

BUILD BRIDGE BELIEVE



Becoming #GreatAllOver

An effective teacher in every classroom, an effective principal in every school

DRIVERS TO ACHIEVE OUR VISION



What is #GreatAllOver?

When we talk about HISD in social media such as Twitter, we like to use the hashtag #GreatAllOver. It's our mantra; it's our philosophy. It's a way that Twitter users can get the word out that Houston Independent School District settles for nothing less than the best.

ON THE COVER

Students gather in the library of Durham Elementary, an HISD leadership magnet and International Baccalaureate candidate school.

BUILD

XÂY DỰNG | بناء | CONSTRUIR | 建立

construct (something, typically something large) by putting parts or material together over a period of time

EXAMPLES

Building trust through careful use of public funds, transparency of actions, community engagement

Building 21st century learning centers through bonds for new and renovated schools, modern technology, and infrastructure

Building enduring relationships with effective teachers

BRIDGE

ĐIỀU HÒA | جسر | CONECTAR | 接合

to reconcile or form a connection between two things

EXAMPLES

Bridging achievement gaps across socioeconomic, multicultural divides

Bridging and blending career and college focus through federally recognized Linked Learning model

Bridging pathways to global learning through IB programs, dual language, and language immersion programs

BELIEVE

TIN TƯỞNG | إيمان | CREER | 相信

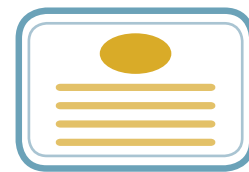
to accept something as true; feel sure of the truth of

EXAMPLES

Believing that every student can succeed — and excel — in an environment that emphasizes rigor and preparation for the future

Believing that our high-achieving, low-income seniors are in demand at the nation's top colleges and universities, and that they will succeed through programs that nurture them

Feeling pride and validation in others' belief in us — the Broad Prize, \$42 million in federal Race to the Top and magnet grants, and national recognition for schools, teachers, and programs



SCHOOL DISTRICT BOND RATING IN TEXAS IS THE **HIGHEST**



282
SCHOOLS



PROPERTY TAX RATE IN HARRIS COUNTY IS THE **LOWEST**



211,552
STUDENTS



GRADUATION RATE IS AT AN ALL-TIME HIGH OF **78.8 PERCENT**



THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS SCORING 3+ ON ADVANCED PLACEMENT EXAMS HAS INCREASED BY **53 PERCENT** SINCE 2009, FROM 4,915 TO 7,524 IN 2013.



SCHOLARSHIP DOLLARS OFFERED TO HISD SENIORS HAVE MORE THAN TRIPLED, FROM \$51.4 MILLION IN 2009 TO **\$186 MILLION** IN 2013.



HISD IS THE ONLY SCHOOL DISTRICT IN AMERICA TO WIN THE PRESTIGIOUS BROAD PRIZE FOR URBAN EDUCATION **TWICE.**

I N D E X

A MESSAGE FROM TERRY B. GRIER, ED.D.....	4
A MESSAGE FROM ANNA EASTMAN	5
BUILD	6
TRUST FROM THE GROUND UP.....	9
BUILDING 21 ST CENTURY SCHOOLS — AS A TEAM	9
2007 BOND INVENTORY	9
2012 BOND PROGRAM	9
THE FACE OF HISD: JONATHAN TRINH AND ADRIAN ACOSTA	10
BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE.....	13
BUILDING HUMAN CAPITAL IN THE CLASSROOM.....	13
BUILDING COLLEGE CREDITS IN HIGH SCHOOL	13
BUILDING STRONG BODIES AND MINDS	13
BUILDING ‘CUSTOMER’ SATISFACTION.....	13
HISD HUMAN RESOURCES FACTS.....	13
BRIDGE.....	14
SCHOOLS CONNECT DIRECTLY WITH FAMILIES	17
HIPPIY SMOOTHS THE PATH TO KINDERGARTEN	17
UPDATING THE PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE.....	17
POWERUP BRIDGES TECHNOLOGY GAPS	21
CONNECTING STUDENTS TO A WORLD OF CHOICES	21
HIGHWAYS TO GLOBAL LEARNING.....	23
LINKING LEARNING AND LIFE	23
FOLLOWING THE IB PROGRAMME	23
FIRST HISD HIGH SCHOOLS TO BE ‘LINKED’	23
THE FACE OF HISD: SAMIYA SAVANNAH	24
RIGOR CONNECTS STUDENTS TO COLLEGE AND CAREERS.....	25
BELIEVE	26
THE BELIEF OF OTHERS: NATIONAL VALIDATION OF OUR DIRECTION	29
ROAD TO THE BROAD	29
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORTS OUR RACE TO THE TOP	29
MAGNET GRANT SHOWS TRUST IN HISD’S STEM INSTRUCTION	29
HISD SCHOOLS RECEIVING THE STEM GRANT	29
HISD ACHIEVEMENTS.....	29
THEY BELIEVE IN HISD	31
THE POWER OF BELIEF: HISD SENIORS “EMERGE” TO NATION’S TOP COLLEGES	31
THE FACE OF HISD: EDGAR AVINA.....	32
HISD’S 2013 OUTSTANDING HALL OF FAME PARTNERS	34
HISD FISCAL RESPONSIBILITIES	36
2012 – 2013 HISD BOARD OF EDUCATION	BACK COVER

A MESSAGE FROM

Terry B. Grier, Ed.D.

Superintendent of Schools



HISD is both a reflection of and a partner with this unique city whose children we educate, a great international city whose future we so profoundly influence.

When you've had a year like the one HISD has enjoyed in 2012 – 2013, it's a joy to produce an annual report. This one might be a bit different from the yearly accounts you're used to reading. We've provided you the standard facts and figures you should know about our finances, student populations, achievements, and more. But we've humanized that data, as well, with vignettes and profiles that typify the remarkable programs and individuals you'll find in our district.

One of the three drivers to achieve our vision of Becoming #GreatAllOver is “engaged stakeholders.” Simply by showing an interest in this annual report, you have proven yourself to be one of those treasured partners in our educational mission. You may be a taxpayer, a voter, a business supporter, a parent, a lawmaker. You tell us when you think we're off track, and you share in our successes.

In trying to come up with a theme for the annual report, we found that many of our initiatives embrace three themes:

Building is a major component of our daily work — whether it's the actual construction of schools and other facilities to 21st century standards under our 2007 and 2012 bond programs or the more metaphorical challenges of establishing and maintaining relationships.

We are constantly striving to bridge gaps in technology, socioeconomic backgrounds, language, and culture in order to provide a uniformly high quality education for all HISD students. Our hope is that this will result in opportunities for higher education and successful careers in the future.

And belief encompasses both the outside world's validation of our efforts and that spirit that drives our mission of Becoming #GreatAllOver — the firm conviction that, with our support and guidance, every HISD student has vast potential in our classrooms and in the world that awaits them.

We're grateful for your involvement with HISD and your belief in what we're doing for our children and for Houston's tomorrow.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terry B. Grier". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

A MESSAGE FROM

Anna Eastman

President, HISD Board of Education, 2012 – 2013



Each year, HISD renews its commitment to excellence, transformation, and transparency with our stakeholders, with the ultimate goal of maintaining and creating schools you would be proud to choose for your child. We are pleased to detail those efforts in this annual report.

I have been honored to serve as president of the Board of Education during a year full of both challenges and affirmation of what we're doing to provide all youngsters in HISD a quality education — an education personalized to their needs and designed to prepare them for a meaningful life beyond our classrooms.

Such a task in a massive district, with socioeconomic and cultural diversity and an ever-changing and demanding job market, is not a simple one.

In the past year, we have started to implement the changes mandated by the state legislature's package of laws known as HB 5. Some districts have found those changes jarring — particularly new graduation requirements. Yet what's now law in Texas was already a focus in HISD — increased rigor and a model that merges career and professional paths from kindergarten through 12th grade. We commit to maintaining the highest standards for each and every HISD student so that they can access successfully the options that will make even their wildest dreams attainable.

Thanks to voters' support of our bonds in 2007 and 2012, we're well on our way to providing 21st century classrooms to support our forward-thinking educational initiatives. Knowing that classrooms are only as good as those dedicated professionals who teach in them, we have made strides in hiring and retaining the most effective educators, and in rewarding them when their students achieve.

Charged with the task of preparing Houston's future workers, thinkers, and leaders, HISD is both a partner and a major factor in our city's continued stability and growth. We're grateful that you share our commitment to leadership in educational innovation. I invite you to further engage with us and to hold us accountable as we continue to strive for the best outcomes for our children.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anna Eastman". The signature is fluid and cursive.



Seventh-grade writing teacher Sarah Campbell guides her students at Young Women's College Preparatory Academy in signing up for Edmodo, a social learning platform that connects teachers, students, and parents.

BUILD

WE BUILD RELATIONSHIPS, NOT JUST SCHOOLS

When voters approved **\$1.89 billion in bonds** for HISD projects in 2012, they weren't simply expressing their interest in building new schools and technology. They were showing confidence in HISD as a leader in **21st Century Learning**. It's a relationship carefully constructed over years of thoughtful planning, responsible practices, and community engagement.

First, the literal meaning of "building" in HISD. Thanks to Houston's support, we're replacing and repairing **40 HISD schools** through the **2012 bond**, including 29 high schools, and rebuilding outdated district athletic facilities that serve thousands. We're **investing heavily in technology** to advance our digital evolution so students and teachers have the tools to transform learning in every HISD classroom. And this year we'll be putting the final touches on **180 projects** funded by our **2007 bond program**.

The figurative "building" that goes on in HISD happens with attracting and nurturing effective teachers, through the relationships they forge with students, and with community engagement through volunteer opportunities and HISD's most comprehensive survey ever.

We know that we're building relationships, not just schools.

“ HISD’s investment in 21st Century Schools — and in effective educators to fill them — creates more stable neighborhoods with higher property values and a stronger Houston economy. ”

— CHAILLE RALPH
2014 chair of the Houston Association of REALTORS®



Esther Galo works with her Advanced Placement Spanish literature class at Westbury High School.

TRUST FROM THE GROUND UP

- HISD created the 21st Century Schools Advisory Committee — architects, engineers, futurists, and other experts — to help ensure that the 2012 bond program builds campuses that live up to students' expectations, as well as ours.
- HISD's nine-member Bond Oversight Committee meets quarterly to monitor the district's bond programs, ensuring that taxpayer dollars are spent prudently in a framework of accountability and transparency.

BUILDING 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS — AS A TEAM

Constructing or remodeling a public school is a complicated, challenging endeavor. To ensure that all the 2012 bond campuses meet the needs of students, staff, and the community, HISD has set up Project Advisory Teams (PATs) for each project.

PATs are structured for school and community members to take an active role in planning and designing, meeting budgets and schedules, and monitoring the progress of construction once it begins. They have input on everything from site planning to wall colors, classroom furniture to technology.

PATs meet monthly and are made up of the school principal, students, teachers, parents, community members, and architects. These teams share relevant information with the school's partners, including families, neighbors, and area businesses. Members will remain on the team for the duration of the project, expected to be two to three years. All meetings are open to the public.

Furr High School's PAT is well on its way to finalizing the site plan and floor plans. "We know our likes and dislikes and what our students need because this is where we live, this is who we are," said Nelly White, a representative from the school's Parent Teacher Student Association.

"One of the concepts we have for the new school is the family room," said an architect assigned to Furr. "It's a metaphor for the overall design that really hits on one of the core values of the campus."

Thanks to teams of committed individuals at each of the 2012 bond schools, the new campuses will reflect the unique culture and needs of the surrounding community — while providing facilities that support 21st century learning.



2007 BOND INVENTORY

More than 180 projects completed or underway

23 new schools opened

3 elementary schools renovated and expanded

More than 8,800 security cameras added at campuses

New fencing at 92 campuses

Middle and high school science labs brought up to date

Final work to be completed by end of 2014

2012 BOND PROGRAM

40 schools, including 29 high schools being built or renovated

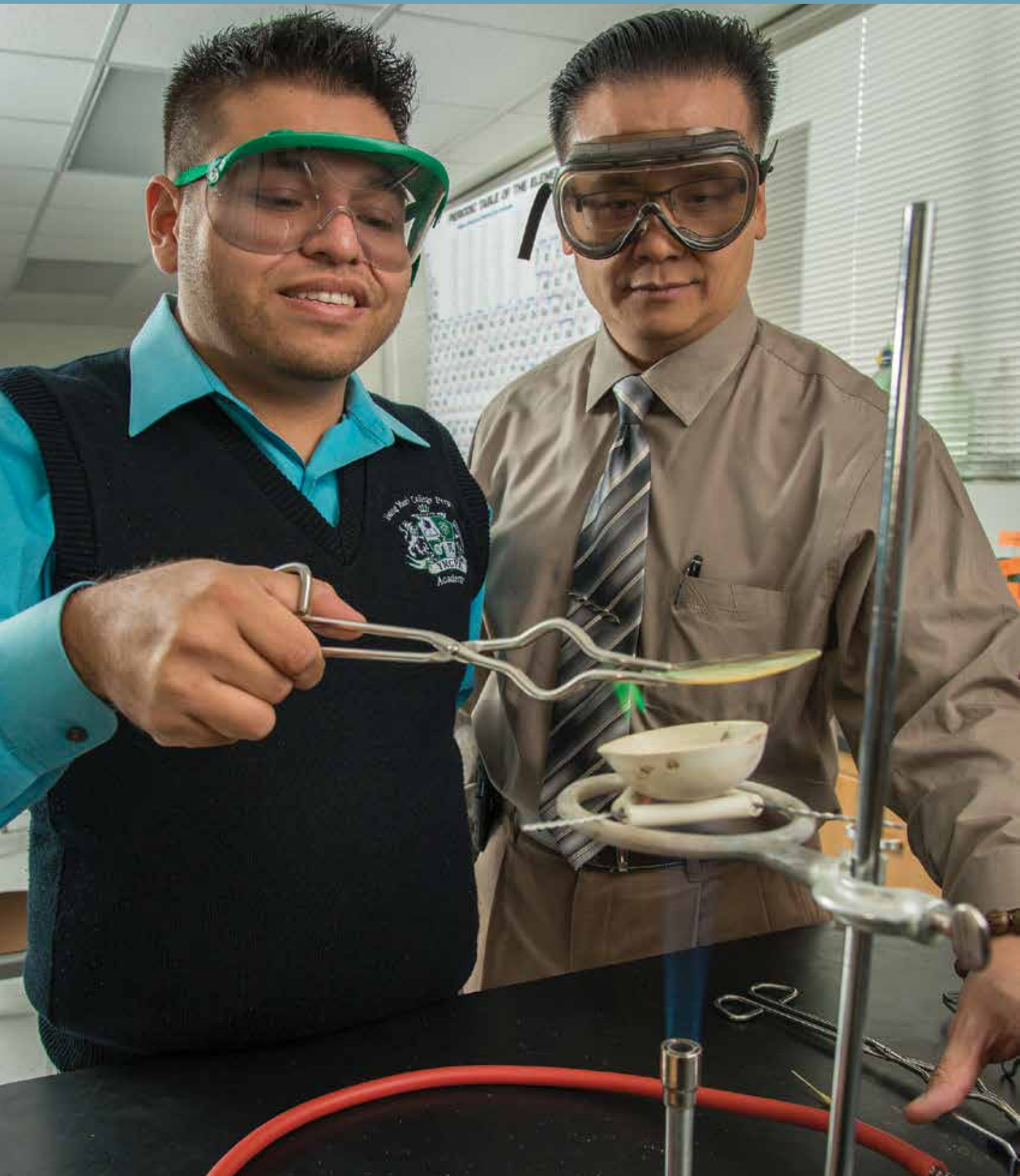
\$100 million in technology upgrades

\$44.7 million in district athletic facility upgrades

\$35 million in middle school restroom renovations

\$17.3 million in safety and security improvements

\$55.8 million for land acquisition



Science teacher Adrian Acosta and his mentor, Dean of Curriculum Jonathan Trinh, conduct a science experiment at Young Men's College Preparatory Academy. Acosta, who was Trinh's student in high school, credits his former teacher with inspiring him to pursue a career in teaching.

THE FACE OF HISD: JONATHAN TRINH AND ADRIAN ACOSTA

Jonathan Trinh is the kind of teacher who builds lasting relationships with his students. That's evident every year on his birthday, when his former students take him to dinner. Adrian Acosta is always one of them. "I wouldn't be where I am now if it weren't for Jonathan," Acosta said.

Acosta teaches seventh-grade science, biology, and chemistry at Young Men's College Preparatory Academy (YMCPA), where Trinh is dean of curriculum. Trinh says Acosta is one of the most effective science teachers in HISD.

His path to the classroom wasn't a direct one, though, as he first had a successful career in the oil industry. But at one of Trinh's birthday dinners, the subject of teaching came up.

"Adrian told me that he wanted to do something more meaningful with his life, 'like you did for us,'" Trinh said. "I got a little emotional when I heard that. I told him to teach for a year, get certified, and I would hire him to work with me at YMCPA."

Acosta did just that, and he is now in his third year at YMCPA. "I teach the way Mr. Trinh taught me," said Acosta. "At first I got some pushback from the kids, because they're not used to the rigor. But it's working — my data speaks for itself."

They met 15 years ago, when Acosta was a freshman and Trinh was his biology teacher. "When I met Mr. Trinh in freshman biology, I struggled," Acosta said. "I was trying to find my way, because I didn't quite fit in, and I had to fight to keep up with the other kids. Mr. Trinh asked me to join math and science club and compete in UIL, which gave me a chance to build close relationships with smart kids I wouldn't have met otherwise."

When it came time to think about college, Trinh encouraged Acosta to apply, despite his father's resistance. "My dad wasn't too keen on the whole college thing," Acosta said, "but my mom, who had been a teacher in Mexico, helped convince him to see the long-term benefits."

Acosta attended University of Houston on a full scholarship. "Thanks to Mr. Trinh's training, my first year at U of H was easy," Acosta said. "Everyone else was failing, but I was doing great."

Trinh has come a long way, as well. When he arrived from Vietnam in 1979, he couldn't speak a word of English. After attending HISD's Gregory-Lincoln Middle School, Dobie High School in Pasadena ISD, and Texas Southern

University, Trinh taught AP biology at Kashmere High School. A year later, he transferred to the Fort Bend ISD, where he taught chemistry and biology and guided students to a number of UIL state championships.

When the new YMCPA opened in 2011, Trinh's sister, Pershing Middle School Principal Kim Trinh Heckman, recruited him to work there.

"I tell my students constantly that the best way to make something of yourself is to get an education," Trinh said. "No other country in the world offers so much opportunity. You can be anything you want to be in America, if you are willing to apply yourself to achieving your goals."

Trinh and Acosta are living proof that hard work — and a strong student-teacher bond does indeed pay off.



Young Men's College Preparatory Academy students respond eagerly to a question in Adrian Acosta's chemistry class.

“In my eyes, there is no other occupation more vital or noble than the role of an educator.”

— DEANA SELVAGGIO
2013 HISD Teacher of the Year Finalist



Sixth-grade teacher Deana Selvaggio reads with her students at Ortiz Middle School.

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

Across the nation, schools are being designed to create 21st Century Learning environments that emphasize collaboration and hands-on learning. HISD is at the forefront of that movement by building facilities that feature natural lighting, flexible spaces, “green” and sustainable designs, and shared activity areas where students can present, collaborate, and study independently. HISD also has mandated adherence to the LEED for Schools “certified” green rating level for all new school construction.

BUILDING HUMAN CAPITAL IN THE CLASSROOM

A district can build state-of-the-art classrooms, but the most important element is still the teacher. HISD’s Effective Teacher Initiative is proving successful at attracting the best and the brightest — and keeping them. During the past three years, HISD has retained more than 90 percent of its most highly effective teachers because of incentives, such as specialized training and performance pay. The district is supporting 223 teacher leaders on 63 campuses, providing specialized assistance in instructional practice, intervention, data tracking and analysis, campus induction, instructional technology, and science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) focus.

BUILDING COLLEGE CREDITS IN HIGH SCHOOL

Two new schools are already in progress under the 2012 bond program. South Early College High School and North Houston Early College High School broke ground in September 2013 and will join HISD’s five other early college campuses that offer students a chance to earn college credits — and an associate’s degree — while still in high school.

BUILDING STRONG BODIES AND MINDS

Delmar Fieldhouse is making way for a new facility slated for completion by PBK Sports in late 2016. “HISD desperately needs a new fieldhouse so that our students can compete with teams from across the Houston area in a setting that is safe and up to standard,” said HISD’s first female athletic director, Marmion Dambrino, who was appointed to her position in August 2010. “You’re continually preparing kids for the future...working on their character and integrity,” she said. “Athletics is one of the better dropout prevention programs for students.”



HISD HUMAN RESOURCES FACTS

THE NUMBER OF APPLICANTS FOR HISD TEACHING JOBS HAS NEARLY DOUBLED TO

10,578.

DURING THE PAST THREE YEARS, HISD HAS RETAINED MORE THAN

90 PERCENT

OF ITS HIGHLY EFFECTIVE TEACHERS.

\$136 MILLION

WAS PAID TO HIGHLY EFFECTIVE TEACHERS FROM 2008 TO 2012.

BUILDING ‘CUSTOMER’ SATISFACTION

More than 125,000 parents, students and faculty graded HISD last spring in HISD’s Your Voice survey, the largest “customer” satisfaction measurement in district history. Questions were asked about everything from safety to rigor to consistency of education, and HISD earned a B-minus. Results are being included as part of the Board Monitoring System and online parent-centered dashboards, and will continue to be used to monitor our progress. We’re aiming for an A-plus.



Westside High School engineering students will be using the skills they learn in high school to succeed in college and beyond.

BRIDGE

WE CONNECT STUDENTS TO COLLEGE AND CAREERS — AND BEYOND

We aim not just to **narrow the achievement gap** but to **bridge it altogether**. We go into homes to turn parents into their preschooler's first teachers, easing their transition into kindergarten. We provide students from the youngest age a glimpse into careers and higher education, offering them an increasingly **focused pathway to their futures**. We arm gifted educators and their students with 21st century campuses and the latest technology — plus the know-how to use it — as a great equalizer.

No matter where and how they started in life, **HISD students will have the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed** in a shrinking world.

Our mission doesn't end with a diploma.



The Wharton Dual Language Academy hosts an Academic Parent Teacher Team meeting, where teachers share tools and strategies with parents so that they can more effectively help their child learn.

SCHOOLS CONNECT DIRECTLY WITH FAMILIES

HISD schools have been empowered to connect directly with their communities through the use of Schoolwires, and the number of these informative, user-friendly sites more than tripled from 2012 to 2013. As of June 2013, there were 247 HISD schools with Schoolwires websites, up from about 80 the previous year.

Schoolwires allows HISD schools to create a website that not only represents the school in a professional manner with their own logos and mascots, but provides simple tools for campuses to easily manage school staff and athletic directories and calendars, and create news blogs and podcasts. Schoolwires allows HISD to communicate instantly with all campuses regarding critical deadlines, inclement weather, or emergency situations.

UPDATING THE PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE

A new team approach — blending classroom learning with home support — is revolutionizing teacher-parent conferences in an HISD pilot program.

Known as Academic Parent-Teacher Teams, the pilot launched at eight schools in 2013 brings in groups of parents to meet with their child's teacher three times a year. Instead of merely walking out with a report card, these parents know where their youngster stands in relation to the rest of the class — and take with them important tools to help support in the home what's being taught in the classroom. Teachers share what the class objectives are and what the students should be learning, as well as the results

HIPPY SMOOTHS THE PATH TO KINDERGARTEN

We know that success in school at all levels is based on a strong preschool foundation. HIPPY — Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters — empowers parents to be their preschool children's first teachers in the home by giving them the tools they need to prepare their youngsters for academic success.

Consistently year after year, students whose parents participated in the HIPPY program outperformed all other HISD kindergarten and first-grade students in standardized testing.

of simple assessments based around skills such as addition and subtraction.

Parents receive their child's assessment results and can anonymously identify their child's score in relation to others in the class and the class goal. Parents then set goals for their child's learning over the next 60 days and learn simple games and activities to practice at home to help their child reach those goals.

Teachers gain instructional partners, parents understand what their child needs to learn and how to support that learning, and students receive instructional support from both at school and at home.



Joel Bruff's kindergarten class at Foerster Elementary enjoys an interactive lesson.



With a little help from science teacher Elizabeth Meaux, first-graders work on their project at Oak Forest Elementary School.





James Njuria and other Austin High School teachers received their new laptops in the fall and were trained for an entire semester before they began using them to teach students in January 2014.

POWERUP BRIDGES TECHNOLOGY GAPS

PowerUp is the district's plan to put a laptop in the hands of every HISD high school student. But that's just the beginning. "Just giving a device to students doesn't mean that the magic happens," said Chief Technology Information Officer Lenny Schad. "This is a paradigm shift for teachers, and you have to train them on how to use the laptops effectively."

Superintendent Terry Grier agrees. "The device is simply a tool," he said. "We want our schools to be engaging, relevant, and interactive for students."

Three schools powered up in 2013, and teachers at eight schools trained in the summer to be ready to lead 21st century learning in their classrooms when computers were distributed to students in January 2014. The goal of this one-to-one initiative is to have a laptop in the hands of every HISD high school student by 2016.

"This kind of instruction prepares student to be lifelong learners and productive, creative workers," said Beatriz Arnillas, senior manager of instructional technology.

HISD Instructional Technology Specialist Elvira Salazar understands how providing students with a laptop to use at home and school will help them to work more effectively and efficiently. Not long ago, she was cramming a towel under her bedroom door to hide the light from her father, who thought sleep was more important than his daughter finishing her homework. "A laptop would have given me access to help beyond my teachers and the classroom walls," Salazar said. "(It) would have given me access to note-taking tools and web resources that might have cut down the amount of time I spent on my homework."

Salazar develops curricula for and trains PowerUp teachers — including at Chavez HS, in the neighborhood where she was raised.

PowerUp means students will carry their classroom home — and for thousands of HISD families, it will introduce the world of the computer and Internet to homes where such technology has been beyond their reach. "What it's doing for the students' families is amazing," said Salazar. "To have a device like this in the home is a very powerful thing."

CONNECTING STUDENTS TO A WORLD OF CHOICES

HISD is working to create school choices that align with career pathways and job fields that are in high demand both in Houston and around the world. Programs such as the Energy Institute High School and Baylor College of Medicine Academy at Ryan develop a strong STEM skill set — science, technology, engineering, and math, for in-demand careers — and even provide hands-on internship opportunities.

Longtime magnet schools, such as the High School for the Performing & Visual Arts — the first HISD magnet — are being relocated. HSPVA will move closer to downtown to take advantage of the many fine arts institutions there — ballet, symphony, theater, opera, and several state-of-the-performing and visual arts venues. The High School for Law Enforcement & Criminal Justice is getting a new facility that will provide students with the resources they need to be prepared for college and careers, as well as connect them with experts at law schools, courts, sheriff's departments, and other agencies.

The Futures Academies and Early College high schools have expanded HISD partnerships with local community colleges to expose students to college-level work and career certifications — and to earn college credits at no cost.



A student works on a robotic vehicle at Waltrip High School during a workshop sponsored by Marine Advanced Technology Education.



Twain Elementary School students help fourth-grade teacher Robert Bonn unpack \$1,000 worth of school supplies that he won for his classroom, thanks to the OfficeMax "A Day Made Better" program.

HIGHWAYS TO GLOBAL LEARNING

The challenging International Baccalaureate Programme is now at 12 HISD campuses, and nine more are in the process of becoming certified. The program stresses problem-solving and independent, critical-thinking skills in languages, mathematics, sciences, humanities, arts, physical education, and technology — offering the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in a shrinking world.

HISD's oldest program is at Lamar High School, which is an IB exemplary site, the largest in Texas, and one of the top 10 IB Diploma Programmes in the U.S., handing out 70 IB diplomas in 2013. School officials come from all over the country to study its program. "I believe in the IB program because it is absolutely the best thing out there," said Lamar Principal James McSwain. "It's the most rigorous program available."

Recognizing Houston's rich cultural and economic diversity — and HISD's own vibrant multiculturalism — the district offers a variety of other programs bridging languages and customs. From foreign language magnet programs and dual language schools to the Mandarin Chinese Language Immersion Magnet School, Houston Academy for International Studies, and Sharpstown International School, HISD students can "study abroad" right in their own neighborhoods and pave the way to becoming citizens of the world.

LINKING LEARNING AND LIFE

When high school students don't perceive a real-world application for what they are learning, there can be a damaging disconnect. The Linked Learning model blends academics with real-life experience in a wide range of fields that are in demand and essential to Houston's future quality of life, as well as maintaining the U.S. status a global economic power.

The U.S. Department of Education found Linked Learning so promising that in December 2013, it awarded HISD a five-year, \$30 million grant to fund the district's model as part of its highly competitive Race to the Top program.

Initiated in HISD in May 2013, Linked Learning is the cornerstone of HISD's strategy to transform how and why students learn, incorporating PowerUp and an array of school choices including magnet schools, International Baccalaureate and other multicultural programs, and the Futures Academies and Early College high schools.

The approach emphasizes career exploration and hands-on training to improve student engagement, reduce dropout rates, raise student achievement, and help graduates more successfully transition into college and career.



FOLLOWING THE IB PROGRAMME

HARVARD ELEMENTARY
NORTHLINE ELEMENTARY
RIVER OAKS ELEMENTARY
ROBERTS ELEMENTARY
TWIN ELEMENTARY

FONDREN MIDDLE SCHOOL
GRADY MIDDLE SCHOOL
HOGG MIDDLE SCHOOL
LANIER MIDDLE SCHOOL

BELLAIRE HIGH SCHOOL
LAMAR HIGH SCHOOL
REAGAN HIGH SCHOOL

FIRST HISD HIGH SCHOOLS TO BE 'LINKED'

CHAVEZ HIGH SCHOOL
EASTWOOD ACADEMY HIGH SCHOOL
FURR HIGH SCHOOL
LEE HIGH SCHOOL
MILBY HIGH SCHOOL
REAGAN HIGH SCHOOL
STERLING HIGH SCHOOL
WESTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL



Samiya Savannah, center, lines up to receive her diploma during the graduation ceremony at Delmar Fieldhouse in August 2013. Savannah completed her course work at Sharpstown High School in 1996 but did not pass the standard exam required to graduate until last year.

THE FACE OF HISD: SAMIYA SAVANNAH

Samiya Savannah, 36, never gave up hope that one day she would graduate from high school. On Aug. 17, 2013, she donned her commencement cap and gown, crossed the stage, and received her diploma. Each August, HISD hosts a summer graduation ceremony for students who have completed their coursework and passed any state testing requirements over the summer months, and this year, Savannah was among them.

“I ended up getting pregnant my senior year, but I had all the credits I needed to graduate, so after my son was born, I came back and took the (TAAS/TAKS exit) test,” said Savannah, who had originally been scheduled to graduate in 1996. “I think the most discouraging moment was when I thought I was going to be graduating and then found out I wouldn’t be able to walk with my friends because I failed the math test.”

Savannah kept taking the test into her early 20s but kept coming up short a few points. “So I settled for a GED and figured that was as far as I was going to go.” she said. “I went on to graduate from college and start a career, but it just didn’t sit right with me.” That persistent sense of discomfort is what prompted Savannah to wish aloud that she could do something about it when she came to pick up a copy of her transcript. When HISD Student Records Specialist Cynthia Nemons told her she could still graduate and guided her to resources to get the information she needed, “I got goose bumps,” Savannah said.

She took the test again and finally passed. When she found out, she broke down and cried. “You don’t understand what I’ve gone through these past 17 years,” Savannah said. “This is really overwhelming. Now I’ll be able to put my diploma up next to my son’s — he just graduated from Cy-Falls.”

RIGOR CONNECTS STUDENTS TO COLLEGE AND CAREERS

It used to be that Advanced Placement courses and college entrances exams were reserved for HISD’s strongest students. Not any longer. We see rigor as important for all students, to build their knowledge and give them confidence as they move into a highly competitive world.

HISD has enhanced its pre-AP curriculum and now has more than 15 AP courses at all HISD high schools. To make it easier for youngsters, we now offer SAT testing on their own campuses, and HISD is paying for SAT and AP exam fees — which can certainly be prohibitive for many families — to those who qualify.

As a result of this increased emphasis on rigor and college readiness, we’ve seen an increase of more than 100 percent in the number of students taking the SAT and a growth in SAT scores, and we’ve seen a 64 percent increase in the number of students who are passing AP exams.

These academic successes are translating into strong motivation for graduates to continue their education. The Class of 2013 received more than \$185 million in scholarship offers — a whopping 128 percent increase in just six years. HISD graduates are staying in college, too. We tracked 3,317 grads attending the second year and 1,769 more in their fourth year.



HISD students got creative with their graduation caps at last summer’s graduation ceremony.



Chavez High School senior Marisol Orquiza is thrilled to receive her diploma from HISD Superintendent Terry Grier in June at Reliant Arena.

BELIEVE

STRONG CONVICTION ABOUT OUR MISSION IS CHANGING LIVES

We believe in **the transformational power of education**, and we believe in the potential in every one of our 200,000-plus students in HISD.

We believe that whether a student's life started as a refugee, in a struggling single-parent household in a Houston housing project, or as part of a nuclear family in West University Place — they will play on a level field in HISD and leave with a diploma and the skills necessary to succeed at higher education and in the workforce.

We believe that a **solid foundation, caring and skilled educators**, 21st Century Schools, and the miraculous technology and resources at our command can change lives.

The ripple effect of that belief can wash over families, rescuing them from poverty and despair. It flows into communities, our city, our region, our state, creating highly skilled, trained workers in the fields that **keep our economies growing** — energy, technology, medicine, education, the arts — and has them poised for emerging fields in a rapidly changing world.

And ultimately, our belief that **anything is possible** creates a culture populated by young people ready for world citizenship who can compete on a global level and to keep Houston the great international city it has become.

It is no longer enough to believe that our mission is to be the best school district in Texas or even in the United States. We must believe that the HISD is on a path that will make it one of the finest educational systems in the world. That belief lends an even deeper and broader meaning to **our vision — Becoming #GreatAllOver**.



Houston ISD staff, students, and visitors celebrate HISD winning the Broad Prize for the second time. The prize, which includes \$550,000 in scholarships for HISD seniors, is presented annually to the top urban school district in the country.

THE BELIEF OF OTHERS: NATIONAL VALIDATION OF OUR DIRECTION

With an unprecedented succession of honors, awards, and grants as a district and to individuals, it is clear that educational leaders across the U.S. also believe in what they're seeing at HISD. They're acknowledging both the work we've already done as a sprawling, complex urban district, and the vision we're sharing about personalizing learning to each student, no matter our size.

ROAD TO THE BROAD

In September 2013, HISD made history. The district was awarded the most coveted award in public education, The Broad Prize for Urban Education, for the second time, making HISD the nation's only two-time winner. The Broad Prize recognizes the public school system that has demonstrated the greatest overall performance and improvement in student achievement while reducing achievement gaps among poor and minority students.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORTS OUR RACE TO THE TOP

In December, the U.S. Department of Education awarded HISD nearly \$30 million in coveted Race to the Top funds over a five-year period. We were one of only five school systems honored out of more than 200 applicants.

The award was a vote of confidence for our "Linked Learning" model, a new vision of teaching from elementary through high school that enables students to begin early college and career readiness through project-based learning and to be prepared, as never before, to move on to higher education and careers.

MAGNET GRANT SHOWS TRUST IN HISD'S STEM INSTRUCTION

The U.S. Government awarded six HISD magnet schools a combined \$12 million for new magnet programs that emphasize science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) instruction in 2013.

The three-year grant will help fund innovative educational programs, including field-based learning, expert lectures and demonstrations, robotics programs, work-based learning, and dual-credit coursework with local college partners. Such programming responds to the demands of the business community, where the need for graduates with a strong foundation in STEM is growing — and provides our students intensive opportunities for moving into jobs of the future.



HISD SCHOOLS RECEIVING THE STEM GRANT

THE BAYLOR COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
ACADEMY AT RYAN

M.C. WILLIAMS MIDDLE SCHOOL
(ENGINEERING ACADEMY)

FURR HIGH SCHOOL
(THE GREEN SCHOOL)

KASHMERE HIGH SCHOOL
(CHEMICAL AND PROCESS
TECHNOLOGY INSTITUTE)

THE ENERGY INSTITUTE HIGH SCHOOL

SOUTH EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL
(ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY INSTITUTE)

HISD ACHIEVEMENTS

EAST EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL AND
PROJECT CHRYSALIS MIDDLE SCHOOL
WON THE PRESTIGIOUS
2012 NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON AWARD FROM
THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

HISD HIGH SCHOOLS MADE
THEIR STRONGEST SHOWING TO DATE IN
THE 2013 WASHINGTON POST HIGH SCHOOL
CHALLENGE RANKINGS, WITH
33 SCHOOLS MAKING THE LIST.

TEN HISD SCHOOLS APPEARED ON
NEWSWEEK'S 2013 LIST OF
AMERICA'S BEST HIGH SCHOOLS,
UP FROM NINE SCHOOLS IN 2011.



Lee High School math teacher Dahirou Ndiaye helps one of the students in his Advanced Placement statistics class.

THEY BELIEVE IN HISD

“Over the past decade, Houston has demonstrated its mission to improve student achievement, and the district’s repeat win is a testament to the hard work and commitment of teachers, administrators, students, parents, and the entire community.” — *Gregory McGinity, managing director of policy for the Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation, September 2013*

“These winners serve as an example to the rest of the country for how to develop innovative plans to drive education reform and improve student achievement. These diverse, trailblazing districts have a clear vision and track record of success for models of personalized learning that aim for every child to graduate from high school ready for

college and careers.” — *U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan, in announcing Race to the Top winners, December 2013*

Teacher Development Specialist Ben Hernandez and Austin High School teacher Armando Orduna were named Champions of Change by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, receiving their awards at the White House in September 2012.

Maria Elena Galan was chosen bilingual teacher of the year by the National Association of Bilingual Educators after receiving the Houston and Texas state titles in 2013.

THE POWER OF BELIEF: HISD SENIORS “EMERGE” TO NATION’S TOP COLLEGES

Perhaps no program in HISD illustrates better how belief can be limiting or empowering than EMERGE. EMERGE is preparing students who might have been stereotyped in the past as not being college material to be accepted into — and to succeed — at some of the nation’s most prestigious colleges and universities.

Most EMERGE students are low income, and most are the first in their families to advance to higher education of any kind. In the fall of 2013, 27 EMERGE seniors — all high achieving and low income — were accepted into Tier One schools for the fall of 2014. All received the maximum financial aid for which they qualified, and some of them are now poised for a quarter-million-dollar education at no cost.

The program, which was launched in 2011 at Chavéz High School by Yale graduate — and now Assistant Superintendent for College Readiness — Richard Cruz, reached about 100 high school students in 2013 but was so successful that it is expanding to 300 students at 13 additional school sites in 2014. HISD program managers who are graduates of Ivy League schools such as Harvard, Princeton, and Yale work closely with students and their families to ensure their success at the nation’s top colleges through:

- school-based programming
- a summer tour of Ivy League schools
- Future Scholars Institute
- one-on-one college-application support
- intensive SAT preparation

Many EMERGE seniors who attended a month-long SAT boot camp in the summer of 2013 saw their SAT scores rise by more than 200 points. “When I took the test

the first time, I didn’t really study, because I didn’t know how or what to study,” said José Chavéz-Carballo, a senior at Eastwood Academy. “After boot camp, I felt super-confident. I even knew the score I needed for my school of choice.”

In the summer of 2013, EMERGE Fellows also had the opportunity to attend a six-day tour of top colleges including the University of Pennsylvania, Harvard, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Brown, Columbia, and Yale. It helped them see possibilities they hadn’t imagined before.

“My most memorable experience on the trip was hearing from the first-generation students of Brown,” said EMERGE student Karen Banda. “Before the trip, I thought that a top-tier school was either too much for me to handle or could not be an option because of the school I attend. Listening to the Brown students’ stories made me realize that if they could do it, then so can I.”

Thanks to EMERGE, HISD graduate and Vietnam native Phuong Ta received a full scholarship to Tufts University and is in her second year there. “The EMERGE program was extremely crucial in making me who I am,” said Phuong. “I didn’t really know anything about college or why I should take the SAT or ACT. I didn’t even know what the SAT or ACT were. I would definitely never have had a chance without EMERGE.”

“I am incredibly proud of all our students,” said EMERGE Program Manager August Hamilton. “They have overcome many challenges and have worked very hard to get where they are. I am excited to see how their lives and the lives of their families will be transformed as a result of the many opportunities they will have in the future.”



Edgar Avina often rides his bicycle to DeBakey High School for Health Professions, where he is a senior. Avina is looking forward to attending Yale University on a full scholarship next year.

THE FACE OF HISD: EDGAR AVINA

There seems to be no obstacle that Edgar Avina cannot surmount. Whether it's biking across town to get to AP statistics class by 7 a.m. because the bus doesn't arrive early enough or getting accepted to Yale University with a full scholarship — which happened in December — this senior at DeBakey High School for Health Professions coolly figures it out.

Avina's AP statistics and AP calculus BC teacher Anil Desai remembers a time when the teen's father was sick, and Edgar had been at the hospital all night. "We had a test the next day, and Edgar looked so tired that I offered to let him take it later," Desai said, "but he said no, I'm ready. He has great character."

Avina has been determined to attend Yale University ever since he joined HISD's EMERGE program in January 2013 and visited the campus last summer as part of EMERGE's Ivy League tour.

"The weather was cloudy and rainy most the time, but the day we went to Yale, the sky was crystal clear and the temperature was perfect," Avina said. "I thought it was a celestial sign."

"The students who escorted us around campus were really upbeat, and I could picture myself there, because I'm really upbeat, too."

Like many HISD students, Avina will be the first in his family to attend college. "I am trailblazing a path," he said.

The path has not been an easy one. Avina has held multiple jobs — busboy, janitor, construction worker — while taking a full load of AP classes. And he rides his bicycle everywhere. "One time I went to a competition at the University of Houston, and as I was returning home, I got caught in a torrential downpour," Avina said. "It was glorious, just me and my bike."

He is already trying to adapt to cold weather to prepare for Yale. "When my friends complain about the cold, I go outside and just experience it."

At first, Avina thought he wanted to be a doctor, but lately his interest has turned to architecture and urban planning. When the EMERGE students were in New York City, he was fascinated by the subway. "I had read all about it," he said, "and I couldn't wait to see it. My legs had a mind of their own — before I knew it, I was on my way to the subway, leaving the group behind. They started calling me Curious George, because my curiosity was always getting me in trouble."

"Edgar is one of the best students I have ever taught," said Desai, who has been teaching at DeBakey for 13 years. "He is an analytical thinker, has a great work ethic, and completes everything on time. With his positive attitude, Edgar is a great role model for other students."

And an inspiring example of how when potential is nurtured through belief, every student can emerge as an HISD success story.



Edgar Avina works on a major project in his Advanced Placement computer science class at DeBakey High School for Health Professions.

HISD's 2013 Outstanding Hall of Fame Partners

Every year, the Hall of Fame award is presented to a small selection of community partners for the exemplary services they have provided for HISD students. This award recognizes organizations and businesses that have forged partnerships with schools, provided support of districtwide programs or sponsored special events for a minimum of five years, had a multiple school or districtwide impact, and served as a model for other partnerships. The Hall of Fame awards program was first launched in 1995, and HISD currently has more than 300 districtwide partners. The 2013 Hall of Fame inductees are the Houston Astros, Houston Food Bank, Independent Petroleum Association of America, and Target.

HOUSTON ASTROS

For almost 30 years, the Houston Astros have provided volunteers, community outreach programs promoting participation in sports and recreational activities, and educational incentive programs designed to reward students for reading and doing well in school. The Astros partner with the Houston Chronicle to sponsor Readers Are Leaders, a program that provides ticket vouchers to students who read during the summer months. The team also provides ticket vouchers as part of the Astros Perfect Attendance, Astros Honor Roll, and HISD's Cool to be Smart programs, among others.

HOUSTON FOOD BANK

The Houston Food Bank has been helping HISD students and their families fight hunger since it was founded in 1982. When kids go hungry, their academic performance, attention span, and energy level suffer. HISD partnered with the Houston Food Bank in 2006 – 2007 to offer the Backpack Buddy Club, in which food is discreetly put into student backpacks so that it can be taken home and shared with siblings. The Food Bank also offers food fairs at local food pantries throughout Houston, the Student Heroes leadership program for teens, and has participated in the Back to School Fest the last two years.



HISD's 2013 Hall of Fame inductees are the Houston Astros, Houston Food Bank, Independent Petroleum Association of America, and Target. Accepting the awards on behalf of their organizations on October 25, 2013, are (left to right) Barry Russell, president/CEO of the IPAA/PESA Education Center; Dell McKinney, group vice-president – South Texas for Target; Meg Vaillancourt, senior vice president of community relations and executive director of the Astros Foundation; and Brian Greene, president/CEO of Houston Food Bank.

IPAA/PESA EDUCATION CENTER

Since partnering with HISD in 2007, the Independent Petroleum Association of America/Petroleum Equipment Suppliers Association of America (IPAA/PESA) Education Center has evolved from arranging guest speakers from the oil and gas industry for HISD students, funding field trips, and providing students with volunteer opportunities and industry mentors who help boost their speaking, writing, and critical thinking skills. The Education Center has played a vital role in preparing students for college and careers in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) fields. In 2013, the relationship with IPAA/PESA blossomed, when the organization collaborated with HISD to plan, create, and open the nation's first energy-focused high school, the Energy Institute.

TARGET

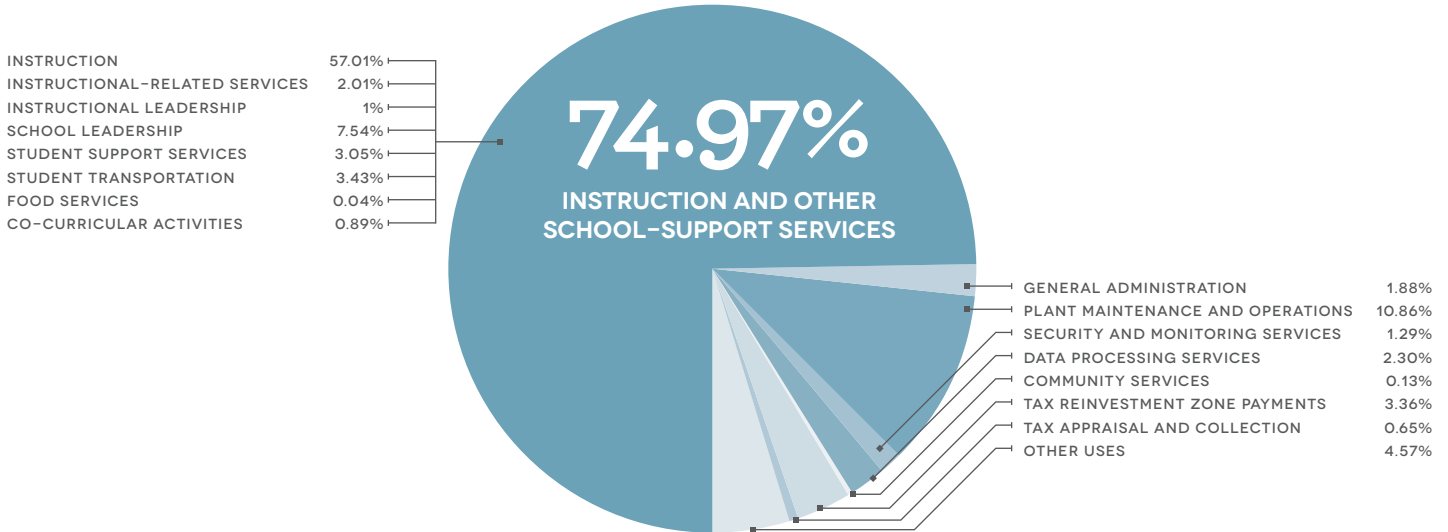
Since partnering with the district in 2008, Target has impacted several HISD schools and thousands of students. The district has received numerous Target grants, and the company's team members donate an increasing number of volunteer hours to HISD schools and the communities in which they are located. Target has donated \$500,000 for after-school fine arts programs since the partnership began. In 2011, the HISD Foundation received a \$200,000 Target grant that was used to establish 187 classroom libraries with books for all student reading levels. During the 2012 – 2013 school year, Target awarded three HISD elementary schools with three separate \$25,000 grants for educational classroom resources. Target also provided volunteers and funding for the Back to School Fest.

HISD Fiscal Responsibilities

AS OF JUNE 2013

REVENUES (GENERAL FUND)

LOCAL TAX	\$1,103,457,123
OTHER LOCAL	14,549,735
STATE SOURCES	321,616,208
FEDERAL SOURCES	6,746,545
OTHER SOURCES	40,027,529
TOTAL REVENUES	\$1,486,397,140



TOTAL EXPENDITURES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR THAT ENDED JUNE 30, 2013, WERE \$1,521,001,414, WITH INSTRUCTION AND SCHOOL-SUPPORT SERVICES ACCOUNTING FOR 74.97% OF THE TOTAL.

EXPENDITURES (GENERAL FUND)

INSTRUCTION	\$865,593,922
INSTRUCTIONAL-RELATED SERVICES	30,570,696
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP	15,106,560
SCHOOL LEADERSHIP	114,388,937
STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES	46,253,174
STUDENT TRANSPORTATION	52,096,680
FOOD SERVICES	583,932
CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	13,541,529
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION	28,545,938
PLANT MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS	164,847,080
SECURITY AND MONITORING SERVICES	19,517,927
DATA PROCESSING SERVICES	34,843,004
COMMUNITY SERVICES	1,943,401
TAX REINVESTMENT ZONE PAYMENTS	51,016,677
TAX APPRAISAL AND COLLECTION	9,927,290
OTHER USES	69,315,667
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$1,518,092,414

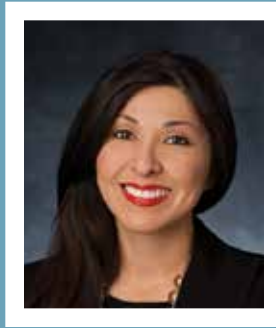


Culinary arts teacher and garden educator Kellie Karavias helps her students harvest greens from their garden at Gregory-Lincoln Middle School.

2012 - 2013 HISD BOARD OF EDUCATION



Anna Eastman
President



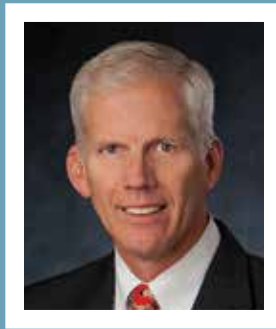
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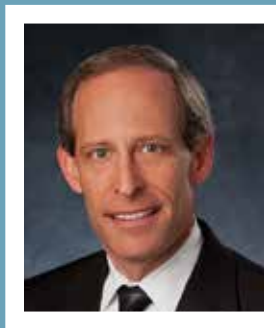
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