**South Early College HS selected as state STEM academy by TEA**

*June 2, 2016* –South Early College High School was named one of 23 new [Texas Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (T-STEM)](http://tea.texas.gov/T-STEM/) Academies for the 2016-2017 school year by the Texas Education Agency.

T-STEM academies are rigorous secondary schools focusing on improving instruction and academic performance in science and mathematics-related subjects, with a goal of increasing the number of students who study and enter STEM careers. Designated T-STEM campuses serve students in grades 6-12 or 9-12.

This is HISD’s first T-STEM academy designation. With the addition of these 23 new campuses, Texas is now home to 121 state-designated T-STEM Academies.

With this new designation, South Early’s T-STEM academy will be known as South Early College High School Advance Technology Institute. As one of five early college campuses in HISD, South Early is the district’s only STEM magnet early college. Students there can earn an associate’s degree tuition-free from Houston Community College while still in high school.

In August, the school, which is currently housed at Jones Futures Academy, will receive a new building located on the campus of HCC South as part of the 2012 HISD Bond Program. The new 57,000-square-foot facility will accommodate up to 400 students and feature flexible learning spaces that support the school’s technological programs – including computer science, software engineering, and advanced artificial intelligence and automation robotics.

“This designation for our school could not have come at a better time as we prepare to move into a 21st century learning environment,” said South Early Principal Steven Gourrier. “Becoming a T-STEM academy will enhance our campus offerings by allowing our educators to receive additional STEM training and coaching. We will be provided with more industry contacts that will help connect students to valuable STEM internships and mentoring opportunities. Through our partnership with HCC and the Texas Workforce Commission, students also will be able to complete industry-based certifications in addition to an associate’s degree, engrossing our students further in STEM and helping us ultimately meet our goal of preparing them for high paying jobs of the future.”

