

**HISD Board of Education to consider recommendation for external audit**

*Trustees to be briefed on preliminary STAAR results and plans for possible November bond referendum*

*May 9, 2018 –* The Houston Independent School District Board of Education on Thursday will consider a recommendation from the Audit Committee calling for an external performance audit.

**The board’s regular monthly meeting begins at 5 p.m. on Thursday, May 10, 2018, in the Manuel Rodríguez Jr. Board Auditorium of the Hattie Mae White Educational Support Center, 4400 W. 18th St. Click** [here](http://www.houstonisd.org/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=51135&dataid=220863&FileName=051018OA_POST.pdf) **to view the full agenda.**

The Audit Committee is recommending an external performance audit be conducted in order to ensure HISD is utilizing scarce resources as efficiently and effectively as possible to inform decision-making and budgeting by the board and administration for the 2019-2020 school year and beyond, and to build public trust by exhibiting good stewardship of public dollars.

“Our school community has been adamant in the call for an external performance audit, and this Board agrees that it’s past time for us to invest the time and resources necessary to see how we can best allocate the tax dollars entrusted into our care,” HISD Board of Education President Rhonda Skillern-Jones said.

This agenda item calls for the firm selected to present a full draft to the board no later than April 2019. Trustees have until June to approve a budget based on recommendations from the audit.

During the meeting, district administration will brief Trustees on the results for the first administration of STAAR grades five and eight reading and math exams. Preliminary results show HISD students have improved in all four areas for which results are available. The largest district-wide gain was a six-point increase in students approaching grade level on the grade five reading assessment.

In addition, trustees will consider changing the grade-level configuration for Woodson PK-8 to an elementary campus that serves students in prekindergarten through fifth grade, with sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade students rezoned to Thomas Middle School. Under the proposal, Thomas Middle School would receive funding through our Achieve 180 initiative to continue offering professional development, support for teachers, and the wraparound services the students have been receiving at Woodson.

“This change will allow us to enhance our level of focus on the elementary students who will remain at Woodson and the middle school students who will transition to Thomas,” Interim Superintendent Grenita Lathan said.

Trustees will also consider an agenda item to establish an attendance boundary option for students zoned to Blackshear, Lockhart, and MacGregor elementary schools to attend Baylor College of Medicine Academy at Ryan. Currently, middle students who live within these elementary attendance boundaries are zoned to Cullen Middle School, with some students from MacGregor being zoned to Gregory-Lincoln Education Center.

If approved, the addition of an optional attendance boundary for Baylor College of Medicine Academy at Ryan would provide direct enrollment access for neighborhood middle-school students who are interested in pursuing a health/medical pathway. This boundary option would be for students entering sixth grade, beginning with the 2018-2019 school year.  The school will continue with its current magnet status and all students would be enrolled in the magnet program.

In addition, trustees will also consider an agenda item authorizing the purchase of Zonar GPS Systems, a school bus management system that provides real-time tracking. The purpose of the system is to improve customer service for the more than 36,000 HISD students that are transported across the district, to improve routing, and create additional efficiencies in route management.

“We have been working all year to develop better ways to inform parents and guardians of any potential changes to their school bus routes,” HISD Chief Operations Officer Brian Busby said. “We already have other communications systems in place that are showing significant improvement. With the Zonar GPS System, we expect the department to inform and respond quicker, faster, and more efficiently than before.”

Administration will also update trustees on the progress of the 2012 Bond program and plans for a possible November bond referendum.

The board meeting will be broadcast live online at [www.hisdtv.org](http://www.hisdtv.org) and on the HISD Channel, which can be found on Comcast Channel 18 or U-verse Channel 99.