

NEWS RELEASE

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## **HISD partners with Rice University to conduct districtwide study on educational equity**

HOUSTON – (July 22, 2020) – The Houston Independent School District (HISD) has partnered with Rice University’s Houston Education Research Consortium (HERC), a program of the Kinder Institute for Urban Research and School of Social Sciences, to conduct a comprehensive study on educational equity across the district.

Recognizing its responsibility to continually improve academic achievement for all students, HISD and HERC will examine equitable access to educational programming, resources, supports, facilities and opportunities for students by race/ethnicity, economic status, English-learner status and other factors.

“Conducting a districtwide study on educational equity — at this scale — is remarkable, and truly unprecedented in many ways,” HISD Interim Superintendent Grenita Lathan said. “We know that for some of our students, simply having equal access to opportunities and resources may not be enough of the support they need to achieve their greatest academic potential. This study will inform critical decision-making relating to equity and closing achievement gaps across the city.”

The purpose of the study, known as The Equity Project, is to identify the mechanisms HISD can use to improve equity and ultimately eliminate gaps in educational achievement and attainment.

The Equity Project will consist of a series of studies across the following topics:

- Academic and extracurricular programming
- COVID-19 resources
- Facilities
- Financial resources
- Human capital
- Student supports
- Technology

“At HERC, our mission is to ensure that our research plays a role in helping districts close gaps for students,” said Ruth López Turley, director of HERC, associate director of the Kinder Institute and a professor of sociology at Rice. “When HISD asked whether we would partner on this project, we embraced the opportunity to help them identify where the greatest student needs exist and develop a plan for how to address those needs.”

The Equity Project is scheduled to be completed by late summer 2021. Learn more online at [www.houstonisd.org/equityproject](http://www.houstonisd.org/equityproject).

To learn more about HERC, visit <https://kinder.rice.edu/herc>.

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This news release can be found online at [news.rice.edu](http://news.rice.edu).

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#### **About Rice University**

Located on a 300-acre forested campus in Houston, Rice University is consistently ranked among the nation’s top 20 universities by U.S. News & World Report. Rice has highly respected schools of Architecture, Business, Continuing Studies, Engineering, Humanities, Music, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences and is home to the Baker Institute for Public Policy. With 3,962 undergraduates and 3,027 graduate students, Rice’s undergraduate student-to-faculty ratio is just under 6-to-1. Its residential college system builds close-knit communities and lifelong friendships, just one reason why Rice is ranked No. 1 for lots of race/class interaction and No. 4 for quality of life by the Princeton Review. Rice is also rated as a best value among private universities by Kiplinger’s Personal Finance.

#### **About the Houston Independent School District**

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.