

HISD Media Advisory

HISD announces new partnership designed to expand arts education in 11 schools

What: The Houston Independent School District will offer additional arts education programs to 7,000 students at 11 elementary schools through a new partnership with the city's Arts Access Initiative, a collaborative group that aims to ensure all students benefit cognitively, creatively, emotionally, and academically through the arts.

Aiming to provide equitable access to arts education to students throughout the district, the partnership will directly connect schools with arts partners to provide students with arts-related, hands-on experiences in- and out-of school time.

The pilot program is being funded in part through a three-year \$370,000 grant from the Houston Endowment, as well as support from the National Endowment for the Arts and the national office of Young Audiences. It will begin this fall at Atherton, Benbrook, Eliot, Hartsfield, Hines-Caldwell, Kashmere Gardens, Memorial, Mitchell, Scarborough, and Whittier elementary schools, and Hamilton middle school.

Students at these schools will participate in creative learning programs in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts. Additionally, core-content teachers at each pilot school will attend art professional development workshops to learn how to successfully integrate arts into their curriculum. The Arts Access Initiative also will work with each campus to embed arts education into their school improvement plan.

**The announcement will feature a "My Voice" project performance by Kashmere Gardens Elementary School third-grader Kania Rainey with the University of Houston Moores School of Music and Houston Grand Opera. The "My Voice" project is a four-organization partnership between the Houston Grand Opera's HGOco, the University of Houston Moores School of Music, Writers in the Schools, and the Houston Public Library.*

Who: HISD Board President **Rhonda Skillern-Jones**, HISD Special Assistant to Superintendent **Daniel Gohl**, Arts Access Initiative Director **Deborah Lugo**, Houston Endowment Program Officer **Elizabeth Love**, Kashmere Gardens Principal **Kristi Rangel**, Kashmere Gardens third-grade **Kania Rainey**, additional Kashmere Gardens students as well as representatives from the Houston Grand Opera, the University of Houston Moores School of Music, Writers in the Schools and the Houston Public Library.

When: Tuesday, May 12, 2015, 10 a.m.

Where: Kashmere Gardens Elementary School, 4901 Lockwood Dr., 77026

HISD MEDIA RELATIONS DEPARTMENT | www.HoustonISD.org/HISDmedia | 713.556.6393

The Houston Independent School District is the largest school district in Texas and the seventh-largest in the United States with 283 schools and nearly 215,000 students. The 334-square-mile district is one of the largest employers in the Houston metropolitan area with more than 28,000 employees. For more information, visit the HISD Web site at www.HoustonISD.org.

Houston Independent School District • 4400 West 18th Street • Houston, Texas 77092-8501
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