

## HISD PRESS RELEASE

### **New Austin High School opening to students on Jan. 6**

*Dec. 18, 2020* — The new Austin High School will open its doors to in-person students on Wednesday, Jan. 6, following their return from winter break.

Students will engage in virtual learning for the first two days after the break — Monday, Jan. 4 and Tuesday, Jan. 5 — to allow faculty and staff to become acquainted with the new building.

Students relocated to an adjacent temporary campus while construction of the new building was underway.

“I think it’s the most appropriate time, given the circumstances of what we have been going through and how education has been affected,” Austin High School Principal Orlando Reyna said. “For us, it is a turn in the right direction. These are the wins students want to see and staff want to experience.”

A cornerstone of Houston’s historic East End, Austin High School was rebuilt as part of HISD’s 2012 Bond Program. The \$80.9 million project called for a new 288,628-square-foot facility, as well as work to preserve the historic facade and auditorium of the original 84-year-old building.

The new facility features a three-story academic wing with larger, naturally lit classrooms, labs for welding, robotics, and maritime, and plenty of downtown views. It also has new athletic facilities, including two gyms, state-of-the-art locker rooms, and a weight room with mustang detailing.

“Austin High School’s new building is the latest achievement in the historic 2012 Bond Program,” Interim Superintendent Grenita Lathan said. “It is a fantastic building, one that blends the history of the original structure with the cutting-edge technology needed in a modern high school.”

The campus, located at 1700 Dumble St., is one of 40 schools — including 29 high schools — renovated or rebuilt as part of the \$2 billion bond program, which is now nearly complete. Only Bellaire High School remains under active construction as part of its original scope of work.

Principal Reyna said there are many features that he finds impressive in the newly constructed school but the contemporary courtyard is by far one of his favorites.

“It just looks amazing,” Reyna said. “I anticipate it’s going to be a popular space for us to utilize and for students to congregate.”

Editor’s Note: Media is invited to see the new school on Jan. 6. Details to be provided after the district’s Winter Break.

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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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