level as specified in Chapter 113 (Social Studies) of the TEKS. 19 TAC §74.1.(a)(b)
- Schools may add elements to social studies instruction at a grade level, but they must not delete or omit instruction in the foundation curriculum as specified in the TEKS. 19 TAC §74.1.(b)
- Schools must ensure that sufficient time is provided for teachers to teach and for students to learn social studies. 19 TAC §74.2 and 19 TAC §74.3.(a)
- In bilingual classes, social studies shall be taught in Spanish in grades K-3. Concepts may be reinforced in English once they have been mastered in Spanish.
- In bilingual grade 4 or 5 classes, social studies shall be taught in the same language used for reading/language arts instruction, and according to the bilingual program model being implemented at the school. Refer to the Bilingual/ESL Program Guidelines to determine language of instruction for social studies.
- For LEP students in ESL classes (and those in regular classes due to the shortage of teachers), social studies shall be taught in English using second language teaching strategies.
- Social Studies textbooks are available in both English and Spanish for grades 1 through 6. Teachers are encouraged to use other resources to supplement and enhance learning.
- HISD Curriculum documents for social studies – including the Horizontal Alignment Planning Guide (HAPG), the Vertical Alignment Matrix (VAM), and the TEKS/TAKS Correlations – will be used as the basis for instructional planning. The documents also apply to bilingual and ESL instructional planning. HISD Curriculum documents are available through CLEAR Online for grades PK-6.
- Supplementary instructional materials for students with disabilities in general education classes may be obtained from the Special Education Resource System (SERS). Suggestions for modifications or accommodations are also available in the respective grade level Resource section in CLEAR Online.

## FINE ARTS EDUCATION

The fine arts disciplines of art, music, theater (creative drama), and dance are viable and essential parts of all student's education as well as being required by TEA. Each fine arts discipline has a unique impact on student achievement when viewed as a separate field of study. Moreover, through study of the fine arts, students are engaged in a process that helps them to develop the critical thinking skills, self-discipline, and self-motivation necessary for attaining success in life.

- The fine arts shall be taught in all elementary grade levels as part of the enrichment curriculum.
- The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (**TEKS**) for fine arts are mandated by TEA as part of the enrichment curriculum. TEC §28.002 requires that the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) be followed when providing instruction in all enrichment subject areas, including art, dance, music, and theatre.
- All LEP students (in either bilingual or ESL classes) shall receive fine arts instruction in English using second language teaching strategies. This instruction counts as part of the required daily English language development for students in bilingual classes. In accordance with TEC §29.055(c), LEP students in bilingual classes must be scheduled with their English-speaking peers for enrichment subjects such as art, music, physical education, etc.
- Sufficient time is to be provided for teachers to teach and for students to learn the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (**TEKS**) in fine arts.
- The school should provide instruction in a variety of arrangements and settings, including mixed-age groupings designed to permit flexible learning arrangements for developmentally appropriate instruction.
- The establishment of a schedule and procedures for instruction in the fine arts must consider:
  - instructional objectives rather than isolated activities
  - sufficient time to complete the specified instructional objectives of a lesson cycle
  - continuity of instruction
  - procedures for assessing student progress
  - assigning separate grades for art, music, theater, and dance
  - designated time in the schedule for art, music, theater, and dance
  - allowance for extended time for special units or program performance preparation in art, music, theater, and dance
  - staffing patterns
  - specified and/or assigned rooms, facilities, and equipment that sufficiently supports and effectively maintains all fine arts disciplines offered on a given campus.

- The primary objective of the fine arts program at the elementary level is to provide students with in-depth experiences with the arts through instruction by a specialist whenever possible or specialized fine arts units of study developed by classroom teachers whenever a specialist is not on staff.
- The fine arts objectives can be accessed on CLEAR Online.
- Art, music, theater, and dance textbooks have been adopted for grades K-12.
- The fine arts teachers are responsible for providing students with learning experiences in the arts, coordinating special events, collaborating with the classroom teachers to foster development of interdisciplinary lessons, **and contributing to student achievement through utilizing a variety of instructional strategies and assessment methods.**
- The art and music programs are enhanced by cocurricular contests/exhibits such as the Spring Visual Arts Exhibit/Contest, Music Memory Contest, Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo School Art Exhibit/Contest, All-City Elementary Band, All-City Elementary Orchestra, and Fire Prevention Poster Contest.
- Appropriate supplies, equipment, and resources should be provided to effectively and successfully implement fine arts programs. Musical instruments, art room equipment, and creative drama props must receive proper maintenance in order to withstand the demands of student use.
- Good judgment must be used in scheduling and staffing for fine arts classes in order to avoid excessively large classes.

## LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH

Communication in the language and cultural understanding of the people who speak the language are the all-important goals for students in language education. Today, students learn to speak, to understand, and to use the language in "real world" situations. Through incremental practice and communication, students develop proficiency in the language.

- Students enrolled in a language other than English, grades PK-6, shall be provided opportunities to listen to and understand the spoken language, to acquire vocabulary and skills essential for everyday communication.
- The current focus on proficiency-oriented instruction suggests that there are activities and strategies that can lead to more efficient teaching and effective learning of language.
- Instructional factors that can positively impact learning include the use of functional activities, authentic context, personalized interaction, student-centered participation and developmentally appropriate linguistic practices.
- Students are encouraged to use the language daily by asking and responding to simple questions using familiar vocabulary and previously used expressions to communicate basic needs.
- Student's language learning should be a positive, non-threatening process, similar to the way children acquire their first language.
- The primary objective of the elementary curriculum is not only to teach language skills, but also to equip students with learning strategies that will aid them as they continue their studies in later years.
- The classroom teacher is responsible for the extensive use and examples of the target language in the classroom, continual positive reinforcement, and low-stress correction of student errors through modeling and by example.
- The curriculum stresses meaningful communication through activities, such as learning games; short questions and comments about everyday activities; in-class recognition of birthdays, achievements, and other events important to students; positive comments on and display of student's work, etc.
- The elementary curriculum for languages other than English is included in the district's Scope and sequence document and aligned with TAKS objectives and the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).

## HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The elementary health and physical education curriculum is essential in the development and growth of the whole child. The purpose of the curriculum is to provide the student with the necessary skills and knowledge to develop healthy lifestyles. Even though health and physical education are two separate and distinct instructional programs, they both emphasize the achievement of one's personal best through health-related fitness and health literacy.

### Elementary Health Education

- **Health education is considered a part of a balanced instructional program; therefore**, students in grades PK-6 **must** be provided weekly instruction in health education.
- The classroom teacher is responsible for teaching health; however, the physical education teacher, school nurse, librarian, or counselor may also teach health instruction.
- It is strongly recommended that one complete lesson be taught within a 20-45 minute block of time, depending on the grade level of the students.
- Health education at the elementary level focuses on the development of wellness concepts and safety practices. This comprehensive program provides age-appropriate instructional activities that promote safety and health enhancing behaviors.
- Students are encouraged to critically examine personal health choices through a program that stresses mental, emotional, physical, and social awareness.
- The primary objective of the elementary curriculum is to provide a framework of health concepts, life skills, and safety practices that lead to wellness lifestyles.
- The curriculum addresses critical health issues such as alcohol, drugs, gangs, interpersonal relationships, self awareness, safety, violence, and life skills which include communication, conflict resolution, decision-making, goal-setting, and stress management.

The HISD Curriculum defines the district's goals and objectives for health education and include the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), assessment correlations, and National Health Education Standards.

- The health education curriculum is aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (**TEKS**), Assessment Correlations, and the National Health Education Standards.
- Health textbooks are available in grades 4-5. These books should be used as **one** of many instructional resources to enhance learning.

### **Local School Health Advisory Council and Health Education Instruction**

TEC §28.004 provides the state requirements related to health and human sexuality instruction, including HIV/AIDS prevention education. HISD Health Education programs comply with state law by ensuring that instruction accomplishes the following:

- presents abstinence from sexual activity as the preferred choice of behavior in relationship to all activity for unmarried persons of school age;
- devotes more attention to abstinence from sexual activity than to any other behavior;
- emphasizes that abstinence from sexual activity, if used consistently and correctly, is the only method that is 100% effective in preventing pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, infection from HIV/AIDS, and the emotional trauma associated with adolescent sexual activity;
- directs students to a standard of behavior in which abstinence from sexual activity before marriage is the most effective way to prevent pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and infection from HIV/AIDS; and
- teaches contraception and condom use in terms of human use reality rates instead of theoretical laboratory rates, if instruction on contraception and condoms is included in curriculum content.

TEC §28.004 also requires school districts to establish a Local School Health Advisory Council (SHAC). The council's duties require submitting the following recommendations to the school board:

- The number of hours of instruction to be provided in health education;
- Curriculum appropriate for specific grade levels designed to prevent obesity, cardiovascular disease, and Type 2 diabetes through the coordination of:
  - health education,
  - physical education and physical activity,
  - nutrition services,
  - instruction designed to prevent the use of tobacco;
- Appropriate grade levels and methods of instruction for human sexuality instruction;
- Health education instructional materials for students in grades PK -12;
- Strategies for integrating curriculum components with the following elements in a coordinated school health program for the district:
  - school health education,
  - counseling and guidance services,
  - a safe and healthy school environment,
  - school employee wellness,
  - health education instructional materials for students in grades PK -12

- The district's SHAC meets on a regular basis and is composed of persons representing diverse views. Membership must represent a majority of parents whose children are enrolled in HISD, as well as teachers, administrators, health care professionals, students, and other interested parties. All SHAC members are appointed by the Board of Education.

Other guidelines governing the use of outside presenters:

- The use of district-approved outside presenters is encouraged in order to enhance instructional programs. However, presenters do not take the place a teacher's assigned classroom instruction. All outside presenters must adhere to HISD curriculum standards.
- The school contact person for the outside presenter (teacher/counselor/nurse) is responsible for setting the proper tone when scheduling the presenter by:
  - reviewing guidelines related to human sexuality issues,
  - communicating school and district expectations,
  - stressing the importance of staying on the designated topics,
  - reviewing all resource materials prior to the presentation,
  - submitting a presenter evaluation report to the Health/Physical Education Department manager;
- The outside presenters who have met district requirements must:
  - be familiar with and adhere to TEC §28.004 guidelines related to human sexuality issues,
  - meet with school contact person(s) prior to the presentation in order to discuss and/or clarify district and school guidelines,
  - use age-appropriate resource materials that have been approved by prior to the presentation,
  - refer all disclosures regarding human sexuality issues to the school nurse or counselor;

### **Procedure for Outside Presenters**

Communicating groups and organizations wanting to introduce health-related supplemental programs to the district must:

- Step 1: Submit an application to the Speakers Bureau for each individual presenter.
- Step 2: Receive a security clearance from HISD's Human Resources Department.
- Step 3: Present materials to the Health/Physical Education Department for review.
- Step 4: Schedule a presentation time during the next available School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) meeting.
- Step 5: Present and display materials to the SHAC for their review and recommendation.

After a complete review of programs/materials/resources: the School Health Advisory Council and Health and Physical Education Department (HPED) will:

- Step 1: Recommend approval of the proposed program to the Superintendent of Schools and Board of Education in the form of a Board Item.  
**(Note: A Board Item must be prepared one month prior to the scheduled Board of Education meeting.)**
- Step 2: Receive a vote of approval by the Board of Education to place the items on the district-wide approved supplemental programs, materials, and resources list for school use.
- Step 3: Submit a letter (signed by the co-chairs of the SHAC) to the appropriate community group and/or organization, indicating that they have met all the requirements and now have district approval to enter the schools. **This letter must be presented to school personnel prior to program implementation.**

If approved, community groups/organizations **must submit a program evaluation summary report to HPED by June of each year.** The report will be utilized by the SHAC to determine program effectiveness and whether to submit the program to the Board of Education for continued approval.

Programs that do not obtain the approval recommendation from the SHAC will receive a letter indicating comments and concerns regarding the proposed program. SHAC members will also include suggested recommendations in order to assist the program in meeting district and community goals and values related to health issues that impact our student population.

All programmatic recommendations will be submitted to the HISD Board of Education by July of each year in order to become effective at the beginning of the school year in August. The entire review and approval process can take up to 4 months to complete.

### **Selecting Supplemental Programs/Materials/Resources**

Although schools teach the comprehensive health education curriculum developed by HISD, they may select Supplemental materials to enhance teaching and learning. Supplemental programs/materials/resources to enhance the district's curriculum may be purchased by schools; however, such materials must appear on the approved supplemental programs, materials, and resource list. **All human sexuality-based supplemental programs must be reviewed and approved by the SHAC for recommendation prior to implementation.**

Additional instructional materials and educational resources are available in the Health and Physical Education central office. Teachers are encouraged to visit the Health Physical Education web site (<http://dept.houstonisd.org/curriculum>) for curriculum updates, program initiatives, resources and professional development opportunities.

## Elementary Physical Education

- Physical education at the elementary school must focus on movement, physical activity, health-related fitness, and social skill development.
- Students should be allowed to participate in daily physical education to learn the necessary skills to perform a variety of physical activities, the implications of and the benefits from involvement in physical activities and to value physical activity and its contributions to a healthful lifestyle.
- The HISD Curriculum defines the district's goals and objectives for Physical Education and include the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), and assessment correlations.
- The elementary physical education instructional programs should emphasize participation in moderate to vigorous physical activity, fundamental motor skill, cardio respiratory endurance, muscular strength and endurance, and flexibility development. Instructional activities should incorporate life skills such as fair play, cooperation, citizenship, leadership, sportsmanship, and teamwork.
- Physical education teachers should design lessons that provide frequent practice opportunities that are both meaningful and appropriate based on previous movement experiences and maturation.
- Physical education teachers should design experiences and select benchmarks to enhance the psychomotor, cognitive and affective development of all children.
- Health-Related Fitness Testing is a district mandate. Students in grades 3, 4 and 5 should be tested once a year. Students in grades K-2 should be exposed to testing but for learning purposes only. Test results should be on file.
- The *FITNESSGRAM* battery test is suggested as the most suitable assessment tool of health-related fitness for the students in Houston Independent School District. The *FITNESSGRAM* assessment tool uses criterion-referenced standards, called Healthy Fitness Zones, to determine students' fitness levels based on what is optimal for good health. In addition, it has a physical activity assessment tool which provides a three-day record of activities performed during each 30-minute period. The report provides information in the following areas: 1) total number of minutes of activity each day as compared to a goal of 60 minutes, 2) periods of time each day spent in activity and 3) types of activity.
- Class size for elementary physical education must be equivalent to those of the classroom teacher, with allowance for a limited number of mainstreamed students with disabilities. To ensure safety and adequate supervision for mainstreamed students normally served by a teacher and teacher aide, the teacher aide must remain with the student during the entire period.

- Exercise should not be used as a punishment for misbehavior and/or lack of participation.
- Appropriate supplies and equipment should be provided to implement quality physical education program. Physical education supplies and equipment must be maintained to ensure indoor and outdoor safety.
- The physical education teacher is responsible for coordinating special events and culminating activities such as field days, fitness festivals, marathons, Olympic events, and holiday programs.
- Plans should be made to provide an adequate, safe and orderly environment when facilitating quality indoor and outdoor physical activities.
- Exposure to extreme heat or cold conditions may cause serious illness or be harmful to students. Therefore, careful consideration should be given to weather conditions whenever classes are held outside.
- Good judgment must be used when temperatures are above 95 degrees or below 35 degrees. Additionally, special precautions should be taken whenever the smog and ozone levels are extremely high. See the Houston Independent School District Emergency Preparedness Plan for further clarification.
- Additional instructional materials and educational resources are available in the Health and Physical Education central office. Teachers are encouraged to visit the Health and Physical Education web site (<http://dept.houstonisd.org/curriculum>) for curriculum updates, program initiatives, resources, and professional development opportunities.
- All Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students (in either bilingual or ESL classes) shall receive physical education instruction in English using second language teaching strategies. This instruction counts as part of the required daily English language development for students in bilingual classes. In accordance with TEC §29.055(c), LEP students in bilingual classes must be scheduled with their English-speaking peers for ancillary subjects such as art, music, physical education, etc.
- In the case of physical disability, extended illnesses, or serious injuries, a doctor's certificate will be required and students must engage in limited physical activities or take another assigned course. A restricted physical education program must be in accordance with the physician's recommendation. The student with disabilities, upon request and recommendation of the private physician, with the approval of the school physician and by action of the ARD/IEP committee may:
  - remain in general education;
  - be referred for evaluation for an Adaptive Physical Education class; or
  - have physical education requirements waived through physician's recommendation.

- Adapted equipment for students with disabilities may be obtained from the Special Education Resource System (SERS).

19 TAC §74.32 requires students in elementary schools to participate in physical activity for a minimum of either 30 minutes daily or 135 minutes weekly under the following conditions:

- participation must be in a Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)-based physical education class or a TEKS-based structured activity; and
- school district procedures for providing the required physical activity must consider the health-related education needs of the student and the recommendations of the local health advisory council.

Further guidelines are being developed to support implementation of this rule. The following 3 pages contain a brief question-and-answer document and sample schedule designed by the Texas Education Agency to assist schools in the development of physical activity programs for elementary school students that comply with the requirements of 19 TAC §74.32:

### 1. What constitutes an elementary school setting in Grades K-6?

**Answer:** The Texas Education Code (TEC) §28.002(l) references students in “a grade level below seven in an elementary school setting.” The statute applies to all grades from kindergarten through grade six in all situations except when grade six is located on a separate middle school campus that includes grades seven and/or eight.

The Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §74.2 Description of a Required Elementary Curriculum and §74.3. Description of Required Secondary Curriculum defines elementary school as grades kindergarten through five, middle school as grades six through eight, and high school as grades nine through twelve. The Texas Education Agency does not recognize “intermediate” as a classification for campuses.

The intent of both the TEC language and the TAC language (passed by the SBOE at the March 2002 meeting) is clear. The physical activity rule addresses all students in full-day kindergarten, all students in grades one through five, and all students in grade six, if grade six is not on a middle school campus with grades seven and/or eight.

### 2. What is “structured activity”?

**Answer:** A structured activity is an organized physical activity that is based on the physical education TEKS if the activity occurs during a physical education class. In physical education, as part of the enrichment curriculum, the TEKS are used as guidelines. The structured activity is aligned primarily with the physical activity & health and movement strands of the physical education TEKS if the structured activity occurs in a non-classroom setting such as daily recess.

### 3. Where may the structured activity take place in a school?

**Answer:** Participation in a structured activity may occur at any place or any time within a school setting and within the school day such as a physical education class or daily

recess. The new rule states in part that “each district shall establish procedures for providing the required physical activity that must consider the health-related education needs of the student and the recommendations of the local health advisory council.” This flexibility may include locally determining a setting other than a physical education class or recess as a setting for rule compliance.

**4. Who may supervise the structured activity?**

**Answer:** In a classroom setting, any certified teacher may supervise the structured activity. In a non-classroom setting such as daily recess, any personnel employed by the district may supervise the structured activity.

**5. May the time requirement be satisfied by averaging the minutes over two or more weeks?**

**Answer:** No. The rule states that the time requirement must be met each week, with one exception. A school district or campus that does not elect to provide daily physical activity may provide less than 135 minutes in a week with fewer than five instructional days by following its regular schedule for physical activity.

**6. How does the rule apply during a week when school is not in session for five days?**

**Answer:** Follow the regular weekly schedule. For a shortened week, please note the answer in question #5.

**7. May students be removed from the required physical activity for tutoring?**

**Answer:** Yes. However, the district must satisfy the weekly time requirements by providing make-up opportunities for students who are removed from class for tutoring.

**8. Are students required to make-up minutes missed due to performing in school-sponsored events such as field trips and extracurricular activities?**

**Answer:** No.

**9. What allowances are there for students with physical limitations or special medical needs?**

**Answer:** A school district may restrict a student’s participation in required physical activity based on the student’s health classifications in physical education in accordance with 19 TAC §74.31. [Health Classification for Physical Education](#).

**10. What allowances are there when students must remain indoors for days because of inclement weather, particularly when there is no gymnasium on the elementary school campus?**

**Answer:** This issue will be locally determined. The rule states that “each school district shall establish procedures for providing the required physical activity that must consider

the health-related needs of the student and the recommendations of the local health advisory council.”

For further clarification, please contact the Health and Physical Education Unit in the Division of Curriculum & Professional Development of the Texas Education Agency at (512) 463-9581.

**SAMPLE SCHEDULING TO MEET SENATE BILL 19 MANDATES**

THE SAMPLE SCHEDULING DOES NOT INCLUDE EXTENDED DAY OR RECESS OPTIONS.

OPTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	GRADES	NUMBER OF CLASSES (PER WEEK)	TIME ALLOTMENT (MINUTES)	TOTAL MINUTES (PER WEEK)
<b>A</b> PE*	Physical Education Teacher	K-6	5	30	<b>150</b>
<b>B</b> PE	Physical Education Teacher	K-2	3	45	<b>135</b>
		3-6	5	30	<b>150</b>
<b>C</b> PE	Physical Education Teacher	K-6	3	45	<b>135</b>
<b>D</b> PE  INCLUDING SA**	Physical Education Teacher	K-6	3	30	90
	INCLUDING Classroom Teacher	INCLUDING K-6	INCLUDING 3	INCLUDING 15	INCLUDING 45  <b>135</b>
<b>E*</b> PE   PE/SA	Classroom Teacher (No Physical Education Teacher)	K-6	5	30	<b>150</b>
		OR K-6	OR 3	OR 45	OR <b>135</b>
	Classroom Teacher	OR K-6	OR 3	OR 30	OR <b>135</b>
		K-6	3	15	<b>135</b>

\*PE: Scheduled Physical Education classes with a certified teacher

\*\*SA: Structured Activity (refer to Question 2 on page 37)

## **RECESS**

Daily schedules for PK and Kindergarten must include thirty minutes for recess. Recess is optional for grades 1-5. However, for those schools that choose to have recess, the following guidelines are offered:

- Each school should determine what time of day the recess should be scheduled and collaborate with the physical education teacher to develop building-level guidelines to ensure adequate supervision and safety procedures.
- One (1) recess period per day, per class, will be scheduled.
- Recess will be thirty (30) minutes including time leaving and returning to the classroom. Twenty (20) minutes will be free play, and ten (10) minutes will be for restroom break and travel.
- A certified person(s) must be responsible for monitoring students to prevent accidents. The student/teacher ratio must be appropriate to ensure adequate supervision.
- Each school will develop an alternative plan for recess on inclement weather days.
- Recess will be held outdoors if weather permits.
- Building principals will ensure that recess will not interfere with the physical education program.
- Recess and physical education must be listed on the daily program.

**RECESS DOES NOT REPLACE PHYSICAL EDUCATION.**

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Extracurricular activities include, but are not limited to, public performances, contests, demonstrations, displays, and club activities, with the exception of public performances specified in the second bullet below.

- In addition, an activity shall be subjected to the provisions for an extracurricular activity if any one of the following criteria apply:
  - the activity is competitive;
  - the activity is held in conjunction with another activity that is considered to be extracurricular;
  - the activity is held off campus except in a case in which adequate facilities do not exist on campus;
  - the general public is invited; or
  - an admission is charged.

A student ineligible to participate in an extracurricular activity, but who is enrolled in a state-approved course that requires demonstration of the mastery of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) in a public performance, may participate in the performance subject to the following requirements and limitations:

- the general public is invited; and
- The requirements for student participation in public are stated in the TEKS of the course.

The school week is defined as beginning at 12:01 a.m. on the first instructional day of the calendar week and ending at the close of instruction on the last instructional day of the calendar week, excluding holidays.

A school district may not schedule or permit a student to participate in an extracurricular activity or a public performance that would require, permit, or allow the student to be absent from a class more than ten times during the school year. A school district may adopt policies that permit distribution of the ten absences during the school year for the purpose of participation in extracurricular activities.

Limitations on practice, rehearsal, and student participation in extracurricular activities during the school week shall be as follows:

- For any given extracurricular activity, a student may not participate in more than one activity per school week, excluding holidays, except as provided in the next bullet.
- In addition to the limit of one extracurricular activity permitted per school week, a student may also participate in a tournament or post-district contest, as well as a contest postponed by weather or public disaster that may determine advancement to a post-district level of competition.

- For each extracurricular activity, a school district must limit students to a maximum of eight hours of practice and rehearsal outside the school day per school week.
- A school may not schedule an extracurricular activity or a public performance to occur on the day or evening immediately preceding the day on which the administration of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) is scheduled for Grades 3-8 and 10.
- Limitations on practice and rehearsal for extracurricular activities during the school day shall be as follows:
  - A school district must limit a student to one period of practice during the regularly scheduled school day for extracurricular activities, such as athletics,
  - A student may not be permitted to miss a scheduled academic class to practice for an unrelated extracurricular activity.
  - A school district must limit extracurricular practice during the school day to ensure that class periods for extracurricular practice do not exceed the time allotted for other class periods.
- TEC §33.086 requires a district employee who serves as the head coach or chief sponsor for an extracurricular athletic activity, including cheerleading, sponsored or sanctioned by a district or the UIL, to maintain and submit to the district proof of current certification in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation issued by the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, or another organization that provides equivalent training and certification.

These provisions apply to any UIL activity. Any other organization requiring student participation that causes a student to miss a class may request sanction from the school district board of trustees. If the organization is sanctioned by resolution of the board of trustees, student participation in the organization's activities shall be subject to all provisions of this section and statute. Any absence incurred by a student while participating with an organization that has not received sanction from the school district board of trustees shall be subject to provisions of the Texas Education Code related to student attendance.

## EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

21<sup>st</sup> Century skills are imperative for students pursuing post-secondary education which demands a high level of knowledge and skills and a high degree of technology competency. To equip our students with the skills necessary to compete in a global digital society, students need to be given opportunities to access, evaluate, manage, and use information in a variety of media formats from a wide array of sources and communicate those results to diverse audiences.

- Adopted by the State of Texas in 1997 and found in 19 TAC Chapter 126, the Technology Application TEKS provide technology literacy standards that are to be integrated throughout the curriculum in grades K-8 and expanded through specialized, focused courses in Grades 9 – 12. The Technology Applications TEKS are divided into four strands for all grade levels:
  - ▶ **Technology Foundations** – Through the study of technology applications foundations, including technology-related terms, concepts, and data input strategies, students learn to make informed decisions about technologies and their applications.
  - ▶ **Information Acquisition** – The efficient acquisition of information includes the identification of task requirements; the planning for the use of search strategies; and the use of technology to access, analyze, and evaluate the acquired information.
  - ▶ **Work in Solving Problems** – By using technology as a tool that support the work of individuals and groups in solving problems, students will select the technology appropriate for the task, synthesize knowledge, create a solution and evaluate the results.
  - ▶ **Communication** – Students communicate information in different formats and to diverse audiences. A variety of technologies will be used. Students will analyze and evaluate the results.
- The Technology Application TEKS describe what students should know and be able to do using technology. The goal of the Technology Application TEKS is for students to gain technology-based knowledge and skills and to apply them to all curriculum areas at all grade levels. The Technology Application TEKS are not to be taught in isolation but as an integral part of every classroom's use of technology.
  - ▶ Grades K-2 – Students gain basic skills such as inputting information, beginning touch keyboarding and becoming familiar with the computer. Using technology, student access information that can include text, audio, video and graphics. They use computers and related technology to make presentations and prepare objects for foundation curriculum areas.

- ▶ Grades 3-5 – Students use proper keyboarding techniques and acquire information by selecting the most appropriate search strategies. Students use word processing, graphics, databases, spreadsheets, simulations, multimedia, and telecommunications. They solve problems and communicate information in various formats and to a variety of audiences and evaluate their results.
- As of 2003, TEC 28.002 requires school districts to use the TEKS when teaching all of the required curriculum (foundation and enrichment content areas). Prior to 2003, the enrichment TEKS were used as “guidelines”.
- The Technology Applications curriculum includes the teaching, learning, and integration of digital technology knowledge and skills across the curriculum, especially in the core curriculum areas to support learning and promote student achievement. This curriculum defines the technology literacy and integration requirements for students and teachers specified in No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Title II, Part D.
- Districts must ensure that sufficient time is provided for teachers to teach and students to learn the essential knowledge and skills in Technology Applications for Grades K-12. The State Board of Education adopted Technology Applications instructional materials in November 2003. Funded in the 2005-2006 school year, HISD choose EasyTech by Learning.com as the online textbook for grades K-6.

## **SUPPORT PROGRAMS**

### **MAGNET SCHOOL PROGRAM**

In addition to the regular educational program, HISD offers a variety of other program options to its elementary students. Attendance at a Magnet school is an exception to the requirement that a student attend the school within his or her attendance zone. Magnet schools are specialized curriculum programs available to students through Magnet transfers. Each Magnet program is developed with a strong basic academic program in addition to an attractive enrichment specialty. Because the specialties are extensive and varied, it is possible to meet the needs, interests, and talents of most students. Students are accepted into Magnet programs according to each program's particular requirements. Generally, entrance into an elementary Magnet program is based on the student's interest in the program and available space.

### **CHARACTER EDUCATION PROGRAM**

TEC §29.906 allows school districts to implement character education programs after consulting with educators, parents, and other members of the community, including community leaders:

1. Stress positive traits such as:
  - ◆ Courage
  - ◆ Trustworthiness, including honesty, reliability, punctuality, and loyalty
  - ◆ Integrity
  - ◆ Respect and courtesy
  - ◆ Responsibility, including accountability, diligence, perseverance, and self-control
  - ◆ Fairness, including justice and freedom from prejudice
  - ◆ Caring, including kindness, empathy, compassion, consideration, patience, generosity, and charity
  - ◆ Good citizenship including patriotism, concern for the common good and the community, and respect for authority and the law
  - ◆ School pride
2. Use integrated teaching strategies
3. Must be age appropriate

The legislation requires TEA to maintain a list of character education programs and to review and evaluate the impact of character education programs on student discipline and academic achievement. The legislation also allows TEA to accept money from federal government and private sources to use in assisting school districts in implementing character education programs that meet the criteria prescribed.

HISDs character education plan, adopted by the Board of Education in March 1989, calls for all schools to implement a K-12 values program with instruction provided weekly and reinforced throughout the school on a daily basis. HISD's Character Education Program is the largest program in the nation and received the first ever national award for large urban school districts, the Character Education Partnership (CEP) National Lighthouse Award, 2004.

### **Rationale**

The latest brain-based research confirms emotional intelligence versus academic intelligence is a better indicator of student success. Character building involves nurturing self-esteem/self-concept, which instills in students the concept that they can learn. This is a critical component in a student's ability to achieve and be successful. Teaching students the value of being honest, self-disciplined, self-reliant, trustworthy and responsible reflects high expectations of behavior and provides a school climate that is safe, supportive, and caring. Addressing issues of building healthy relationships and respecting others provide students an opportunity to learn problem-solving skills and conflict resolution skills.

### **Purpose and Scope**

To be effective, instruction in character education is consistently implemented and appropriate to the developmental level of the students. At the elementary level, students are introduced to different concepts of personal and social responsibility each month. The program focuses on active involvement and demonstration of these concepts so that children learn that these concepts are essential to academic success, as well as lifelong success. The next level of the character education program includes the involvement in school and community projects and work with role models from the community.

This program enlists the support of the entire community. Parents must be informed and encouraged to support their children's involvement and be reassured that the program focuses on character traits and civic values, not on religious concepts. The program is multi-faceted in response to the diverse needs of the learning community. The components of HISD's Character Education program include the following trainings and workshops.

- ◆ A three-hour workshop designed to demonstrate the concepts of character education and the implementation process. Participants are provided an opportunity to experience and internalize strategies and techniques applicable to the classroom and the learning community.
- ◆ A three-hour workshop where content specialists guide teachers through the process of learning how to utilize a six-step process to infuse their curriculum with the nine core values.
- ◆ 40 Developmental Assets training, a three-hour highly interactive workshop designed to support teachers in creating supportive classroom conditions that help young people thrive.

- ◆ Campus Climate Transformation, a three-hour workshop where participants learn tools specifically focused on teaching students the value of being honest, self disciplined, self-reliant, trustworthy and responsible. This reflects high expectations of behavior and provides a school climate that is safe, supportive, and caring. Teachers develop an action plan designed to transform their campus.
- ◆ Project Reconnect Program facilitates the extension of character development from school to the home and the community through training, activities and resource centers for parents.
- ◆ The awarding of grants to Middle Schools that attend the No Place for Hate Summit, sponsored by the Anti-Defamation League, facilitates the ability of students to plan activities for their school to address prejudice. The Character Education Department offers a \$100 scholarship to schools that develop and implement activities that involve the entire student body.
- ◆ A website that presents a description of the value of the month, helps integrate each core value with the district’s philosophy of education, and communicates successful applications of character education employed within HISD. The website offers reading recommendations for administrators, teachers, and parents.

**DISTRICTWIDE ADPOTED VALUES**

<b>September</b>	<b>Self-Esteem</b>
<b>October</b>	<b>Honesty</b>
<b>November</b>	<b>Respect</b>
<b>December</b>	<b>Trust</b>
<b>January</b>	<b>Loyalty</b>
<b>February</b>	<b>Justice</b>
<b>March</b>	<b>Commitment</b>
<b>April</b>	<b>Self-Discipline</b>
<b>May</b>	<b>Self-Reliance</b>

**Resources**

- Trainings and Workshops
- Model Character Infused Lessons
- Random Acts of Kindness Program
- Rachel’s Challenge – Student Leadership Summit (Fall and Spring)
- Adults Relating to Kids
- Kids at Hope
- Best Friends
- Best Men

## TUTORIALS

- School districts are no longer required to provide tutorial services to students.
- Individual schools may develop tutorial programs that target students *scoring below 70 or in jeopardy of scoring below 70 in a course or subject.*
- Transportation will not be provided for students attending special tutorial sessions.
- No district funds will be available for tutorials. Individual campus funds may be used to provide these programs.
- In accordance with the state's Accelerated Reading Instruction Program, school districts may develop after-school reading intervention tutorial programs for students in grades 1 and 2 who are at risk for reading failure as determined by the Texas Primary Reading Inventory and Tejas LEE early reading assessments.
- Federal funds are provided to schools in order for them to offer tutorials for students with disabilities who need such assistance to prevent failure in reading and/or mathematics and to assist the student to prepare for the state assessments – TAKS or SDAA II.