

March 4, 2010

Dear Colleagues,

We are writing you today to encourage you to take advantage of an opportunity to express your opinions and perspectives about what works well and what can be improved for teachers in HISD. As anyone who's spent time in the classroom knows, teachers are HISD's greatest resource, and how we train, support, and reward our teachers makes a huge impact on the success of our students.

As you may also know, HISD is seeking to implement a number of changes affecting teachers, including mentoring for new teachers, the teacher appraisal process and teacher professional development. On Monday, March 8<sup>th</sup>, you will be asked to take a survey regarding these topics and more by The New Teacher Project (TNTP), an organization that is working in HISD to study a number of issues affecting teaching and learning in the district. You will be asked to contribute your perspective on matters including professional development, school leadership, and compensation. In particular, the survey will give you a chance to give feedback on ways to improve the teacher appraisal process.

Using your responses to this survey and other data sources, TNTP will complete an extensive analysis of how well HISD currently recruits, selects, supports, rewards, and retains its teachers and make recommendations for improvement. A report summarizing TNTP's findings and recommendations will be published later this year and will be available via TNTP's web site.

We encourage you to take these surveys and give your honest input. It is of vital importance that we teachers take advantage of this opportunity to voice our thoughts, beliefs, and concerns.

The New Teacher Project, the organization conducting the surveys, is a non-profit, non-partisan group that has worked collaboratively with dozens of school districts and teachers associations across the country. They have a track record of fairness, and their work has earned praise from a wide range of educational stakeholders, including both major teachers unions. You can be assured that the responses you give on the surveys will be fully confidential and that TNTP will never share information identifying you individually to HISD. For more information about TNTP, please visit <http://www.tntp.org>.

We understand that every second of a teacher's time is precious, and we encourage you take just a few minutes to share your perspective. Just as every student is important, every teacher deserves to be heard, and these surveys will give us another opportunity to do just that.

Thank you,

**Gayle Fallon**  
President, Houston Federation of Teachers

**Charles Robinson**  
Director, Congress of Houston Teachers