



PRESS RELEASE

HISD Media Relations Department

www.houstonisd.org/HISDmedia 713-556-6393

HISD and the College Board Roll Out New College Awareness Campaign

Includes First Advertisements on HISD Buses

May 4, 2011 – Today, HISD Superintendent Terry Grier and [College Board Advocacy & Policy Center](#) Vice President Christen Pollock rolled out a new college awareness campaign to promote the value of higher education. As part of the campaign effort, the College Board purchased ads on 50 HISD buses. The educational effort is the first ad campaign to appear on HISD buses. Buses with the ads were on display for the announcement.

HISD Superintendent Terry Grier said, “Our students need to see what the research shows about the difference a college degree will make in their lives. It’s one thing to tell them, but it just carries more weight when you have the data to back that up.”

The Houston Independent School District (HISD) is the first district in the country to partner with the College Board on this awareness campaign, called “[Five Ways Ed Pays](#).” It highlights five personal benefits of achieving a 4-year college degree, including:

- **Better Health** – Individuals ages 25 to 34 with a 4-year college degree are 70% more likely to engage in vigorous exercise than those with only a high school diploma.
- **Closer Family** – Parents with 4-year college degrees are 68% more likely to have attended a concert or live show with their children than parents with only a high school diploma.
- **Greater Wealth** – Individuals with a 4-year college degree earn an average of \$22,000 more per year than those with only a high school diploma.
- **More Security** – Individuals with only a high school diploma are about twice as likely to be unemployed as those with a 4-year college degree.
- **Stronger Community** – Individuals ages 18 to 24 with a 4-year college degree were 75% more likely to vote in the 2008 election than those with only a high school diploma.

The information will be disseminated to nearly 80,000 HISD middle and high school students through ads, posters, and brochures provided by school counselors.

This college awareness campaign is based on *Education Pays 2010*, one in a series of college affordability and financial aid reports issued by the College Board Advocacy & Policy Center to demonstrate the importance and benefits of college readiness, access and completion.

The College Board oversees Advanced Placement (AP) and Pre-AP courses and testing as well as PSAT/NMSQT and SAT testing. HISD high schools are currently required to provide 10 AP courses. That requirement rises to 15 next year. The district is also covering the expense for AP tests, which can result in college credit, and provided HISD juniors with free SAT testing during class time at all high schools for the first time this year. Pre-AP courses are also being expanded in HISD middle schools and the district is the first in the country to offer AP and Pre-AP designations to high schools and middle schools that meet specific criteria.

In the 2009-10 school year, more HISD students than ever attempted college-level AP courses and exams and a record number of students performed well enough to earn college credit. In fact, it was the largest one-year increase in the history of HISD with 46 percent more students taking AP exams. More than 6,000 of those exams were scored high enough to earn college credit – a 27 percent increase over the previous year.

The **College Board Advocacy & Policy Center** was established to help transform education in America. Guided by the College Board's principles of excellence and equity in education, the Center works to ensure that students from all backgrounds have the opportunity to succeed in college and beyond. Critical connections between policy, research and real-world practice are made to develop innovative solutions to the most pressing challenges in education today. Drawing from the experience of the College Board's active membership consisting of education professionals from more than 5,900 institutions, priorities include: College Preparation & Access, College Affordability & Financial Aid, and College Admission & Completion. For more information, visit www.advocacy.collegeboard.org.

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.**
