

# REPORT FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Office of Superintendent of Schools  
Board of Education Meeting of December 13, 2012

SUBJECT: **BOARD MONITORING SYSTEM—GOAL 2: IMPROVE HUMAN CAPITAL**

At the February 11, 2010, board meeting, the Board of Education implemented a revised Board Monitoring System in order to efficiently maintain and measure achievement of Houston Independent School District (HISD) goals and adherence to its core values. The monitoring system was designed to give district administrators clear direction on how to meet the board's expectations in these crucial areas.

Board Policy AE(LOCAL) states “[T]he administration shall report to the Board of Education on each goal and core value using the specific method and timing set out below, . . .”

In reference to the district's **Goal 2: Improve Human Capital**, policy states that the district shall, “attract and hire top talent . . . provide every employee ongoing annual feedback . . . and provide quality service and personal attention that meet(s) the needs of our current employees, applicants, and external customers.” Policy further states that, “[t]he administration will report to the Board of Education on the outcomes of the key metrics for recruitment and selection . . . personnel assessment . . . and customer service.”

The attachment provides information regarding the requested report for the 2011-2012 school year.



# HISD Human Resources Board Monitoring Report

November 2012

## Part I: HR Mission, Goals, and Structure

### Our Mission:

HISD’s Human Resources (HR) department exists to advance world-class human resource practices and build a culture of growth across the district to attract, develop, and retain top talent in education. Our goal is to make HISD the employer of choice for those committed to building the future through education.

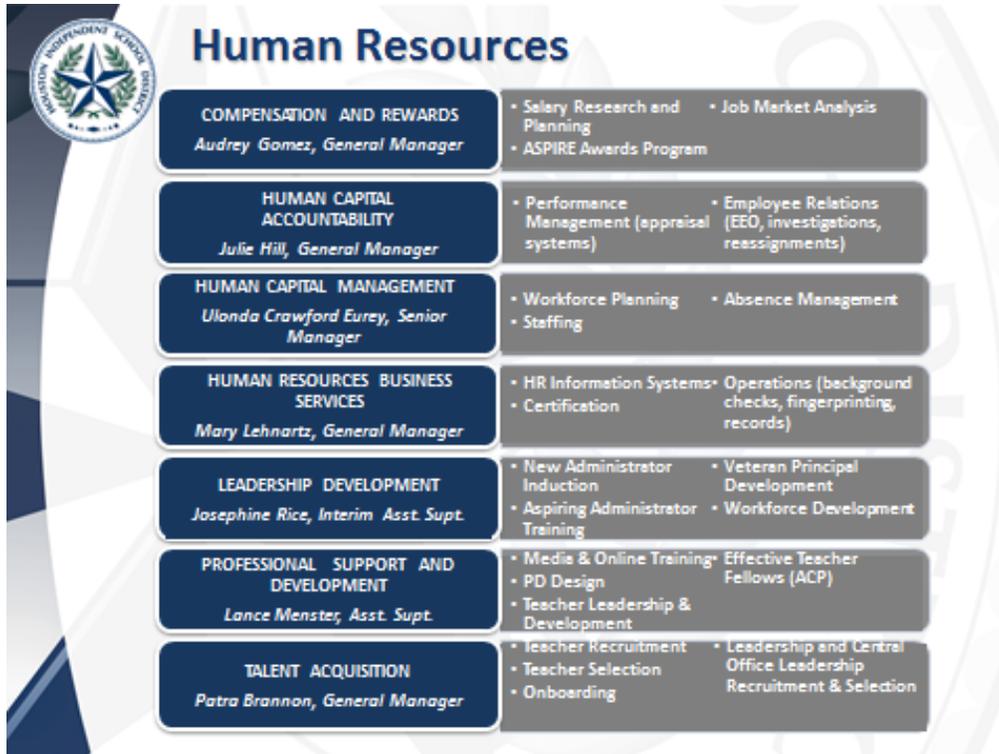
**Figure 1: Human Resources Vision, Mission, and Core Values**



### Our Goals and Structure:

Our most important task as an HR department is to support all campus-based and central office staff in the pursuit of a rigorous, consistent education for every student in a safe school environment. We are committed to offering the tools, resources, and services that allow our schools and our departments to be their most successful. In order to fulfill that commitment, we have recently restructured the department to offer improved, more focused service to the organization from the following teams: Human Resources Business Services, Compensation and Rewards, Human Capital Accountability, Human Capital Management, Leadership Development, Performance Management, Professional Support and Development, and Talent Acquisition. Please refer to **Figure 2** for a list of the HR department leadership and the services that each team provides.

**Figure 2: Human Resources Structure**



The HR leadership team has worked together to define a clear set of goals that each department is directly responsible for during 2012-13. By clearly defining responsibilities and increasing accountability, we can ensure that HR achieves its specific goals in the following three areas:

- improving staff recruitment and selection,
- improving performance through appraisals and increased learning opportunities for our workforce, and
- improving HR services and support.

Specifically, we support schools in four critical ways:

- **Acquiring talent**—helping principals bring the best teachers in the door
- **Accurately evaluating how talent is performing**—helping principals assess performance using clear and rigorous standards
- **Developing and supporting talent**—helping principals maximize talent
- **Ensuring the district keeps its best and exits those not meeting expectations**—helping principals use performance data to make smart staffing decisions.

By giving teachers frequent and targeted feedback on their instruction, keeping our best teachers in the classroom longer, and removing consistently low-performing teachers more quickly, we will reach our ultimate goal: **providing consistent and rigorous instruction for every student, every day.**

## Part II: Progress toward HR Goals

HISD’s Board Monitoring System exists to systemically monitor the district’s goals and core values. As a result, each department reports on each goal and core value on a routine basis. These goals are:

- **Recruitment and Staffing:** to attract and hire top talent through proactive search strategies and rigorous selection criteria for every position,
- **Human Capital Assessment and Retention:** to provide every employee ongoing feedback that creates opportunities for recognizing excellence, developing skills and leadership, and retaining high performing staff in every position, and
- **Customer Service:** to provide quality service to meet the needs of current employees, applicants, and external customers.

*For a full report on each of the key metrics included in the Board Monitoring System, please see Appendix A "Board Monitoring System: Goal 2: Improve Human Capital."*

### **A. Progress Report: Recruitment and Staffing**

**Goal:** Attract and hire top talent through proactive search strategies and rigorous selection criteria for every job position

#### **Context:**

Recruiting and selecting top talent across the entire district lays the groundwork for consistent and rigorous learning in all HISD classrooms. Each hiring decision represents an opportunity for HISD to ensure students are engaged and have the resources to help them succeed; thus, it is crucial to build a pipeline of the highest-potential teachers, leaders, and non-instructional staff into HISD. HR's continued focus is to develop and execute strategic recruitment strategies that bring a greater quantity and quality of candidates to the district. Human Resources also prioritizes continued focus on refining selection processes designed with rigor and efficiency for those positions we centrally screen in order to ensure only the most qualified candidates are selected for positions.

#### **1. Recruitment and Selection: Teachers**

##### **Results from the 2011-12 Hiring Season:**

In past seasons, well over half of HISD's new teacher hires were made in late season July and August. Since early hiring is the single greatest indicator of a teacher's effectiveness, HR set the goal of staffing 75% of teacher vacancies by the end of June 2012 and focused on the strategies below:

- **Hiring candidates early** allowing principals access to the highest quality applicants
- **Creating a stronger pool of quality, diverse candidates** filling vacancies with more effective teachers
- **Using teacher performance data to** inform and refine recruiting, selection, and staffing strategies
- **Staffing the hardest-to-staff and highest need schools** by providing additional strategic support
- **Implementing a talent acquisition stopgap** to manage data and help drive work

Key activities in the 2011-12 hiring season to support these strategies included: staffing events and the early notification program to identify nearly 70% of vacancies before May; the issuance of 250 early contracts to teachers; a total of 77 recruitment visits to career events to Texas and out-of state universities; outreach to over 400 university and career websites across the country; and implementation of a Strategic Staffing Initiative for 26 hard-to-staff schools that included recruitment incentives, on-site staffing support, priority access to top candidates, and a series of training sessions for school-based hiring teams.

As a result of these strategies and activities, HISD succeeded in hiring **more teachers in total** and **more teachers earlier in the 2011-12 hiring season** than in the past three years, significantly exceeding the past three years' hiring volume. However, despite these activities, the district did not meet the overall goal of staffing 100% of schools by the first day of school or the interim goal of hiring 75% of teachers by June, 2012. Instead, 88% of vacancies were fully staffed by the first day of school, and 54% of vacancies were staffed by the end of June. This was primarily due to an overly complex candidate selection and staffing process and long candidate processing times. (It took an average of twelve weeks for new hires to move from application to contract signing).

### **Preparations for 2012-13 Hiring Season:**

HR has made dramatic changes in order to eliminate the obstacles that prevented us from reaching our goals during last year's hiring season. As of November 2012, we already have taken the steps below to ensure that 100% of teacher vacancies are staffed by the first day of school in the 2013-14:

- Executed on a strategic, data-driven recruitment strategy designed to achieve a 2:1 candidate-vacancy ratio
- Utilized recruitment incentives and early notification incentives
- Allowed applicants to apply for 2013-2014 vacancies as early as October 2012
- Launched the HISD Careers website as a one-stop shop for all job-seekers to the district
- Refined the selection model to give principals more selection and staffing power
- Streamlined the selection and staffing process so that candidates can enter the pool in three business days or less and be confirmed for hire in seven business days or less
- Implemented the AppliTrack system to support the streamlined recruitment and selection process
- Refined the Strategic Staffing Initiative for 2012-13

## **2. Recruitment and Selection: Principals**

### **Results from 2011-12 School Year:**

The 2010-11 hiring season was HISD's first venture to strategically recruit leadership from universities and conferences. The subsequent 2011-12 hiring season provided the opportunity to strengthen those recently established communication networks. HR focused on continuing to develop a strong pipeline of school leadership talent while maintaining a selection process designed to increase rigor and ability of candidates placed into the pool. As such, a goal was set to achieve 65 principals in the hiring pool with 25% of those candidates bilingual. Of 455 applicants to principal positions within the district, 85 (19%) were placed in the hiring pool, 33 (39%) were bilingual, and in total 35 (41%) were hired from the pool. Key strategies in the 2011-12 hiring season to support principal hiring goals included:

- attending formal conferences and leadership organizations at the national and state level (BEEMS Conference, ALAS, NABE, TASSP),
- promoting HISD through grassroots recruitment efforts, targeting 15-20 elementary campuses in the Rio Grande Valley,
- partnering with HISD Leadership Development to identify strong candidates from an internal pipeline, and
- partnering with HISD Schools Office Chiefs and School Support Officers (formerly School Improvement Officers) to review candidates' readiness for leadership opportunities and participate in structured leadership interviews.

### **Preparations for 2012-13:**

In order to continue identifying strong, diverse leadership candidates and maintain rigor in the school leadership selection process, HR has planned to take the steps below to ensure that 100% of principal vacancies are staffed by the first day of school.

- More strategically align leadership recruitment strategies to focus on high yield events
- Leverage the HISD Careers website to advertise leadership opportunities within the district
- Continue to establish and cultivate external relationships to identify quality, diverse candidates
- Continue partnering with the Schools Office to provide direct school leadership representation in recruitment and selection efforts
- Continue partnering with HISD Leadership Development to identify our internal leadership succession pipeline to meet recruitment needs

### **3. Recruitment and Staffing: Non-Instructional Staff**

#### **Preparations for 2012-13:**

Recruitment and selection for non-instructional staff, including central office leadership, is handled independently of any centralized recruitment and selection effort. However, HR has recognized the need to bring a more consistent and rigorous strategy to select top talent into central office leadership positions. As a result, HR has moved to a more centralized recruitment and selection effort for central office leadership positions. Key strategies to support this effort include the following:

- leveraging the HISD Careers website to advertise non-instructional opportunities within the district,
- hiring additional staff to focus on advertising and recruitment of central office leadership positions,
- leveraging senior management in the selection process for central office management,
- continuing to establish and cultivate external relationships to identify quality, diverse candidates from multiple disciplines, and
- refining the staffing process to ensure hires are confirmed in ten business days or less.

#### ***B. Progress Report: Human Capital Assessment (Performance Appraisals and Development Opportunities)***

**Goal:** To provide every employee ongoing annual feedback that creates opportunities for recognizing excellence, developing skills and leadership

##### **1. Performance Appraisals and Development Opportunities for Teachers**

#### **Context:**

HISD is committed to the success of each one of its 203,000 students, which means every HISD teacher must receive the individualized feedback and support necessary to set students up for success, and every principal must receive the information he or she needs to make strategic staffing decisions. HISD's new teacher appraisal and development system is an important step toward helping teachers advance their practice and achieving our goal of placing an effective teacher in every HISD classroom. In addition, HISD has embraced an individualized approach to professional development tailored to address the specific professional needs of each teacher.

### **Progress in 2011-12:**

In 2011-12, HISD launched the Instructional Practice and Professional Expectations components of our new teacher appraisal and development system. Over **795** certified and trained appraisers conducted a total of 50,000 total observations in 2011-12, all followed by feedback.

As a result, teachers in HISD:

- received dedicated training on the expectations in the new system,
- created an individualized development plan and regularly discussed their progress with their appraiser,
- received in-person support and coaching from Teacher Development Specialists,
- had at least five face-to-face discussions about their teaching with their appraiser, and
- received formative ratings in the middle of the year and a summative rating at the end of the year.

Appraisal and development data also enabled HISD's Professional Support and Development department to better tailor development resources and trainings for teachers over the course of the year. These included:

- The creation of over 20 **video exemplars** featuring HISD teachers modeling effective teaching and downloadable resources on specific teaching techniques, all directly aligned to the Instructional Practice criteria in the appraisal and development system. The video exemplars and effective practices are accessible on [www.houstonisdpsd.org](http://www.houstonisdpsd.org).
- **Curriculum and Assessment Institutes** co-sponsored by Professional Support & Development and the Curriculum Department, which gave teachers an opportunity to delve into grade-level and content specific strategies for use with the district's new curriculum. PSD also provides ongoing just-in-time curriculum training sessions every grading cycle for core-content area teachers along with online curriculum preview videos for targeted grade levels and content areas.
- **Neuhaus Reading trainings and Region IV-Content Literacy Trainings** designed to ensure that all students district-wide are able to read at or above grade level.
- **Everyday ExcELLEnce trainings** designed to provide elementary and secondary teachers of English language learners with effective teaching strategies.
- **New Teacher Academy** onboarding over 1500 new teachers with training on the HISD Curriculum, appraisal and development system, classroom management strategies, and tools and resources for effective lesson planning to start the year strong.
- **Partnerships with the Baylor College of Medicine and Rice University** to strengthen elementary and secondary teacher content knowledge and instructional practice in the area of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) to bolster student achievement.

### **Results from 2011-12 School Year:**

Initial analysis of appraisal data collected at the end of the first year showed that most teachers were rated as effective. However, while there is a meaningful, positive relationship between Instructional Practice ratings and school level EVAAS (Figures 3 & 4), not all schools are aligning their assessment of classroom practice with student growth. In 2011-12, over 77% of the teachers who received the lowest EVAAS performance level also received an Instructional Practice rating of a 3 or a 4 (the two highest categories; see Figure 3).