** HISD students to tackle computer science challenges with new coding experience**

 *Districtwide “12 Days of Code” initiative to allow students to create smartphone games, applications, web content*

**What:** Houston ISD students will use computer science to solve problems and think creatively as part of the district’s [12 Days of Code](http://www.houstonisd.org/12daysofcode) initiative that will engage students in a new coding experience each day.

Starting today through Dec. 16, students in elementary, middle, and high schools will participate in various computer science activities that include designing an iPhone game, tracking Santa, decoding messages with cryptography, and animating text.

The district created 12 Days of Code as a platform to join millions of students across the world participating in coding challenges as part of the Hour of Code, a global movement led by Code.org during Computer Science Education Week (Dec. 5-11). During this week, students are encouraged to create technology – and not just use it – by completing at least an hour of coding.

In 2014, HISD teamed up with Code.org, a non-profit organization that aims to expand student access to computer science. HISD’s 12 Days of Code will allow students to do more than just an hour of coding by engaging in additional computer science activities. The initiative will help students develop critical-thinking and problem-solving skills that make them better thinkers and learners and put them on a path to high-wage, high-demand, 21st century careers. Last year, more than 25,000 students participated in the Hour of Code, and this year HISD would like to double that number.

***\*Media are invited to interview students and staff participating in coding challenges during the 12 Days of Code. Please contact the HISD Media Relations Department to arrange a campus visit.***

**Who:**HISD elementary, middle, and high school students

**When:              December 1-16, 2016**

**Where:**Various HISD schools