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HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT STYLE GUIDE | PAGE 3
To help Houston Independent School District (HISD) offices, departments, and schools maintain a consistent and effective identity in the communications and publications they produce, HISD has prepared this style guide. It includes basic rules of written communication, such as punctuation, abbreviations, and capitalization, as well as guidelines for formatting and the use of the approved district branding (seal).

Questions or comments about this guide can be directed to Multimedia Services (713-556-6066; info@HoustonISD.org). An online version of this guide, electronic files of the branding images in a variety of formats, and Microsoft Word documents for use as templates for letters and memoranda are available at www.HoustonISD.org/branding. In addition, this guide will be updated periodically, as common practices in the district evolve, and to clarify or add guidelines and standards as needed.
The primary “authority” selected to follow for writing standards in HISD is Strunk and White’s *The Elements of Style — Fourth Edition*. It is a concise and inexpensive guide that is often used in English classes in schools and colleges across the country.

Also referenced are more complete guides such as the *Associated Press Stylebook* and *The Chicago Manual of Style*. Even the most authoritative style guides sometimes differ on certain details, however. In a few instances, the *HISD Style Guide* may not agree with all major reference works. In these cases (such as the final comma in a series or using only one space after periods and colons) follow the preferences as detailed in the HISD Specific Writing/Style Guide section of the appendix. Of course, HISD preferences do not supersede those established for areas of writing that have their own set of rules (legal documents for example).
EDITORIAL STYLE GUIDE

ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS
If an abbreviation or acronym is widely known, such as SAT or ACT, it is acceptable on first reference. If the acronym is obscure, give the full name of the organization or program on its first use, followed by the acronym in parentheses: Effective Teacher Initiative (ETI). If the organization or program is not mentioned again, there is no need to give the acronym. Traditionally, acronyms included periods (F.B.I.), but they are usually omitted today (FBI). The AP Style rule about abbreviations is to use periods for two letters, not to use periods with abbreviations of three or more letters; i.e., U.S., USA. Make sure the use of periods in abbreviations and acronyms is consistent throughout the same document. “Athletics” means sports. “The Athletics Department” is the department that oversees athletics (sports). “The Athletic Department” would be a department that is athletic. Use the former.

BOARD OF EDUCATION
The formal title of the governing body is the Houston Independent School District Board of Education. HISD Board of Education is also permitted in all references. Subsequent references may be “the board” (not capitalized), “school board,” or “trustees.” To maintain consistency in communications, please do not use “Board of Trustees.”

BOARD OF EDUCATION TITLES
HISD has nine trustees or members on its Board of Education. Each trustee is elected to a four-year term to represent a specific geographic district. The four-year terms are staggered, and the nine districts are numbered using Roman numerals (I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX). An individual is referred to as either a “trustee,” “school board member,” or “board member.” These individual titles are capitalized only when used as a formal title before the name. Trustees hold various offices, but the board president is the only trustee whose title should be used, as in Board President Juliet Stipeche. Use Trustee as the formal title before names of trustees who are not the Board of Education president.

COMMA IN A SERIES
Include a comma before the last item in a series. A, B, and C, not A, B and C.

DASHES
Longer than a hyphen, an en dash (as wide as the letter n) is for ranges, as in 1965–1970. You should not use an en dash between two consecutive days. Thus Aug. 3–5 but not Aug. 3–4 (that should be Aug. 3 and 4). Twice as long as an en dash, an em dash (as wide as the letter m) indicates a sudden break or abrupt change, or sets something off from the rest of the sentence, as in “The Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills — the TAKS — is the state-mandated achievement test.” In Microsoft Word, en and em dashes can be found on the “Special Characters” tab after selecting “Symbol” in the “Insert” pull-down menu. Much easier than pulling down the symbols is to use a keyboard shortcut on ens and ems. For ens, it is [Alt]+[Ctrl]+[-] (in the numbers on the right of the keyboard). For an em, it is [Ctrl]+[-].

DAYS OF THE WEEK AND MONTHS
Always capitalize days of the week, and never abbreviate them. Always capitalize the names of months. If a month is used with a specific date, only abbreviate the following months: Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., and Dec. However, spell out all months when a year is attached or when alone. In formal writing, use July 1, 2006, not July 1st, 2006. And use a comma after the year in “On July 1, 2006, teachers attended…”

DEGREES
If you know a subject has an advanced degree, it is acceptable to use. When writing an advanced degree, use abbreviations with periods and no spaces (e.g., Daniel Jones, Ph.D.; Mary Smith, Ed.D.). If including degree information is desired, do so using abbreviations with periods and no spaces in the first reference (see above), in subsequent references use the formal title “Dr.” Example: The keynote speaker at the inservice was Daniel Jones, Ph.D., a leading expert in the field of testing. Dr. Jones’ speech focused on using test results to improve instruction. It is not correct to use a title and degree together (incorrect: Dr. Mary Smith, Ed.D.).

EMAIL
The “e” in email is lowercase, and the word is not hyphenated.
EDITORIAL STYLE GUIDE

FACILITY NAMES
When referring to a campus facility use HS, MS, or ES after the school name on first reference. Delmar-Tusa Complex should be used if referring to the entire complex, including the stadium and grounds. If only the stadium is used, Delmar Stadium is acceptable.

HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
The formal name is the Houston Independent School District; however, HISD is acceptable on first reference. If the acronym is used in the first reference, it must be spelled out in the second reference. The Houston Independent School District may also be referred to as “the district” (not capitalized) in subsequent references.

HYPHEN
A hyphen is a very short dash used to indicate a link between words, as in after-school. Use a hyphen for compound words, such as “often-used” or “much-loved.” Hyphenate two or more modifiers preceding a noun when they form a unit modifying the noun (e.g., exit-level test and up-to-date records). Do not use a hyphen after adverbs ending in “-ly” (highly regarded, not highly-regarded). Do not use a hyphen after prefixes or before suffixes. Prekindergarten, not pre-kindergarten; districtwide means “throughout the district,” while district-wide means “as wide as a district.”

NAMES
It is John Smith III, not John Smith, III. Traditionally, “Jr.” was both preceded and followed by a comma, as in “John Smith, Jr., has been …” This guide recommends following the increasingly common practice of omitting the commas, as in “John Smith Jr. has been …”

NUMBERS
Spell out both cardinal and ordinal numbers from one through nine and when a sentence begins with a number. Use figures for 10 and above: ninth grade, 10th grade, 11th grade. But use all numbers in mixed situations (5 out of 10 students), Spell out ordinal numbers below 10. (“ninth grade” rather than “9th grade”). Use numbers for grades 10 and above (10th grade, 11th grade, and 12th grade). Numbers over a million may be rounded off and expressed this way, including sums of money: 2.75 million rather than 2,752,123 and About $2.35 million rather than $2,349,999.

OFFICES AND DEPARTMENTS
In HISD, organizational units that report directly to the superintendent of schools are called offices. These “direct report” offices are made up of departments. Capitalize the word “office” or “department” in the name of an office or department (e.g., the Office of Academic Services, the Office of Human Resources, the Special Education Department). Use a lowercase “o” or “d” in “the office” or “the department” in subsequent references (e.g., Almost every employee in the department attended the fitness rally.)

PERCENT
Use “percent” rather than % in formal writing. And a 10 percent increase is not the same thing as a 10-percentage-point or 10-point increase.

PREKINDERGARTEN
Prekindergarten is one word. Pre-K is acceptable on second reference.

SCHOOLS
In general, when a school is named after a person use only the person’s last name (Twain Elementary School, Yates High School). Some HISD schools are named after people with the same last name. When referring to these campuses, always use the identifying initials, with a space between the letters (e.g., J. R. Harris and R. P. Harris Elementary Schools, C. Martínez and R. Martínez Elementary Schools), or use the full name (Clemente Martínez Elementary School).

SDMCS
They are shared-decision-making committees, not shared decision-making committees (the decision-making is shared on the committees, the decision-making committees are not shared).

SEASONS
It is “spring 2013” or “spring of 2013,” not “Spring 2013.” And there is no comma (spring 2013, not spring, 2013).

SPACES
It is customary now to use only one space after a period at the end of a sentence and after colons, not two.
EDITORIAL STYLE GUIDE

STUDENTS
They are ninth-graders, not ninth graders. And it is “All ninth- and 10th-grade students ...,” not “All ninth and 10th-grade students ...” Grades 10 and higher should use numbers.

STUDENT NAMES
Use the last name of high school students on second reference. Use elementary and middle school students’ first names on second reference.

SPECIAL EDUCATION
Capitalize it when referring to Special Education programs. Otherwise it just means programs that are special. Never use sped or SPED in reference to Special Education.

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
The formal position title is “superintendent of schools,” but HISD Superintendent [insert name] is acceptable in all references. Capitalize the title only when used as a formal title before the name, such as Superintendent of Schools [insert name], or HISD Superintendent [insert name]. Subsequent references may be written as “the superintendent.” Do not use “Dr.” and “superintendent” together. HISD Superintendent Dr. [insert name] is not correct.

TELEPHONE NUMBERS
Do not put the local area codes in parentheses. Thus, 713–556–6005, not (713) 556–6005. And use hyphens, not periods as they do in Europe. Thus 713-556-6005, not 713.556.6005.

THE
Capitalize “the” only when it is the first word in a sentence. It can also be capitalized if it is part of an official name (e.g., The New York Times, The Learning Channel, etc.).

TIME
Don’t use tonight with p.m. or this morning with a.m., because it is redundant. Use 3 p.m. not 3:00 p.m. An event is “from 2 – 5 p.m.,” not “from 2:00 – 5:00 p.m.”

TITLES
All titles (principal, school improvement officer, manager, etc.), are capitalized when they precede the person’s name, as in “School Improvement Officer Armando Alaniz,” but not when used after or without the person’s name, as in “Armando Alaniz, the school improvement officer, attended the meeting” or “The school improvement officer attended the meeting.” Spell out all legislative, state, and congressional titles: State Rep. Sylvester Turner, U.S. Rep. Gene Green.

UNDER WAY
Under way is two words, not one (underway).

URLs
When typesetting URLs or emails, capitalize “HISD” (e.g. www.HoustonISD.org, name@HoustonISD.org, etc.)

WEBSITE
Website is one word and begins with a lowercase “w.”

YEARS
It is “2011 – 2012 school year” (with an en dash, not a hyphen) but “fiscal year 2005.” 2011-12 is not correct.

ZIP CODE
ZIP code, not zip code (ZIP is the acronym for Zone Improvement Plan.)
Dozens of languages are spoken in HISD, with English, Spanish, Arabic, and Vietnamese the four most widely used. In order to keep Houston’s Hispanic and Vietnamese communities well informed about the district’s programs and policies, HISD’s Translation Services Department translates key district and school-based documents and communications into Spanish and Vietnamese for public distribution in printed form and on the Internet. These include letters to parents from schools and departments as well as documents that have districtwide importance.

To ensure that communications in languages other than English are consistent and of high quality, schools and departments are encouraged to use the services provided by Translation Services (4400 West 18th Street; 713-556-6130). The procedures and timeline for acquiring Spanish, Arabic, or Vietnamese translations are outlined in administrative regulation GBB2. HISD’s translation guidelines and practices are set forth in GBB3(REGULATION). Both regulations are available at http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/592?filter=GBB. The department can also provide assistance in locating translation support for languages other than Spanish, Vietnamese, Arabic, or Italian. Be sure to allow time for translations when planning your communications.

To help HISD personnel to better serve non-English-speaking patrons in person, the district has prepared a list of frequently asked questions and their answers available in seven languages (English, Spanish, Vietnamese, French, Farsi, Mandarin Chinese, Arabic, and Urdu). The publication has been distributed to schools and is available online by clicking on the “How may we help you?” link on the left-hand side of the district’s home page (www.HoustonISD.org). The home page also includes a Spanish-language website and a channel in Vietnamese.
BUSINESS CARDS, LETTERHEAD, AND ENVELOPES

The Houston Independent School District has official business cards, letterhead, and envelopes for use when communicating with the public.

BUSINESS CARDS
Official district business cards featuring the HISD seal are available through HISD Printing Services. Contact Printing Services or visit its website (www.HoustonISD.org/Domain/7977) for details on ordering business cards.

OFFICIAL LETTERHEAD
The district has official letterhead available for school, office, and department use. Letterhead can be ordered from Warehouse Operations through SAP; use material #2232 or contact Printing Services for details on ordering letterhead.

PERSONALIZED LETTERHEAD
Personalized letterhead is available to the superintendent, the superintendent’s direct reports, and regional superintendents unless otherwise authorized by the chief of staff. Approved personalized letterhead is available through HISD Printing Services.

BLANK LETTERHEAD PAPER
Blank paper matching the stock used for the district’s official letterhead can be ordered from Warehouse Operations through SAP; use material #30273. Use this paper for letters that require more than a single sheet of printed letterhead.

ENVELOPES
Envelopes that include the 4400 West 18th Street return address are available for office and department use. Envelopes can be ordered from Warehouse Operations through SAP; use material #2125 for ordering white #10 envelopes with the return address or material #2128 for ordering white #10 window envelopes with the return address.
Whenever possible, to save paper, limit external correspondence to one page. Using 11-point instead of 12-point type should make this easier. Paragraph line spacing may also be reduced from “Multiple” “At: 1.2” to “Single” if needed. Do not utilize paragraph line spacing less than the standard “Single” setting.

Of course, if the letter is very short and a smaller type size is not needed to conserve space, 12-point type can certainly be used.

If a letter does require more than one page, use plain paper instead of official letterhead for the additional pages.

**EXTERNAL CORRESPONDENCE TEMPLATES**

Electronic templates are available online at www.HoustonISD.org/branding.

**SAMPLE EXTERNAL CORRESPONDENCE**

Electronic templates for external correspondence are available online at www.HoustonISD.org/branding.
Executive letterhead is available only to the superintendent, the superintendent’s direct reports, and regional superintendents unless otherwise authorized by the chief of staff. Approved personalized letterhead is available through HISD Printing Services.
Memoranda are used for internal written communications among schools and departments. Memos should be concise and easy to read. Use simple, direct sentences in the active voice. Also, before writing a memo, consider whether the memo format is the best way to reach your audience. For example, if only a few people need the information, a simple email could suffice.

**GENERAL MEMO GUIDELINES**

- Use 11-point Arial, black ink/toner only, and set the top, bottom, left, and right margins at 1”.

**Note:** Whenever possible, to save paper, limit memos to one page. Using 11-point instead of 12-point type and setting the margins at 1” should make this easier. If the memo is very short and a smaller type size is not needed to conserve space, 12-point type can certainly be used.

- Text is flush left (the text is aligned along the left margin or gutter; it is uneven along the right margin or gutter), and the first line of paragraphs is not indented.

- Include the name of a contact person and his or her telephone number.

Electronic memo templates are available online at www.HoustonISD.org/styleguide.
The Office of Student Support communicates information to principals and other district leaders on behalf of various departments. Please follow these guidelines when submitting information for dissemination.

**PROCESS FOR SUBMITTING COMMUNICATIONS FOR PUBLISHING ON WEBSITE**

- Ensure that the appropriate Cabinet member has approved the communication before submitting. The responsibility for obtaining appropriate departmental approval for submission rests solely with the individual originating and/or submitting the item.
- Submit communication by 5 p.m. on Thursday in order for it to be published on the Academic Services Memos website (HoustonISD.org/ASM) the following Monday.
- Use the online submission form that is located on the website.
- Click the “Submit New Memo” tab (located in the box at the top left section) to access the Submission Form.
- Fill out the form completely; required information is indicated by an asterisk.
- Mark the Monday of the week following the date of submission as the “Post Date.”
- Include a specific date, if appropriate, in the box designated, “Deadline Date If Applicable.” The deadline date should fall on a Friday, and a minimum of two weeks should be allowed for the recipient to respond to any action required.
- Indicate the intended recipients (i.e., principals, work location supervisors, etc.) in the “Audience” box.
- Input the information to be communicated in the “Message Body” section. The first few sentences of this text will serve as a “preview” to the entire item. Use single spacing with double spacing among paragraphs. Place tables, graphs, outlines, etc. in an attachment and reference the attachment in the message body.
- Upload the attachment, if appropriate, by clicking the “Attach File” icon at the top of the submission form and following the instructions. An attachment should not include a memo that repeats the content of the message body.
- Click “Save” to submit the memo. Upon submission, the communication is sent directly to the Academic Services mailbox; the submitter receives a notice that the form was successfully submitted, and the completed form is also automatically emailed to the address listed for the contact person.

**PROCESS FOR SUBMITTING COMMUNICATIONS FOR EMAIL DISTRIBUTION**

Emails to a select group of principals must be submitted to the Office of Student Support for approval and dissemination. Send the email communication, along with a distribution list for the selected principals, to AcademicServices@HoustonISD.org.

**PUBLICATION/DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNICATIONS**

All communications (postings and emails) received in the Academic Services mailbox by 5 p.m. on Thursday will be reviewed by the Student Support Officer and (barring any conflicts or concerns) published/distributed on the following Monday.

**TIPS FOR WRITING THE COMMUNICATIONS**

- Summarize and place important information at the beginning of the item as an “attention grabber.” This beginning text should briefly provide basic information on the topic such as what, who, when, where, why, and how. Ensure that the communication is concise and easy to read. Use simple, direct sentences written in the active voice. Carefully proofread and edit the information.
- If needed, translate letters or information to parents in Spanish and Vietnamese prior to submitting them for publication or distribution.
- Include tables, graphs, outlines, etc., in an attachment in order to maintain their original formatting.
The Board of Education is the official policy-making body of the Houston Independent School District. The nine trustees, elected from separate districts, serve staggered four-year terms. The board holds public meetings at 5 p.m. on the second Thursday of every month in the HISD Board Auditorium, 4400 West 18th Street. A limited number of printed agendas and meeting notices are available on board meeting day. Agenda summaries and the official agenda are available online (http://www.houstonisd.org/domain/7947).

A detailed description of the process and format used to create agenda items to be considered in HISD Board of Education meetings is provided in BE2(REGULATION) and BE3(REGULATION), available at http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/592?filter=BE.
Emails used for district-related purposes need to be formal, polished, and professional in tone as well as concise and easy to read. Always be aware that by law all HISD emails are public documents open to public scrutiny.

**GENERAL EMAIL GUIDELINES**

Use black or dark colors for type in emails; avoid using bright or lightly shaded type, which can be difficult to read. Be cautious about attaching large documents or photos to your emails, because they can quickly fill up a recipient’s inbox, potentially shutting down his or her account. If you must send a large attachment, be considerate by alerting a recipient before sending it, and try not to send it on a Friday or over a weekend (thereby possibly shutting out weekend emails). Decorative or whimsical animations and using “stationery” (backgrounds or “wallpaper”) in emails are not permitted.

Remember, your HISD email account is for district-related communication purposes and should not involve solicitation, be associated with any for-profit outside business activity, or propagate chain or junk email. All employees are encouraged to review district policy on appropriate use of email and the network. The policy can be found online in the TIS Policies and Procedures Manual under Policies and Procedures on the Technology and Information Systems Department website after log-in.

Also, it is always good to keep your Outlook properties information current. To view your information, open an email that you have sent and double-click on your name at the top of the email. To update, simply email your correct information to the Technology Help Desk (helpdesk@HoustonISD.org).

**EMAILS TO SCHOOLS AND REGIONAL — OFFICE PERSONNEL**

Emails to groups of schools, all school support officers, or large groups, principals, or regional-office personnel should follow the general guidelines outlined above and must be submitted as an Academic Services memo (see preceding section).

**EMAIL FORMATTING:**

- **USE A WHITE BACKGROUND**
  
  Do not use a “wallpaper” or other image as a background – these are often received as attachments and are not viewable on all devices, and can make the email difficult to read.

- **USE A STANDARD TYPEFACE FOR BODY CONTENT**
  
  Use only common, easy-to-read typefaces such as:
  - Arial
  - Calibri
  - Times New Roman

- **ONLY USE ARIAL FOR THE EMAIL SIGNATURE**

- **USE 11-POINT TYPE**
  
  Use blue PMS 549 C (R=103/G=162/B=185) and/or black text color.

- **DO NOT USE LOGOS AND GRAPHICS**
  
  These do not translate well across email clients.

- **DO NOT USE QUOTES OR EPIGRAPHS**
  
  Using quotes or taglines in your email signature is not permitted.
EMAIL SIGNATURES

APPROVED FORMAT FOR EMAIL SIGNATURES

Name
Title, Department
XXX-XXX-XXXX (office) | XXX-XXX-XXXX (fax)
name@HoustonISD.org (email)

HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
Hattie Mae White Educational Support Center
4400 West 18th Street | Houston, TX 77092-8501
Keep up with the latest news from HISD: www.HoustonISD.org
Follow HISD on Twitter: @HoustonISD
Like HISD on Facebook: www.facebook.com/HoustonISD

Sample with a department tagline

Name
Title, Department
APPROVED DEPARTMENT TAGLINE
XXX-XXX-XXXX (office) | XXX-XXX-XXXX (fax)
name@HoustonISD.org (email)

HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
Hattie Mae White Educational Support Center
4400 West 18th Street | Houston, TX 77092-8501
Keep up with the latest news from HISD: www.HoustonISD.org
Follow HISD on Twitter: @HoustonISD
Like HISD on Facebook: www.facebook.com/HoustonISD

SAMPLE WITH A DEPARTMENT TAGLINE
EMAIL SIGNATURES

INAPPROPRIATE FORMAT FOR EMAIL SIGNATURES

Name
Title, Department
XXX-XXX-XXXX (office) | XXX-XXX-XXXX (fax)
name@HoustonISD.org (email)

HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
Hattie Mae White Educational Support Center
4400 West 18th Street | Houston, TX 77092-8501
Keep up with the latest news from HISD: www.HoustonISD.org
Follow HISD on Twitter: @HoustonISD
Like HISD on Facebook: www.facebook.com/HoustonISD

HISD | Department Name
TAGLINE — FIVE WORDS OR LESS

✗ Do not use multiple colors.
✗ Do not highlight areas.
✗ Do not include quotes, phrases, or scriptures.
✗ Do not include images.
✗ Do not use wallpaper or background colors.
✗ Do not use a typeface other than Arial.
✗ Do not add a department logo.
The Houston Independent School District generates hundreds of publications (manuals, reports, newsletters, brochures, posters, flyers) each year from schools, offices, and departments. In many cases, these publications target a specific audience or community, such as those produced for parents whose children attend a particular school. In other cases, publications are produced centrally for districtwide audiences or groups of audiences, such as all taxpayers, all students, all parents, or all employees. To ensure that all schools, offices, and departments convey the fact that they are part of the HISD organization, it is important that their publications be consistent in design and format. Below are basic guidelines for the different types of publications that the district produces.

Questions or comments about using the HISD Style Guide can be directed to Multimedia Services (713-556-6066; info@HoustonISD.org). The guide, as well as electronic files of the images and templates referenced in the guide, are available at www.HoustonISD.org/branding.

MANUALS AND REPORTS
All districtwide manuals and reports must include content and design elements as outlined below.

COVER SPECIFICATIONS
Manual and report covers should include the title of the document, the district name, the district seal, and the month and year of publication.

INSIDE COVER (OR INSIDE PAGE) SPECIFICATIONS
All district manuals and reports must have an inside cover page that includes the seal; the name of the district; the names of the HISD Board of Education members including officer positions; the name of the superintendent of schools; the name of the superintendent’s direct report whose office generated the publication, or the name of principal if generated by a school; the physical mailing address and web address (if there is one) of the issuing office or school; and the district’s web address. Indicate individuals’ advanced degrees (doctorate).

The inside cover should also include the HISD Equal Opportunity Statement:

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, political affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression in its educational or employment programs and activities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
All manuals and reports that include several sections or chapters or that consist entirely of charts, graphs, or tables must include an executive summary. An executive summary is similar to the abstract for an article in a professional journal. It is a brief but comprehensive summary of the purpose and content of the document. It should succinctly outline the document’s aims, findings, and conclusions.

PAGINATION/TABLE OF CONTENTS
Documents of more than two pages should be clearly paginated. Publications should include a table of contents if there are several sections or chapters.

USE OF GRAPHS/TABLES AND PHOTOGRAPHY
Images included in a document should complement the text, making the information that is being presented easier for the reader to understand. Graphs and tables can be used to make complex data and their relationships easier to understand (e.g., a bar graph can compare HISD’s performance on a given test with that of other districts, a line graph can be used to show comparisons over time, a pie chart can show divisions of the whole or parts of the whole). Graphs and tables should be simple and easy to read, with a clear explanation of what is being represented, and should include the source of the data.

Photography can also be used to make information easier to understand (e.g., pictures of students wearing clothes that meet a school’s dress code) or can be used to make a document more interesting and visually appealing. Be sure to follow HISD’s Media Policy when using photographs of students in publications (www.HoustonISD.org/mediapolicy).

Avoid using complicated images behind text, as they can often make reading difficult. In addition, be sure your images retain their correct proportions.
PUBLICATIONS

Descriptions of the kinds of publications that HISD issues are included in BP3(REGULATION) available at http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/592?filter=BP3.

NEWSLETTERS, BROCHURES, POSTERS, AND FLYERS

All district, office, department, or school newsletters, brochures, posters, and flyers must include content and design elements as outlined below.

• The words “Houston Independent School District” must be clearly visible.
• Use of approved color palette
• Use of approved typefaces
• The information about using graphs/tables and photographs in manuals and reports in this style guide applies to newsletters, brochures, posters, and flyers, as well.

When your phone rings at 6 p.m. on Tuesday April 29, pick it up and listen.

A surprise caller will invite you and all HISD eighth-grade parents to a live “Tele-Town Hall” so you can learn about how new state legislation will affect what your eighth-grader studies in high school and what’s needed for graduation. And you can do this from the comfort of your home, vehicle, office — wherever you take the call.

Cynthia Cisneros, a reporter for ABC-13 for more than 20 years and now the station’s vice president of community affairs, will lead a live discussion with HISD principals.

You can just listen in for important information about the changes coming this fall under House Bill 5 — and you’ll have the chance to ask your own questions about such things as personal graduation plans, endorsements, and more that will put your student on the path to higher education and career.

If you miss the call, you can phone 855-756-7520 ext. 24664# for English, ext. 24665# for Spanish.

Join us and learn all about the big changes to HISD’s high schools starting next year.

No meetings required.

Sample 8.5” by 11” flyer

HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Hattie Mae White Educational Support Center • 4400 West 18th Street • Houston, Texas 77092-8591

www.HoustonISD.org • www.facebook.com/HoustonISD • www.twitter.com/HoustonISD

When your phone rings at 6 p.m. on Tuesday April 29, pick it up and listen.

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Sample 8.5” by 11” flyer
When designing presentations using PowerPoint, use the official HISD PowerPoint templates. They can be downloaded at www.HoustonISD.org/branding.

**GENERAL TIPS**

- For presentations, use at least 24 point type. Anything smaller may not be readable from a distance.

- Your presentation should help the audience understand the topic, and include a clear outline and logical structure.

- Strive for fewer slides and simple, easy-to-comprehend charts and graphics.

- Rather than using a printout of your slides as a handout, consider placing fewer words on your slides and developing a separate handout with your talking points or additional notes. Let the audience know you will make these notes available at the end of the presentation so they will focus less on taking notes and more on what you’re saying.

- Whenever possible, use images to complement the text. Approved HISD photography can be found at www.HoustonISDphotos.photoshelter.com. To download a photograph from this library, use password “media” when prompted.
The Houston Independent School District (HISD) realizes that part of 21st century learning is adapting to the changing methods of communication. The importance of teachers, students and parents engaging, collaborating, and sharing in these digital environments is a part of 21st century learning. To this aim, the Houston Independent School District has adapted guidelines to provide direction for instructional employees, students and the School District community when participating in online social media activities. Social media guidelines can be downloaded from www.HoustonISD.org/Page/106719 under the Resources heading.

Whether or not an employee chooses to participate in a blog, wiki, online social network or any other form of online publishing or discussion is his or her own decision. Free speech protects individuals who want to participate in social media, but the laws and courts have ruled that school districts can discipline employees if their speech, including personal online postings, disrupts school operations.

The guidelines have been created as a resource for you. It is important to create an atmosphere of trust and individual accountability. Keep in mind that information produced by HISD employees is a reflection on the entire district and is subject to the District’s Acceptable Use Policy. Personal postings, even if marked private, may also be subject to relevant HISD policies and procedures, as well as to relevant local, state, and federal laws. By accessing, creating or contributing to any blogs, wikis, podcasts or other social media for classroom or district use, you agree to abide by the guidelines (www.HoustonISD.org/Page/106719). Please read them carefully before participating in any social media application.
Our typographic style is strong, clear, and professional.

Headlines should be prominent and limited to a small number of words. Body copy should be large enough to be legible with sufficient white space. Typestyles for content should be applied consistently throughout the layout.

When working in Microsoft Office on a computer that does not have the recommended typefaces installed, the acceptable typeface substitutions may be utilized.

**RECOMMENDED TYPEFACES**

**HEADLINES**
The primary typeface for headlines is Archer Bold or Novecento Wide Bold. The type size and weight should be prominent and clear in relationship to the body copy.

Archer Bold Italic, Archer Semibold Italic, Archer Semibold, Novecento Wide Medium, Novecento Wide Medium Italic, Novecento Wide Bold, or Novecento Wide Bold Italic are secondary options.

**SUBHEADLINES**
The primary typeface for subheadlines is Novecento Wide Bold. The space between the letters, kerning may be expanded at a distance that is aesthetically pleasing.

Novecento Wide Medium is a secondary option.

**BODY COPY**
Body copy should be set in Adobe Caslon Pro.

**CHARTS AND LABELS**
Chart body copy and illustration labels should be set in Avenir. Chart headers should be set in Novecento Wide Medium.

**HEADLINES AND SUBHEADS**
- **Archer Light**
- **Archer Light Italic**
- **Archer Medium**
- **Archer Medium Italic**
- **Archer Semibold**
- **Archer Semibold Italic**
- **Archer Bold**
- **Archer Bold Italic**

**NOVECENTO WIDE MEDIUM**
- **NOVECENTO WIDE BOLD**

**ACCEPTABLE TYPEFACE SUBSTITUTIONS FOR MICROSOFT OFFICE**
- **Archer Bold** = Rockwell Regular
- **NOVECENTO WIDE DEMIBOLD** = ARIAL BOLD (ALL CAPS)
- Adobe Caslon Regular = Times New Roman Regular
- Avenir Medium = Arial Regular

**ACCEPTABLE TYPEFACE SUBSTITUTIONS FOR WEB AND MOBILE APPS**
- **Archer Bold** = Arvo (Normal 400)
- **NOVECENTO WIDE DEMIBOLD** = MONTSERRAT (BOLD 700) (ALL CAPS)
- Adobe Caslon Regular = Times New Roman Regular
- Avenir Medium = Arial Regular
PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography is a dynamic tool. It can be used to make information easier to understand (e.g., pictures of students wearing clothes that meet a school’s dress code) or can be used to make a document more interesting and visually appealing.

The photographs taken and utilized should convey the diversity, activities, and values of the district. Photographs should show natural, real-life people and activities. They should evoke positive emotions, atmosphere, and engage the audience while maintaining relevance to the content they support. Look beyond the straightforward and typical to communicate the rich moments of district life.

Avoid using photographs with complex elements behind text, as they can often make reading difficult. In addition, be sure your photographs retain their correct proportions.

Be sure to follow HISD’s Media Policy when using photographs of students in publications (www.houstonisd.org/Page/31524).

To access the district photography library, visit www.HoustonISDphotos.photoshelter.com.

- At the bottom of the web page there are four category thumbnails including: students, staff, leadership, and trustees for quick photograph selections.

- To find particular photo, enter search criteria into the field located next to the “Search Archive” button at the bottom of the webpage.

- To download a photograph from the library, use the password “media” when prompted.

Approved HISD photography can be found at www.HoustonISDphotos.photoshelter.com. To download a photograph from this library, use password “media” when prompted.
When choosing color, it is important to consider the best configuration from the district color palette that will present the message clearly, effectively, and complement the chosen images.

For text, the primary color is 80 percent black on a white background. Utilizing the 80 percent tint of black offers a welcoming and warm feeling to the design. It is inviting to the audience. The full 100 percent black is acceptable to use when a strong impact or direct look and feel is desired.

**The primary color for HISD branded materials is blue – PMS 549 C.** When there is information that requires a distinction in hierarchy beyond what blue PMS 549 C and its tints can offer, the secondary and tertiary colors along with their tints may be utilized.

Color configuration options have been illustrated in the following pages. The options illustrated in this guide are a small sample of the creative possibilities that the district color palette affords. You are encouraged to create the best configuration from the palette with this key standard in mind — **Always keep blue – PMS 549 C as the main color.**
COLOR PALETTE: PRIMARY COLORS

PMS 549 C
C: 60
M: 24
Y: 20
K: 0

#67A2B9
R: 103
G: 162
B: 185

TINTS
90% #78ACC0
80% #88B5C6
70% #99BEC6
60% #A6C6D3
50% #B5CFDB
40% #C3DAE3
30% #D3E2E8
20% #E1ECEF
10% #F1F5F6

80% BLACK
C: 0
M: 0
Y: 0
K: 80

#5859B
R: 88
G: 89
B: 91

TINTS
100% #000000
90% #404040
70% #6E6E6E
60% #828282
50% #949494
40% #A8A8A8
30% #BDBDBD
20% #D2D2D2
10% #E7E7E7

PRIMARY COLOR CONFIGURATION OPTIONS
A surprise caller will invite you and all HISD eighth-grade parents to a live “Tele-Town Hall” so you can learn about how new state legislation will affect what your eighth-grader studies in high school and what’s needed for graduation. And you can do this from the comfort of your home, vehicle, office — wherever you take the call.

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COLOR PALETTE: SECONDARY COLORS

PMS 110 C
C: 16
M: 31
Y: 100
K: 0

#DCA900
R: 220
G: 169
B: 0

TINTS

90%  #E3B207  R=227 / G=178 / B=7
80%  #E8BA2A  R=232 / G=186 / B=42
70%  #EDC42C  R=237 / G=194 / B=76
60%  #F1CB68  R=241 / G=203 / B=104
50%  #F1D280  R=244 / G=210 / B=128
40%  #F3DB9B  R=243 / G=219 / B=155
30%  #F8E4B3  R=248 / G=228 / B=179
20%  #F9EDCD  R=249 / G=237 / B=205
10%  #FAF6E4  R=250 / G=246 / B=228

PMS 369 C
C: 67
M: 12
Y: 100
K: 0

#61A60E
R: 97
G: 166
B: 14

TINTS

90%  #73B02F  R=115 / G=176 / B=47
80%  #84B849  R=132 / G=184 / B=73
70%  #95C161  R=149 / G=193 / B=97
60%  #A5CA77  R=165 / G=202 / B=119
50%  #B4D28C  R=180 / G=210 / B=140
40%  #C3DBA3  R=195 / G=219 / B=163
30%  #D5E4B9  R=213 / G=228 / B=185
20%  #E4EDD0  R=228 / G=237 / B=208
10%  #F1F5E6  R=241 / G=245 / B=230

SECONDARY COLOR
CONFIGURATION OPTIONS
COLOR PALETTE: TERTIARY COLORS

PMS 208 C
C: 32  
M: 99  
Y: 61  
K: 26  
#8C1D40
R: 140  
G: 29  
B: 64

TINTS
90%  #9A3851  R=154 / G=56 / B=81  
80%  #A64E62  R=166 / G=78 / B=98  
70%  #B36674  R=179 / G=102 / B=116  
60%  #C07A87  R=192 / G=122 / B=135  
50%  #CC9098  R=204 / G=144 / B=152  
40%  #D6A5AC  R=214 / G=165 / B=172  
30%  #E1BABF  R=225 / G=186 / B=191  
20%  #ECD1D5  R=236 / G=209 / B=213  
10%  #F1E7EA  R=241 / G=231 / B=234

PMS 7583 C
C: 16  
M: 74  
Y: 97  
K: 4

TINTS
90%  #D27040  R=210 / G=112 / B=64  
80%  #DA8055  R=218 / G=128 / B=85  
70%  #E2906A  R=226 / G=144 / B=106  
60%  #E79F7D  R=231 / G=159 / B=125  
50%  #EDAF91  R=237 / G=175 / B=145  
40%  #F3BFA6  R=243 / G=191 / B=166  
30%  #F4CEBC  R=244 / G=206 / B=188  
20%  #F9DDDD  R=249 / G=221 / B=209  
10%  #F7EEE7  R=247 / G=238 / B=231

PMS 7673 C
C: 77  
M: 74  
Y: 22  
K: 6

TINTS
90%  #656393  R=101 / G=99 / B=147  
80%  #75729E  R=117 / G=114 / B=158  
70%  #8682A9  R=134 / G=130 / B=169  
60%  #9794B5  R=151 / G=148 / B=181  
50%  #A8A4C1  R=168 / G=164 / B=193  
40%  #B9B5CD  R=185 / G=181 / B=205  
30%  #CC7D9  R=204 / G=199 / B=217  
20%  #DDDAE5  R=221 / G=218 / B=229  
10%  #EEECF1  R=238 / G=236 / B=241
COLOR PALETTE: TERTIARY COLORS

TERTIARY COLOR CONFIGURATION OPTIONS
# Houston Independent School District

## Plan Your Path

Paths and Endorsements Offered at High Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics)</th>
<th>Business and Industry</th>
<th>Arts and Humanities</th>
<th>Public Services</th>
<th>Multi-Disciplinary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>Business and Industry</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Public Services</td>
<td>Multi-Disciplinary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>Performing Arts</td>
<td>Social Services</td>
<td>Multi-Disciplinary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Performing Arts</td>
<td>Social Services</td>
<td>Multi-Disciplinary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary Career &amp; Technical Education</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Performing Arts</td>
<td>Social Services</td>
<td>Multi-Disciplinary</td>
</tr>
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<td>Social Services</td>
<td>Multi-Disciplinary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Houston Independent School District

Hattie Mae White Educational Support Center
4400 West 18th Street
Houston, Texas 77092-8501
www.HoustonISD.org • www.facebook.com/HoustonISD • www.twitter.com/HoustonISD

### Sample

COLOR PALETTE

COLOR CONFIGURATION OF SAMPLE
# COLOR PALETTE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PMS 549 C</th>
<th>100%</th>
<th>15%</th>
<th>7%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#67A2B9</td>
<td>R: 103</td>
<td>G: 162</td>
<td>B: 185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#EAF0F3</td>
<td>R: 234</td>
<td>G: 240</td>
<td>B: 243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#F4F7F8</td>
<td>R: 244</td>
<td>G: 247</td>
<td>B: 248</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### STYLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PMS 549 C</th>
<th>Header</th>
<th>PMS 549 C — 7% TINT</th>
<th>Header</th>
<th>PMS 549 C — 15% TINT</th>
<th>Header</th>
<th>NOVECENTO WIDE MEDIUM 10 PT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#67A2B9</td>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>Avenir Book 9 pt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMS 549 C</td>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>INNER RULES 0.5 pt PMS 549 C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#F4F7F8</td>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>OUTER RULE 1 pt PMS 549 C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOVECENTO WIDE MEDIUM 9 PT</td>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE HISD SEAL

The HISD seal is should be utilized for authenticating official district documents, such as diplomas, transcripts, certification of board actions, trustee and superintendent publications, and other official correspondence. To ensure the integrity of the seal, here are some guidelines:

• Do not modify the seal’s colors, content, or graphic elements.
• The approved seal can be downloaded from http://www.HoustonISD.org/branding.
• Maintain the seal’s proportions. The scale/size of the seal may be adjusted to fit the needs of the layout; do not stretch or distort it.

For promotional and marketing materials the seal is not required; however Houston Independent School District or HISD should be prominently displayed.
THE HISD LETTERMARK LOGO

The HISD logo should be utilized for promotional and marketing districtwide materials.

To ensure the integrity of the HISD logo, here are some guidelines:

• Do not modify the colors, content, or graphic elements.
• The approved HISD logo can be downloaded from www.HoustonISD.org/branding.
• Maintain the proportions. The scale/size of the logo may be adjusted to fit the needs of the layout; do not stretch or distort it.

Maintain a minimum clear space around the logo. Clear space insulates the logo from distracting elements, such as other logos, copy, illustrations, and photography. The minimum clear space can be determined by taking the measurement from the bottom of the arm of the “h” to the bottom of the “h” character.
When placing the logo on a dark background or photograph utilize white. Do not place the logo on busy areas of the photograph that compromise legibility.
THE HISD LETTERMARK LOGO

Maintain the logo’s proportions. The scale/size of the logo may be adjusted to fit the needs of the layout yet, do not stretch or distort it.

Do not modify the logo’s colors, content, or graphic elements. The only adjustment allowed is scaling the logo to meet the size needs of the layout.

Adhere to the minimum size or greater for optimal legibility.
DEPARTMENT LOGOS

Houston Independent School District has a wealth of talent, expertise, leadership, resources, and infrastructure that supports the needs of Houston’s students and employees. Conveying the strong connection that each specialized department or office has with the district reinforces the value and contribution of all stakeholders.

Specialized departments may not use their unit name without “HISD” appearing in its designated format. Departments may not use a logo that has not been created by the Office of Communications or has not been approved as such.

CREATING A DEPARTMENT LOGO

Each department or office is unique and brings specialized value to the district. Therefore, each department has the option of developing a tagline that best represents how it reinforces the district’s overall mission.

1. Each department or office Brainstorms tagline options with their team.

2. The department or office chooses one option that best meets the following criteria:
   • Concise — five words or less
   • Conveys how the department contributes to the district’s mission (e.g. HISD | College Readiness | Higher Expectations. Higher Education.)

3. Email the tagline for approval to info@HoustonISD.org.

4. Once the tagline is approved, the logo in various file formats will be made available for usage.
DEPARTMENT LOGOS

BUILDING A STRONG IDENTITY
A department can build a strong presence and reinforce its relationship with the district by consistently utilizing a structured brand. Here are some guidelines to ensure the integrity of the department’s identity:

![Logo Diagram]

Maintain a minimum clear space around the logo. Clear space insulates the logo from distracting elements, such as other logos, copy, illustrations, and photographs. The minimum clear space can be determined by taking the measurement from the bottom of the arm of the “H” to the bottom of the “H” character.
When placing the logo on a dark background or photograph, utilize some white space. Do not place the logo on top of busy areas that compromise legibility.
DEPARTMENT LOGOS

- Do not change the colors of the logo
- Do not change the content of the logo with subtractions or additions
- Maintain the logo’s proportions. The scale/size of the logo may be adjusted to fit the needs of the layout yet, but do not stretch or distort it.

Do not modify the logo’s colors, content, or graphic elements. The only adjustment allowed is scaling the logo to meet the size needs of the layout.

Adhere to the minimum size or greater for optimal legibility.
**PROGRAM LOGOS**

The major programs and initiatives that HISD develops fulfill the educational needs of the student body and embody the vision of the district in unique and specialized ways.

As a whole, HISD is a strong team — continuously improving and refining initiatives in innovative ways. The logo system strongly connects and highlights the “who we are” and “what we do” back to HISD.

To receive logo artwork for a program, initiative, or approach, submit your request to info@HoustonISD.org. Do not create a program logo on your own. Logos that have not been created by the Office of Communications or have not been approved as such may not be used. All logos must comply with HISD branding color and type choices.

---

**MEETS STANDARDS**

**HISD**

Family Learning Academy

**MEETS STANDARDS**

**HISD**

Family Learning Academy

**DOES NOT MEET STANDARDS**

**HISD**

Family Learning Academy

*Do not change the colors*

**DOES NOT MEET STANDARDS**

**HISD**

Family Learning Academy

*Do not place on a background that compromises legibility*
APPAREL

The HISD brand is strong, clear, and professional. When acting as an HISD representative in the community these ideals should be reflected in your demeanor and apparel.

To request artwork suitable for screen printing or embroidery: email the Manager of Branding and Graphic Design, Noora Alsalman, at nalsalma@HoustonISD.org. Please indicate the shirt type, shirt color, fabrication method (ie. silkscreen or embroidery), and the logo or seal desired.
CONTACTS

COMMUNICATIONS
Hattie Mae White ESC
4400 West 18th Street
Houston, Texas 77092

MAX MOLL
Chief Community Engagement Officer
telephone: 713-556-3350
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