



## HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Hattie Mae White Educational Support Center

4400 West 18th Street • Houston, Texas 77092-8501

**Richard A. Carranza**  
*Superintendent of Schools*

[www.HoustonISD.org](http://www.HoustonISD.org)  
[www.twitter.com/HoustonISD](https://twitter.com/HoustonISD)

Dear HISD Parent,

At the start of every school year, I would get “butterflies,” whether I was a parent sending my child off to a new grade or a principal in charge of an entire campus. It’s no different as superintendent, but I promise you these are good butterflies – they signal excitement about the great possibilities of what’s ahead.

The 2016-17 school year has begun, and my first act as your new superintendent was visiting HISD campuses across this diverse district on the first day of classes. I met elementary students at a dual-language school who could tell me about their summers and favorite foods while switching easily between English and Spanish. I visited pre-K and middle-school classrooms where teachers know literacy is the key ingredient for success. I saw the challenging pre-college courses high school students are embarking on and the exciting career programs they are involved in, such as maritime studies and communications. And I had lunch with high school students who told me they are eager for more technology and want to address issues like discrimination and educational opportunity across the district.

I was impressed by the staff I met, and intrigued by the issues people voiced about how to equip our students for a global workforce. This is the start of a much larger conversation. I plan on spending the next 90 days meeting the community, asking lots of questions, and listening. I will also listen to your trustees on the Board of Education, who understand the needs of every neighborhood. And I will bring everyone together for a conversation about the positive things in the district and the areas that need attention. I have three key goals:

1. I want to make sure every student in HISD has access to a high-quality education that gives them the opportunity to decide their own path, whether it is a career, college, or the military.
2. I want to address our district’s challenges through an “equity lens,” acknowledging that different communities have different challenges, and it is up to us to target resources in a way that ensures everyone’s unique needs are fulfilled.
3. I want to be transparent and involve communities in how decisions are made.

Our students will be competing globally for careers and college, and we must give them the tools they need to build real-world skills and succeed in a multilingual workforce. I plan on improving not just test scores, but student experience. I also know that many students have something standing in their way – whether they are being bullied, are learning English, or don’t have strong support systems – and it is up to us to address those issues. And I know that everything that goes on in this district – from how students are educated to what they are fed – ultimately falls to me. But I want to involve you, every step of the way.

HISD’s strength is in its diversity, innovation, the dedication of its staff – and you. The district is poised for a positive future, and I am thrilled to be a part of it. Look for further communication from your school, [HoustonISD.org](http://HoustonISD.org), [Twitter.com/HoustonISD](https://twitter.com/HoustonISD), and [Facebook.com/HoustonISD](https://facebook.com/HoustonISD) for information on community meetings and opportunities to make your voice heard. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Richard A. Carranza  
HISD Superintendent