



# PRESS RELEASE

HISD Media Relations Department

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## Teacher Appraisal and Development System Wins Initial Approval

*April 14, 2011* – The HISD Board of Education gave initial approval Thursday for a more fair and meaningful appraisal and development system for teachers.

The system makes several major upgrades to the district's current, 20-year-old appraisal system. It ensures that all teachers receive the regular, valuable feedback on their performance that they deserve as professionals, as well as individualized support that helps them serve their students more effectively. It would rate teachers based on multiple measures in three major categories—including student performance—rather than relying on the results of a single classroom observation, as the current system does. At least two different measures of student performance will be factored into each teacher's evaluation.

The proposal is the result of a six-month design process that involved thousands of HISD teachers, school administrators, parents, and community members.

The new appraisal system is the first step in HISD's Effective Teachers Initiative—part of the district's larger Strategic Direction—which aims to put an effective teacher in every classroom by transforming the way the district recruits, develops, and retains its teachers.

Trustees Juliet Stipeche and Carol Mims Galloway voted against the proposal.

The Board is expected to vote on whether to give final approval to the new system on May 12.

### *State Budget Cuts Lead to More Teacher Layoffs*

Putting a quality teacher in every classroom will be especially important as state budget cuts force HISD to lay off teachers. On Thursday, the Board voted to give notice to more teachers that their positions are being eliminated. As a result of Thursday's vote, the number of teacher layoffs now stands at 950. The number of teacher layoffs caused by budget cuts is 729. The number of teacher layoffs that are due to job performance issues is 221.

HISD anticipates a \$171 million shortfall next year and has identified about \$100 million in budget cuts so far. Earlier this month, the Board approved the elimination of 277 Central Office jobs.

### *Rising Food Costs Lead to School Lunch Price Increase*

The Board also approved a proposal to increase the cost of school lunches by 40 cents, to \$2.25. The increase will not affect 80 percent of HISD students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches. The new price is the result of rising food costs and the cost of providing students with healthier menu options, including fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and lower-sodium food.

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).