

STATE  
OF SCHO



HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
**STATE OF THE SCHOOLS**  
2010 ANNUAL REPORT



## 2011 BOARD OF EDUCATION



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## MESSAGE FROM THE 2010 BOARD PRESIDENT

How proud I am to be a part of the Houston Independent School District (HISD) and to reflect upon the significant achievements of 2010. I want to thank all the members of Team HISD for their role and participation in these accomplishments.

Over a six-month period last year, the Board of Education worked with district stakeholders to develop a formidable strategic plan. In a series of public meetings, we had the opportunity to hear from students, parents, teachers, and staff, as well as representatives from community, business, and nonprofit organizations.

Thousands of people from all walks of life participated and offered their feedback. Some came straight from work, others had children in tow, but all came because they care about Houston schools and they take their role in helping to chart HISD's course seriously. It was so inspiring to see such passion for public education and to be a part of this process. I also was proud that many students stepped up to make their voices heard. It was both moving and humbling to see so many individuals express a genuine and deep interest in HISD.

As a result of this process, HISD's Strategic Direction was developed. It is truly a community blueprint, consisting of five core initiatives to propel the district forward and to maximize student achievement:

- Effective Teacher in Every Classroom
- Effective Principal in Every School
- Rigorous Instructional Standards and Supports
- Data-Driven Accountability
- Culture of Trust through Action

When taken together, these key objectives will no doubt impact student achievement and transform our schools. You will see several new programs highlighted in this report. Each one is designed to support one or more of these five core initiatives.

Thank you for your continued commitment to HISD. We are grateful for your dedication to public education and to the children of our district. Your ongoing support is crucial as we strive to provide the best education for our students and to make HISD the best school district in the nation.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Meyers".

**Greg Meyers**

President, 2010 Board of Education



## MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

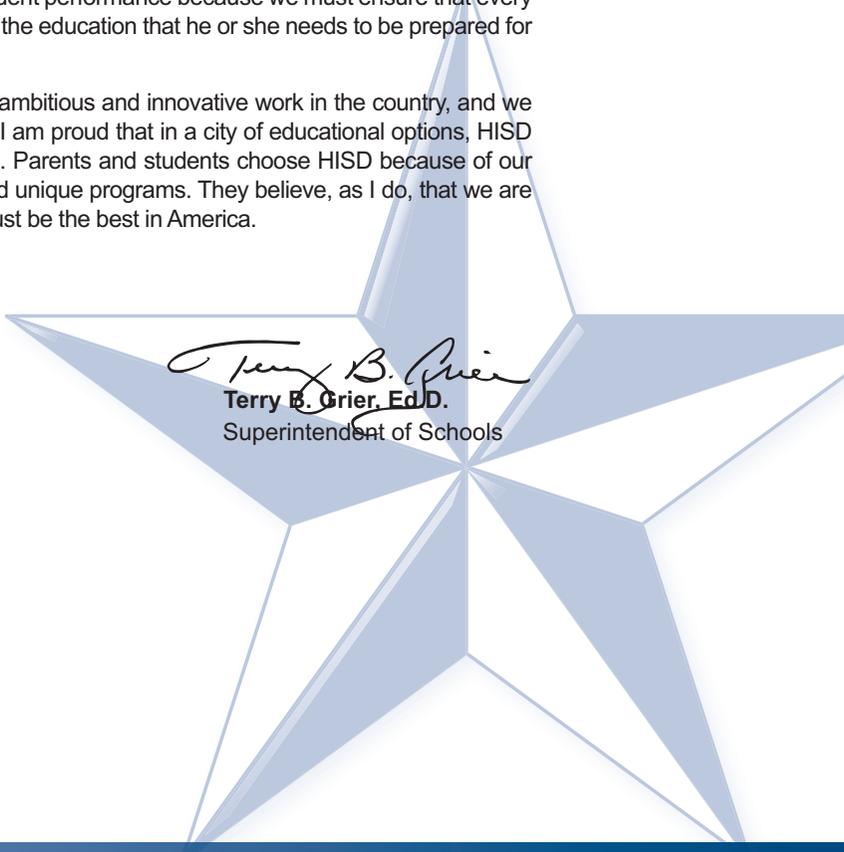
The Houston Independent School District is determined to be the best district in America. In 2010, we created a bold plan to change public education and transform Houston's schools. We are raising expectations, moving forward, and producing results.

At the core of our plan is a fundamental belief that every child, regardless of his or her background, has the ability to learn. We are committed to increasing student achievement. If a child is having trouble with a lesson, we reteach it—using a different approach. We invent new methods of instruction, tutor students one-on-one, and work with them over and over again until they succeed.

Research shows, and I believe, that the single most important way to improve student achievement is by having an effective teacher in the classroom. We know that great teachers challenge and inspire students. That is why the first of the five core initiatives of the Strategic Direction focuses on effective teachers. We have some outstanding teachers in HISD. We must recognize and reward them; and we must attract dynamic, new teachers.

I am excited about the work being done to create a new appraisal and development system for teachers. Our teachers told us the current system doesn't provide useful feedback. We are changing that. The new system, designed with the input of thousands of educators and community members, will give teachers an accurate picture of their strengths and weaknesses and identify a clear path toward success. The appraisal process will be closely tied to student performance because we must ensure that every child, in every HISD school, gets the education that he or she needs to be prepared for college and a career.

We are doing some of the most ambitious and innovative work in the country, and we are making significant progress. I am proud that in a city of educational options, HISD stands out as a district of choice. Parents and students choose HISD because of our strong neighborhood schools and unique programs. They believe, as I do, that we are the best in Houston. Now, we must be the best in America.



*Terry B. Grier*  
**Terry B. Grier, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent of Schools

# STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT ON THE RISE

## ACHIEVEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

- High school students took a record number of Advanced Placement (AP) exams in 2010—16,556, an increase of 43 percent compared with 2009.
- The number of AP exams scoring 3 or higher has increased every year since 1999. It jumped from 4,915 in 2009 to 6,262 in 2010.
- The Class of 2010 was awarded a total of \$97 million in college scholarships—a record for HISD.
- Ninety-three percent of HISD schools met federal Adequate Yearly Progress standards.
- The percentage of students achieving Commended status on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills increased in all but one subject area, and was led by the number of Hispanic students who received Commended status in all five subject areas.
- Over the past three years, the number of HISD students graduating from high school increased from 64 percent to 70 percent. At the same time, the dropout rate decreased from 22 percent to 16 percent.
- The number of HISD schools receiving the state's highest accountability rating of Exemplary jumped from 84 in 2009 to 101 in 2010. Seventy-four percent of HISD schools have the top two ratings of Exemplary or Recognized.

**GLENDA REYES**, *Eleventh-grade student*  
Booker T. Washington High School and the High School  
for Engineering Professions



Engineering teacher Nghia Le introduced Glenda Reyes to rocketry. She and the other students in Dr. Le's class are designing and building rockets expected to fly 19 miles.

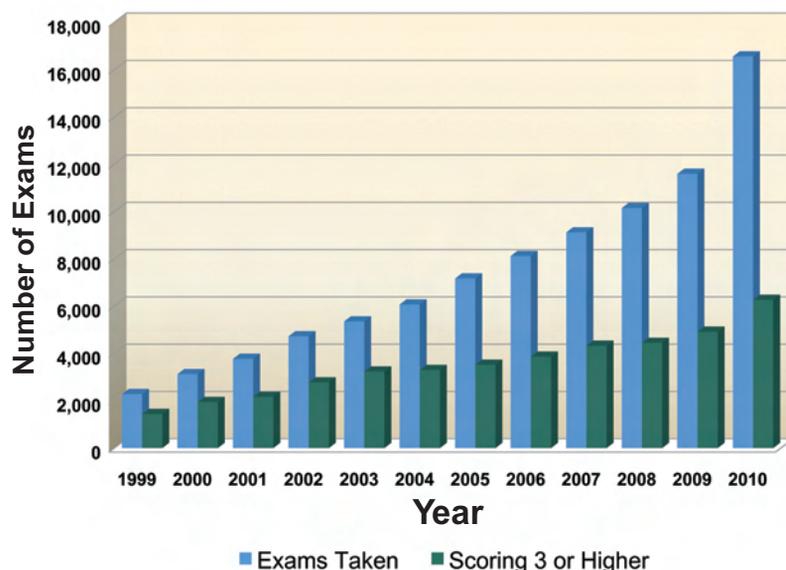
Glenda Reyes says it was a gift from her parents that convinced her she wanted to become an astronaut. "They gave me a telescope, and on a clear night I would look at the moon. I knew then that I not only wanted to see the moon from earth, but I wanted to stand on the moon." Now, Glenda is one step closer to her dream of space travel. She and her classmates in Dr. Nghia Le's engineering class at Booker T. Washington High School are designing and building rockets that are expected to fly 19 miles! They presented their plans to NASA scientists and have a launch date later this spring. If the flight is successful, the students stand to be the first high-schoolers in the world to reach such a level of accomplishment.

Glenda moved to the United States from El Salvador when she was seven years old and enrolled in HISD's Sherman Elementary. "The classes were hard for me since I didn't speak English," Glenda remembers. She credits her principal, Ms. Aguilar, with helping her learn the language. "She got tutors for us. That really helped me out a lot."

Teachers and school leaders have continued to be a source of inspiration. Ms. Garibaldi, a magnet coordinator at M.C. Williams Middle School, encouraged Glenda to enroll in a robotics class, and Dr. Le introduced her to rocketry. Glenda has been one of the only girls in the program. "It was hard having to deal with guys who think you are too weak to drill, or too scared to solder, but girls can do it too!"

Whenever she faces a challenge, Glenda says Dr. Le has been there to encourage her. "He told me that if it was in my heart, I could do it." And with that level of determination, Glenda knows, there is no limit to where she can go.

**Number of AP Exams Taken and Scoring 3 or Higher**



Watch a video about the great things happening at Washington HS.

[www.houstonisd.org/bookertwashington](http://www.houstonisd.org/bookertwashington)

# STRATEGIC DIRECTION

## A COMMUNITY PLAN TO TRANSFORM HISD

In August 2010, the Board of Education unanimously adopted HISD's Strategic Direction, a long-term plan designed to dramatically improve student achievement. It was crafted over six months and is based on analysis and conversations with staff, parents and community members. The Strategic Direction brings all the district's goals into alignment and identifies five core initiatives that will guide improvement efforts for years to come.

### CORE INITIATIVES

1. Effective Teacher in Every Classroom
2. Effective Principal in Every School
3. Rigorous Instructional Standards and Supports
4. Data-Driven Accountability
5. Culture of Trust through Action



Learn more about  
the Strategic Direction.

[www.houstonisd.org/strategicdirection](http://www.houstonisd.org/strategicdirection)

## Strategic Direction: Core Initiative 1

# EFFECTIVE TEACHER IN EVERY

OUR GOAL: EFFECTIVE TEACHING IN EVERY CLASSROOM,

### INVESTING IN WHAT MATTERS MOST

No other school district has made such a comprehensive long-term effort to put an effective teacher in every classroom. We know it is the right thing to do for our students. It is also the right thing to do for teachers, who deserve to be treated like the professionals they are and deserve to be recognized for their results in the classroom.

HISD 2010  
Elementary Teacher  
of the Year



**ANGEL WILSON**, *Fifth-grade teacher*  
Codwell Elementary School

Angel Wilson's classroom is never quiet. "I have a class full of singers, rappers and dancers," Wilson says. Wilson's fifth-graders at Codwell Elementary use music and theater to reinforce virtually every lesson in the curriculum—from acting out a skit about the Boston Massacre, to writing and performing a song about the water cycle.

Wilson comes from a family of educators and is in her fifth year of teaching. She first had the idea to use music in her lesson plans when she was trying to teach students about figurative language. She asked them to listen to their favorite songs and identify similes and metaphors. In hit singles from Beyonce and Miley Cyrus, students also discovered idioms and alliteration. Eventually, they started writing their own songs and rap.

"It's an attention getter," Wilson explains. Students snap and clap—and come up with catchy phrases for key concepts. "Then we go back and discuss the process and provide more depth."

Wilson gives each child an end-of-the-year DVD of his or her performances, but she says the students aren't just starring in their own music videos, "they're directing their own learning."

***"We consider this partnership between The New Teacher Project and HISD to transform its human capital system to be the most significant work a school district can undertake...We are confident that it will result in HISD attracting, developing and retaining highly effective teachers who can close the achievement gap."***

➤ Marina Walne, Executive Director for Education  
The Laura and John Arnold Foundation

The Laura and John Arnold Foundation has awarded \$6 million to the HISD Foundation to support HISD's goal of having an effective teacher in every classroom.



Learn more about the  
Effective Teacher Initiative.

[www.hisdeffectiveteachers.org](http://www.hisdeffectiveteachers.org)

# CLASSROOM

## IN EVERY SCHOOL, EVERY DAY

### KEY EFFORTS

- HISD is developing a comprehensive plan to bring the most-talented new teachers to HISD through smart, focused recruitment and high selection standards.
- We are designing a new appraisal and development system for teachers that will give them meaningful feedback regarding their performance and the individualized support they need to accelerate student progress. The system is being designed with input from thousands of educators and the broader community.
- Through the ASPIRE Award Program, more than 16,500 teachers, principals and staff received performance awards for boosting student achievement in 2010.

**HISD 2010  
Secondary Teacher  
of the Year**

### **BRANDON KIMBLE,** *Math teacher* Pershing Middle School

When Brandon Kimble jumped out of an airplane to go sky-diving, he decided to face his fear of heights head on. It was an exhilarating moment for him and one that's encouraging his students to reach new heights in the classroom. "I have some students who say they are afraid of math," Kimble says. "I tell them they just need to tackle it. We all have to face our fears, like I did when I went skydiving."

Kimble has the same level of determination when it comes to teaching his students. "Every single child has the ability to learn—but how they learn, that could be different from child to child. We're not teaching to a class, we're teaching to the individual student," Kimble explains.

Kimble teaches Pre-AP Math and Algebra I at Pershing Middle School and spends a significant amount of time tutoring students one-on-one. "I always give the students real-world situations and real-world scenarios to show them how to use



math when they are out and about." Kimble's students can relate to saving money at the grocery store—and when he puts lessons in the context of the real world, the concepts start to make sense. "Their eyes get big and they just start smiling. They're like, 'Oh, I get this.'"

### ASPIRE

The ASPIRE (Accelerating Student Progress, Increasing Results & Expectations) Award Program measures teacher and school impact on student academic progress from year to year using both achievement data and value-added analysis. HISD paid \$42.4 million in performance awards for the last school year. Andres Balp, a teacher at Lyons Elementary, received the largest ASPIRE Award.



Find more information  
about ASPIRE.

[www.houstonisd.org/aspire](http://www.houstonisd.org/aspire)

# EFFECTIVE PRINCIPAL IN

OUR GOAL: EVERY SCHOOL HAS A STRONG, DECISIVE LEADER

## SUPPORTING AND DEVELOPING SCHOOL LEADERS

School principals play a vital role in helping to ensure high-quality instruction for every student. Since launching the Strategic Direction, HISD has taken steps to attract new principals, support existing school leaders, and create pathways for internal candidates who show leadership potential.

### **HERLINDA GARCIA,** *Principal* J.P. Henderson Elementary School

Herlinda Garcia has a fundamental belief that every child has the ability to learn. “I’ve always believed that regardless of economic status, race or ethnicity, that all of us are capable of taking our minds to the limit, if someone believes in us and encourages us,” Garcia explains.

For 30 years, she has served as principal of J.P. Henderson Elementary. Ninety percent of the school’s students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, and 70 percent are learning English as a second language. Garcia has clear expectations for the students and teachers: “We are striving for perfection. We are aiming for high achievement,” she says.



Garcia rarely takes the time to celebrate her accomplishments and is always looking for innovative ways to help students reach new levels of academic achievement. “The mindset is very important,” Garcia says. “It’s not about whether they can or they can’t. It’s about how we are going to make it happen because we are serving them.”

For Garcia, perhaps the greatest reward is watching a child succeed. “It validates my whole life,” she says. “I’ve dedicated my whole life to education.”



**J.P. Henderson Elementary** earned a place on the 2010 National Center for Education Achievement List of Higher Performing Schools. HISD had more schools on the list than Dallas, Austin, San Antonio and El Paso combined.



Watch a video about J.P. Henderson Elementary School.

[www.houstonisd.org/jphenderson](http://www.houstonisd.org/jphenderson)

# EVERY SCHOOL FOCUSED ON STUDENT SUCCESS

## KEY EFFORTS

- HISD is developing a new appraisal system for school leaders. This system will be implemented in Fall 2011 for all principals.
- We are creating multiple university partnerships to identify individuals who will be ready to serve in districtwide leadership positions.
- The district launched a new recruitment effort to attract principals from around the nation.
- HISD is providing leadership development programs for both first-time and experienced assistant principals and deans to prepare them to become principals.

## HISD'S HEALTHY SCHOOLS

In addition to their role as instructional leaders, principals promote health awareness and healthy options in their schools. HISD's Food Services Department is also helping students make healthy choices.

Here are some accomplishments from 2010:

- Launched "First Class Breakfast," a classroom breakfast program, in all HISD elementary and middle schools. The program provides students with a hot, nutritious entrée, fresh fruit, and one-percent or skim milk. Studies show children who eat breakfast are more focused on learning and are more productive in the classroom. First Class Breakfast is funded by the state and federal governments.
- Began serving more whole-grain breads and dark-green and orange fruits and vegetables. Selections include steamed spinach, bok choy, and acorn squash.
- Started offering a vegetarian entrée at every grade level, every day.
- Increased production of freshly made entrées and side dishes at HISD's Food Service Support Facility. This reduces the number of processed foods served in HISD schools.
- Served over 8,892,000 fresh bananas, enough to feed every resident in the state of New Jersey, and 11,115,000 fresh apples, enough to feed every resident in the state of Ohio!



## NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON AWARD

Five HISD schools won the prestigious 2010 National Blue Ribbon Award—more than any other district in Texas. The winning schools are Briarmeadow Middle School, Burrus Elementary School, Cornelius Elementary School, Johnston Middle School, and Oak Forest Elementary School. The U.S. Department of Education's Blue Ribbon Schools

Program recognizes the nation's schools that either are high-performing or have improved student achievement to high levels, especially among economically disadvantaged or minority students.

## Strategic Direction: Core Initiative 3

# RIGOROUS INSTRUCTIONAL

OUR GOAL: EVERY STUDENT WILL HAVE THE RIGOROUS INSTRUCT

### PROVIDING RIGOROUS ACADEMICS FOR EVERY STUDENT

HISD is a district of choice. Families have an array of different educational options, from strong neighborhood schools to Magnet and other specialized programs. Our goal is to provide rigorous academic instruction at each one of HISD's campuses. We want all of our students to have access to quality educational programs and opportunities, so they graduate ready for college and the career of their choice.

HISD is partnering with community colleges to design and implement programs that will offer high school students the opportunity to earn a two-year associate's degree on their own high school campuses through online, dual-credit courses.

"Together We Can, Whatever It Takes, No Excuses!" That's the motto at Sharpstown High School, one of HISD's Apollo 20 schools. Stop any student in the hall and he will be able to tell you the motto, not because he learned to recite it—but because he believes it. Principal Rob Gasparello awards students certificates for "Living the Apollo Creed." He is creating a new, "no-excuses" culture where students and staff are holding each other accountable for academic success.



**"Together We Can,  
Whatever It Takes,  
No Excuses!"**



June is College Preparation Month for students at Energized for STEM Academy. They spend a month on college campuses earning high school and college credit. Incoming juniors participate in a residential program that allows them to stay in dorms and take courses at universities, including Harvard and Texas A&M.

### HISD CHARTER SCHOOLS

It is a well-kept secret that HISD is a charter leader, and HISD charter schools are every bit as successful as their more well-known counterparts. The district operates 44 internal and external charter schools. The majority that received state accountability ratings in 2010 were rated either Exemplary or Recognized, and none were below Acceptable.

### APOLLO 20 PROJECT

The Apollo 20 Project is a major school reform initiative launched in August 2010 through a partnership between HISD and the Education Innovation Laboratory at Harvard University, led by Dr. Roland Fryer. The current nine Apollo secondary schools have a longer school year, longer days and extensive tutoring programs. According to a midyear report, Apollo 20 students are showing great academic progress. In addition to increased academic achievement, student attendance rates are higher and suspension rates have fallen. Students are benefiting from effective tutors, increased expectations and strong leadership. The \$29 million Apollo 20 initiative is funded by a combination of federal and state monies. The district has also received \$2 million worth of investments from businesses and charitable foundations to support the transformation of the educational experience for the district's most needy students.

# STANDARDS AND SUPPORTS

## ATIONAL PROGRAM REQUIRED FOR COLLEGE AND CAREER SUCCESS



Larry Kellner

*“This year, the Houston Independent School District, under the leadership of Superintendent Terry Grier and a no-excuses school board, made the bold decision to try something radically new at schools that need help... Houston’s business leaders at the Greater Houston Partnership, and all of the philanthropists already supporting Apollo 20, realize what’s at stake here and understand why HISD’s mission is critical to our city’s economic future.”*

➤ Patrick Oxford, chairman, and Larry Kellner, vice chairman  
Greater Houston Partnership  
*Houston Chronicle*, Dec. 2010

## FOCUS ON COLLEGE READINESS

**HISD’s goal is to prepare students for college and a career of their choice. We are expanding our efforts by providing a higher level of academic rigor in every school, greater opportunities to earn college credit, and numerous programs that allow students to interact with college faculty, students and alumni.**

Here is a closer look at some of our initiatives:

- HISD formed a unique partnership with the College Board to create AP High Schools and Pre-AP Middle Schools. The schools will offer a greater number of Advanced Placement (AP) and Pre-AP courses. In 2010, nearly all HISD high schools offered at least one AP course and the district began covering the cost of exams. Students who score 3 or higher on the AP exam may earn college credit.
- The district expanded its online course offerings to include more AP classes. Students also are able to receive online tutoring to prepare for college entrance exams.
- All eleventh-grade students will be given the opportunity to take the SAT college entrance exam, for free, during the school day at their own campus. It is expected to eliminate barriers and encourage more students to apply for college. HISD is only the third district in the nation to offer the free, in-class testing.
- HISD expanded the “PSAT for All” program to include incoming ninth-graders. They are able to take the PSAT exam for free, just as tenth-graders have been doing for several years.

## TWILIGHT HIGH SCHOOLS

HISD’s Twilight High Schools were created in October 2010 to help students who find it difficult to attend class during the regular school day. The program, at seven locations across the city, offers nontraditional hours; online, self-paced coursework; and guidance and support from knowledgeable, caring teachers. Currently, there are 330 students enrolled in Twilight High Schools. The first graduate of the program earned his high school diploma in December and is now enrolled in college.



## GRAD LABS

Grad Labs—computer labs with special software—help struggling students earn their high school diplomas. The labs are located at 46 campuses as part of HISD’s Online Credit-Recovery Initiative. Students receive supplemental learning opportunities through online coursework and tutoring on state tests and college entrance exams. More than 12,000 students were enrolled as of February 2011.



Learn more about the  
Apollo 20 Project.

[www.houstonisd.org/Apollo20](http://www.houstonisd.org/Apollo20)

## Strategic Direction: Core Initiative 4

# DATA-DRIVEN ACCOUNT

OUR GOAL: EVERY DECISION IN SCHOOLS AND OFFICES IS

### DATA-DRIVEN INSTRUCTION

How well does a student understand a particular lesson? Is a teacher presenting information in a clear and effective way? HISD uses data to help answer those questions and to shape classroom instruction. The data includes assessment results, district exams scores and quick, end-of-class reviews conducted on a daily basis to see how well students understand the material. The information is regularly reviewed by board members, administrators and teachers to help identify areas where students and educators have been successful and where more targeted instruction is needed.



A teacher at **Milby High School** tracks student performance. Student data is maintained in a single room to make it easier to access records and chart progress. The school is one of 16 HISD schools recognized by *Newsweek* magazine on its list of America's Best High Schools.



HISD's Construction and Facility Services Department implemented a plan to improve service and save millions of dollars.

### DATA-DRIVEN DECISIONS

HISD's Construction and Facility Services Department is using data to improve service and save millions of dollars. General Manager Issa Dadoush says that when he was hired in April, his employees suggested the department was understaffed. They presented a plan to hire additional workers. Dadoush examined HISD's data and similar information for other large school districts. He noticed that, by comparison, HISD was actually overstaffed and spending way too much—\$7 million—on overtime annually. He directed each custodian to clean 25,000 square feet and each maintenance worker to cover 100,000 square feet. This was on par with industry standards. Dadoush developed a plan to cut overtime by 60 percent, avoid additional new hires, and eliminate 84 positions—most of which were vacant. This actually improved service to each campus. How do the campuses look today? "They are shining examples," according to Dadoush.

### BUILDING A CENTRAL DATA WAREHOUSE

Teachers, administrators and parents need to have readily accessible and timely information about student progress. Currently, data is housed in various locations, making it difficult to pull together relevant and useful reports. HISD is in the process of creating a data warehouse where all critical data will be stored.

# ABILITY

## MADE USING REAL-TIME DATA TO SUPPORT STUDENT SUCCESS

### FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

- HISD has the highest bond rating of any school district in the state.
- HISD balanced the budget for 2010–2011 with no increase in the property tax rate of \$1.1567 per \$100 assessed value—the lowest among school districts in Harris County.
- HISD is one of the few school districts in Texas that offers an additional, optional, 20 percent homestead exemption. This means that the owner of a single family residence valued at \$100,000 pays taxes on only \$80,000 of that value.
- HISD received the state's highest financial accountability rating for the eighth straight year.
- Based on the state's 2008–2009 financial accountability system (FIRST), the district spent a smaller percentage of its budget on central administration than other urban school districts in Texas.

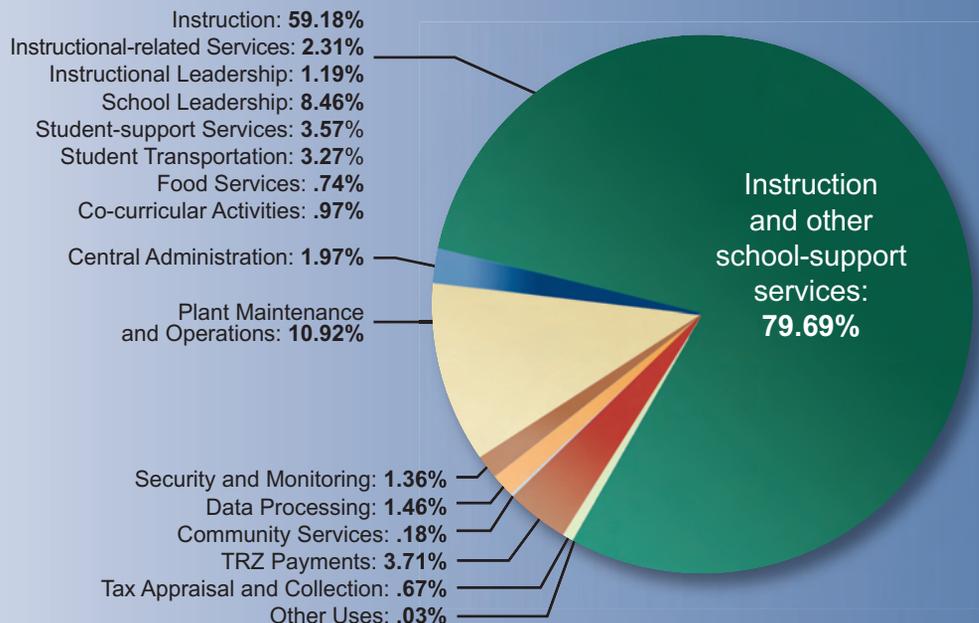


### MELINDA GARRETT

HISD Chief Financial Officer Melinda Garrett was recognized with the prestigious Bill Wise Award by the Council of the Great City Schools for her distinguished service to urban education.

### EXPENDITURES

Total expenditures, including other uses, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2010, were \$1,470,993,206, with instruction and other school- and student-support services accounting for almost 80 percent of the total.



### REVENUE

HISD's general fund budget is funded by four primary sources:

1. Local property taxes (65.15%)
2. State funding (32%)
3. Other local funding (2.3%)
4. Federal funding (0.56%)

## Strategic Direction: Core Initiative 5

# CULTURE OF TRUST

OUR GOAL: EVERY MEMBER OF TEAM HISD IS ENGAGED AND

### ENGAGING OUR PARTNERS

In order for students to succeed, they need the support of all members of Team HISD. The district recognizes that staff, parents and community members need timely and accurate information and clear channels to make their voices heard. HISD is committed to communicating in ways that are inclusive, interactive and transparent.

#### **CARONETTA JONES**, *President* HISD Council of Parent Teacher Associations

The students at Clifton Middle School call her “Granny.” Caronetta Jones has been a volunteer with HISD for 30 years, since her daughter was a student. Now, Caronetta has grandchildren in school—her own grandson and dozens more adopted grandchildren at Clifton. “I don’t have a problem being that Granny because our children need somebody they can come to, and I am there,” Jones explains. She reads to students, serves as a hall monitor and helps photocopy lessons. She spends countless hours at the school and, as the president of the HISD Council of Parent Teacher Associations, she helps set up parent organizations at other campuses. In September, she was honored by the State Board of Education with its Heroes for Children Award for her talents, skills, and efforts to improve public schools. HISD has more than 85,000 registered volunteers. They are people who give of their time and, like Jones, never expect a paycheck in return. “This is based on love,” she says. “When one child says ‘yes ma’am’ or passes a class, I have been paid.”



**“This is based on love. When one child says ‘yes ma’am’ or passes a class, I have been paid.”**

➤ Caronetta Jones



HISD is grateful for the continued support of Houston’s professional sports teams, including the Astros, Rockets, Texans and Dynamo.

### MEANINGFUL PARTNERSHIPS

Our students benefit from hundreds of districtwide and school-based partnerships with Houston’s business and community groups, nonprofit centers, colleges and universities, and faith-based organizations. This year, the Houston Hispanic Forum is celebrating a quarter century of helping students prepare for the future by hosting the 25th annual Career and Education Day. Four other partners—Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority (Alpha Kappa Omega Chapter), Capital One Bank, Elves & More, and Luby’s—were inducted into the district’s Hall of Fame for their outstanding support of education.

# THROUGH ACTION

## COMMITTED TO STUDENT SUCCESS

### KEY EFFORTS

- A redesigned HISD website makes it easier to find information and provides greater opportunities for two-way communication.
- Community meetings are regularly held to solicit public opinion regarding a variety of issues, such as the budget process, Magnet program and teacher appraisal system.
- Parent Prep Academy Workshops are conducted on topics that include internet safety, reading, nutrition and preparing for college.
- Postage-paid feedback cards—in multiple languages—are provided to stakeholders to gather input on district issues.

Since July 1, 2010, HISD has been awarded nearly \$125 million in competitive grants from state and federal departments, as well as from private companies and Houston-based and national family foundations.

- \$6 million from the Laura and John Arnold Foundation to support the Effective Teacher Initiative
- \$1.5 million from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to support the Effective Teacher Initiative
- \$1.4 million from the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation to support the college readiness plan of the Rigorous Instructional Standards and Supports Initiative
- \$31.5 million Teacher Incentive Fund grant from the U.S. Department of Education to support the Effective Teacher Initiative and the Effective Principal Initiative
- \$11.4 million from the U.S. Department of Education's Magnet Schools Assistance Program to fund five new magnet programs

HISD has a number of advisory committees. The parents, community members and HISD staff who serve on these committees play an important role in the district's decision-making process.

Committees include:

- Budget Advisory Committee
- District Advisory Committee
- Food Service Parent Advisory Committee
- Shared Decision-Making Committee
- Superintendent's Parent Advisory Committee
- Superintendent's Public Engagement Committee
- Bond Oversight Committee
- Gifted and Talented Advisory Committee

### LAURA RICHARDSON

Laura Richardson serves on the Superintendent's Parent Advisory Committee and Public Engagement Committee. She says families, teachers and staff need to encourage all HISD students to reach new levels of academic achievement. "If we are just looking at our own schools, we are doing a disservice...to all the schools in HISD. We all need to work together."



HISD is using powerful social media tools to share important information with the HISD community.



Follow us on Twitter:

- @HoustonISD, the district's main account
- @HISDEspanol, for district news in Spanish
- @HoustonISDGov, for legislative updates



Watch a video about HISD's partnerships.

[www.houstonisd.org/partnerships](http://www.houstonisd.org/partnerships)



## Houston Independent School District

Hattie Mae White Educational Support Center  
4400 West 18th Street, Houston, Texas 77092

- Largest school district in Texas
- Seventh-largest district in the United States
- Highest school district bond rating in Texas
- Lowest property tax rate in Harris County

### 298 schools

- 170 Elementary
- 42 Middle
- 55 High
- 31 Combined/Other

### 204,245 students

- 26.2% African-American
- 3.1% Asian
- 61.9% Hispanic
- 7.8% White
- 80.4% Economically Disadvantaged



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