

HISD PRESS RELEASE

In Response to Requests, HISD Will Accept More NES Schools Than Planned

February 9, 2024 - After seeing how many principals want their schools to join HISD's New Education System (NES), the District announced today that it will not cap the number of slots for eligible schools and will instead accept all eligible campuses that want to participate in the 2024-2025 school year. HISD had originally said it would only accept up to 14 campuses from the group. However, 19 principals told the District they want their schools to be a part of the NES. HISD has decided to take them all. The campuses have high-D ratings (65 to 69). In joining the NES, students, staff, and families will receive additional resources and support.

The campuses announced today as joining the NES next school year are:

- Austin High School
- Bell Elementary School
- Deady Middle School
- Foerster Elementary School
- Frost Elementary School
- Gross Elementary School
- Jefferson Elementary School
- Ketelsen Elementary School
- Marshall Middle School
- Montgomery Elementary School
- Navarro Middle School
- Neff Elementary School
- Petersen Elementary School
- Reynolds Elementary School
- Ross Elementary School
- Sanchez Elementary School
- Southmayd Elementary School
- Tinsley Elementary School
- Valley West Elementary School

"Parents want what's best for their child," said **Navarro Middle School Principal Alejandro Lopez, whose school will join the NES in the fall.** "They want good instruction and a teacher who is prepared. NES has the best practices that will fit right in with what we need at our school. My families have heard a lot of misinformation on social media, but they have also taken the time to learn about the NES and ask questions. Some of the things parents have told me are: they like how NES teachers meet students where they are in their learning, that students get to travel to new places for free, and that we will not only keep the electives we already have, but add the Dyad classes as well."

To gather input from their school communities about whether they wanted to join the NES, principals from the 24 eligible campuses hosted staff and family information sessions. Principals also met with their Shared Decision Making Committees and parent-teacher organizations. In addition, HISD emailed a survey to campus staff and families asking for their thoughts.

“I am so motivated because I want the best for my son and the other students at Navarro Middle School,” **Navarro parent Dania Coello said in Spanish.** “They will have teachers and teacher assistants. They will have more attention and opportunities to learn more.”

Schools in the NES use an innovative staffing model and instructional program to ensure students receive consistent, high-quality instruction. They pay teachers and staff higher salaries and differentiate compensation based on the subject and grade level. NES schools provide Art of Thinking courses to teach students critical-thinking and problem-solving skills as well as how to assess, evaluate, and effectively use information. They provide specialty classes in the areas of fitness, music and fine arts, 21st-century media and technology, and hands-on science. These classes supplement schools’ existing electives and magnet programs and are taught by community consultants with specific knowledge and skills. In addition, students have the opportunity to go on free trips to experience new places and cultures. And buildings are open extended hours to better support working families. Preliminary data show NES schools had significantly higher academic growth than non-NES schools on mid-year exams.

“More and more people in Houston are getting to know the NES and are seeing the difference it makes for our students – but also for our staff who have the opportunity at NES schools to earn some of the highest teacher salaries in the nation,” **said HISD Superintendent Mike Miles.** “We asked these principals to meet with their staff and communities and decide if they wanted to opt in. For our high-D campuses, joining the NES was entirely voluntary – and we had some that chose not to – but in the end we are accepting more schools for next year than we had planned. When we looked at the list of principals who, after talking with their staff and families, decided the NES is the best way to support kids at their campuses, we weren’t going to turn a single one of them away.”

In accepting five more schools for the NES than originally planned, leaders worked to identify funding to cover the related campus supports. Those funds will come from cost savings associated with HISD’s ongoing efforts to right-size the District, make daily operations more efficient, and reduce wasteful spending.

With today’s announcement, HISD will have 130 NES schools in the 2024-2025 school year. HISD launched the NES at 28 historically underperforming campuses in the 2023-2024 academic year. Another 57 schools asked to be included in the NES; for the current year, these are known as NES-aligned (NES-A) campuses. In the coming year, HISD will not have a distinction between NES and NES-A schools. There will only be two kinds of campuses: NES and non-NES.

The Houston Independent School District is the largest school district in Texas and the eighth-largest in the United States, with 276 schools and nearly 190,000 students. The 333-square-mile district is one of the largest employers in the Houston metropolitan area, with more than 27,000 employees.

 @HoustonISD |  @HISDEspanol |  @houstontxisd |  @hisd_espanol |  @HoustonISD |  @HISDEspanol

4400 West 18th Street | Houston, Texas 77092-8501 • HoustonISD.org

H O U S T O N I N D E P E N D E N T S C H O O L D I S T R I C T