**HISD Trustees and Superintendent heading to Austin to discuss school finance solutions**

District leaders hope to stop detachment of commercial property and restore $162 million in local taxes to HISD classrooms

*Jan. 24, 2017* – Members of the HISD Board of Education and Superintendent Richard Carranza will spend two full days in Austin this week, collaborating with top state leaders to address changes to Texas’ school finance system.

Board President Wanda Adams, trustees Anna Eastman, Michael Lunceford, and Rhonda Skillern-Jones, along with Superintendent Richard Carranza will have scheduled meetings on Wednesday and Thursday with state leaders and members of HISD’s legislative delegation in Austin.

“The HISD Board of Education and administration are united in our desire to work constructively with our state leaders to identify funding solutions that put children first,” Adams said. “We all agree that Texas’ school finance system was never intended to take classroom resources from our state’s most needy children.”

Under the state’s current school finance system, HISD is considered “property wealthy” and is subject to sending $162 million in local property taxes to the state – a process known as “recapture.” But on Election Day last November, Houstonians voted down the ballot measure that would have authorized the $162 million payment and future payments totaling more than $1 billion. This means that, starting in July, the Texas Education Agency can detach $18 billion worth of non-residential, commercial property from HISD’s tax roll – starting with the most valuable – and reassign those businesses to other school districts for taxing purposes. The reassigned properties would be taxed at different tax rates from buildings nearby and would likely pay a higher tax rate than they were paying to HISD. The TEA will continue to detach property every July for the foreseeable future.

HISD’s Board of Education urges the Legislature to stop the detachment and reassignment of commercial property in Houston before June and reduce its over-reliance on local property tax dollars to fund public education statewide, replacing those local tax dollars with state funds.

The Board’s legislative agenda, which can be found [here](http://www.houstonisd.org/cms/lib2/TX01001591/Centricity/Domain/15302/2017%20Legislative%20Agenda%20FINAL.pdf), outlines proposed solutions to HISD’s school finance dilemma. Ultimately, the Board is advocating for any solution that helps the vast majority of school districts statewide.

Other legislative priorities on the Board’s legislative agenda are improving digital learning and broadband access statewide, as well as preserving local control.

Please contact HISD Media Relations to arrange interviews.

