

NEW EDUCATION SYSTEM

The Houston Independent School District's (HISD) New Education System (NES) is the largest and most significant effort to transform K-12 education in the United States.

While other districts have tried to improve schools by taking incremental steps—such as adopting a new curriculum or expanding certain programs—the NES involves whole-scale, systemic reform.

Launched at 85 underperforming campuses across HISD in the fall of 2023, the NES is designed to dramatically improve academic performance, close achievement gaps, and ensure Houston's students graduate prepared for the modern workplace and world.

It is an ambitious effort for our city—and, indeed, the nation—with the potential to remedy decades of ineffective K-12 policies and prove what is possible for America's students.

UNDER THE NES MODEL, SCHOOLS:

- **Use an innovative staffing model to ensure students receive consistent high-quality instruction. It also allows teachers to focus on their core work and have better work-life harmony.** A centralized team creates the daily lessons, which can be customized as necessary, so teachers do not have to spend a great deal of time outside school hours creating lessons from scratch. Teachers receive regular coaching from instructional experts and are supported by Teacher Apprentices and Learning Coaches. Apprentices are earning their teacher certification. They work alongside the teacher and substitute as necessary, while Learning Coaches supervise students' higher-level independent and partner work and handle a variety of time-consuming tasks such as making copies and completing paperwork.
- **Use a rigorous, differentiated instructional program to meet students' individual needs.** Those who show they understand the day's lesson are given opportunities to do more challenging work independently or in pairs with the guidance of a Learning Coach. Students who need more help receive targeted support from their teacher and a Teacher Apprentice.
- **Pay teachers and staff higher salaries and differentiate compensation based on the subject taught as well as rigorous teacher and leader evaluation systems.**
- **Provide Art of Thinking courses to teach students critical-thinking and problem-solving skills as well as how to assess, evaluate, and effectively use information.**
- **Provide specialty classes in the areas of fitness; music and fine arts; 21st-century media and technology; and hands-on science.** Classes supplement schools' existing electives and magnet programs and are taught by community consultants with specific knowledge and skills.
- **Are open longer hours to better support working families.**
All buildings open at 6:30 a.m. and stay open until 5 or 5:30 p.m.
- **Offer free trips for students to experience new places and cultures.**
In spring 2024—at no cost to their families—eligible seventh graders will travel to Washington, D.C., and eligible eighth graders will travel to Japan.
- **Have clear expectations for maintaining a culture of respect and a safe and productive learning environment.** Discipline is handled by administrators so teachers do not have to step away from instruction. Students who are disruptive are sent out of the classroom to take a time out, get counseled, or access other services and support. Most students who are removed from class for minor infractions rejoin their class remotely via Zoom until the next class period.
- **Will incorporate career and technical education programming aligned to changes in the workforce and will help students and teachers learn to use artificial intelligence effectively in the classroom and modern workplace.**