**2015-2016 First Day of School Talking Points**

**Arabic Immersion Magnet School – AIMS**

* First public Arabic immersion school in nation.
* 132 prekindergarten and kindergarten students.
* Spend half the day learning in English and half the day learning in Arabic.
  + Math and science in Arabic, English and social studies in English
* Being bilingual is a key component of a global education.
  + Students who learn new languages see long-term academic and social benefits.
  + Improves analytical skills and enhances memory and creativity.
  + Gain a more profound understanding of their own culture and develop more positive attitude toward other cultures.
  + More valuable in the workforce.

**HISD 2015-2016 School Year**

**General Stats**

* 215,000 students
* 29,000 employees
* 288,000 meals served daily
* 34,000 students transported on buses daily

**Dual Language Expansion**

* HISD nearly doubled the size of its Spanish Dual Language program, expanding from 31 to 52 campuses.
* The district also offers full school immersion programs in Arabic, Mandarin Chinese and Spanish.

**College Readiness**

* Deploying 28 new college success advisors and 10 college success managers to campuses across the district.
* Doubling size of the successful EMERGE program, which aims to identify low-income, high potential students and help them gain admission to and graduate from Tier 1 and Ivy League colleges and universities.
* Goal: boost college attendance/completion rates by 20% over next three years.
* Programs funded by $8.5 million in grants from the Houston Endowment.

**PowerUp**

* Final implementation of HISD’s PowerUp one-to-one laptop initiative, which is part of continued effort to transform classroom instruction by phasing out textbooks and transitioning to digital content and curriculum.
* More than 40,000 students at 32 Phase 1 and 2 high schools will have their devices reissued to them as they return to school this fall.
* About 8,000 students at the 15 Phase 3 high schools will receive their laptops later in the school year.

**Schools Office Restructuring**

* Allows low performing “transformation” campuses to be grouped together and assigned to veteran administrators with experience in turning schools around.
* Administrators have fewer schools to oversee, allowing them to dedicate more time to schools and principals who need extra support.