



## HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

HATTIE MAE WHITE EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT CENTER  
4400 WEST 18th STREET • HOUSTON, TEXAS 77092-8501

ABELARDO SAAVEDRA, Ph.D.  
*Superintendent of Schools*

May 11, 2009

Dear Parents and Graduates:

As the Houston Independent School District (HISD) finalizes plans for commencement activities, a decision has been made to once again use metal detectors at all sites to ensure safe, uninterrupted commencement ceremonies.

All participants and audience members will be screened prior to entry into the graduation site. Police officers and administrators will be on duty to perform this screening, as well as visually inspect handbags and purses.

Prior to the first ceremony each day, the facility will undergo a security check by HISD police officers. After each site is swept, officers will be assigned to the site to prevent entry by unauthorized personnel. These procedures at all graduation sites proved to be successful and well received in previous years.

I realize these procedures may cause some inconvenience; however, due to circumstances throughout the nation, I feel these steps are necessary. Additionally, our Board of Education recently included safety as a major organizational goal. Our administrators and police department have been meeting regularly to make the screening process as fast and effective as possible.

In closing, I ask for your support in working with our principals and staff in ensuring that our number-one core value, "student safety above all else" is upheld. With the continued assistance of all parents, students, faculty and staff, I am certain our commencement activities will be the special occasions we expect them to be.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Abelardo Saavedra".

Abelardo Saavedra, Ph.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

AS/MW;jm

c: Board Members  
Direct Reports  
High School Principals