



PRESS RELEASE

HISD Media Relations Department

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HISD to pay \$42.4 Million in Performance Awards Wednesday

16,527 Employees to Receive Extra Money for Helping Students Improve Academically

January 25, 2011 – HISD is paying **\$42,404,602.51** in ASPIRE Awards to teachers, principals and other staff on Wednesday for their hard work that boosted student achievement to unprecedented heights last school year.

The payouts for teachers in core subjects, such as math, science, social studies and language arts, are based on their students' academic gains compared to their peers. Other ASPIRE Award amounts were based on campuswide academic performance. The number of teachers receiving awards this year totaled 11,264.

On Wednesday, January 26, a teacher at Lyons Elementary School will find an extra \$11,330 in his bank account and **HISD Superintendent Terry Grier** in his classroom. Dr. Grier **will personally thank bilingual teacher Andres Balp, who is receiving the district's largest teacher performance bonus this year. Dr. Grier will arrive at the school at 10:00 a.m.** (800 Roxella, 77076).

HISD Superintendent Terry Grier said, "In order to reach our goal of being the best school district in the country, we must make sure we have effective teachers like Andres Balp in every classroom and effective principals like Cecilia Gonzales leading every school. This year 92 percent of eligible employees are receiving performance bonuses and I want to give them all my heartfelt thanks for a job well done."

A total of 16,527 HISD teachers, principals, instructional and non-instructional staff will receive performance pay totaling \$42,404,602.51 for helping children improve in the classroom. The largest teacher bonuses go to those whose students showed the most academic growth.

Among educators who teach core subjects, 9,077 (99 percent of those eligible) received bonuses. The average teacher award is \$3,614. Among principals, assistant principals and deans who will receive some award, amounts range from \$100 to \$15,530 with an average award of \$4,980.

Core Teacher ASPIRE Awards

2,303 teachers earned \$11,330 to \$5,233.33

2,328 teachers earned \$5,233.32 to \$3,150

2,307 teachers earned \$3,149.99 to \$1,575

2,235 teachers earned \$1,574.99 to \$0

Top 5 Elementary Campuses

Campus	Average Core Teacher Award
1. J.P. Henderson Elementary	\$6,872.21
2. Osborne Elementary	\$6,556.32
3. Sanchez Elementary	\$6,497.65
4. De Chaumes Elementary	\$6,384.98
5. Pilgrim Academy	\$6,267.40

Top 5 Middle School Campuses

Campus	Average Core Teacher Award
1. Energized for Excellence MS	\$8,233.33
2. Jackson MS	\$7,300.16
3. Burbank MS	\$7,254.41
4. Pershing MS	\$7,148.11
5. Kaleidoscope MS	\$6,441.25

Top 5 High School Campuses

Campus	Average Core Teacher Award
1. Milby HS	\$7,532.66
2. Westbury HS	\$7,337.73
3. DeBakey HS	\$7,008.04
4. Austin HS	\$6,687.36
5. Eastwood Academy	\$6,518.25

District data shows that educators receiving awards are more likely to stay with HISD while those not receiving awards are more likely to leave. Performance pay may also play a key role in drawing more applicants to the district. HISD now draws 169 applicants for every vacant teaching position, nearly a three-fold increase since 2006. Nearly 92 percent of teachers who received a 2008-2009 ASPIRE Award returned to work for HISD the next year.

The performance pay program is a key component of the district's effective teacher initiative under which HISD is fundamentally changing the way it recruits, hires and retains effective teachers in order to reach the goal of having an effective teachers in every classroom within five years.

The program is part of ASPIRE (Accelerating Student Progress Increasing Results & Expectations), HISD's comprehensive school improvement strategy. HISD's performance pay program for teachers is one of the largest in the country. The program measures teacher and school impact on student academic progress from year to year using both achievement data and value-added analysis.

The ASPIRE awards program model divides growth into four groups known as quartiles. Teachers in the top two quartiles receive performance pay.

“For those teachers who did not receive an ASPIRE Award this year, it doesn’t mean their students or their campus didn’t grow academically, it just means that their performance wasn’t in the top 50 percent for last year,” says Assistant Superintendent for Research and Accountability Carla Stevens.

On December 10, every teacher was given access to a special online website where they could see their estimated bonus amount and information about the value-added scores that led to the calculation of the bonus amount. That gave employees plenty of time to check the information and ask questions or raise concerns.

Non-instructional staff at schools, including teacher aides and clerks, also had a chance to take part in the performance pay program. Among them, 1,828 earned bonuses ranging from \$150 to \$750, with an average payment of \$564.

HISD launched the performance pay program in January 2007 as a way of identifying and rewarding educators for strong academic growth by children and as a tool for recruiting and retaining the best talent. Since 2007, HISD has awarded more than \$155 million in performance pay.

This year’s program was supported by \$12 million in state grant money and \$5.9 in federal Teacher Incentive Fund grants. The remaining \$24.5 million comes from the HISD general fund. This payout exceeds last year’s by approximately \$1.8 million.

The **Houston Independent School District** is the largest school district in Texas and the seventh-largest in the United States with 298 schools and more than 200,000 students. The 301-square-mile district is one of the largest employers in the Houston metropolitan area with nearly 30,000 employees.

For more information, visit the HISD Web site at www.houstonisd.org.
