

ReCONNECT

2014
2015

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S NEW AND WHAT'S NECESSARY IN HISD THIS YEAR



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HISD RECONNECT

is available online in English,
Spanish, Arabic, and Vietnamese at
www.HoustonISD.org/ReCONNECT

WELCOME | BIENVENIDO | MARHABAN | CHÀO MỪNG

TIME TO RECONNECT

Whether you're a longtime HISD family or newcomers, there's plenty to learn about before the school year begins. This is where you'll find a quick look at what's new for the 2014 – 2015 school year, as well as important basic information to guide you.

HISD's digital transformation is our cover story. Technology is not only changing teaching and learning but how we keep in touch with you. You'll also discover information about new directions for learning and changing requirements for the coming year.

Whenever possible, we've included websites and email addresses for you to learn more about the programs, initiatives, rules, and standards you'll find outlined in this publication. We hope you'll keep it on hand throughout the school year for easy reference.



FOR STUDENTS, FAMILIES, STAFF, A YEAR OF INNOVATION AWAITS



This publication merely used to list a lot of information about enrollment, buses, lunches, and attendance. It still does, because all that is important to your individual life and a successful school community.

But there's so much new to HISD this year — state-of-the-art methods to stay connected, exciting new technology in the classroom, and innovative ways to learn and to plan for your future. You'll find that here, too.

As never before, the 2014 – 2015 school year is all about personalizing learning and nurturing each student's talents and dreams. HISD is one of the nation's largest school systems, but every young person, family, and employee counts. Our successes are shared, and our challenges are met together.

To new families, welcome to HISD; to returning families, welcome back!

Terry B. Grier, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

THEY'RE ELECTED TO REPRESENT YOU

The nine trustees of the Board of Education are elected to staggered four-year terms by geographic district to represent their own constituents and to serve the community as a whole in making policy and overseeing management of HISD.

Regular meetings are scheduled for 5 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month in the Board Auditorium at 4400 W. 18th St. (subject to change), and hearings, workshops, and special sessions are conducted as needed.

All agendas are posted in advance online, as well as rules and sign-up information for public appearances before the board. Live streaming and recorded coverage is available at www.HoustonISD.org.



BOARD SERVICES

713-556-6121

BoardServices@HoustonISD.org

Juliet K. Stipeche

District VIII, President

jstipech@HoustonISD.org

Rhonda Skillern-Jones

District II, First Vice President

rskille2@HoustonISD.org

Manuel Rodriguez Jr.

District III, Second Vice President

mrodrigu@HoustonISD.org

Anna Eastman

District I, Secretary

aeastman@HoustonISD.org

Wanda Adams

District IX, Assistant Secretary

wadams2@HoustonISD.org

Paula Harris

District IV

pharris3@HoustonISD.org

Michael L. Lunceford

District V

mluncefo@HoustonISD.org

Greg Meyers

District VI

gmeyers@HoustonISD.org

Harvin C. Moore

District VII

hmoore1@HoustonISD.org

Visit www.HoustonISD.org/Board for trustees' biographies, lists of schools, general information, board policy, the board monitoring system, and videos

TEXT MESSAGING IS COMING TO HISD! HERE'S HOW TO RECEIVE IMPORTANT NEWS ON YOUR CELL PHONE

In an effort to improve safety and communication across the district, HISD will launch a text messaging service this coming school year as a way to quickly and efficiently provide accurate information to families about campus emergencies, inclement weather, and important district events.

Text messages won't replace the district's existing, primary means of communication — phone calls, letters, and web updates. Rather, they will serve as an additional tool to help keep parents, students, and staff informed about emergency situations. The text messaging service will formally launch in early September.

"People pay attention to texts more than callouts," Milby High School Principal Roy de la Garza said.

Bellaire High School Principal Michael McDonough agreed. "I am definitely in favor of adding text messages as a way to alert parents and students about emergency situations," McDonough said. "We definitely need this tool."

Before the program launches this fall, parents and students will have the opportunity to voluntarily "opt-in" to the text messaging service by texting **"YES" to 68453**. Parents and students who want to receive HISD text messages must make sure their cell phone numbers are registered with their school office and listed in the district's School Information System.

Those who don't voluntarily opt-in but have a cell phone number registered with the district will have a second chance to sign up in

September, when the service formally launches with an invitation sent via text message.

Please note that although HISD doesn't charge for this service, recipients may incur text message charges through their cell phone provider. More information outlining the process for signing up for this service will be sent home with students at the beginning of the year and posted on our district and campus websites.



COMING SOON TO YOUR FAVORITE DEVICE: BUS, FOOD, MOBILE APPS

The 2014 – 2015 academic year will deliver even more exciting options to HISD families who want to stay connected with the school district.

For the 30,000 students who ride the bus, HISD's Transportation Department will launch a new app to help parents track their child's bus. The goal is to make it easier to pinpoint the location of the bus and whether it's on schedule.

Food Services will offer a new app for viewing menus and nutrition information. Menus will be easy to read on

smartphones, and a taste-testing feature will give students the opportunity to give a rating to their food.

HISD will bundle these new features into a districtwide mobile app, slated for release later this year.

We know families want timely, accurate information delivered via mobile devices, and we're committed to ensuring that our most popular features are easy to access, whether from a desktop, tablet, or phone.

STAY INFORMED: SIGN UP FOR ENEWS!

One of the best ways to stay abreast of the latest developments in HISD is to sign up for our weekly eNewsletter, which is sent to a recipient's mailbox each Friday (Thursday, during summer). eNews highlights important information and interesting stories

from around the district, and contains a helpful Parent Planner chock-full of crucial dates and a list of free (or cheap) and fun activities for students to enjoy with their families.

To receive eNews weekly, go to www.HoustonISD.org/Subscribe.

ONLINE AND IN TOUCH

HISD WEBSITE | www.HoustonISD.org

Updated daily with news, features, photos and galleries, and videos that keep you current on what's happening at the district, with the Board of Education, and on campuses. Stay in touch with trustees meetings with our live streaming video at 5 p.m. on the second Thursday of every month (schedule may vary).

FACEBOOK | www.facebook.com/HoustonISD

"Like" us to receive news briefs, photo galleries, and campus reports — plus the chance to share information, comment, ask questions, and interact with HISD.

TWITTER | www.twitter.com/HoustonISD

Fast news and information plus photos and links to media coverage of HISD and other timely local information. Include our handle **@HoustonISD** for us to see your tweet, or use the hashtags **#HISD** or **#GreatAllOver**.

VIMEO CHANNEL | www.vimeo.com/HISD

YOUTUBE CHANNEL | www.youtube.com/user/TheHISD

See all the latest videos from HISD's award-winning team of producers and videographers who cover special events, find creative ways of explaining complex programs, and chronicle what's happening on campuses.

POWERING UP IN 2014 - 2015: OUR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION CONTINUES

HISD is transforming teaching and learning through PowerUp, our comprehensive K-12 initiative that is closing the digital divide in education with computer hardware, software, infrastructure, parent workshops, and teacher training.

In 2014 - 2015, there will be two major advances in HISD's PowerUp creation of 21st century classrooms:

- Twenty-one more HISD high schools will be added to the 1-to-1 laptop initiative that enables anytime-anywhere learning in the classroom and at home. Last year alone, 18,000 computers were distributed in 11 pilot schools, and teachers began the personalized, collaborative learning that PowerUp promises to bring eventually to every HISD campus.
- The first 48 campuses will pilot the HUB, HISD's new K-12 digital learning platform. The HUB is exactly what its name implies: the center for curriculum, communication, collaboration, and personalization for HISD's staff, students, and parents. Starting this year, teachers and students in the pilot schools will be able to log in to the HUB from any device with Internet connectivity to access educational information, resources, and tools. In 2015, a parent portal will be rolled out, and in the 2015 - 2016 school year, all HISD campuses and families will be connected to the HUB.

SOCIAL MEDIA, SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

For cybersafety tools for students and parents, including resources, videos, and constantly updated news about dangerous practices and sites, go to www.HoustonISD.org/CyberSafety.

Along with the magic of digital transformation can come high-tech versions of social problems that have existed for generations — things like youthful indiscretions and bullying. When done in cyberspace, though, bad behavior can have broad effects and longterm impact on young people.



WHEN WILL YOUR SCHOOL BE GETTING THIS NEW TECHNOLOGY?

See the schedule at www.HoustonISD.org/PowerUp.

That's why an important part of PowerUp is arming students, parents, and educators with digital citizenship tools. HISD provides training for both parents and students, along with a Digital Citizenship Pledge, as part of PowerUp orientation, but the cyberworld changes rapidly. For the latest information and constantly updated parent resources to keep youngsters safe online, bookmark the CyberSafety section of our PowerUp website.

Learn about PowerUp and find documents for participating schools at www.HoustonISD.org/PowerUp.

RE-IMAGINING LEARNING: WHAT'S CHANGING IN THE CLASSROOM

HOW HIGH SCHOOL HAS CHANGED

Starting with this year's ninth-graders, state legislation known as House Bill 5 is requiring high school students and their parents to chart a pathway to graduation that combines academic rigor with options that will lead to higher education or training and a rewarding career. HISD has mandated a 26-credit Distinguished Level of Achievement graduation plan that includes Algebra II, and students will also choose from five Endorsements — learning and career focuses that interest them — and extra achievements, known as Performance Acknowledgments, to help personalize their learning.

LINKED LEARNING

HISD's Linked Learning approach, which will launch at eight pilot schools (and their feeder patterns) in 2014 – 2015, connects academics to real-world experience. From the elementary

through high school levels, academic rigor will be combined with career awareness and investigation that has been proven to improve student engagement, reduce dropout rates and increase graduation rates, and raise student achievement. A \$30 million federal Race to the Top grant, awarded in December 2013, is helping to fund this blended-learning program in these schools and their feeder campuses: Chavez HS, Furr HS, Lee HS, Milby HS, Reagan HS, Sterling HS, Westside HS, and at the Eastwood Academy.

GLOBAL SKILLS

Dual-language programs offer students instruction in two languages in all content areas so they will become strong readers and speakers, armed with an important skill that helps in a shrinking world. HISD will be adding 14 more elementary dual-language programs in the 2014 – 2015 school year, bringing the total to 32.

SCHOOL CHOICES ARE PLENTIFUL — AND EXPANDING

HISD's open enrollment policies combined with a robust portfolio of school choices are among its biggest lures — more than 50,000 magnet school applications were received last year alone, when a new online process was launched. The district offers pre-K-12th-grade programs including strong neighborhood, magnet, and specialty school choices that are constantly expanding to keep up with academic and Houston workforce demands. Families may choose from such options as Montessori, fine arts; science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM); Vanguard gifted and talented, career and technical education, career academies, International Baccalaureate, single-sex college preparatory academies, early childhood programs, early college high schools, virtual instruction, and more.

MAGNET AWARENESS WEEK

One week each November, HISD magnet schools open their doors for tours and information sessions in preparation for the

application deadline. Visit www.HoustonISD.org/SchoolChoice and click on the Magnet Calendar under Magnet Programs to learn when the week is scheduled and other important magnet dates.

For more on the changes to high school, go to www.HoustonISD.org/PlanYourPath

Information about Linked Learning is available at www.HoustonISD.org/Page/LinkedLearning

To learn about HISD magnet schools, visit www.HoustonISD.org/Magnet

To find details about dual-language programs in HISD, go to www.HoustonISD.org/Page/DualLanguage

The wide range of HISD School Choices can be found at www.HoustonISD.org/ChooseHISD

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

The Houston Independent School District is undergoing a historic transformation to rebuild its facilities so that students and teachers will have schools equipped for 21st century learning. The district is moving forward with the largest voter-approved bond program in Texas history to renovate, build, or replace 40 schools and is putting the finishing touches on a massive 2007 bond program that included more than 180 expansion and renovation projects.

The \$1.89 billion program approved in November 2012 will rebuild or renovate 29 high schools — many of which are more than 50 years old. That program is also providing for major safety and technology upgrades and renovations of middle school

restrooms throughout the district, and a new \$35.2 million fieldhouse at the Delmar-Tusa Athletic Complex.

These new projects promote environmental sustainability. Transparency and accountability are ensured through a nine-member Bond Oversight Committee. Community buy-in comes through the 21st Century Schools Advisory Committee of architects, engineers, futurists, and other experts, and through PATs — Project Advisory Teams — that are helping design new schools to meet the needs of students, staff, and their own unique communities.

Go to www.HoustonISD.org/Bond to find information about HISD's bond programs, designs for new schools, videos, a news blog, and the latest bond newsletter.

ENROLLING AND GETTING STARTED

WHERE AND WHEN TO ENROLL

Each school in HISD handles its own registration and enrollment. To find out the enrollment schedule for a specific school, call that campus.

HOW TO ENROLL AND WHAT PAPERWORK IS REQUIRED

Texas law requires that a child must be enrolled by the parent or guardian or another person with legal control of the child under a court order. It also requires the district to record the name, address, and date of birth of the person enrolling the student. To register and enroll your child in the school that he or she is zoned to attend, bring to the school:

- The child's birth certificate or other proof of age and identity
- Proof of your identity and residential address (driver's license and utility bill)
- A record of your child's current immunizations signed by a doctor. (For details about necessary inoculations and clinic locations, visit www.HoustonISD.org/HealthServices or call 713-556-7280.)
- Your child's school records from the last school attended

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO ENROLL

Children may attend HISD schools if they live within the boundaries of HISD, are between the ages of 4 and 21, and have not graduated from high school. To be eligible for first grade, a child must be 6 years old by Sept. 1 of the school year. Although state law does not require students to attend kindergarten, it is excellent preparation for first grade. To enter kindergarten, a child must be 5 years old no later than Sept. 1 of that school year.

Students who do not reside within HISD's attendance zone may transfer when space is available. No out-of-district transfers shall be accepted into secondary separate and unique school (SUS) magnet programs or specialty schools on campuses that do not have an attendance zone.

HOW ATTENDANCE ZONES ARE SET UP

Most schools have specifically defined attendance zones that include residential areas that each school serves. HISD assigns each student to a "feeder pattern" composed of a specific elementary, middle, and high school on the basis of his or her home address. To determine which schools serve your residence, use the online "School Zone Search Tool" (www.HoustonISD.org/SearchTool), or call Student Transfers at 713-556-6734 or the HISD Information Center at 713-556-6005. Students are not zoned to specific schools for pre-kindergarten and may attend any school or pre-K center with available space.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

If your child is experiencing difficulties with learning in school, please contact your teacher first to determine what type of assistance is available. If you suspect your child has a disability,

ask that your child be referred to the campus intervention assistance team (IAT), and the teacher will then work with the IAT to find the appropriate supports to match your child's needs. If you request a Section 504 or Special Education evaluation because of a suspected disability, the school should respond within five to 10 days. The IAT will either formally refer your child for an evaluation or formally inform you of a decision not to evaluate and why. You are a part of this process, and any decision about a Section 504 or Special Education evaluation will be made with your participation. An evaluation cannot take place without your written consent. If your child is identified as a child with a disability, an Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) or Section 504 committee will convene to review the evaluation results and discuss possible services.

HAVING THE CORRECT SUPPLIES

Although many schools have similar requirements for what children should bring to class at the start of the school year, parents should contact their child's school directly to obtain a list of required supplies before making their purchases. Supply lists for grades 7 through 12 may vary from school to school, as the course of study in secondary classes is more specialized. Teachers will distribute school supply lists for specific secondary level classes as needed.

WHAT TO WEAR

Dress codes and school uniform requirements are determined at the school level. A uniform list is available online at www.HoustonISD.org/Uniforms. Contact your child's school for details.

CONDUCT COUNTS

HISD developed the *Code of Student Conduct* to inform all students and parents of the district's expectations regarding behavior and conduct. The Code is reviewed and approved by the HISD Board of Education. All students and parents receive copies of the Code of Student Conduct, which describes disciplinary offenses and how the school district handles them. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children adhere to the rules and conventions of proper behavior while at school. HISD has an official policy of "zero tolerance" for student behavior that could disrupt instruction or pose safety hazards on HISD property and at school-related events. Such behavior includes the possession of weapons, drugs, or alcohol.

Go to www.HoustonISD.org/CodeofConduct for an online copy of the Code of Student Conduct.

SCHOOL HOURS AND EARLY DISMISSAL

All HISD schools are in session Monday through Friday, and every school is required to have a seven-hour, 15-minute instructional day. However, specific schedules vary at different campuses, so contact your child's school to find out its starting and ending times. Throughout the year, there are several days when schools dismiss students early to allow time for instructional planning, professional development, and parental

(Continues on the next page.)

ENROLLING AND GETTING STARTED (Continued from the previous page.)

involvement activities. HISD has assigned five Wednesdays as early dismissal days: Sept. 24, Oct. 29, Nov. 19, 2014; and Jan. 28 and Feb. 25, 2015.

RELEASING STUDENTS DURING SCHOOL HOURS

A student may be released during school hours only to the person who signed the student's enrollment form or who has legal custody of the student, or to a person who has the parent's written permission to have the student released. That person must first present identification at the school office.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ATTENDANCE

It is now state law — as well as each parent's duty — to require his or her school-age children at every level to attend school, monitor each child's attendance, and request a conference with school officials to discuss any attendance concerns. Principals may excuse absences for personal illness, death in the family, or other legitimate reasons. A student must attend at least 90 percent of the days the course meets during the school year in order to receive credit. If too much class is missed, an "NG" is entered instead of a grade, and parents must contact the school to see what corrective steps might be taken. If a student is absent from school without parental consent for any portion of the school day for three days in a four-week period or for 10 or more days in a six-month period, the student and the student's parent or legal guardian are subject to prosecution by the Harris County Justice of the Peace Courts or Municipal Courts. The student may also be referred to a juvenile court.



ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY MAKING PARENTS PARTNERS IN CHILDREN'S SUCCESS

The **Family and Community Engagement (FACE)** department is dedicated to establishing meaningful partnerships among families, communities, and schools by helping educators empower parents as their teaching partners and as advocates for all children.

Important new initiatives include reinvention of the parent-teacher conference at a growing number of campuses. The program, known as **Academic Parent-Teacher Teams (APTT)**, brings in groups of parents to meet with their children's teachers three times a year. Instead of merely walking out with a report card, these parents learn where their youngster stands in relation to the rest of the class, and they take with them valuable tools to help support in the home what's being taught in the classroom. Everyone wins. Teachers gain instruction partners with APTT, parents understand what their child needs to learn and how to support that learning, and students receive instructional support both in school and at home. To see a list of participating schools, go to www.HoustonISD.org/APTT.

Home Instruction for the Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPIY) empowers parents to be their preschool children's first teachers in the home by giving them the tools needed to prepare their youngsters for academic success with a strong foundation. The 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds are given support by their trained parents in literacy and important concepts.

WHEN ASSISTANCE IS REQUIRED

To reach the Parent & Community Assistance Office, visit district headquarters at 4400 W. 18th St. 77092, call **713-556-7121**, or email ParentAssistance@HoustonISD.org. You can learn more about the office, including advice on addressing a concern at your child's campus, and locate your campus liaison at www.HoustonISD.org/ParentAssistance.

If you need help with addressing concerns, issues, and conflicts, the Parent and Community Assistance Office is responsible for providing parents and community members with assistance. Parent liaisons are available to listen to you and trained to help to address and resolve your concern through the proper district policies, procedures, and personnel. The ultimate goal is to foster a strong partnership between home and school.

BOOKMARK YOUR SCHOOL'S WEBSITE

HISD schools are connecting directly with their communities through the use of campus websites utilizing Schoolwires. These websites are maintained by campus personnel who can manage school staff and athletic directories, calendars, newsblogs, photo galleries, podcasts, and more. These websites are also used by the district to communicate information about critical deadlines, inclement weather, or emergency situations.

For more on Family and Community Engagement programs visit www.HoustonISD.org/FACE.

FOOD, TRANSPORTATION, AND SAFETY

THREE MEALS AND SNACKS

For online Food Services, including applying for school meal benefits, managing your child's cafeteria account, menus, nutritional information, healthy recipes, and the latest news, go to www.HoustonISD.org/HISDFoodServices.

HISD provides nutritious, well-balanced breakfasts, lunches, dinners, and snacks to help students perform better in all areas of their lives. About 270,000 meals are served each day, providing necessary nutrients, whole grains, low-fat proteins, and fresh fruit and vegetables. The HISD Food Service Support Facility provides signature wholesome foods from its bakeshop and hot and cold foods kitchens.

Breakfast is free for all students, and the student lunch is \$2.25. Lunches are available to qualifying students at no cost or at a substantially reduced rate. Applications for free or reduced price meals are available online at www.HoustonISD.org/SchoolMeals and at each school.

HISD's First Class Breakfast program serves all elementary and middle school students a free nutritious, hot, and tasty breakfast every morning. High school students are offered free breakfast daily in the cafeteria before school.

A number of HISD campuses also offer free dinners for youngsters ages 1 – 18. To see if your child's school participates, call HISD Food Services at 713-491-5938.

GETTING AROUND HISD

For information about eligibility for transportation and bus stops, contact your child's school or visit www.HoustonISD.org/HISDTransportation.

HISD assists parents in providing transportation to eligible students. To determine eligibility, a request is made through the student's campus transportation coordinator to the Transportation Services Department. If eligible, the student will be assigned to a designated route and stop location (often situated at an HISD campus). These stop locations are usually within one mile of the student's residence but are no farther away than two miles. The parent or legal guardian of a student who qualifies for bus service is responsible for transportation to the student's assigned bus stop.

If a special-needs student's Individualized Education Program requires transportation services, HISD provides bus service to the closest available program that meets the student's needs. The parent or legal guardian of a student who does not qualify for bus service is responsible for the student's transportation, if needed, to the assigned campus.

With the METRO Q Fare Card, all elementary-school (over the age of 6) through high-school students receive a 50 percent discount on fares — automatically deducted from the card each time it is used — and free transfers. The card provides faster boarding, tracks riders' progress toward earning five free trips for every 50 paid rides, and protects balances if it is ever lost or stolen. For complete details, call METRO at 713-635-4000 or visit www.RideMetro.org.

MEDICAL CARE AT SCHOOL

The school will contact parents or a designated relative or family friend if a student becomes ill or suffers an injury. Be sure to list all emergency telephone numbers on your child's enrollment card.

Prescription medication can be administered at school only when advance written parental and physician permission is on file, and only personnel designated by the principal may administer prescribed medication to a student during the school day. Medication must have the prescription label affixed to the container. For additional information, contact the school principal or school nurse.

STUDENT INSURANCE

By law, public schools are not liable for injuries that students receive while on campus. HISD does, however, make available affordable voluntary accident insurance. Parents can buy 24-hour coverage or coverage only for those hours when their child is at school. Enrollment information is available from Texas Kids First; call 1-800-388-5620 or visit www.TexasKidsFirst.com.

For information about health insurance for uninsured children sponsored by the state of Texas, call 1-800-647-6558 or visit www.TexCarePartnership.com.

HISD POLICE DEPARTMENT: KEEPING EVERYONE SAFE

The mission of the Houston Independent School District Police Department is to ensure an environment where students feel safe to learn, employees feel safe to work, and the community is confident in the safety of the district.

Under the leadership of Chief of Police Robert Mock, it is the only accredited public school district police department in the nation, recognized by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). HISD PD abides by the highest standards of service and ensures a safe environment for around 210,000 students and more than 25,000 employees — as well as those in the communities served by the district.

HISD PD responds to more than 81,380 calls per year and covers more than 300 square miles in the Houston area.

The department's functions include:

- Patrol
- Community policing
- Crime prevention
- Alcohol/drug awareness
- K-9 Unit
- Crime Stoppers

HISD POLICE DEPARTMENT

3500 Tampa St. 77021
713-842-3715 (8 a.m. – 5 p.m.)
713-892-7777 (24-hour)
Fax: 713-842-3752

TESTING AND PROMOTION STANDARDS

HISD uses a variety of national, state, and local measures to monitor and improve student learning. Information about testing, including descriptions of each assessment, is available through your child's school. STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness) is the current Texas testing program for students in grades 3 through 12, designed to assess progress and to make sure youngsters are on track for graduation, leading to college and careers. Testing dates are available online at www.HoustonISD.org/Calendars.

STAAR GRADES 3 – 5

The STAAR assessments in grades 3 – 5 focus on content taught during the current academic year rather than knowledge and skills learned over multiple years. Third-, fourth-, and fifth-graders are tested in math and reading. In fourth grade, a writing test is added, and in fifth grade, students will take a science test in addition to math and reading. Performance on STAAR tests may be used to determine placement in more rigorous pre-Advanced Placement classes in middle school. Students in grade 5 must pass both the reading and math exams to be promoted to sixth grade.

STAAR GRADES 6 – 8

The STAAR assessments in grades 6 – 8 focus on content taught during the current year rather than knowledge and skills learned over multiple years. Sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-graders are tested in math and reading, with a writing test added in seventh grade, and science and social studies in eighth grade. Students in grade 8 must pass both the reading and math exams to be promoted to ninth grade.

NEW: NO DOUBLE-TESTING IN ADVANCED MIDDLE SCHOOL MATH

Previously, students who took Algebra I in middle school were required to “double-test” and take both the Algebra I EOC and the grade-level STAAR math assessment. Now, the Algebra I EOC will satisfy the requirement for a math test for those middle school students taking Algebra I. Middle school students taking Algebra I WILL NOT be required to take the grade-level STAAR math assessment in addition to the Algebra I EOC.

END-OF-COURSE GRADES 9 – 12

The STAAR EOC (end-of-course) assessments test high school students' mastery of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for a given course and determine college and career readiness. State legislation has reduced the number of EOCs that must be passed for graduation from 15 to five:

- Algebra I
- Biology
- English I (combined reading/writing)
- English II (combined reading/writing)
- U.S. History

PROMOTION STANDARDS

GRADE LEVEL	PROMOTION STANDARDS
1 and 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students must pass High Frequency Word Test — recognizing and reading words that appear very often in written and spoken language. • State requirement of overall yearly average of 70 or above and local requirement of an average of 70 or above in reading, other language arts, mathematics, and science or social studies. • Students must have sufficient attendance*
3, 4, and 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students must pass STAAR (State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness) in reading and math. • State requirement of overall yearly average of 70 or above and local requirement of an average of 70 or above in reading, other language arts, mathematics, and science or social studies. • Students must have sufficient attendance*
6, 7, and 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students must pass STAAR in reading and math. • State requirement of overall yearly average of 70 or above and a local requirement of an average of 70 or above in three of the four core courses: language arts (average of reading and English), mathematics, science, and social studies. • Students must have sufficient attendance*
9 – 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are promoted based on their total accumulated course credits prior to the beginning of the next school year. • Individual course credit is earned through a passing grade of 70 percent or above and sufficient attendance*

* See attendance page 8.

For more on STAAR, including testing policies, frequently asked questions, and sample test questions and answers, go to www.HoustonISD.org/STAAR.

GRADING AND REPORT CARDS

STRATEGIC DIRECTION A COMMUNITY PLAN TO TRANSFORM HISD

HISD's Strategic Direction is a long-term plan designed to dramatically improve student achievement. It was crafted over six months and is based on analysis and conversations with staff, parents, and community members. The Strategic Direction brings all the district's goals into alignment and identifies five core initiatives that will guide improvement efforts for years to come.

- 1 EFFECTIVE TEACHER
IN EVERY CLASSROOM**
- 2 EFFECTIVE PRINCIPAL
IN EVERY SCHOOL**
- 3 RIGOROUS INSTRUCTIONAL
STANDARDS AND SUPPORTS**
- 4 DATA-DRIVEN
ACCOUNTABILITY**
- 5 CULTURE OF TRUST
THROUGH ACTION**



HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Hattie Mae White
Educational Support Center
4400 West 18th Street
Houston, Texas 77092-8501

www.HoustonISD.org
www.facebook.com/HoustonISD
www.twitter.com/HoustonISD

ACADEMIC SUBJECTS

90 – 100 = excellent
80 – 89 = good; above average
75 – 79 = satisfactory; average
70 – 74 = passing; below average
below 70 = unsatisfactory; failing

CONDUCT

E = excellent
S = satisfactory
P = poor; below average
U = unsatisfactory

GRADE CLASSIFICATION

In high school, a student's total credits determine the student's classification—i.e., what grade level or "year" the student is in. Policy concerning classification is described in Board Policy EIE (LOCAL).

CREDITS EARNED

0 – 5.5
6 – 11.5
12 – 17.5
18 or more

CLASSIFICATION (YEAR)

grade 9 (freshman)
grade 10 (sophomore)
grade 11 (junior)
grade 12 (senior)

GRADES AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Under the state's "no pass/no play" law, eligibility for participation in extracurricular activities during the first six weeks of the school year is determined by a student's grades from the final grading cycle of the previous school year or the number of credits earned during the previous school year. After the first six weeks, a student who receives a grade lower than 70 (or the equivalent) in any academic course is ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities during the first three school weeks of the next grading period. During that time the student may continue to practice or rehearse with other students but may not take part in any competition or public performance.

NINE-WEEK GRADING PERIODS *used in elementary schools and certain secondary schools*

First Grading Period	August 25 to October 24
Second Grading Period	October 27 to December 19
Third Grading Period	January 6 to March 13
Fourth Grading Period	March 23 to May 28

Elementary schools (and certain secondary schools) send report cards to parents four times during the year, shortly after the end of each nine-week grading period: October 31, January 9, March 27, and May 28 (elementary and middle schools) and June 2 (high schools).

SIX-WEEK GRADING PERIODS *used in most secondary schools*

First Grading Period	August 25 to October 2
Second Grading Period	October 6 to November 7
Third Grading Period	November 10 to December 19
Fourth Grading Period	January 6 to February 13
Fifth Grading Period	February 16 to April 2
Sixth Grading Period	April 6 to May 28

REPORT CARDS

Most middle schools and high schools (and certain elementary schools) send report cards to parents six times during the school year, shortly after the end of each six-week grading period: October 10, November 14, January 9, February 20, April 10, and May 28 (elementary and middle schools) and June 2 (high schools). Certain middle schools and high schools, however, observe nine-week grading periods; see the schedule for elementary schools above. If a student is not progressing satisfactorily, parents receive a preliminary report at the midpoint of the grading period and at other times as necessary. Parents must sign and return the reports.

2014													
JULY							OCTOBER						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5				1	2	3	4
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
27	28	29	30	31			26	27	28	29	30	31	
AUGUST							NOVEMBER						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
					1	2							1
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
31							30						
SEPTEMBER							DECEMBER						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30					28	29	30	31			

2015													
JANUARY							APRIL						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
				1	2	3			1	2	3	4	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	26	27	28	29	30		
FEBRUARY							MAY						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7						1	2
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
							24	25	26	27	28	29	30
							31						
MARCH							JUNE						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		1	2	3	4	5	6
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
29	30	31					28	29	30				

KEY	HOLIDAYS	SIGNIFICANT DATES
■ Holidays	LABOR DAY September 1, 2014	TEACHERS REPORT TO WORK Aug. 11, 2014
◇ Early Dismissal Days (2½ hours early)	FALL HOLIDAY October 3, 2014	FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL Aug. 25, 2014
○ Teacher Service Days	THANKSGIVING November 26 – 28, 2014	LAST DAY OF FIRST SEMESTER Dec. 19, 2014
□ Teacher Preparation Days	WINTER BREAK Dec. 22, 2014 – Jan. 2, 2015	FIRST DAY OF SECOND SEMESTER Jan. 6, 2015
△ Make-up Days (if needed)	MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY January 19, 2015	LAST DAY OF SCHOOL May 28, 2015
	SPRING BREAK March 16 – 20, 2015	LAST DAY FOR TEACHERS May 29, 2015
	SPRING HOLIDAY April 3, 2015	
	MEMORIAL DAY May 25, 2015	

USEFUL NUMBERS

HISD POLICE DEPARTMENT 713-892-7777 EMERGENCIES 911 NON-EMERGENCIES 713-842-3715

Main Number 713-556-6000	Curriculum 713-556-6823	Multilingual Programs 713-556-6961	Superintendent's Office 713-556-6300
Advanced Academics 713-556-6954	Dropout Prevention 713-556-7017	Office of School Choice 713-556-6734	Tax Office (Harris County) 713-368-2000
Athletics 713-556-6913	Early Childhood (Pre-K) 713-556-6882	Parent Assistance Center 713-556-7121	Tip Line 713-641-7446
Attendance Boundaries 713-556-6734	Federal and State Compliance 713-556-6731	Family and Community Engagement 713-556-7290	Transcripts 713-556-6744
Board of Education 713-556-6121	Food Services 713-491-5700	School Support Services 713-556-7257	Transfers 713-556-6742
Buses (Transportation) 713-613-3040	Health and Medical Services 713-556-7280	Special Education 713-556-7025	Volunteers (VIPS) 713-556-7206
Career and Technical Education 713-556-6981	Information Center 713-556-6005	Strategic Partnerships 713-556-7200	
Closing of Schools/Weather Hotline 713-267-1704	Library Services 713-695-5652	Student Assessment 713-349-7460	
Counseling and Guidance 713-556-7387	Magnet Programs 713-556-6947	Summer School 713-556-6928	

TIP LINE

When students or parents see or hear about wrongful school-related activity — theft, vandalism, threats, etc. — they should call the anonymous and confidential Tipline at **713-641-7446** and report their concerns.

EMERGENCIES

Report emergencies that require immediate police assistance to **911**. School-related non-emergencies can be reported to the HISD Police Department by calling **713-842-3715**.

CLOSING OF SCHOOLS

The district may close schools due to inclement weather or emergencies. HISD announces closings through the following outlets:

HISD website: www.HoustonISD.org

Facebook: [Facebook.com/HoustonISD](https://www.facebook.com/HoustonISD) and [Facebook.com/HISDEspanol](https://www.facebook.com/HISDEspanol)

Twitter: [Twitter.com/HoustonISD](https://twitter.com/HoustonISD) and [Twitter.com/HISDEspanol](https://twitter.com/HISDEspanol)

School Messenger system and HISD Weather Hotline:
713-267-1704

Local radio and television stations