

HISD PRESS RELEASE

HISD provides \$1 million to Texas Universities with it's Grow Your Own Grant program

August 22, 2023 - The Houston Independent School District announced three university educator preparation programs will be awarded Grow Your Own grants through HISD's competitive grant program to create pathways for aspiring educators to help them earn their bachelor's degree and Texas teaching license while being paid as a full-time teaching assistant in HISD. HISD's Grow Your Own grant program funds partnerships with educator preparation programs from Texas public institutions of higher education to prepare future teachers.

"We are excited about what this means for HISD's future teachers, and ultimately, for our students," said Elizabel Garcia, Director of Grow Your Own and Strategic Staffing at HISD. "Thanks to our partners, we will be able to eliminate financial barriers and expand opportunities for our teaching assistants and others in the community to become teachers."

HISD is proud to announce the following grant awardees:

- **Texas Woman's University: 5 grants**
- **Prairie View A&M University: 3 grants**
- **Tarleton State University: 2 grants**

These partnerships will provide significant cost savings to both HISD and aspiring teachers and teaching assistants. On average, HISD's cost per participant is \$7,190, which represents well over a 50% tuition discount in the state of Texas. Participants who hold an associate degree (or equivalent 60 credits) will be able to earn their bachelor's and Texas teaching license at no cost.

Applications prioritized high-need subject areas such as special education and bilingual education. **In total, the program will prepare and place 133 aspiring educators for positions in HISD by the 2025-2026 school year in the following certification areas:**

- 48 candidates EC-6 with SPED supplemental
- 30 candidates EC-6 ESL
- 20 candidates 4-8 ELA and Reading with SPED
- 15 candidates EC-6 Bilingual

- 10 candidates EC-12 SPED with core subjects
- 10 candidates EC PK-3 with SPED supplemental

The Grow Your Own Competitive Grant offers grants to Education Preparation Providers (EPPs) that can offer high-quality, low-cost pathways to aspiring educators. EPPs meet strict TEA standards as high-quality institutions that recruit and prepare qualified educators to meet the needs of all students in Texas classrooms. A list of approved EPPs can be found [here](#).




Additionally, the grant program prioritizes a high-quality yearlong residency experience and time spent in the classroom and recruits directly from local communities. Awardees agree to work with the district in establishing their Grow your Own as a registered apprenticeship program with the U.S. Department of Labor.


This initiative is supported by a strong partnership with the National Center for Grow Your Own and Houston Endowment.

“Houston Independent School District is focused on ensuring every child has not only the teacher they need, but deserve, by investing in opportunities for school-based employees to become teachers,” said David Donaldson, founder of the National Center for Grow Your Own. “These grant awards are an efficient use of taxpayer dollars that will lead to an incredible return on investment of over 130 new and debt-free teachers.”

To learn more about the National Center for Grow Your Own, [click here](#).

The Houston Independent School District is the largest school district in Texas and the eighth-largest in the United States, with 276 schools and nearly 190,000 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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