

HISD PRESS RELEASE

HISD expands free, full-day pre-K program across district

July 22, 2019 – HISD is expanding its free, full-day pre-kindergarten program at schools across the district to provide more three- and four-year-old students with the opportunity to attend a high-quality program that will build a strong foundation of learning and support the needs of the families it serves.

A total of 12 elementary campuses throughout the district will be expanding pre-K classrooms for a total of 38 pre-K rooms. Those campuses are Neff Early Learning Center, Isaacs, R. Martinez, Rucker, Love, Browning, Shadowbriar, Askew, Mitchell, Garden Villas, DeAnda and Wesley elementary schools.

Two schools – Hillard and Oates elementary schools – are implementing pre-K for the first time.

A recent Rice University study found that HISD's pre-K program significantly increases kindergarten readiness after as little as one year compared with students who do not attend pre-K. Research also shows that students who attend pre-K perform better in K-12 education, are more likely to graduate and earn higher wages as adults.

"The earliest years are the most promising for brain and skill development," Director of HISD's Early Childhood Mechiel Rozas said. "Pre-K provides a great foundation and gives children a chance to develop and grow while also learning skills needed to be successful later in life."

Campuses are actively engaging their communities to communicate increased early childhood options in their neighborhood. Children must live within HISD boundaries but do not have to be zoned to a specific campus to attend a pre-K program.

Students who attend pre-K in the 2019-2020 school year will benefit from engaging, age-appropriate, hands-on instruction, as well as:

- High-quality teachers in every classroom
- Optional bilingual classrooms
- After-school care (available at some campuses)
- Free breakfast, lunch, and dinner
- New furniture and instructional materials in every classroom
- Support to address mental and physical health, food and housing needs, and more
- Parent education classes

How to enroll

Parents can secure a spot by visiting a participating campus from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday-Thursday with the items below. Assistance with enrollment forms is provided.

- Parent income (check, award letter, child support, SSDI)
- Proof of address (utility bill such as light, gas, water, or lease)
- Child's original birth certificate
- Child's Social Security card
- Child's immunization record
- Parent identification

Parents can also visit HoustonISD.org/PreK and enroll.

Who can enroll

Free full-day pre-K is available to three- and four-year-olds based on any one of the following criteria:

- Unable to speak and understand English
- Economically disadvantaged (eligible to participate in the National School Lunch Program)
- Child of a member of the U.S. Armed Forces
- Has ever been in state foster care
- Homeless (no documents needed to enroll)

For more information about pre-K, call 713-556-6835 or visit HoustonISD.org/PreK.

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The Houston Independent School District is the largest school district in Texas and the seventh-largest in the United States, with 284 schools and more than 214,000 students. The 333-square-mile district is one of the largest employers in the Houston metropolitan area, with more than 27,000 employees.

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