

# HOUSTON ISD

## 83rd LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS

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### **ACCOUNTABILITY & ASSESSMENT**

**Streamline graduation requirements for students.** HISD supports a strong student assessment program as well as maintaining accountability for students, schools, and districts. However, such testing requirements should be reasonable while maintaining accountability.

HISD supports:

- Eliminating any forced grade impact requirements with the STAAR End-of-Course (EOC) tests as well as the requirement that students meet additional, cumulative scores.
- An assessment system that decreases the frequency of tests for high performing students by expanding the means by which students may satisfy graduation requirements through use of alternate measures (e.g. SAT, ACT, AP, IB). Additionally, HISD supports allowing school districts to receive credit in the state accountability system for students who demonstrate proficiency on these alternate measures.

**Provide flexibility in the 4X4.** HISD supports a rigorous academic program. However, flexibility should be incorporated into the current 4X4 to allow additional classes of equal rigor to satisfy the 4X4 requirements.

HISD supports:

- Increasing flexibility in state graduation requirements that allow students to satisfy graduation requirements through additional courses beyond those in the current 4X4 statutory scheme.

### **GOVERNANCE & LOCAL CONTROL**

**Support preserving the local control and flexibility of school districts by duly-elected school boards.** Local board of trustees are elected and held accountable by their constituents. As such, the state should afford school boards the flexibility in regards to their programs and operations to innovate and create educational environments that best meet the needs of their students.

HISD supports:

- Removing statutory language that the first day of school cannot be any earlier than the fourth Tuesday in August. In the alternative, HISD also supports allowing school districts to apply for a waiver on school start dates if the school district's elected board so determines it is in the best interests of the students.
- The freedom to meet the needs of its students by collaborating with community colleges for dual credit programs that are in the best interests of the students.

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### FINANCE

**Ensure programs aimed at supporting student success are adequately funded.** The 2011 legislative session saw significant cuts to programs that help ensure student success. Such cuts should be restored at a minimum to their 2010-2011 levels.

HISD supports:

- Providing funding for full-day pre-kindergarten through the states formula funding; in the alternative, restoration of the grant program.
- The restoration of funds for the District Awards for Teacher Excellence grant and the Student Success Initiative.
- Establishing funding on a pro-rata basis for students attending flexible schools hours instead of the current system of contact hours.