

HISD PRESS RELEASE

HISD announces updated timeline for School Choice Application and Enrollement Process

December 1, 2023 - The Houston Independent School District (HISD) today announced key dates for families interested in participating in the school choice process. The District is not making any major changes to the application, lottery, or transportation supports. All schools, including magnets, will be included in the choice process, and parents will continue to be able to rank up to 10 school options on their application.

“HISD has a long history of providing an extensive array of school choice options for families,” said Superintendent Mike Miles. “Long before joining the District, I knew about Houston’s impressive range of offerings – and the program is a source of pride for our HISD community. We will continue to provide excellent choice options while also working to strengthen our neighborhood schools.

“The information on the process that we are sharing today is in direct response to what we heard from families. We are keeping what families like and making the improvements they have asked for.”

Many parents and caregivers said the District has historically taken too long to sort students’ applications and notify families about their options for the next school year. Acting on that feedback, HISD will condense the application and enrollment timeline and notify families earlier. The updated timeline for the 2024-2025 academic year is:

2024-2025 Academic Year School Choice Application and Enrollment

Deadline for Families to Request GT Testing <i>(Families whose student has not been previously identified as GT, and who want their student to participate in HISD Vanguard programs, must sign their student up to be GT tested. Those who have been previously identified as GT do not need to test again.)</i>	12/8/2023
Phase One Application Opens <i>(Families apply to lottery)</i>	1/18/2024

Phase One Application is Due*	2/23/2024
Phase One Lottery Notification <i>(Students matched to schools)</i>	3/26/2024
Phase Two Application Opens <i>(Students who participated in the Phase I lottery and did not accept a position at one of their matched schools can apply to any school with available space.)</i>	3/26/2024
Phase One School Acceptance Deadline <i>(Students who wish to accept their school match must do so by this date.)</i>	4/9/2023
Phase Two Application is Due	Will be announced soon
*The list of New Education System campuses for the coming school year will be communicated in February, before the Phase 1 application closes.	

In addition, families who would like their student to participate in [HISD's Vanguard magnet programs](#) in the coming school year must have their student tested to see if they qualify. **By next Friday, December 8, families must sign their child up to be tested using the [Gifted and Talented \(GT\) testing request link](#).** Those who have been previously identified as GT do not need to be retested. The purpose of GT testing is to identify students who demonstrate exceptional abilities, so the District can provide appropriate educational opportunities that nurture and develop students' talents. As families requested, HISD will now provide GT testing results before the Phase I application period opens on January 18.

"We want to thank the more than 11,000 families who provided feedback on the school choice application and enrollment process," said HISD Chief Academic Officer Kristen Hole. "Through focus groups, online surveys, and community events, we received valuable input that informed our plans for the coming school year."

In addition to a shorter timeline and earlier notification, families said they want enhanced communications on school options and how the school choice process works. As such, HISD will train all campus leaders in the process and will provide learning opportunities for families and support their visits to schools; launch ongoing school choice enrollment events; and look for ways to improve the District's School Choice website and SchoolFinder tool.

Families with pre-kindergarten students, specifically, said they prefer to enroll their child in pre-K at the campus where they will attend elementary school. In response, HISD will now provide a zoned pre-K option. In most instances, families will no longer need to apply through the lottery for their student to attend pre-K at their

zoned school. Families who prefer not to attend their zoned pre-K campus can still choose to enter the school choice process.

To help families understand and navigate the updated School Choice Application and Enrollment process, HISD will host the following community events in December.

- Tuesday, December 19 – In-person event (*Time and location will be announced soon*)
- Wednesday, December 20 – Virtual events
 - Option 1: 4 to 5 p.m. (*Registration link will be available soon*)
 - Option 2: 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. (*Registration link will be available soon*)

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.

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