

HISD PRESS RELEASE

HISD Board approves \$2 billion budget, pay increases for teachers and stipends for all employees

Budget calls for no increase in property tax rate

June 11, 2020 – The Houston Independent School District Board of Trustees voted 7-2 to pass a \$2 billion 2020-2021 budget, which includes a \$34.4 million salary and benefits package as well as an increase in employer contribution to health insurance premiums for employees.

The salary and benefits package includes the following:

- For employees whose salaries are based on the teacher salary placement table, a step movement plus a 1.5 percent one-time retention stipend based on the employees' new 2020-2021 annual salary
- For employees on the master scale, a one-time \$500 retention stipend adjusted for their work-time percentage
- For bus drivers, crossing guards and Nutrition Services food service attendants, a one-time \$500 retention stipend adjusted for their work-time percentage

The tax rate in HISD's 2020-2021 budget is slated to be a maximum of \$1.1331 for every \$100 of property valuation, down a fraction from last year's \$1.1367.

The cost of COVID-19 in the new fiscal year remains uncertain. Classes may resume in-person, take place on staggered attendance days to facilitate social distancing, or continue virtually or a combination of staggered days and virtual instruction.

Each option carries additional costs such as extra sanitation practices, bus routes, computers and hotspots for students, and personal protective equipment (PPE) for students and staff. HISD's fund balance, equivalent to the district's savings account, would have to be tapped to pay for COVID-related expenses since there is no other funding available at this time.

As part of the 2020-2021 budget, HISD will also be required to send \$12 million in "excess revenue" to the state of Texas since the district's revenues will exceed its entitlement under the new school finance system.

HISD's fiscal year begins annually on July 1 and ends on June 30.

Trustees also approved \$4.6 million for a program for at-risk students with physical and emotional needs that could impede their educational outcomes. Student advocacy group Communities in Schools, a long-time HISD partner, may be utilized to continue assisting students in need.

Additionally, the board approved a \$600,000 grant from the Houston-Galveston Area Council to help pay for 10 new buses in the HISD bus fleet as part of the Clean Vehicle Act to help reduce air pollution.

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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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