



# PRESS RELEASE

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## President Obama Recognizes HISD's Commitment to Saving Energy and Money through the Better Buildings Initiative

*HISD one of only two school districts in the country to accept a national target of increasing energy efficiency in commercial buildings by 20 percent*

December 2, 2011 – President Barack Obama today announced commitments from 60 major organizations, including HISD, to upgrade approximately 1.6 billion square feet of commercial and industrial property to increase energy efficiency.

The Houston Independent School District will implement a comprehensive energy efficiency project with an ultimate goal of a 30 percent reduction in energy usage by 2015, including:

- Working with energy service companies to identify ways to cut energy use;
- Capital improvement upgrades;
- Energy retrofits for approximately 24 million square feet;
- Water conservation measures; and
- Behavioral and student-centered conservation activities.

Heading toward FY 2012, the district will be implementing an energy enterprise management system, an expanded and improved single-stream recycling program, an energy performance contracting program, and various other initiatives to continue to improve service delivery to schools, maximize the efficient use of resources and reduce costs.

“We are serious about operational efficiency at Team HISD, including making sure that our schools provide safe, energy-efficient classrooms where our kids can see that their behavior can change their immediate environment,” said HISD Superintendent Terry Grier.

The district will also kick off a new initiative, The Green School Challenge, on Wednesday, December 14 at 10 a.m. at Berry Elementary School. This is a friendly school competition designed to bring awareness, reduce energy consumption, water usage, and to increase single-stream recycling of waste.

“We believe that taking simple steps in the way we operate our schools will result in significant savings for the District; savings that can be used to further improve our schools,” explained Dr. Gavin Dillingham, the district’s energy manager.

In addition, HISD is committed to saving energy and resources through curriculum links, building new facilities to LEED Silver (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards and by investing in energy efficient retrofits products that save both money and energy. Since January, the district has saved 13.5 million kilowatt hours (kWh); enough energy to power 13 elementary schools for an entire summer.

“We are excited to be partnered with the President’s Better Business Initiative as part of a team of leaders and organizations who are committed to making the best use of our resources,” said Leo Bobadilla, HISD’s chief operating officer. “Providing our students with a healthy and safe learning

environment in a cost effective and sustainable manner is a win for our students, teachers and the community.”

For more information, visit <http://www.houstonisd.org/BusinessOperations>.

The **Houston Independent School District** is the largest school district in Texas and the seventh-largest in the United States with 281 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).**