



A Community Plan to Transform HISD

- Parents
- Students
- Community
- Employees
- District

*Working together to
improve student
achievement.*

HOUSTON
INDEPENDENT
SCHOOL DISTRICT

AUGUST 2010



Strategic *Direction*

OVERVIEW

A Community Plan to Transform HISD




Overview of Our Strategic Direction

On September 12, 1962, in a speech at Rice University here in Houston, President John F. Kennedy announced one of the most ambitious projects in human history—a journey to the moon. It is therefore appropriate, in this city with a tradition of making the seemingly impossible a reality, that the Houston Independent School District launches its own ambitious goal: to become the first school district in the nation to close the achievement gap.

The need for action is clear and compelling. Despite our adoption of some of the most innovative approaches in the country, our students are not consistently achieving at a level required to succeed in the 21st century. One measure of this shortfall is that, among our first-time ninth graders, only an estimated 15 percent will go on to earn a postsecondary certificate or degree. That number is far lower for our Hispanic and African American students, and for our poor, special education, and male students.

The Board of Education, in its *Declaration of Beliefs and Visions*, has articulated a set of beliefs that will help ensure that every student, regardless of culture, ethnicity, language, or economic status, has both equal opportunity and equal access to high-quality education evidenced through results of growth and accountability ratings. Those beliefs are:

- The overall student-achievement level must be improved so that after each school year, every student makes, at a minimum, one year of academic progress.
- There can be no achievement gap between socioeconomic groups and/or children of ethnic diversity.
- Recruitment and retention of highly effective teachers are the keys to enhancing the quality of education and increasing student achievement.
- The dropout rate is unacceptably high and must be reduced.
- Our schools must be able to earn autonomy.
- The level of meaningful parental engagement must be increased.
- The community has a legitimate voice in reform, and responsiveness to community concerns must be improved.



Over a six-month period in 2010 we worked to develop a plan for transforming the district to align with the board’s vision and meet the needs of HISD’s students and parents and the broader community. The purpose of this Strategic Direction is not to list all of our current activities or past accomplishments. Rather, it is to describe as clearly as possible the major areas of focus for HISD over the next several years. Thousands of people—parents, students, employees, and community members—have participated in the process, recognizing the stake that we all have in the success of the district. With your help, we have identified five core initiatives that will together enable us to transform HISD:

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

The bottom line for the success or failure of this plan will be student achievement. More specifically, our goal is to ensure that all HISD students graduate from high school ready to succeed in the college and career of their choice. If we do that, we will become the best school district in America.

The following page describes the roles everyone—parents, students, the community, employees, and the district—will play as we move forward.

Transforming HISD is a multiyear effort, and it will require our patience and collective vigilance to stay focused on the issues that have the greatest potential to improve the academic performance of our students.

Every member of the community has a stake in the success of this effort, and we cannot achieve real transformation alone. Your support and commitment will help determine whether or not we are able to create the best district in the nation.

– Greg Meyers, HISD Board of Education President

For further information on the strategic plan and other related reports, please visit our website, www.houstonisd.org/strategicdirection.



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Strategic Direction Roles

Below are the roles everyone will play as we move forward.

Houston Independent School District

- Strengthen the system for recruiting, supporting, and developing a high-quality workforce.
- Provide equal access to rigorous instruction and academic programs to all HISD students.
- Provide a safe, secure, and healthy environment in every school.
- Engage parents, community members, and businesses in partnerships that support student achievement.

Parents

- Stay informed about your child's academic progress.
- Work in partnership with school staff to help your child achieve at the highest levels.
- Communicate to your child the importance of being prepared for college and a career.

Students

- Come to school prepared to work hard and aim high every day.
- Respect your peers, teachers, and principal.

Employees

- Work hard to consistently improve your performance.
- Stay informed, engaged, and accessible to all stakeholders.
- Be an advocate of HISD with your family, friends, and community.

Community

- Support HISD by sharing your expertise, providing volunteers, and/or helping to fund initiatives.
- Be an advocate to students about the importance of college and careers.

Be sure to stay informed about district news and initiatives. Please continue to share ideas, questions, and concerns with us and to rally behind the plan to help in its implementation.

Check our website regularly for updates:
www.houstonisd.org/strategicdirection.

We welcome your comments at
strategicdirection@houstonisd.org.



QR CODE

Scan with your "smart phone" to visit the Strategic Direction website.

Did this publication help you understand the HISD Strategic Direction? Was it easy to read? Let us know what you think by going to www.houstonisd.org/feedback or calling 713-556-6005.

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