



# PRESS RELEASE

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HISD Media Relations Department

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## Chase Donates \$2.5 Million to HISD's Apollo 20 Program

*Major contribution will fund nation's most ambitious school turnaround effort*

April 25, 2011 – Chase on Monday announced a \$2.5 million donation to the HISD Foundation in support of the pioneering Apollo 20 school turnaround program.

The gift is the single largest contribution to the three-year effort undertaken by the HISD Board of Education and Superintendent Terry Grier to transform schools that have a history of failing to help all students achieve at the highest levels. Total contributions to the HISD Foundation in support of Apollo 20 now stand at nearly \$5 million.

Monday's announcement was made at HISD's Key Middle School, one of the first nine campuses included in the Apollo 20 program this school year.

"Improving the quality of our local schools has huge implications for Houston's future," said Gina Luna, Chairman of J.P. Morgan Chase in Houston. "J.P. Morgan and Chase believe the cities and states that do the best job of educating all of our children will lead this nation in economic growth and quality of life."

Paula Harris, president of the HISD Board of Education, said the gift helps ensure that some of Houston's neediest students will continue to have access to the research-based educational practices that Apollo 20 schools offer.

"This generous donation from Chase represents a smart investment in Houston's future," Harris said. "Thousands of students are now getting the extra help they need to bring college and great careers within their reach."

Apollo 20 began with five middle schools (Key, Dowling, Attucks, Ryan, and Fondren), and four high schools (Jones, Kashmere, Lee, and Sharpstown) during the 2010-2011 school year. Apollo 20, developed in partnership with renowned economist Dr. Roland Fryer and Harvard EdLabs, relies on concepts that have proven effective in the nation's top-performing charter schools:

- **Human capital** (Effective principal and teachers in every school)
- **More instructional time** (Longer school year and longer school days)
- **Use of data-driven instruction** (Giving teachers and parents complete information about each child's progress)
- **High-dosage tutoring** (In-school math tutoring for all sixth- and ninth-graders; double-dose math or reading instruction based on the subject in which they are most behind for students at other grade levels)
- **Culture of high expectations for all** (All students performing on or above grade level and making plans to attend college)

Apollo 20 will expand into 11 elementary schools for the 2011-2012 school year, employing the same strategies used on the secondary level, except for the longer school year and school day.

Superintendent Terry Grier said Apollo 20 seeks to address the same issues that plague urban schools everywhere.

"The issue of turning around schools is not a Houston phenomenon. It's all over the world and there has not been a turnaround model yet that's proven to work," Grier said. "Unfortunately, we have sat by as these schools sank academically year after year. Turning them around will take time and hard work."

Chase believes in Apollo 20's potential, said Kimberly Davis, President of the JPMorgan Chase Foundation.

"Reforming the nation's public schools is critical to our collective future, and the Apollo 20 initiative is a highly innovative effort to accelerate learning in Houston's lowest performing schools," Davis said. "Chase is excited about the role our support will play in bringing these innovations into more classrooms and putting more Houston schoolchildren on the road to success."

Although the program is still in its earliest stages, there are already signs of cultural transformation at Apollo 20 schools. Attendance rates are up, out-of-school suspensions are down, and 93 percent of graduating seniors at the four Apollo 20 high schools have already been accepted into a 2- or 4-year college or university.

Larry Kellner, chairman of the Greater Houston Partnership's Board of Directors, commended Chase for its commitment to children.

"I want to thank Chase for their strong support of HISD's Apollo 20 school transformation project and encourage other local and national corporations to consider a gift in support of our country's educational future," Kellner said.

James D. Calaway, chairman of the HISD Foundation and the Apollo Fund Oversight Committee, said Chase has set a high standard for business philanthropy.

"On behalf of the HISD Foundation, I want to thank Chase for their leadership and vote of confidence. Their gift in support of Apollo 20 has set a high mark for others in the Houston region and around the nation," Calaway said.

### **About the HISD Foundation:**

The HISD Foundation partners with the district to raise private support, manage funds and provide donor accountability. Funds raised by the HISD Foundation and district leaders provide resources to advance the core initiatives of the district's Strategic Direction. The Foundation's fundraising efforts focus on institutional priorities set by the superintendent of schools and board

of education. A separate 501 (C) (3) nonprofit, the Foundation is managed by a volunteer board of business, community and philanthropic leaders. The Foundation's programming is aligned with the district's five core initiatives: (1) Effective Teacher in Every Classroom; (2) Effective Principal in Every Classroom; (3) Rigorous Instructional Standards & Supports; (4) Data-Driven Accountability; (5) Culture of Trust through Action.

For more information about the HISD Foundation please visit [www.houstonisd.org](http://www.houstonisd.org)

#### **About Chase**

JPMorgan Chase has 207 branches and more than 7,000 employees in the Houston area. The company's philanthropic goal is simple - be the catalyst to meaningful, positive, and sustainable change. In 2010, JPMorgan Chase gave more than \$150 million through grants and sponsorships to thousands of not-for-profit organizations around the world. More information about Chase is available at [www.chase.com](http://www.chase.com).

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The **Houston Independent School District** is the largest school district in Texas and the seventh-largest in the United States with 298 schools and more than 200,000 students. The 301-square-mile district is one of the largest employers in the Houston metropolitan area with nearly 30,000 employees.

**For more information, visit the HISD Web site at [www.houstonisd.org](http://www.houstonisd.org).**

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