GENERAL QUESTIONS

Can we get FAQ in Spanish too?
Yes, a version of the FAQ can be provided in Spanish on the HISD Board website as well.

EMERGENCY CONSTRAINT A ITEMS

Heading into August and the fall semester, does the administration recommend any different emergency priority progress measures, given the change in the emergency context?
It would be appropriate to continue to monitor many of these same areas, regardless of if they are part of emergency constraints. For example, the Wraparound Specialists have always monitored the supports provided to students, and this will continue through the fall and beyond.

Are SEL services provided in other languages?
At this time, SEL services are primarily provided in English and Spanish, this includes direct services for students, webinars and SEL literature. If other languages are needed, we work with HISD Translations Services as needed.

How many students saw a nurse regularly for health reason before COVID?
According to Chancery, 435,157 students were seen by a nurse during the 2019-2020 school year and 602,214 students were seen by a nurse in 2018-2019. The number of students monitored for health reasons on a regular basis varies campus by campus depending on the medical alert recorded in Chancery. If at any time a student has his/her medical alert button activated, it remains activated in the system regardless if the medical need changes over time. As an example, a student’s medical alert may be activated if he experienced a broken leg in 2nd grade. The medical alert remains in subsequent years even though medical attention may not be necessary beyond 2nd grade. Like a medical file in a doctor’s office, the alert captures a student’s medical history over time for reference in any possible future needs.

Is food distribution going to remain the same for summer? Or is it only going to be the summer food program?
Food distribution will remain the same throughout the district. Through our Summer Feeding Program, we are currently serving 71 schools twice weekly (Monday and Friday) and providing a combined total of 7 days’ worth of reimbursable meals. Each day's meal contains breakfast, lunch, dinner, and a snack. Based on site participation or need, Nutrition Services will add, combine, or close sites for greater effectiveness.
**EMERGENCY CONSTRAINT A ITEMS**

**Can we get more social media for SEL services?**
Yes, we can work with the HISD Communications team, who manages the social media platforms, to increase SEL visibility across all platforms. The SEL Department has also increased the number of employees who are actively sharing information on social media, specifically the SEL Twitter account.

**Seems there was a spike in SEL services on Week 4, have you explored why? And how we can duplicate this?**
The topic presented during Week 4 was “Understanding Depression in COVID-19 Era” which was a relevant topic based on where we were during the pandemic/distance learning. Topics were selected based on requests, and recommendations from Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL), National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and Mental Health America of Greater Houston (MHA). We also had several district leaders to share the webinar information with their campuses, district staff and parents. As time has progressed, more departments are offering webinars at the same time, which reduces the number of viewers we may have during our live webinars. Webinars are also recorded and posted on our website for later viewing.

**ITEM A.2**

**What changes are there in this budget compared to what the board was presented in its last budget workshop?**
Reduction of the salary package of $16,645,774 and reduction in vacant salaries of $2,305,827 to balance the budget.

**How much of HISD's CARES allocation do we expect to go to ADA maintenance?**
All of it except for the amounts due to private non-profits for equitable services.

**Do we expect any to be available for other needs?** No.

**What CARES funding is available to HISD through grant applications?**
We will have to apply for CARES Act funding even for the ADA portion. There is an additional amount of CARES Act funding being provided called the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) that allows districts to apply for up to 75% reimbursement of eligible additive expenditures through May 20, 2020 up to $250 per state compensatory student. If the total state requests exceed the amount the state set aside then the 75% rate may be reduced. There is no allocation to districts since it is on a request basis. This is above the CARES Act being used for ADA.
ITEM A.2 (CONTINUED)

What are the retention stipends? How are they given out?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>How it is Paid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autism Teacher Retention Bonus</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
<td>$500 per semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itinerant Teacher Retention Bonus</td>
<td>$2,000.00</td>
<td>$1,000 per semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech Therapist/Audiologist Retention Bonus</td>
<td>$2,000.00</td>
<td>$1,000 per semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech Therapist/LSSP Retention Bonus</td>
<td>$2,000.00</td>
<td>$1,000 per semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech Therapist that are TEA Certified</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
<td>$500 per semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech Therapist Assistant Retention Bonus</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
<td>$500 per semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher School Leader (TSL) Incentive (Teachers)</td>
<td>$10,000.00</td>
<td>3 payments (September, January, and following September)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher School Leader (TSL) Incentive (Principals and AP/Deans ES)</td>
<td>$10,000.00</td>
<td>3 payments (September, January, and following September)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher School Leader (TSL) Incentive (Principals and AP/Deans MS)</td>
<td>$15,000.00</td>
<td>3 payments (September, January, and following September)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher School Leader (TSL) Incentive (Principals and AP/Deans HS)</td>
<td>$20,000.00</td>
<td>3 payments (September, January, and following September)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher School Leader (TSL) Performance Bonus (Principals)</td>
<td>$7,500.00</td>
<td>Up to $7,500 paid in December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A180 Incentive, (Teachers, AP/Dean)</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
<td>$2,500 per semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A180 Incentive, Principals ES</td>
<td>$10,000.00</td>
<td>$5,000 per semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A180 Incentive, Principals MS</td>
<td>$15,000.00</td>
<td>$7,500 per semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A180 Incentive, Principals HS</td>
<td>$20,000.00</td>
<td>$10,000 per semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Shortage Recruitment Incentives (Secondary Math &amp; Science)</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
<td>2 payments (October and June)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Shortage Recruitment Incentives (Secondary Math &amp; Science Year 2)</td>
<td>$2,500.00</td>
<td>1 payment (June 2020)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Shortage Recruitment Incentives (Special Education)</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
<td>2 payments (October and June)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Shortage Recruitment Incentives (Special Education Year 2)</td>
<td>$2,500.00</td>
<td>1 payment (June)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual Stipend</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
<td>$2,500 per semester</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ITEM A.2 (CONTINUED)

Is implementation of the district's three-year special education plan on track, and does this budget allocate enough resources to support that plan and any other newly identified special education needs?

The HISD Office of Special Education Services (OSES) Three-Year Strategic Plan is on track. We have sufficiently utilized the existing budget allocation to execute the plan. However, as a result of districtwide implementation of Intervention Assistance Teams (IAT) and the increase in the number of students referred for evaluation, a significant increase in students qualifying for Special Education Services has occurred. The Office of Special Education Services continues to evaluate the continuum of services needed for identified students and continues to add additional service locations, instructional materials, and human resources where needed throughout the district.

Beyond plans to progress measure in the coming year, what existing evidence is there that the academic strategies as funded by this budget will achieve the board goals? For example, are we utilizing evidence-based strategies, or do we have data from piloting strategies in a small group of schools within HISD?

Progress monitoring of student growth will vary by grade level for reading and math in both types and frequency. In practice, all teachers progress monitor informally during small group through anecdotal notes and in whole group instruction with checking for understanding techniques. Unit assessments are also utilized across all classrooms in monitoring mastery of TEKS. Listed below are the screeners and formatives used as part of the data collection for progress monitoring:

- Circle assessment (PK)
- KEA (Kinder Math) and Renaissance (Kinder Early Literacy Screener)
- Renaissance (1st-8th Reading and Math) and for high school students who have not passed EOC Algebra I, ENG 1 and ENG 2
- Running Records (Reading, grades K-3 all students and students in intervention/urgent intervention in grades 4-5)
- High Frequency Word assessment, grades 1-2
Beyond plans to progress measure in the coming year, what existing evidence is there that the academic strategies as funded by this budget will achieve the board goals? For example, are we utilizing evidence-based strategies, or do we have data from piloting strategies in a small group of schools within HISD? (Continued)

In terms of College, Career and Military Readiness, we believe that the evidence of the effectiveness of our efforts have been well documented from studies conducted by our own internal research and accountability department as well as other external research partners. Each of the past 3 years, we have exceeded the Board’s Goal Progress Measures as it relates to Goal 2: Meeting the Global Graduate standards as measured by the College and Career Readiness component of the Texas Accountability system. Not only are the overall strategies and practices that that the division use based in research, but we leverage weekly data pulls to help us adjust the distribution of the resources that we do have in real-time in order to ensure that all students have equitable access to the best supports possible.

ITEM A.3

Can we get the data broken down by schools or sub pops?
Yes, the constraints that are currently tracked by campus include: 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 3.1, 3.3, and 4.2. For 1.2, 2.1, and 3.3, student group data can also be produced.

Do we know what schools have unmet needs?
This varies based on the constraint discussed, but campus leadership is addressing individual student needs as they arise.

Academic, Social, and Emotional Contacts - which is the greatest?
The data for ECPM 1.3 is only being collected at the aggregate by campus by week level, and not by category or individual student.

Is there a plan to move all SEL, Wrap Around, Nurse wellness checks, etc. to Purple for reporting?
Currently at this time, Purple is only utilized by only the Wraparound Services Department. Due to data sharing provisions, confidential student – level health data is to be maintained securely within the Student Information System (Chancery/PowerSchool). Since the data within Purple is also shared with an outside entity, we currently do not have plans to migrate those functions into the Purple system at this time.
ITEM B.2

Please share the purpose of adding a community member to the committee, and the process employed to find and vet the community member.

The Audit Committee Charter based on IIA standards recommends that a community subject matter expert join in on meetings. The Audit Committee developed a description outlining the responsibilities and desired qualities for the volunteer. We worked with Ethics and Compliance to craft questions around potential conflict of interest. Each committee member along with the CAE pushed out to our networks. We had one response ahead of our meeting on April 30. The Committee discussed the candidate. They were screened by Ethics and Compliance and we are making the recommendation that they join us as a subject matter expert volunteer at subsequent meetings.

ITEM D.4

Do you anticipate any other changes to the school calendar for 2020-21? If so, do you anticipate differences between campuses?

We are currently exploring and drafting some possible changes to our 2020-2021 school calendar. The main purpose is to add additional instructional days for our students in order to reduce any instructional gaps due to COVID-19. We are also looking at a possible calendar that tries to anticipate current predictions with regards to a second wave of Coronavirus cases. If changes to our currently approved calendar are necessary, these will be presented to the Board for approval.

Reading instruments - what is the difference between the one we used last year and the one we are seeking a waiver from? Please give examples/evidence.

On May 28, 2020, the Commissioner selected TX-KEA as the recommended screener for kindergarten. Houston ISD is asking to continue with STAR Early Literacy.

According to TEA:

- STAR Early Literacy has strong internal consistency; moderate predictive validity; is generalizable to a Texas population; is sensitive to student improvement; and has moderate classification accuracy and decision-making rules.
- TX-KEA is generalizable to a Texas population; the administration format negates issues related to inter-rater reliability; and has internal item consistency and construct/content validity
- With STAR Early Literacy, “Students complete assessment alone on computers or tablets through individual student accounts while teachers or proctors monitor; web-delivered direct one-on-one assessment
- TX-KEA uses a “combination of timed direct assessment, untimed direct assessment, and observation checklists. Students respond to on-screen stimulus while teacher verbalizes prompts and records responses through technology-based administration.”

The goal is to transition to TX-KEA for the 2021-2022 school year. The reason we are asking for a waiver is due to the lack of ability to effectively training and professional development.
ITEM D.5

Are we doing an alternate evaluation for teachers and principals? Are we modifying or implementing an alternate evaluation during the pandemic? We should still be evaluating and have accountability.

Due to the timing of the move to virtual instruction, many of the appraisal activities were completed or in progress; therefore, while modifications were needed, there was no need to develop an alternative evaluation. In April, a Resolution was passed that granted flexibility to certain components of the teacher appraisal system, TADS. The following modifications were made:

1. Waive the requirement for an annual appraisal if there is insufficient existing data to rate the teacher.
2. Waive the requirement for each teacher participating in TADS to receive at least two formal unannounced walkthroughs and observations and for teachers participating in M-TADS to receive at least one walkthrough and observation.
3. Omit Student Performance as a category for calculating summative ratings for the 2019–2020 school year.
4. Waive second appraisal review for Instructional Practice for the End of the Year (EOY).

End-of-year conferences were held virtually with teachers during May. At the June meeting, the board is asked to approve a Resolution requesting flexibility to certain components of the school leader appraisal system, SLAS. The following are the requested modifications:

1. Waive the requirement for an annual appraisal if the employee’s effective date is January 6, 2020 or later due to the limited window to collect evidence of performance. These employees will receive a rating of not rated for 2019-2020.
2. Calculate the School Leader Scorecard using the data elements available while omitting assessment data unavailable due to the pandemic.
3. Waive the requirement for each school leader to receive two formal observations.

Passage of this Resolution will allow the end-of-year appraisal process to be completed for principals, assistant principals, and deans.
ITEM F.2

Are there any other students exempt from out-of-school suspension? Please explain why or why not.

There are two groups that by Board Policy and/or Texas Law are not permitted to be suspended out-of-school:

- Homeless students - TEC 37.005(d): A school district may not place a student who is homeless in out-of-school suspension unless the student engages in conduct described by Subsections (c)(1)-(3) while on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off of school property. The subsection referenced has to do with criminal activity (i.e. possession of drugs, assaults, etc.).

- Students in grades below third grade: Board Policy - Board Policy FO (LOCAL) prohibits the suspension, placement in the DAEP, or expulsion of students prior to third grade unless required by law.

In some cases, Special Education students may be exempt due to their disability.

A school administrator always has the discretion not to follow the prescribed default consequence: The Code states: Prior to the implementation of any exclusionary consequence (i.e. in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or DAEP) and pursuant to Texas Education Code (TEC) Chapter 37.001 (a)(4), an administrator must consider the following factors: (1) self-defense; (2) intent or lack of intent when the student engaged in the conduct; (3) a student’s disciplinary history; (4) a disability that substantially impairs the student’s capacity to appreciate the wrongfulness of the student’s conduct; (5) a student’s status in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services; and, (6) a student’s status as a student who is homeless.

Are there considerations or policies in our Student Code of Conduct that are based on restorative justice practices?

Yes. The Code has Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and implicit restorative language throughout it; listed in the sections concerning possible responses to Code violations. In addition, the Code contains Education First opportunities in lieu of DAEP placement for first time drug offenders who have no other documented discipline concerns or history of previous placements in discipline programs. Also, during the Code of Student Conduct trainings, school administrators are provided information on restorative justice practices and PBIS.
ITEM F.2 (CONTINUED)

What is the reason(s) for the first four changes?
The first four bulleted changes listed are a result of changes in TEC Chapter 37 and the Texas Penal Code. Although this was not a legislative year, some of these laws were passed after August 2019 and, thus, were not included in the 2019-2020 Code (although they were implemented in practice).

What process was followed for identifying needed changes to the Code?
Notes were taken throughout the school year as concerns and questions for clarification surfaced from school administrators, parents, and teachers'/administrators’ organizations. Some of these concerns or needs for clarification surfaced during appeals conferences. In previous years (especially during legislative years), pre-consultation informal review meetings are held with various stakeholders. This was not a Legislative year and the changes in the Code were “catch-up” and clarification revisions.

How were students involved in reviewing and changing the Code?
Students were mainly involved through concerns and/or questions that surfaced during campus-level and school office appeals hearings. Some questions and concerns were also brought to our attention by community-based student advocacy groups.

ITEM F.3

Please share the academic performance of the school. Do we expect the school’s performance to improve this coming year? How and why? Please share the 2019 external audit for the school.

In the 2017-2018 school year, the school scored a 64 out of 100, which Met Standard in the prior accountability system. In 2018-2019, the school scored a 67 out of 100, which is an improvement, but is still the equivalent of a “D” in the state’s A-F Accountability System. Due to the COVID-19 closing, there is no TEA accountability data available for the 2019-2020 school year, thus defining improvement for next school year would have to be based off results comparing data from 2018-2019 and 2020-2021 if STAAR is able to continue as scheduled. The school will continue to receive targeted support from the Lead Principal/SSO assigned to the campus and will have access to supports and resources from HISD’s Central Office, to support the external performance contract campus’s leadership with improving educational outcomes.
Pending the adoption of EL (LOCAL) revisions, all of our current external performance contract partners will have to undergo an RFQ process in order to become eligible to receive future contracts. Any operator that we do not believe can provide a satisfactory educational experience for HISD students will not receive a contract for the 2021-2022 school year. The external audit is attached to this response.

ITEM I.6

What is the amount?
This item just gives us the authority to carryover budget from 2019-2020 into 2020-2021 along with any PO’s or obligations of those funds. If we don’t carryover budget, then 2020-2021 funds are consumed from these outstanding obligations reducing the 2020-2021 available resources. There is no dollar amount known until after July 1st when we begin the carryover process of those outstanding obligations. This is an item brought forward every year and is part of the year-end closing process.

ITEM J.2

Does the audit department have the resources to complete this plan?
Currently, the Audit Department is short only one Junior Auditor, but we hope to fill that position as soon as possible. With all positions and the current budget both maintained for the year, the department will have sufficient internal resources along with hired help to complete the audit plan.

However, sufficient resources are not the only thing that is needed to ensure success. Some things that we need improvement in are largely outside of our control, including: a) timely submission of requested information from auditees; and b) timely access to leaders, especially in the Schools Office, to discuss the audits and the support that we need from the leaders.

What is the contingency plan if the department loses staff?
Presently, there are two foreseeable options. First, if sufficient funds are available, temporary auditors and/or audit firms can be hired to perform audits that the team is unable to complete on their own. If, however, sufficient funds are not available to hire temporary staff, then the Chief Audit Executive will request additional funds through the Board and the Superintendent. If either of those options don’t work, then the Chief Audit Executive will ask the Board for permission to either remove audits from the current plan or carry them forward into the next audit plan.
ITEM J.2 (CONTINUED)

Please note that “sufficient funds” includes our ability (competitive salaries) to attract the best candidates. We oftentimes find ourselves not attracting our first or second candidates because they reject the salaries that are offered. We have one vacant junior audit position and it has been vacant since early 2019, over a year.

What might be the COVID-19 impact on completion of this plan?
If the virus causes key District personnel and/or Internal Audit to not be available for an audit(s), then that could cause the audit objectives to be partially completed or for the audit to not be completed at all. Also, one of the main factors that slows down our audits currently is that some District staff do not have VPN access to HISD’s network and we haven’t found a workaround for that so far. I think the biggest factor is how long COVID-19 exists and adversely impacts the District in ways that forces us to adjust our ways of doing business.

What was the process for developing this audit plan?
Developing a risk-based audit plan includes activities throughout the year. At a minimum, they include the following:

- The Chief Audit Executive (CAE) maintains a list of ideas for the audit plan as they come to his attention from a variety of sources, including discussions at Board meetings, discussions with key personnel, articles in professional journals, discussions with audit professionals at various events, topics discussed at professional development events, etc. Some of those topics are placed into the audit plan because of the CAE’s perceived degree of risk.
- Each year, the CAE engages BDO, a professional services firm, to conduct an enterprise risk assessment (ERA). The results include areas of the District that appear to pose a high risk. Within those areas, we try to identify relevant topics that we have not audited before or a long time has passed since the last audit. During the ERA, the assessors interview as many Trustees and key personnel in the administration as time permits, and conducts exit meetings with Chief Audit Executive and the Superintendent and with Board leadership if available.
- Through the Board’s Audit Committee, the CAE asks for the Board to provide desired topics that are relevant.
- Audit managers identify areas that have at least a moderate degree of risk that have not been audited or information has come to their attention that suggests an audit may be warranted.
- The Audit Department determines which audits in the current plan will likely not be started or will not be complete by period-end and carry them forward into the next audit plan.
- A draft audit plan is provided to the Board and the Superintendent for review and suggestions for change.
- The draft audit plan is voted on by the Board.
ITEM K.2

Please explain the reason(s) for the proposed changes.
Given the pandemic, where there are limited opportunities for travel, as well as the additional work that has been involved for employees to shift to a virtual teaching, learning, and working environment, we recommend that 12 month employees be allowed to carry over and not lose their unused vacation days. It is important that our TEAM HISD members feel supported not only in their work environment, but also in their much-deserved personal time away from work. We are looking to ease some of our employees concerns about being able to safely enjoy their time off when we are allowed to resume normal day to day activities. This item has now been through consultation and has the support of the Houston Federation of Teachers, Congress of Houston Teachers, and Houston Association of School Administrators.

ITEM K.3

How does these changes affect equity as it relates to HISD’s G/T programs and services?
The revisions to EHBB Local are for the purposes of language alignment with the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students. The proposed changes do not impact programming or services to students.

ITEM L.2.B

Why is the small school subsidy capped at some small schools and not at others?
The Resource Allocation handbook states that the Superintendent can cap campuses. For some of those campuses the amounts that they would receive are considered well beyond what they reasonably need to operate their campus. The intent of the small school subsidy is to ensure that small campuses are still able to provide the essential positions like a Nurse, Counselor, and Librarian first as these positions tended to be the first positions closed. In some cases, the schools are so small that the amounts received provide a significant amount of additional resources. Capping has been there since the small school subsidy began.

How is the magnet funding different this year compared to past years? Please explain.
There is no change to Magnet funding for 2020-2021.
ITEM L.2.B (CONTINUED)

Were any of the recommendations from the Resource Allocation Committee (2018) considered when creating this budget? Please explain.

There are no changes based on the RAAC from 2018. At the time the RAAC presented their recommendations there was acknowledgement that there would be a significant redistribution of funds in implementing the type of model presented. They also acknowledged that significant changes to implement the model would need additional funding to help lessen the impact of any redistribution.

Based on the FAQs - why is the Per Pupil budget allocation only able to change if there is additional funding? Please explain.

Anytime the PUA or a weight is increased that means additional funds (budget) are allocated to campuses. Just like when the district increases salaries or adds funding into health insurance, it is an increase to the district’s budget. If the district does have additional revenues, then they compete for what they are being used for. For example, you could use them for increase the PUA / weights or you can use them for salary increases. If revenues aren’t increasing or cuts aren’t made, then we don’t have additional budget to increase the PUA.