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**Three Schools Eliminated from HISD Closure,  
Consolidation Proposal**

*Board of Education to vote on new proposals for Jones High School   
and Dodson Elementary School during March 13 Board Meeting*

*March 5, 2014* – The Houston Independent School District Board of Trustees will review proposals to close Jones High School and Dodson Elementary School during the March 13 board meeting. Three of the five schools – Nathaniel  Q. Henderson Elementary School, Port Houston Elementary School, and Fleming Middle School – originally proposed for closure have been removed from consideration by Board President JulietStipeche**.** This authority is provided to the president through board policy.

“I respect our board president’s request to remove these schools from consideration,” HISD Superintendent Terry Grier said. “I also appreciate her input, the input of all trustees, and the community-at-large in this process.”

Grier said that the school closure proposal process has been about dialogue, feedback, and working together as a community to evaluate the potential impact of these changes and to find additional options and ways to make HISD schools stronger and better. “School closure discussions are never easy,” he said.  “We must continue to have constructive conversations on this issue. Not to do so could be harmful to many of our communities and the students that reside in them.”

HISD administrators reviewed feedback from meetings held at each school and discussions with community members to develop revised proposals for Jones High School and Dodson Elementary School. The board will also consider plans to adjust attendance boundaries for Billy Reagan K-8 Educational Center.

“Our proposals for Jones and Dodson show the strength of the process,” Grier said. “We heard the community and used that feedback to develop proposals that we think will mitigate potential negative impacts to the affected school communities.”

While Henderson, Port Houston, and Fleming were removed from consideration, the district will continue to evaluate schools with low enrollment each year, as required by board policy.

“We must continue to evaluate schools with low enrollment each year, critically looking at both areas of town experiencing demographic changes that have resulted in less students in an attendance zone as well as specific schools that are simply not attracting the ample number of students zoned to them.” Grier said.   “This is a serious issue because under-enrolled schools are often not able to support the same types of programming that schools with full enrollment can provide – creating inequities that are unfair to students.

During last week’s board workshop, HISD administration announced that the district will provide transportation for any student affected by school closures and who are outside the standard two-mile radius.

Final recommendations for Jones and Dodson will be presented to trustees for vote at the March 13 board meeting. If three Board members request an item be reinstated, it will be added back to the agenda for consideration.

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