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**HISD, UH offer free tuition to students who choose to get degree in education, work in HISD**

*Teach Forward Houston fellows to receive additional professional development and internship opportunities, as well as coaching and mentoring throughout fellowship.*

*Jan. 15, 2016 —* The Houston Independent School District and University of Houston are joining forces to offer a new teacher preparation program that aims to bring HISD’s brightest students back into the classroom upon their college graduation.

Through the Teach Forward Houston fellowship program, HISD graduates interested in obtaining a degree in education are eligible for free tuition at University of Houston in exchange for teaching four years in HISD after graduation.

“Teach Forward Houston will benefit our communities by bringing highly qualified teachers into the classroom,” said [Robert McPherson](http://www.coe.uh.edu/directory/employee-profile/index.php?id=83), dean of the UH College of Education. “The students participating in the program will have the opportunity to study in a Tier One institution, receive the top quality training and ongoing support they need to be successful in the classroom and graduate with little-to-no debt.”

The program is designed to provide higher education access to bright, motivated students who might not be able to afford college otherwise. It also ensures HISD classrooms are staffed with talented, highly effective teachers who know the district and are driven to make a positive impact on its students.

Fellows have the opportunity to earn a degree in teaching and learning, a UH program specifically designed to equip teachers with the skills they need to be successful in large, diverse, urban school districts. They also will receive additional professional development and internship opportunities, as well as coaching and mentoring throughout the fellowship.

“This program is going to have far-reaching effects,” said HISD Superintendent Terry Grier. “Our graduating seniors won’t just have the opportunity to get free college tuition, they’ll have the opportunity to come back and make a difference in the lives of countless children across the district.”

Applications are being accepted now, with up to 100 students expected to attend UH this fall. Interested students should have a good academic record and grade point average, a history of participation in extracurricular activities and service in leadership roles, and a deep desire to give back to their community through education.

All prospective Teach Forward Houston fellows must fulfill admission requirements for University of Houston prior to being accepted into the Teach Forward Houston program. Students also must submit a free application for federal student aid — more commonly referred to as FAFSA — by March 3.

HISD will supplement scholarship and financial aid packages to ensure all tuition is covered for students who are accepted into the university and the program. In return, the students must commit to teaching four years in an HISD elementary or middle school.

Other standard college costs — including housing, food, fees, and books — are not included in tuition. Students will be required to re-pay their tuition assistance for any portion of their teaching commitment that is not fulfilled.

For more information, go to [www.houstonisd.org/teachforwardhouston](http://www.houstonisd.org/teachforwardhouston).

