**HISD awarded $9.2 million pre-K grant**

*July 6, 2016* — The Texas Education Agency on Tuesday awarded the Houston Independent School District a $9.2 million grant to enhance its early childhood education program.

HISD is among 578 school systems across Texas to be awarded a grant as part of Gov. Greg Abbott’s high-quality prekindergarten initiative. The $116 million grant program allows districts and charters to receive funding for qualifying pre-K students in addition to the half-day Foundation School Program funding that is already received for each eligible pre-K student. To receive the grant funding, a district or charter must meet certain enhanced quality standards related to curriculum, teacher qualifications, academic performance, and family engagement.

“This additional funding will allow HISD to continue to focus on our goal of increasing student achievement by providing our youngest learners more instructional resources and materials to support language, literacy, and math development,” said HISD Early Childhood Education Manager Janice Dingayan. “We want to continue to enrich our pre-K program by ensuring our students are kindergarten-ready with the foundational skills needed to be successful in elementary school and beyond.”

For more than two decades, HISD has provided quality pre-K classes for Houston-area 4-year-olds. The district’s pre-K program currently offers full-day pre-K instruction to about 14,000 students at 155 campuses, as well as nine early childhood centers. The program integrates learning across all attributes of cognitive, physical, social and emotional child development, offering children an opportunity to learn to recognize and identify letters and numbers and develop an understanding of written and oral communication, which they need to become strong readers. The program also enhances their social skills through the use of cooperative learning opportunities.

The grant will help better align HISD’s pre-K program with the district’s Literacy by 3 Initiative, which strives to have all students reading and writing fluently by the end of third grade. The grant will fund additional professional development opportunities for pre-K teachers in domains aligned to the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines. The grant also will be used to maintain and achieve increased levels of family involvement by equipping parents of pre-K students with tools to enhance and extend learning at home.

Registration is now open for pre-K classes across the district for the 2016-2017 school year. To learn more about the district’s pre-K program, visit [houstonisd.org/prek](http://www.houstonisd.org/prek).