

# HISD PRESS RELEASE

## **HISD 2019-2020 budget earns top honors for financial accuracy, accountability**

*Jan. 13, 2020* – The Houston Independent School District has received the Meritorious Budget Award (MBA) from a worldwide association of school business officials for producing a 2019-2020 budget that is accurate, informative and easy to comprehend.

HISD earned the award from the Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO), which has been in existence for 110 years. To receive the honor, the association required the district to submit a substantial packet of detailed budget documents, which were evaluated by a confidential panel of school finance experts.

HISD has been participating in the MBA program for 22 years and has earned the honor 21 times. Out of more than 1,000 school districts in Texas, HISD was among only 23 that earned the MBA last year.

“We are committed to providing financial transparency to our stakeholders,” HISD Interim Superintendent Grenita Lathan said. “Producing budgets that earn MBA’s not only provides our partners with a clear understanding of how the district’s funds are being used, but it also supports student outcomes by promoting effective resource management.”

ASBO encourages districts to pursue MBA honors in order to elevate financial planning, produce informative budgets and foster financial comprehension among taxpayers and the general public.

“Receiving this honor is proof of the hard work our finance team performs regularly to ensure that fiscal integrity and budget clarity are the norm, not the exception,” said HISD Chief Financial Officer Rene Barajas. “We strive to produce annual budgets that are easy to understand and that requires an incredible amount of diligence. I am extremely proud of my team for putting in the work and earning an MBA once again.”

Members of ASBO said it is “impressive” for school district budgets to receive MBA honors.

“Districts that apply to the MBA program recognize the importance of presenting a quality, easy-to-understand budget internally and to the community,” ASBO International Executive Director David J. Lewis said. “Participating in the MBA program provides important tools and resources districts need to communicate their goals and objectives clearly and illustrates their commitment to adhering to nationally recognized budget presentation standards.”

School districts in the U.S. and Canada that meet ASBO's strenuous requirements are eligible to receive the Meritorious Budget Award.

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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.

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