


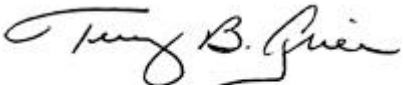


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	  <p>from the HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT</p>
<p>August 20, 2010</p>	
<p>First Day of School! Monday, August 23</p>	
<p>UPCOMING EVENTS:</p> <p>August 20: Harvest of Hope concludes</p> <p>August 20: Kashmere High School Reunion Band Concert</p> <p>August 20–22: Sales Tax Holiday</p> <p>August 21: Food Services interviews</p> <p>August 23: First day of school (non-Apollo 20 campuses)</p> <p>August 25: Food Services interviews</p> <p>August 30: District VIII filing deadline</p> <p>August 31: UT-CULP: nomination deadline</p> <p>September 1: Latino leaders scholarship deadline</p> <p>September 4: Green Light for Healthy Living Fair</p> <p>September 6: Labor Day holiday</p> <p>September 11: Grads</p>	<p>Effective Teachers, Getting Even Stronger</p> <p>Why am I confident that 2010–2011 will be a great school year? Because of our work to place an effective teacher in every classroom. Recruiting, hiring, and developing outstanding teachers is a primary goal of the district's new long-term Strategic Direction, and in a workshop on Thursday the Board of Education was updated on our efforts to achieve it.</p> <p>This fall we are implementing a new staff review process and designing a new teacher-appraisal system. In the system, principals and teachers will work together throughout the year to create and refine individual professional development plans tailored to teachers' individual needs. To help school administrators put together effective skill-building plans, this summer all principals, assistant principals, and school improvement officers were given in-depth training in how to identify, develop, and document teacher quality and growth.</p> <p>I told the board on Thursday that we've received some fantastic feedback on this process, and First Vice President Paula Harris agreed saying that the principals she has spoken to called the three-day workshop "the best training ever."</p> <p>Doing a better job of identifying what teachers need to become more effective and delivering those supports <i>will</i> make HISD's fine teacher corps even stronger, and I want to thank every member of Team HISD—employees, parents, and the community—in advance for making 2010–2011 what I know will be a very successful year.</p> <div data-bbox="987 1459 1388 1606"><p>Terry B. Grier, Ed.D. Superintendent of Schools</p></div> <p>District News</p>

[Within Reach](#) walk

September 16: [Board meeting](#)

September 17: [Fall holiday](#) (Yom Kippur)

September 18: [TEDxHISD](#) forum at Chávez HS

September 25: [Museum District Day](#)



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[HISD Hotline to Help Answer Parents' Back-to-School Questions](#): First day of school is Monday, August 23, and Hotline operators will be standing by from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. **Call 713-556-8900.**



[Back-to-School Information for 2010–2011](#): Details include how to select a school, obtain bus transportation, sign up for free/reduced-price lunch, and more. The "*Welcome to HISD*" document (formerly called "*Back to School*") is now available for printing and downloading.



[Apollo 20 Students Get an Early Start to a Promising New School Year](#): Students at the first nine campuses in the Apollo 20 project started school on Monday, August 16—a week ahead of other HISD students—and HISD's superintendent and Board of Education members welcomed students back to a variety of innovative supports. [See video!](#)



[Board Adopts Strategic Direction: A Community Plan to Transform HISD](#): The long-term plan for dramatically improving student achievement moved from the development stage to the implementation phase on August 12, when the Board of Education unanimously approved the district's Strategic Direction. [See video!](#)



[HISD Board Votes to Hold Election to Fill Vacant Seat](#): At a special meeting on August 19, the trustees voted unanimously to hold a special election on November 2 to fill the vacancy left by former District VIII representative Diana Dávila. The filing deadline for candidates is 5:00 p.m. on Monday, August 30.



[Board Gets Update on Core Initiative of Effective Teachers](#): At a workshop on August 19, trustees received an update on the district's core initiative of placing an effective teacher in every classroom. Teachers, principals, parents, students, and members of the Houston community will have multiple opportunities to provide input before the final appraisal system is presented to the board for approval in the spring of 2011. [See video!](#)



Employees

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General comments or suggestions can be sent to

info@houstonisd.org

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

[Apollo 20 Hailed as "One of the Most Important Efforts Going on in America"](#): Top education reformers Geoffrey Canada and Roland Fryer met in Houston on August 12 to discuss school reform and eliminating the achievement gap.



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[HISD's Transportation Services Department Focuses on Safety](#): The largest bus fleet in Texas trains its drivers so well that in 2009–2010, more than 80 percent weren't involved in a single accident.



[Join Us on September 11 for Grads Within Reach Walk](#): This annual event (formerly known as Reach Out to Dropouts) is back for its seventh time in the Bayou City, and district officials are asking employees, parents, alumni, local leaders, and other community members to help get kids back in class so they can graduate.



[Trustee Paula Harris to Serve on Space Center Houston Board](#): Harris, who has been named the chair of the education committee, will work with 23 other board members to oversee policies, programs, and initiatives at Space Center Houston.



[Kroger Helping HISD Foundation Raise Money for Student Programs](#): All Houston-area Kroger stores are collecting donations on behalf of the HISD Foundation. Look for the specially marked canisters in the check-out area through September 11. All funds collected will allow the district to continue or expand programs in literacy, math, science, technology, and the arts.



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School News

Dowling Middle School Principal Ken Davis was recently named the president of District 4 for the [Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association](#) (TEPSA). He was also named the 2009 Texas Elementary Level National Distinguished Principal.



Bastian Elementary School students participating in the 2010 Communities in Schools Houston Galveston Institute (HGI) Summer Enrichment Program became the beneficiaries of a book drive conducted by Faith Lutheran Church. Middle-school students at its summer camp program coordinated the drive, which allowed each Bastian student to take home four books to expand his or her home library.



Berry Elementary School students in grades 3–5 who won an essay contest took home one of 50 free refurbished computers in late July, thanks to a partnership with [Comp-U-Dopt](#). The school is also one of thousands across the country vying to split a \$500,000 prize 20 ways through the [Kohl's Cares contest](#). To help the environmental science Magnet campus obtain funding for a new fine arts program, visit the Facebook link above and cast your vote through Friday, September 3.

J. R. Harris Elementary School is partnering with Sisters for Hope to win a [Pepsi Refresh Grant](#) by being one of the top ten projects to receive the most votes online by August 31. Supporters can cast a vote once each day, and if Harris wins, it will use the money to upgrade the computer systems on campus. Supporters can also text 101388 to 73774 to vote.

Lee High School students visited [Texas A&M and Prairie View A&M Universities](#) on August 18 as part of a campus-based initiative dubbed "Ten for Eleven." The program is designed to expose the Class of 2011 to at least ten colleges before the end of their senior year.



Milby, North Houston Early College, and Westside High School students earned the title of "champion" this summer at the [Houston Urban Debate League's Summer Institute Tournament](#) in early August. Lenzi Daniel and Harlin Oh (Westside) earned top honors in the varsity division, while Thomas Milton and Kwesi Ugwu (NHECHS and Westside, respectively) earned the same in the intermediate division, and Lizeth Castillo and Antoinette Stewart (Milby and Westside, respectively) took home the prize in the novice division. For complete competition results, visit the link above.

Ryan Middle School, one of the Apollo 20 campuses, hosted a community outreach and orientation event dubbed "Rethink Ryan" on August 5, featuring a booth manned by Board of Education First Vice President Paula M. Harris, prizes donated by Elgin Auto Shop, and food generously provided by Fiesta Mart. School Improvement Officer Jeremy Beard also dropped by to wish the school well in the coming year.



Sharpstown High School students participating in Communities in Schools activities got health-related advice and information from coordinator Stewart Schaefer through [Health Corps](#), a program developed by Dr. Mehmet Oz to empower young people to take charge of their physical and mental health.

Sterling High School Principal Leviticus Williams took to the streets on August 8—more than two weeks before most HISD schools started—to introduce himself to current and former students after being named the new campus leader on July 20. The Magnet aviation campus opened in 1965 and offers students the opportunity to obtain a pilot's license before they can legally obtain a driver's license.



Westside High School held its tenth-anniversary celebration on August 12, and special guests included former principals Scott Van Beck (pictured, left) and Paul Castro, as well as former U.S. Secretary of Education (and former HISD Superintendent of Schools) Rod Paige (right). Entertainment was provided by the award-winning Inertia dance troupe, choir members, and the jazz ensemble. The silent auction raised more than \$4,000 for the new Alumni Scholarship Fund. The campus opened in August of 2000. Photo courtesy Your Best Shot Photography.



Wilson Montessori School broke ground on a new community garden during its annual back-to-school ice-cream social on August 19. The garden will be installed with assistance from Urban Harvest and offer enough bed space for each classroom to have one.



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National News

Corrected Link: [New Tablet Computer Could Be Tool for Students, Educators](#)

[ACT Results Show Slight Increase in College, Career Readiness](#)

[Are Schools Setting Their Expectations of Students Too Low?](#)

[Back to School: Obama Needs to Push Teacher Accountability](#)

[Challenging Popular Myths About Public Schools](#)

[Federal Money to Save Jobs Is Too Late for Some Teachers](#)

[Should Students Be Held Back at Parents' Request?](#)

[Some Early-College Programs Adjust Their Goals](#)

[Teacher Website Combines Social Networking and Lesson Planning](#)

[Teaching Secrets: Making Math Meaningful for All](#)

[Walking to School Could Ease Classroom Stress](#)



Houston Independent School District

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