



PRESS RELEASE

HISD Media Relations Department

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HISD Receives \$2 Million in Grants for “Green” School Buses

January 4, 2011 – The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) and the Railroad Commission of Texas awarded HISD a total of \$2,120,500, to help buy 25 propane-fueled school buses that are environmentally friendly.

The HISD Board will vote on acceptance of the funds during its regular board meeting at **5:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 13, at Hattie Mae White Educational Support Center (4400 West 18th Street, 77092).**

The grants -- \$1.5 million from the TCEQ and \$620,500 from the Railroad Commission - will help fund 70 percent of the costs to purchase 25 propane-fueled school buses, with HISD covering the rest.

“These 25 buses have a dual benefit,” said HISD General Manager of Transportation Nathan Graf. “They are considered ‘green’ in that they produce fewer toxins and other smog-producing emissions than gasoline and diesel engines, and they are a smart budget decision because they also lower fuel and operating costs.”

“The Houston Independent School District was awarded a grant of \$1.5 million through the TCEQ’s Texas Clean Fleet program,” said TCEQ Grant Development Team Leader Stephen R. Murchison. “The purpose of the Texas Clean Fleet Program is to encourage entities that operate large fleets of vehicles in Texas to replace diesel powered vehicles with alternative fuel or hybrid vehicles, in an effort to reduce the amount of nitrogen oxides (NOx) released into the environment.”

“I am pleased to announce that HISD received an early holiday present from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and the Railroad Commission,” said Railroad Commission Chairman Michael L. Williams. “The grants, totaling \$2.1 million, will add 25 propane school buses and propane refueling infrastructure to the HISD fleet. This award will enable HISD to save 50 cents on each gallon of propane thanks to the recently extended federal alternative motor fuel tax credit.”

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, propane-fueled vehicles produce 30 to 90 percent less carbon monoxide and about 50 percent fewer toxins and other smog-producing emissions than gasoline engines. Propane is one of the cleanest-burning fuels that is not toxic and not harmful to the environment.

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.