

Waltrip High School only campus in U.S. selected for Mars rover training exercise

WHAT: After being selected as this year's only Mission Control Academy in the United States by a space exploration and robotics company, students at Waltrip High School in the Houston Independent School District will get the opportunity on Friday to remotely control a rover located in Canada.

From their classroom in northwest Houston, students will control the rover prototype located in the province of Quebec at a facility where terrain conditions are similar to those on Mars.

The HISD campus, along with a high school in Ottawa, Canada, was selected as a Mission Control Academy campus by Mission Control Space Services, Inc. Waltrip was selected due to its Geographic Information Systems (GIS) magnet program and its partnership with Texas A&M University researchers.

The Canadian company selects schools for two-week science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education and training programs led by experts from the space industry, NASA and research universities.

The culmination of the program is the remote rover exercise.

Almost two dozen students in Waltrip's GIS magnet program are participating in the academy training and the rover exercise.

WHO: HISD Board of Education Trustees, Waltrip High School Principal **Michael Niggli**, Mission Control Space Services Manager of Space and Education **Adam Deslauriers**, Texas A&M University researchers **Ryan Ewing** and **Marion Nachon**, Waltrip HS GIS magnet students and teachers

WHEN: Friday, Oct. 18
12:30-3:30 p.m.

WHERE: Waltrip High School
1900 W. 34th St., 77018

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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 280 schools and more than 209,772 students. The 333-square-mile district is one of the largest employers in the Houston metropolitan area, with more than 27,000 employees.