

HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT'S

State of the Schools

2008 Annual Report



HOUSTON
Independent School District



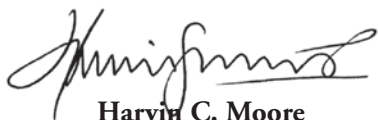
Creating a College-Bound Culture

The Houston Independent School District is at the forefront of the great challenge of our time: to break the connection between poverty and achievement, while still ensuring that all children achieve to their utmost potential. For the past 20 years, HISD has been nationally recognized as a leader in education reform—and for unprecedented results for a large urban school district.

Back in 1987, 70 percent of HISD schools were on the state's list of lowest-performing schools. But today, despite three major increases in accountability standards over that period, only 5 percent of our schools are in the state's lowest-performing category. We made those significant, steady gains in part because of a commitment to accountability, decentralization, competition, and, recently, a change in focus from passing a test to a focus on solid academic-achievement growth for every student, every year. That focus on achievement growth is now manifesting itself in significant gains in college-readiness and commended-performance levels. As one example, HISD students in 2008 had higher math college readiness than the state as a whole in every ethnic subgroup. While our work is not done, HISD is breaking the connection between poverty and low achievement.

At the beginning of 2008, I expressed a vision of HISD becoming a district filled with schools led by principals who are strong, collaborative leaders, who are determined to recruit and retain only the best teachers, and who consistently work with local nonprofits, neighborhood volunteers, and supportive corporations to provide everything our children need to succeed. That vision of an expectation of excellence, and a commitment to better collaboration and communication, continues to drive us in 2009.

We have a very long way to go—but the combined efforts of our excellent teachers, support staff, parents, and community have given us an enormous amount of pride, as well as energy for the rest of our journey.



Harvin C. Moore

*Trustee, HISD Board District VII
President, 2008 Board of Education*



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Pictured left to right are Secretary Carol Mims Galloway (District II), Greg Meyers (District VI), Diana Dávila (District VIII), Assistant Secretary Lawrence Marshall (District IX), President Harvin C. Moore (District VII), First Vice President Paula M. Harris (District IV), Manuel Rodríguez Jr. (District III), Second Vice President Natasha M. Kamrani (District I), Dianne Johnson (District V), and Superintendent of Schools Abelardo Saavedra, Ph.D.

For more information about the HISD Board of Education, including meeting dates and times, agendas, trustee biographies, and Board Monitoring System reports, visit www.houstonisd.org/board or call Board Services at 713-556-6121.

As this year's State of the Schools report outlines, the Houston Independent School District is performing at higher levels than ever before, thanks to the hard work and dedication of students, parents, partners, trustees, and every member of the HISD family.


Five years ago, HISD had nine Exemplary schools, as rated by the Texas Education Agency's accountability system. Today, it has 38, and the total number of highest-rated schools is 157. Surpassing the state by 10 percentage points in the percentage of Exemplary and Recognized schools, HISD is a district where being an Exemplary or Recognized school is the norm and not the exception. HISD's gains are just as impressive in student performance on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills. Over just the past two years, commended performance in science rose by 87 percent, in math by 36 percent, and in reading and social studies by 35 percent. During the same two years, HISD's growth in college-readiness has surpassed the state's, closing the gap between the district and the state to just five points in English and one point in math.

HISD has the vision and the tools needed for ongoing improvement. Launched in the 2007–2008 school year, the ASPIRE educational model (ASPIRE stands for Accelerating Student Progress, Increasing Results & Expectations) connects all of HISD's improvement initiatives, to make them more effective. Its value-added analysis of data helped to produce the outstanding student academic growth that is highlighted in this State of the Schools report. And the ASPIRE Award program is rewarding the teachers whose students make the strongest academic progress and developing human capital through targeted professional development and the sharing of best practices.

To build on the success of these changes, HISD is expanding the ASPIRE model to include a performance-management system that makes every member of the HISD family, no matter what role they play in the organization, more responsive in helping our schools perform at the highest levels possible and make sure every student graduates from high school college- and career-ready. In addition, the district is developing stronger two-way communication with the community it serves. HISD works hard to keep the public informed of its goals, initiatives, activities, challenges, and accomplishments. The district is also committed to transparency in its communications and listening to the community's concerns, wishes, and aspirations and engaging the community in our vital work through participation and volunteerism.

By staying focused on the goals and core values that define and guide this district, HISD will continue to provide Houston's children with the world-class education they need and deserve.




Abelardo Saavedra, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools

INTRODUCTION

The largest public school system in Texas and the seventh-largest in the United States, the **Houston Independent School District** has served millions of area students and families since its founding in 1923. Throughout its history, HISD has worked to strengthen the social and economic foundation of Houston by striving to provide the highest-quality education through an intensive core curriculum and specialized, challenging instructional and career programs.

A Strong Foundation

The reform efforts that have made HISD one of the finest urban school systems in America were launched with the Board of Education's *A Declaration of Beliefs and Visions* in 1990. Trustees called for a new educational structure that fosters the relationship between the teacher and the student, features shared decision-making through a decentralized system, focuses on performance rather than compliance, promotes more parental involvement, and offers a common core of academic subjects for all students.

Statements of **purpose and strategic intent and sets of goals and core values** help guide the district on its path to ongoing success (they are printed on the back cover of this report).

Those ideals and principles are the foundations of the initiatives that are driving HISD's continuous improvement, and the 2003 Board of Education created the **Board Monitoring System** as a mechanism for measuring the district's progress in achieving the aims outlined in *Beliefs and Visions* and reporting that progress to the public.

HISD's record of innovation, efficiency, and effectiveness has garnered national attention. In 2002, the district won the inaugural **Broad Prize for Urban Education**, awarded annually for outstanding overall improvement while narrowing the achievement gap between economic and ethnic groups. In 2007 the Board of Education was a co-winner of the **National School Boards Association's Urban School-Board Excellence Award**, and in 2008 the district won the **Greater Houston Partnership's "Houston's Greatest" Award** in the nonprofit business organization category for its role in advancing the greater Houston region as a business magnet. *(Continued on page 2.)*



Teaching and Learning, Accountability

The district's strategic intent is to earn so much respect from the citizens of Houston that HISD becomes their prekindergarten through grade 12 educational system of choice.

ASPIRE—the district's educational-improvement and performance-management model—is the primary catalyst to support all HISD stakeholders in achieving this purpose. Through ASPIRE, HISD:

- Continues connecting and aligning all campus and central service initiatives and functions to support district goals
- Creates more clarity around expectations and accountability measures for all campus and central service initiatives and functions
- Fosters collaboration and communication among HISD employees, families, and business and community members
- Guides decision making, research, and policy development
- Optimizes performance and efficiency while ensuring the highest quality service and support
- Replicates best practices and recognizes excellence while reinforcing a culture of continuous improvement

ASPIRE and other efforts are also helping HISD teach children to read as soon as possible. In 2008, the district launched the **Literacy Leads the Way Initiative**, which includes setting expectations for reading, writing, and speaking, and making literacy coaches available at all grade levels; expanding the use of Lexiles (measures that match students with books geared to their reading skills); improving the quality of district libraries; and working with the Houston Public Library to encourage more reading all year long.

Special thanks to the Broad Foundation, the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for their generous support.



Modern, Safe Facilities

HISD is committed to providing the students, parents, and communities it serves with schools that are safe, inspiring, well-equipped, and technologically up-to-date learning environments. To achieve that goal, HISD has submitted a series of three bond proposals to Houston's voters in recent years (1998, 2002, and 2007).

The current \$805-million bond program, approved by voters in 2007, includes the construction of 24 new schools, the expansion of four other schools, and the renovation of another 134. All schools in the district will receive safety and security upgrades, such as new fencing, security cameras, public address systems, and other security enhancements, and all middle- and high-school science labs will be updated and improved. The program also calls for the improvement of both the infrastructure and accessibility of Barnett, Butler, and Delmar Stadiums.

Committed to building "green" schools that save taxpayer dollars while also protecting the environment, the district has also developed a six-year, \$232-million pay-as-you-go facilities-improvement plan that required no tax increase.

Responsible Financial Stewardship

Committed to both fiscal responsibility and academic excellence, HISD regularly wins state and national recognition for its financial integrity and management. HISD maintains the lowest property tax rate among the 20 school districts in Harris County, and HISD has the lowest rate among the 13 largest school districts in Texas.

PRIORITIES AND CHALLENGES IN 2009

HISD will continue to build on its past successes by increasing the graduation rate, improving human capital, expanding the emphasis on performance management, and strengthening communications.

Graduating More Students

HISD will continue to work to increase the high-school graduation rate. The district will maintain the Reach Out to Dropouts effort and study the district's retention and promotion policies, because students who have been held back for failing just one subject and are thus older than their peers are more at risk of dropping out. The district will examine other procedures such as course-credit requirements for graduation.

Developing Human Capital

HISD's ASPIRE Awards program paid out a record-breaking \$31.4 million to 15,700 employees last year. The district will work to expand the program and continue to focus on the "Developing Human Capital" component of the ASPIRE educational-improvement model because both efforts help to achieve the primary goal of increasing student achievement.

The district will also continue to enrich its talent pool and increase student achievement by attracting and retaining the most successful educators. HISD is developing a plan that involves additional awards for "master teachers"—those ranked in the top 10 percent for at least two consecutive years on the basis of their students' academic growth.

To help the district to hire the best employees, HISD is considering adjusting its recruitment efforts to include more-

personalized approaches as well as traditional job fairs.

As a benefit for all employees and for use as a recruitment tool, HISD is considering opening onsite clinics and day-care centers for district employees and their families.

Performance Management

The districtwide implementation of a performance-management system will increase accountability throughout the organization and strengthen the support that schools receive. (See "Teaching and Learning, Accountability" above, to learn more.)

Communications

The district will continue to strengthen its communication efforts, building on the new assistant superintendent for communications and publications position and developing a set of goals that include more two-way communication with the community HISD serves.



Increase Student Achievement



To make sure that all students graduate college- and career-ready, HISD focused on significant academic growth, strong performance on state and national achievement tests, and narrowing performance gaps between minority and nonminority students.

Record-High Performance on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

HISD posted its third consecutive year of good progress on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, with students scoring record highs on the state achievement test and 84 percent of schools improving in passing rates in social studies and 79 percent in science.

Students also improved in math and in science at every grade level on the English-language TAKS, sometimes by as many as 11 percentage points, and 70 percent of HISD schools improved in math, 61 percent of schools improved in reading, and 60 percent improved in writing.

HISD also had increases nearly across the board in students earning “commended” status on the TAKS by answering nearly every question on the test correctly. The percentage of eighth-graders earning commended status in reading rose six points to 39 percent, and the percentage of fourth-graders rated as commended in writing increased 12 points to 30 percent.

Reading TAKS passing rates at HISD improved in grades 7, 8, 10, and 11 and held mostly steady in lower grades, while social-studies passing rates improved at every grade level, in some cases by as much as five points.

The number of HISD eleventh-graders passing the exit-level TAKS also rose sharply this year, with 69 percent of juniors passing all tests taken compared with 61 percent last year.

82 Percent of HISD Schools Make AYP

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is the accountability component of the federal No Child Left Behind Act. America’s schools are required to meet annual targets in reading and mathematics performance. There are also targets for graduation rates in the case of high schools and attendance rates for elementary and middle schools.

Eighty-two percent of HISD schools rated met the federal accountability standard in the 2007–2008 school year. The drop of six percentage points from the previous school year reflected a change in testing policy to meet federal AYP requirements. In 2008, for the first time, many Special Education students who previously took the state-developed alternative assessment off grade-level were tested using the new TAKS-Accommodated on grade level. That resulted in a 19-percent drop in the test scores of Special Education students districtwide, but at the same time other HISD subgroups saw gains, resulting in an across-the-board drop of 6 percent. Despite

these new tests, HISD’s Special Education students made enough progress to meet the standards set by the AYP requirements. However, due to the federal limit on proficiency results mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act, HISD missed AYP for reading/English language arts for the Special Education subgroup. HISD also missed AYP for the graduation rate.

More Students Taking Dual-Credit, AP Courses

Dual-credit and Advanced Placement (AP) courses give students the opportunity to earn high-school and college credits at the same time. Record numbers of HISD students took these classes, giving them a head start as college freshmen and saving their parents thousands of dollars in college tuition. The number of students enrolled in dual-credit courses rose 47 percent from 2007 to 2008, with a passing rate for all students at 95.1 percent. Nearly 7,900 students were enrolled in AP classes in 2007–2008 representing an increase of 34.8 percent since 2003.

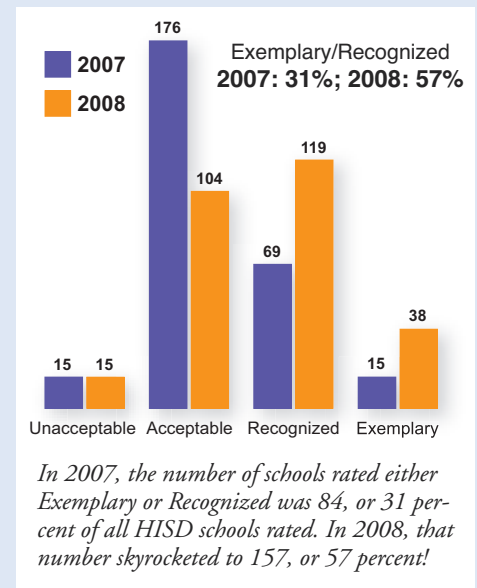
Record Number of Schools Earn Highest State Ratings

HISD’s strong focus on academic progress by every student helped Houston schools achieve their best results ever, with a record **157 HISD schools**—nearly double last year’s number—earning the highest academic ratings, “**Exemplary**” or “**Recognized**,” under the state’s current accountability system (see chart).

This year, more than half (57%) of HISD’s schools were rated in the state’s top two performance categories, making “**Exemplary**” or “**Recognized**” status the norm in HISD, not the exception.

In all, **95 percent** of HISD schools met or exceeded the state standard this year, and the district as a whole was rated as Academically Acceptable.

Announced at a communitywide rally at the Delmar Field House, the new ratings came after a school year in which HISD also saw record numbers of students scoring at the “commended” level on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) by answering almost all questions correctly.



GOAL ONE *(continued)*

HISD Students Gain in College-Readiness

With a student population that is approximately 90 percent minority and 80 percent economically disadvantaged, HISD made more progress than the state average in improving college-readiness among all students and each student group for both English Language Arts and mathematics in 2008. Although the state beat the district in the percentage of all students meeting this higher level of performance, the district closed the gap in English Language Arts from 13 to 5 percentage points in the last year and in math from 7 to 3 percentage points.

For 2008 at the separate student group-level, HISD beat the state average in performance on the math college-readiness indicator and met or exceeded the state at the college-readiness standard for English language arts. Further, four HISD high schools—Bellaire, Charles Milby, and John Reagan High Schools and Michael E. DeBakey High School for Health Professions—received a 2008 College Readiness Award from the Texas ACT Council for increasing the number of students taking the ACT test and increasing their level of achievement.

HISD Students Improve PSAT, SAT, and ACT Participation, Performance

HISD's college-bound students made significant gains in the 2007–2008 administrations of the Preliminary SAT (PSAT), the SAT Reasoning Test (SAT), and the ACT college-entrance exam (ACT).

The percentage of sophomore and juniors taking the PSAT rose to 80 percent from 77.6 percent the previous year. The PSAT serves as preparation for the SAT Reasoning Test, as a qualifying examination for numerous scholarship programs (including the National Merit Scholarship Program), and as a tool schools can use to identify students with the potential for success in Advanced Placement classes. They also improved their average performance on the writing section.

More graduating seniors took the ACT, and their composite scores and mean scores on all sections of the test were higher than those in 2007. In addition, more students took Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate exams.

Stanford/Aprenda Scores Make Strong Progress

Students' strong performance on the nationally normed Stanford/Aprenda achievement tests further indicated HISD's success in making Houston's children college- and career-ready. Students made Stanford 10 test gains of as many as five points in normal curve equivalent scores, which allow the comparison of student performance from different test administrations. Results were even better on the Aprenda 3, which measures the academic achievement of K–8 Spanish-speaking students in their native language and is modeled on the Stanford 10, with NCE scores rising as many as nine points.

Reach Out to Dropouts Walk Returns Students to School

Superintendent of Schools Abelardo Saavedra, Board of Education members, HISD employees, and volunteers from the community were joined by Mayor Bill White and his wife Andrea, and other city and state officials, for the district's fifth annual Reach Out to Dropouts Walk. More than 1,400 people visited 1,913 homes, made direct contact with 1,053 students or parents, and persuaded nearly 100 dropouts to come back to school to continue their education.

Petroleum Academies Open

To help prepare students for rewarding careers in the oil industry, HISD created three petroleum academies that will focus on engineering and geoscience. The district's collaboration with the Independent Petroleum Association of America includes more than \$28 million in educational grants, incentives, software, teacher stipends, and training for the Academy for Petroleum Exploration and Production Technology at Charles Milby High School, the Engineering and Geosciences Academy at Westside High School, and the Global Energy Management Program at Mirabeau Lamar High School.

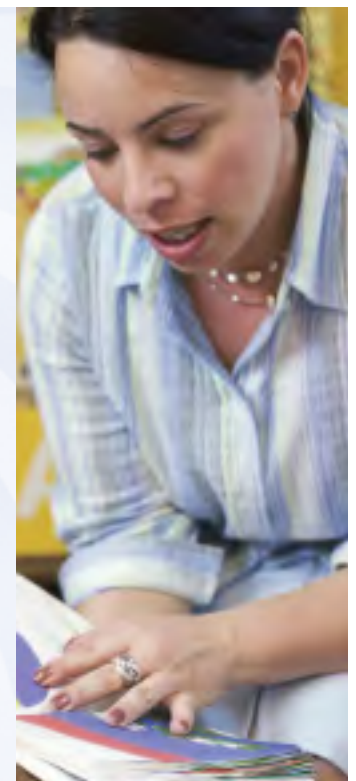
New E-STEM Academy Focuses on Science, Math, Technology

Housed at Jack Yates High School, the new Energized for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Academy (E-STEM) was created to serve students entering the ninth grade who are creative, learn best through hands-on experiences in a nontraditional setting, and are able to use technology as a springboard to deeper understanding of their academic course work. Support for the program is provided by a group of community partners that includes the City of Houston Green Program, Rice University, Texas Southern University, Houston Community College, and C-STEM Teacher and Student Support Services.

HISD Awards Millions in Performance Bonuses

HISD reached its goal of a \$10,000 maximum award in its nationally recognized teacher-performance-pay program thanks to a \$13.1-million award from the TEA's District Awards for Teacher Excellence (DATE) Grant Program. HISD paid more than \$23 million in ASPIRE Award performance bonuses to nearly 13,000 HISD teachers and instructional and noninstructional staff members as a reward for helping children make strong academic progress during the 2006–2007 school year.

In addition, 104 HISD schools were identified by the TEA as eligible for nearly \$10 million in grants as a reward for their performance under the Governor's Educator Excellence Award Program. Each qualifying campus was eligible for a one-year grant award ranging from \$40,000 to \$210,000, depending on student enrollment, and 75 percent of the total award must be used for awards to classroom teachers who improve student performance.



Two New Schools Target At-Risk Students

The district collaborated with Inspired for Excellence Academy, Inc., to establish the fifth- and sixth-grade program, which will eventually be located in all quadrants of the school district. Designed to assist students who are likely to struggle in ninth grade and not graduate from high school, it includes a comprehensive after-school tutoring and enrichment program, and group and individual counseling to support improvement in academic achievement, behavior, and self-esteem.

A partnership with Leaders in Education, Inc., established Houston Advantage East End High School, a career-preparation charter high school for students who are overage for their grade level and have fallen behind in graduation credits, and are likely to drop out. With support from the East End Chamber of Commerce, Oak Farms Dairy, VAM Drilling, Anheuser Busch Brewery, Port of Houston Authority Partners Electrical Services, and Texas Port Recycling, the new school provides the opportunity to gain on-the-job training, certifications, and college credit.

Sam Houston High School Repurposed

Ordered closed after several years of “academically unacceptable” ratings by the TEA, Sam Houston High School was repurposed as two separate schools on the Houston High site. The Sam Houston Math, Science, and Technology Center offers college and career pathways for students in engineering, health professions, information technology, and automotive technology. The Ninth-Grade College-Preparatory Academy features a longer school day, college and career programs, teen leadership classes focusing on character development, dual-credit and Advanced Placement courses, and intensive math, science, and technology instruction.

Partnership Promotes Summertime Reading

HISD worked with Houston Public Libraries in an intensive literacy effort that encouraged students to read a collective one million books. This initiative is part of “Literacy Leads the Way,” the district’s \$3-million prekindergarten-through-twelfth-grade program designed to significantly improve students’ literacy skills. The goal was for each of 200,000 HISD students to read at least five books during



Students from Bruce Elementary School performing at Fine Arts Friday in January 2008. Bruce is one of the many schools in the district to purchase new musical instruments thanks to VH1's Save the Music.

the summer, and for parents to read with their children as well. Students who read five books over the summer as part of this initiative received a “Millionaire Club” T-shirt.

Academic Coaches Help Athletes Become Better Students

Each of HISD’s 23 comprehensive high schools now has an academic coach to help student athletes score better grades, improve test scores, and earn more college scholarships. The program is supported through \$1,365,000 in federal funding and an additional \$400,000 raised in the local community by the Touchdown Club of Houston and the National Football Foundation.

Seniors Receive Nearly \$4 Million in Project GRAD, Rodeo Scholarships

For the seventeenth consecutive year, Project GRAD Houston awarded college scholarships totaling \$2.4 million to graduating seniors from five HISD high schools. More than 600 Jefferson Davis, Sam Houston, John Reagan, Phillis Wheatley, and Jack Yates High School students received a \$4,000 scholarship that they may use at any accredited college or university in the country. In addition, 98 students from almost every high school in the district received \$15,000 scholarships from the Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo.

Through these and other opportunities, the students in the Class of 2008 were offered nearly \$79 million in college scholarships.

District Receives Support for Musical Instruments

HISD received a total of \$1.4 million in funds and in-kind donations to help reestablish music-education programs and ensure that students can receive music education as part of their core curriculum. The VH1 Save the Music Foundation, Comcast, and Yamaha Corporation of America contributed \$450,000 worth of musical instruments to 15 HISD schools. Fidelity Investments and the Houston Symphony launched Fidelity FutureStage, a new music-education initiative which included more than \$50,000 in new instruments. The 2007 WinterFest fundraising event for HISD’s Sound Investment Program raised nearly \$200,000 to purchase or repair musical instruments for use by children who cannot afford to buy their own.

HISD Receives Millions in Federal, State, Corporate Grants

HISD receives helpful financial support from the state and federal governments, major foundations, and area individuals, organizations, and businesses aimed at enhancing the instruction, resources, and services the district offers its students. Below is a list of some of that support.

- \$12.6 million from the TEA for reading and math programs
- \$3 million for the Texas 21st-Century Community Learning Centers program of after-school academic activities such as tutoring
- \$1.35 million in Teaching American History grants for teachers’ professional development
- \$500,000 from the U.S. Department of Education for HISD’s Character Education program
- \$378,000 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to serve nearly 1,000 refugee students enrolled in HISD schools
- \$300,000 from Target for after-school fine-arts experiences
- \$5,000 and \$10,000 grants for 26 teachers, from the national Fund for Teachers
- \$100,000 from Dell Computers to design “Intelligent Classrooms” and purchase laptops and other technology
- BP A+ for Energy grants to more than two dozen HISD teachers



Provide a Safe Environment



HISD improved the safety and security of district schools, facilities, and events through changes in policy, new staffing initiatives, and responses to emergencies.

HISD Provides Critical Support to Community, Students, and Employees during Hurricane Ike

With its emergency response team working literally around the clock for a full week, HISD began preparing for Hurricane Ike well before it hit Houston early in the morning of September 13. The district ordered schools and offices closed starting Friday, September 12, and as school buses returned from their afternoon routes on Thursday, they were parked at district sports complexes in protective circle-the-wagons-style “storm formation.” Thanks to the preventive measures, not one of the district’s approximately 1,000 buses was damaged. When HISD made 10 secondary schools available as temporary “shelters of last resort” for community members, HISD employees staffed the shelters and Transportation Services dispatched buses to those campuses to provide emergency transportation as needed.

HISD responded to the hurricane just hours after the storm slammed in from the Gulf Coast. The following day, scores of employees from regional offices, schools, and district departments began working to get schools ready to reopen as soon as possible. Coordinating with officials from the City of Houston and other agencies, the district’s rapid response included clearing campuses of debris, making critical repairs to facilities, working with local energy companies to restore power and air conditioning at schools, making sure all employees would receive their wages on schedule following their return to work, maintaining building security, and removing all food from school cafeteria refrigerators, and later restocking them so students would be fed when their schools reopened.

Code of Student Conduct Strengthened

Following the annual process of strengthening and clarifying the *Code of Student Conduct*—a process that includes recommendations from a committee of school principals, teachers, and parents—HISD expanded the ban on gang-affiliated clothing and gang-related or offensive tattoos, defined and prohibited dating violence, clarified provisions dealing with truancy, and prohibited attempted bribery of any school employee by students (e.g., to improve a grade).

Teen Court Allows Students to Continue Education

To continue to educate students who are charged with criminal conduct or get expelled, HISD collaborated with the Harris County District Attorney’s Office, Houston Ministers Against Crime, and three Harris County Justices of the Peace to create a Teen Court that will provide enhanced juvenile-justice services to students in the South Region’s five high schools. The program is designed to develop safe school environments and give students more community-based behavioral, social, and emotional support.

Ban on Bullying Broadened

HISD significantly expanded the ban on bullying that is part of the district’s prohibition of discrimination and harassment. The ban already barred bullying based on a characteristic protected under law, such as race, color, religion, sex, national origin, and disability. HISD added bullying based on weight to the list of prohibited conduct.

New Program Helps HISD Recruit Police Officers

In order to increase the size of the force and compete more effectively with other police departments for qualified recruits, the HISD Police Department implemented a new Police Trainee Sponsorship Program. Applicants are hired as HISD Police Trainees and enroll in local police academies, where the district pays for the training and a basic salary. Upon graduation, applicants are sworn in as HISD Police Officers. For recruits working in another field while paying for their own police training courses, the HISD Police Department pays all training costs and applicants commit to at least three years of service.



Kolter Elementary School did not wait for power to be restored following Hurricane Ike to get back to teaching and learning. Teachers voluntarily coordinated outdoor learning activities for dozens of restless students, who had been out of school for two weeks. Pictured are fifth-graders Meghan Rodríguez (right) and Myrah Porter participating in a science lesson involving weights and measures.



Increase Management Efficiency



Committed to fiscal responsibility and maximum support for educational programs and employees, HISD increased school and per-student funding, raised employee pay, strengthened accountability districtwide, and developed innovative money-saving and human-capital initiatives.

Budget Focuses on Schools, Teachers, Students

HISD's \$1.6-billion (net of recapture) general-fund budget for 2008–2009 included a \$10.2-million increase in per-student funding for schools, \$10 million to improve school libraries, \$10 million to boost fine-arts programs, \$20 million for capital needs, \$8.7 million to improve athletics facilities, \$2.17 million for the district's new training institute for principals, \$864,000 to improve the curriculum for gifted and talented students and expand testing of four-year-olds for G&T programs, and \$15.9 million in districtwide spending cuts to help balance the budget. In addition, all teachers received a pay raise of at least 3 percent, which increased the average teacher salary by nearly 4 percent. HISD teacher salaries have increased for 10 consecutive years, for a total increase of 61 percent.

Performance Management Extended

Work began on the next generation of the ASPIRE model to extend it to include performance-management for central and regional offices. Working with the district's partner Battelle for Kids, HISD is developing ways to measure results so that everyone is responsible for supporting the best possible instruction for every child in every classroom, establish reporting procedures so that everyone knows how much progress is being made, and recognize outstanding performance on the basis of results.

New Transportation, Food Services Facilities Increase Efficiency, Quality

Every school day, HISD's Food Services Department serves more than 240,000 meals. In addition, Transportation Services' 1,000 buses travel more than 80,000 miles per day to transport more than 40,000 students to and from school and other school-related activities. To help these crucial service providers operate as efficiently and effectively as possible, HISD built a new central transportation facility, as well as a state-of-the-art food storage and preparation facility that will enable the district to become the national leader among school districts in good nutrition.

HISD Offers Health Plans with No Increases in Premiums

Although costs for medical and pharmacy plans continue to rise nationwide, HISD did not increase the employee or district contributions to its medical plans, the fourth consecutive year of no rises in premiums. The district held the line by using fund surpluses built up over the past several years, and by making some improvements in the plan designs. HISD's health plans also included free on-site flu shots and health screenings and monetary incentives to monitor, manage, and improve one's health.

Bond Ratings Upgraded, Honors and Awards

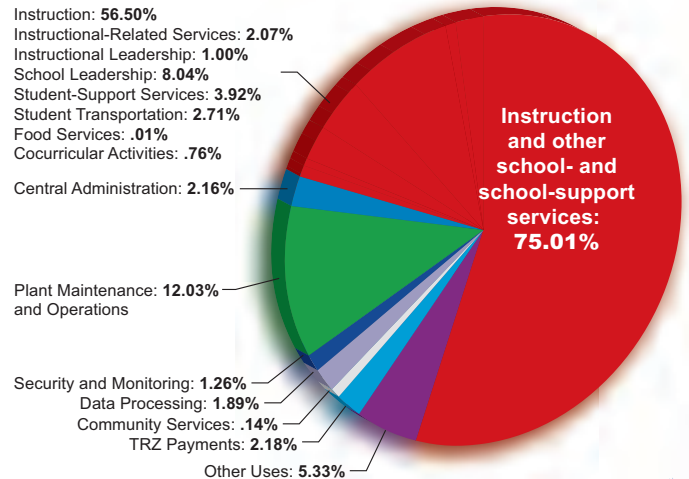
Standard & Poor's raised the district's bond rating to AA+ (second-highest rating possible); Moody's bond rating for HISD is also AA+. The high ratings enable the district to obtain more-favorable interest rates. HISD received its sixth consecutive "Superior Achievement" rating from the TEA's Schools FIRST (Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas) financial accountability system. The Association of School Business Officials awarded HISD the district's 31st Meritorious Budget Award. HISD also won an award from the Government Finance Officers Association for the outstanding work of the Budgeting and Financial Planning Department, the Controller's Office, and Office of the Chief Financial Officer.

General-Fund Revenues, Expenditures, and Fund Balance

For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2008, total general-fund revenues (including other sources) were \$1,571,172,963 (local: \$950,170,420 (60.5%); other local: \$34,761,796 (2.2%); state: \$543,571,805 (34.6%); federal: \$5,776,363 (.36%); other: \$36,892,579 (2.34%)). Total general-fund expenditures (including other uses) were \$1,505,252,237 (see chart). The ending fund balance was \$523,685,000. For detailed budget information, see www.houstonisd.org/finance.

Chart: Total expenditures for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2008, were \$1,505,252,237, with instruction and other school- and student-support services accounting for approximately 75 percent* of the total.

*Calculation includes expenditures for instruction, instructional-related services, instructional leadership, school leadership, student-support services, student transportation, food services, and cocurricular activities.



Improve Public Support and Confidence in Schools



HISD's efforts to improve support and confidence included informative community meetings, better communication with students and parents, and initiatives to improve students' health and well-being.

Five Schools Earn Federal Blue Ribbon Status

Victor Hartsfield, Harvard, and Lora Peck Elementary Schools, Pin Oak Middle School, and Carnegie Vanguard High School were named No Child Left Behind-Blue Ribbon Schools by the U.S. Department of Education. Only 26 public schools in Texas received the award, which recognizes schools that either have at least 40 percent economically disadvantaged students who show dramatic improvement in the TAKS, or are ranked in the top 10 percent in TAKS results.

Record Number of HISD Schools Make State Honor Roll

Eighteen HISD schools were named to the Texas Business and Education Coalition's 2008 list of Texas Honor Roll Schools. Honor Roll Schools have demonstrated three years of consistent, high performance in all subjects compared to other schools serving similar student populations. Less than 5 percent of the more than 8,000 public schools in Texas earn the honor.

Five HISD Campuses on Newsweek's List of Best High Schools

Campuses included in *Newsweek's* roster of the 1,425 best high schools in the country (out of some 27,000) were Bellaire (102), DeBakey Health Professions (191), Westside (245), HSPVA (343), and Lamar (865). The list is based on an index determined by dividing the number of graduates by the number of Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, or Cambridge tests taken.

Community Forums Inform Parents about ASPIRE

HISD conducted 175 community forums throughout the district to educate more than 1,000 parents and community members about the ASPIRE educational-improvement model and the ways the district is working to prepare all students to be college- and career-ready. The meetings featured information about the difference between student progress and student achievement, why it's important to measure both, and how ASPIRE's value-added analysis helps HISD improve teaching and learning districtwide.

Public Engagement Committee Created

HISD formed the Superintendent's Public Engagement Committee to gain valuable input from key community members on district issues and initiatives. The parents, business leaders, and community members who make up the committee are nominated by Board of Education trustees and the superintendent, who chairs the committee. Minutes from all meetings are available online, and a summary is provided to the board.

Special Web Portal Provides Information for Secondary School Students, Parents

HISD launched *The Source*, a Web portal specially designed to serve students and their parents. The online tool provides access to class schedules, progress reports, report cards, TAKS data, curriculum resources, daily and period attendance that is updated nightly, and a student HISD e-mail account.

Online System Enables Parents to Pay for, Monitor Students' School Meals

HISD launched *Parent Online*, a Web-based system enables parents to prepay for their children's school meals using a credit card, view account balances and student purchase history, and manage their children's nutrition online. Accessible 24 hours a day on the Food Services Department Web site, the system also e-mails parents when account balances are low.

Learning Labs Keep Parents, Community Informed

HISD conducted a series of Learning Labs where parents and community members could learn more about their school district and the issues it faces. Topics for discussion included school funding and finance, the district's legislative agenda, performance pay for teachers, school accountability, HISD's communication efforts, and parent and community involvement.



Create a Positive District Culture



To help create a more powerful sense of community and shared direction among employees and the public, HISD improved employee health plans, assisted lower-paid employees with rising fuel costs, and took steps to strengthen communications.

Employees Reach Out to the Needy

HISD demonstrated its caring and generosity toward those in need by pledging almost \$580,000 to nearly 700 local, national, and global charities represented in 14 charitable foundations.

HISD Creates No-cost/Low-cost Health Plans

In addition to reducing the cost for the basic health-insurance program for employees by nearly 40 percent and to less than \$50 per month for employee-only coverage, HISD developed a flexible spending account and medical discount plan option for the nearly 3,400 benefits-eligible employees, both full-time and part-time, who do not participate in a medical plan.

Subsidy Helps Employees with Rising Fuel Prices

HISD allocated \$2.85 million to help most of the district's 10,000 lower-paid employees deal with high gasoline prices. The plan provided a one-time bonus of \$250 to thousands of cafeteria workers, bus drivers, custodians, clerks, and others who make less than \$30,000 a year.

HISD Hosts National Education Conference

HISD hosted the 52nd Annual Council of the Great City Schools conference, where more than 1,000 urban school leaders from around the nation addressed key issues in education that affect millions of children nationwide. The event included a special town-hall meeting moderated by Dan Rather in which education advisers representing presidential candidates Barack Obama and John McCain joined urban school leaders to discuss the future of education.

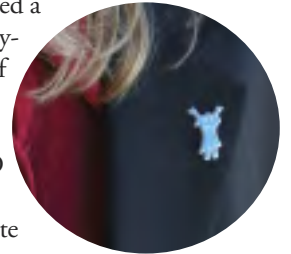
School Support "Good," Getting Better

As part of HISD's emphasis on performance management, 246 principals took part in a survey about the customer service provided schools by central administration. With 67 administrative departments rated, overall the central administration and regional offices

received high marks for the work they do. Fifty-nine departments received ratings of "good," and no department was rated "poor." Even so, the district began addressing any areas that principals said could be improved, such as courtesy and responsiveness to telephone calls and e-mails.

Lapel Pin Emphasizes HISD's Brand, Mission

To reinforce the district's branding images and to reflect our mission to support "Creating a College-Bound Culture," the district developed a lapel pin for employees and members of the community. The design is based on the HISD logo—a jubilant high-school graduate in cap and gown.



New Post Oversees Communications and Publications

To improve communication with the community and build stronger partnerships with the public, HISD created the position of assistant superintendent for communications and publications. The new post brings together six key departments: Administrative Services (including printing services, records management, and the mail room), Communication Services (which encompasses publications, the HISD *Connect* Web portal, and translation services), the HISD Information Center, Instructional Media Services (the district's cable-television operation), Media Relations (formerly the Press Office), and Strategic Partnerships (business and community partnerships, parental involvement, Volunteers in Public Schools, special events, and the HISD Foundation).

Fine Arts Fridays Feature Student Performers



Dancers from Albert Sidney Johnston Middle School perform at Fine Arts Fridays.

To showcase the talents of HISD students, performing groups from district elementary, middle, and high schools entertained Hattie Mae White Educational Support Center employees in a series of lunchtime Fine Arts Friday appearances. The performances, which are shared with the community via the HISD cable TV channel, featured orchestras, string ensembles, choirs, mariachi and jazz bands, and folklorico, ballet, and tap dancers.



Provide Facilities-to-Standard Program



In 2008, HISD continued its commitment to providing Houston's children with safe, modern, environmentally friendly, cost-effective, and inspiring facilities in which to learn.

District Conducts Series of Community Meetings on School Proposals

As part of its ongoing commitment to community-outreach efforts, HISD held 54 meetings throughout the district to inform parents and community members about programs, school funding, and possible future school closings and consolidations. Attended by more than 1,800 community members, the meetings also gathered feedback on how HISD can better communicate future school-facilities plans, improve the educational programs in its schools, and facilitate school consolidations for affected students and their families.

Trade Magazine Honors HISD Buildings for Excellence

Two HISD facilities were honored by a national publication as some of the top new-construction projects in the Gulf Coast area. The two-year-old Hattie Mae White Educational Support Center was featured in the Houston/Coastal Texas Edition of *Real Estate & Construction Review* as one of the best in the region. In addition, John J. Pershing Middle School was featured in another issue of the same magazine for being nominated for the "Building of America" award bestowed by Construction Communications, which publishes the magazine. *Real Estate & Construction Review* is used by state, county, and city economic development groups to highlight the vitality of their respective communities. Each project featured in the publication shows how it is making a difference for its community and outlines what makes it innovative and unique.

HISD School Renovation Wins Preservation Award

The Greater Houston Preservation Alliance recognized the district's renovation and sympathetic additions to historic West University Elementary School with a Good Brick Award for excellence in historic preservation. A jury of design and preservation professionals honored HISD for its inclusion of sensitive updates to the original Primary School building (constructed in 1925) and the former Pershing Junior High School building (completed in 1928). Two new structures carry over many of the distinctive Spanish Renaissance characteristics of the historic buildings, including clay tile roofs, cast stone trim, and signature brick patterns. The project carefully addressed neighborhood concerns about preserving the historic buildings and the character of the campus.

Bond Program Completes Six More New Schools

In 2008, as part of the district's ongoing campaign to build new schools and renovate old ones, HISD opened or dedicated six new campuses:

- Gregory-Lincoln Education Center (a fine-arts Magnet school)
- John H. Reagan High School
- John J. Pershing Middle School
- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Elementary School
- Roderick Paige Elementary School
- A new replacement facility for Ethel R. Coop Elementary School



Dr. Rod Paige, at the dedication ceremony in May for HISD's new Roderick Paige Elementary School, with the five "little Rods" who represented various stages in his career. Left to right are: Robert Knowles (as coach of the TSU Tigers), Daryll Smith (student in Mississippi), Michael Green (dean of the School of Education at TSU), Dumontray Keller (HISD Trustee and Superintendent, U.S. Secretary of Education), and Malik Mills (college football player).



Working Together: Partners, Volunteers

Giving Houston's young people a rich, comprehensive education requires the collaboration of students, teachers, administrators, parents, elected officials, and concerned members of the community. HISD's partners in education include businesses, community organizations, nonprofit agencies, civic groups, religious organizations, and thousands of Houstonians who care about the city's future.

Thank You!

To recognize excellence among its volunteers and partners, HISD presents awards to some of the people and organizations that demonstrate their commitment to public education by sharing their time, attention, and resources with Houston-area students.

The **Jean Davis Myers Award** is presented annually to an individual or group whose program or volunteer effort has had a positive effect on students in several HISD schools. The winner of the Jean Davis Myers Award for 2007–2008 was Devon Energy Corporation, which has been working with students at Ruby Thompson Elementary, Ezekiel Cullen Middle, and Jack Yates High Schools for the past three years. Devon Energy Corporation volunteers provide individualized tutoring and mentoring to ensure that first- and second-graders at Thompson reach their full potential.

Pat Rosenberg, a previous recipient of the Jean Davis Myers Award, who volunteers 40 hours per week at Lanier Middle School, received the **Special Lifetime Achievement Award** for her more than 20 years of service as an HISD volunteer.



Pat Rosenberg

Four business partners were recognized for their contributions and support by being inducted into the **HISD Partnership Hall of Fame** (see below).



Inducted into HISD's Partnership Hall of Fame in 2008 were the Federal Reserve Bank, the Harris County Department of Education Cooperative for After-School Enrichment, the Houston Chronicle in Education program, and the McDonald's Corporation. The awards were accepted in November at the Partnership Hall of Fame celebration by (L–R) Harris County Department of Education Superintendent John Sawyer, Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas (Houston Branch) Vice President René Gonzales, McDonald's franchise owner Mary Redmond, and Houston Chronicle in Education Manager Ed Vaughn.

HISD's Strategic Partnerships Department matches the needs of schools with partners who can provide mentors, tutors, supplies/services, or financial contributions to help individual schools. The district's acclaimed Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS) program and the initiatives listed below are some of the ways parents, community members, and the business community can help HISD succeed.

Community Engagement creates relationships among schools, community organizations, businesses, and others committed to our students to provide connected learning experiences linking the classroom to real world opportunities.

HISD Foundation is a private, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization that exists to support and enhance the HISD's priority improvement projects that advance student academic performance for which tax dollars are not available. The Foundation seeks private contributions for districtwide and school-based programs. For more information, please contact foundation@houstonisd.org.

Parent Engagement programs ensure that parents are informed about the state of the school and the district as a whole; engaged in the educational process; and equipped with the tools necessary to be advocates for students as well as the district at the community, state, and federal levels. Districtwide leadership is provided to facilitate and coordinate parent involvement activities consistent with the district's core value, "Parents are Partners."

HIPPY (Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters) is a model for early childhood education that provides skills for school success. A free community service, HIPPY serves diverse families in the Houston Independent School District.

VIPS are HISD volunteers. Each year, nearly 60,000 parents, students and community partners support HISD students and teachers by volunteering their time. VIPS represent all economic, ethnic and educational backgrounds. They are caring adults or children who tutor or mentor students, serve as classroom assistants to teachers, provide enrichment and hands-on experience with computers, work in the library, clinic, office, cafeteria, and provide other support.

Texas Scholars Program is a joint effort between school districts and the business community to demonstrate to students the vital link between a strong academic foundation and their future success. Key to the success of this program are experienced business professionals making presentations to eighth- and tenth-grade students. The presentations emphasize the fact that students who complete the Texas Scholars curriculum, officially known as the Recommended High School Program, are better prepared for college, technical school, or workplace.

Get Involved! To register as a volunteer, or for more information, go to www.houstonisd.org/VIPS. To explore **partner opportunities**, please call 713-556-7200.

Keeping You Informed!

HISD works hard to provide information to the community and employees in an accurate, transparent, and effective way using a variety of media, including print, the Web, and cable TV. Below are resources you can use to find out more about HISD, and to let us know what you think, too.

eNews

Sign up to receive news from HISD via e-mail. Simply visit www.houstonisd.org/subscribe.

www.houstonisd.org—Visit the HISD*Connect* Web portal, where you will find:

- News and notices about current events, accomplishments, and initiatives
- Information about schools, regional offices, and departments
- Menus and online meal-payment system
- School and testing calendars
- Online encyclopedias and other homework helpers
- Board of Education policy, meeting agendas, and monitoring-system reports
- Access to trustees, the superintendent, senior staff, regional superintendents, and principals
- Spanish and Vietnamese HISD Web sites
- Enrollment/transfer and transportation information
- Promotion and conduct standards
- School-zone maps, directions to schools
- Athletics schedules, news, and directions to stadiums
- Educational-choice options, including Magnet, charter, alternative, early childhood/pre-k, and Virtual schools
- Finance, budget, and tax information
- Information about doing business with the district, M/WBE
- Emergency and inclement-weather procedures
- Resources and information for alumni

The Source: www.houstonisd.org/TheSource—A Web portal, specially designed to serve students and their parents, *The Source* provides class schedules and attendance reports, progress reports and report cards, curriculum resources, and much more!

ASPIRE: www.houstonisd.org/ASPIRE—Everyone can learn about the educational-improvement efforts under way at HISD, including how the district is using value-added data analysis to guide instructional decision-making. Also available on the ASPIRE portal are district, region, and school value-added reports, and special resources for employees.

Rebuild: www.houstonisd.org/Rebuild—Find out the latest about what HISD is doing to provide modern, safe, and environmentally friendly learning environments for Houston's children.

Employment: www.houstonisd.org/HISDjobs—Visit the HISD Jobs Web site to see what positions are available and apply online! In addition, if you are a qualified degreed professional and interested in making a career change to teaching, visit www.houstonisd.org/ACP to find out how.

Print—HISD produces a wide variety of printed publications, from the annual *Back to School* and *Code of Student Conduct* to newsletters and menus. Many are available online, or by contacting your child's school or visiting the HISD Information Center (4400 West 18th Street, Houston, TX 77092).

Cable TV—HISDTV can be viewed on cable within HISD's boundaries 24 hours a day on Comcast (Time-Warner) cable channel 18, Phonoscope channel 76, TVMax channel 96, and Suddenlink channel 18. A complete schedule of programs and additional information are available online at www.houstonisd.org/media.

Telephone—HISD's *Connect-ED* automated telephone service enables the district and schools to send voice messages to thousands of parents or employees. If you are an HISD parent and are not receiving these calls already, check with your child's school to make sure your correct phone number is in the system.

Annual Report: www.houstonisd.org/AnnualReport08—Visit HISD*Connect* to access this report as well as an expanded version with more news from 2008.

We Want to Hear From You!

HISD wants to know what you think, so that working together we can give Houston students the best education possible. Your comments and suggestions are essential to improving the district, so please take a moment to share them with us at info@houstonisd.org or call the **HISD Information Center (713-556-6005)**.

Learning Labs: An Educational Dialogue with the Community—Parents and community members are invited to come learn more about their school district by attending the HISD Learning Labs. Visit www.houstonisd.org/LearningLabs or call **713-556-7200** to find out more.

TipLine, AlertLine—When students or parents see or hear about wrongful school-related activity—*theft, vandalism, threats, etc.*—all they have to do is call the confidential **TipLine at 713-641-7446** and report their concerns. HISD also operates a 24-hour toll-free **AlertLine (1-800-455-9551)**, which employees can use to anonymously report fraud, theft, waste, or any other impropriety by anyone on the job.



The Houston Independent School District, with more than 200,000 students and encompassing 301 square miles within greater Houston, is the seventh-largest public-school system in the nation and the largest in Texas. HISD schools are organized within five geographic regions (North, East, South, West, and Central) by feeder patterns composed of specific elementary, middle, and high schools; an Alternative and Charter Schools Office oversees those types of schools. Each regional office is managed by a regional superintendent who coordinates a team of executive principals to ensure the quality of instruction throughout

the region's feeder patterns. Regional managers serve to strengthen the district's outreach to parents by handling parental concerns and working to improve parent, volunteer, and business-partner programs. Each of the five regions manages four or five of HISD's 23 feeder patterns.

HISD's organization is designed to emphasize teaching and learning, align school goals and programs for sustained improvement, eliminate duplicated services, and provide greater oversight of data and compliance with state laws and regulations.

Campuses and Enrollment

Academic Level	Number of Schools	Enrollment	% of All Students
Elementary	179	108,725	54.3
Middle	39	34,235	17.1
High	43	46,317	23.1
Combined/Other	35	10,948	5.5
Total	296	200,225	

Students by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Number of Students	% of All Students
African American	55,582	27.7
Asian	6,501	3.2
Hispanic	122,278	61.0
Native American	157	0.1
White	15,707	8.0
Total	200,225	

Students by Program

Program	Number of Students	% of All Students
LEP	61,813	30.9
ESL	16,600	8.3
Bilingual	40,736	20.4
At Risk	135,257	67.6
Title I	186,493	93.1
Special Education	16,918	8.4
Gifted/Talented	24,986	12.5
Economically Disadvantaged*	161,933	80.9

*Meets federal criteria for free or reduced-price lunches.

HISD operates under the auspices of the Texas Education Agency, using a core curriculum based on state guidelines for prekindergarten through twelfth grade. Instructional offerings include Magnet and Vanguard programs, charter schools, and alternative programs that use innovative instruction to help students who are at risk of dropping out of school. Also offered are programs in early-childhood education, Special Education, multilingual education, career and technology/vocational education, and dual-credit/advanced academics.

Employment

HISD is among the largest employers in Houston, with approximately 29,300 full- or part-time employees. Most HISD personnel are assigned to schools and deliver services directly to students on a day-to-day basis.

Position	Number Employed*
Teachers	12,730
Principals	264
Assistant Principals/Deans	370
Counselors	202
Librarians	166
Nurses and Psychologists	312
Teaching Assistants/Clerks/Aides	3,977
Police Officers/Security Personnel	307

*January 2009

HISD also employs approximately 123 administrators in its central and regional offices and nearly 10,850 full- or part-time employees who serve as substitute teachers or furnish specialized support services, such as technology, transportation, food services, and crafts and trades.

SOURCES—Demographic Data: TEA Public Education Information Management System; Personnel Data: HISD Office of Human Resources

The *2008 State of the Schools Annual Report* is produced by the Houston Independent School District. Writing and design by Communication Services, printing by Printing Services.

It is the policy of the Houston Independent School District not to discriminate on the basis of age, color, handicap or disability, ancestry, national origin, marital status, race, religion, sex, veteran status, or political affiliation in its educational or employment programs and activities.

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HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

PURPOSE The Houston Independent School District exists to strengthen the social and economic foundation of Houston by assuring its youth the highest-quality elementary and secondary education available anywhere.

GOALS

The district's primary goal is to increase student achievement.

Goal 1: Increase Student Achievement—HISD student performance will demonstrate gains as evidenced by scores on TAKS, SAT, and other state and national tests, while performance gaps between minority and nonminority students will narrow.

Additional goals are established in support of increasing student achievement, as follows:

Goal 2: Provide a Safe Environment—The district shall develop and implement a strategic plan with specific long-range actions that ensure the safety and security of all who are at district schools and facilities or attending district-related events.

Goal 3: Increase Management Efficiency—HISD will have in place a decentralized organizational structure with operational practices and procedures that distinguish between the school district's pedagogical and business aspects and employ best practices with proven business and administrative operational principles for efficient delivery of services and goods to the schools.

CORE VALUES

Safety Above All Else: Safety takes precedence over all else. A safe environment must be provided for every student and employee.

Student Learning Is the Main Thing: All decisions and actions, at any level, focus on and support "the main thing": effective student learning.

Focus on Results and Excellence: Each employee focuses on results and excellence in individual and organizational efforts.

STRATEGIC INTENT To earn so much respect from the citizens of Houston that HISD becomes their prekindergarten through grade 12 educational system of choice

Goal 4: Improve Public Support and Confidence in Schools—The local, state, and national public will view HISD as a large urban district in which achievement is primary, performance is high, educators accept responsibility for student learning, administrators and support-services personnel exist to support the relationship between teacher and student, accountability exists at all levels, and there is respect among all segments of the community. Concomitantly, public confidence in public schools will improve.

Goal 5: Create a Positive District Culture—HISD will have a clearly articulated purpose, with specific goals and objectives that support it. Those will serve as the catalysts for creating a powerful sense of community and shared direction among HISD personnel, parents, students, and the public.

Goal 6: Provide Facilities-to-Standard Program—There will be in place a program designed to make all necessary repairs and renovations to bring HISD facilities up to standard. The plan will include the level of long-range and preventive maintenance necessary to keep the buildings properly up to standard.

Parents Are Partners: Parents are valued partners in the educational process, serving as the child's teacher in the home. All school and district activities will give proper consideration to the involvement of parents.

Common Decency: All members of the organization, both students and employees, deserve and must receive respectful and courteous treatment.

Houston Independent School District



Creating a College-Bound Culture

For More Information About the Houston Independent School District

Mail: Information Center, Level 1–West, 4400 West 18th Street, Houston, Texas 77092

Telephone: 713-556-6005 **Web site:** www.houstonisd.org

Sign up to receive news from HISD via e-mail: www.houstonisd.org/subscribe