

AISD'S COMMITMENT TO JOHNSTON HIGH SCHOOL

Since last May, the Austin School District has taken an aggressive posture to turn around Johnston High School. We believed our original plan to improve Johnston would work, but we found that it was not producing the results we need. The low student performance at Johnston is unacceptable to the District, to the students and their families, and to the teachers and administrators at Johnston.

We are making a dramatic change. We went to the Board of Trustees and the Johnston community in May with a plan to make Johnston a *First Things First School*, beginning this August. We can't wait for a planning year. We need results now. The Board and the Johnston faculty and community agreed that the *First Things First* model was the right model. It has raised student achievement dramatically in schools with challenges similar to those at Johnston. And the district now has a year of experience with the model and its leaders through the work at LBJ, Reagan and Travis high schools. *First Things First* also aligns with the State's requirements and expectations that we bring in a model that has proven itself in schools like Johnston.

We are committed to demonstrating educational improvement for the students of Johnston High School this year. We have put in place the instructional interventions and support those students and teachers need. We have also restructured the organization of Johnston into *First Things First* small learning communities, under the leadership of Dr. Celina Estrada-Thomas and her team. We are pleased that the three lead administrators—Dr. Estrada-Thomas, Mr. Harris, and Ms. Robertson—remain at Johnston and are working effectively with the new model, and we look forward to the classroom results with more than 80 percent of the teachers returning this fall. Stability and focus will be real assets to the education work on the Johnston campus.

We have a proven model at Johnston; we are committed to the students and community of Johnston; and we expect to demonstrate the educational improvement that will sustain this campus for years to come.

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