

# Rio Hondo Independent School District

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Dear Bobcat Community,

We are excited to welcome back all of our wonderful students, staff, and community. Our school board, administrative team, teachers, counselors, nurses, and our entire auxiliary staff are committed to prioritizing the needs of our students first in all of our decisions, actions, and plans in accordance with our school board adopted goals for the 2023-2024 school year.

## District Goal 1 - Academic Excellence and Student Achievement:

- The entire RHISD team has been highly engaged in two weeks of professional development sessions since Monday, August 14<sup>th</sup> in preparation to implement research based instructional programs and strategies proven to increase academic achievement for all of our students.
- Our district data reveals that RHISD students are missing more days of school than they ever did before which has caused our students to perform lower academically: See chart below:

• Refined Average Daily Student Attendance District-wide for <b>2019</b> (Pre-COVID)	• <b>94.4%</b>
• Refined Average Daily Student Attendance District-wide for <b>2023</b> (Post-COVID)	• <b>91.7%</b>

- Since school funding is based on student attendance, we estimate that Rio Hondo ISD received approximately \$1,675,520 less funds last school year than we did in 2019. Unfortunately, that means that we have less money to hire staff and to provide high quality educational programming for our students today than we did four years ago.
- Rio Hondo ISD will be proactive to address low student attendance by implementing TPMs (Truancy Prevention Measures). TPMs are programs or services that promote consistent student school attendance and address the underlying risk factors with the parents in order to prevent truancy.

## District Goal 2 - Character Education and Safe Environment:

- RHHS P-TECH has a new receiving area entrance with added security features matching the high security receiving area entrances already in place at the elementary and middle school campuses.
- RHHS P-TECH and RHMS each have an additional security guard.
- Students may possess personal cell phones/smart watches for safety purposes; however, **these devices must remain turned off and put away during the instructional day** unless authorized by school officials for instructional purposes. This policy will safeguard our students from being victims of bullying and harassment through social media apps, group text messages, and from exposure to inappropriate sexual images airdropped to their phones.

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- RHISD will be implementing an online and contactless E-hallpass system that will:
  - eliminate the risk of spreading germs that can easily occur with written hall passes.
  - provide a safer and more secure environment for learning with an online accountability system in place that will:
    - limit the number of passes permitted for each bathroom location to prevent overcrowding and eliminate vaping.
    - enhance school security by informing administrators and teachers of exactly where each student is at all times. This will deter students from bullying other students and stop the vandalism in the schools.

#### District Goal 3 - Communication, Community, Family, and District Engagement:

- We are pleased to enter into our third year partnership with Communities in Schools which provides a full time social worker at each campus to address the critical needs of our students.
- We continue to recruit and promote community, family, and business partner involvement in our campus and district level decision making committees such as the SBDM (Site-Based Decision Making), DEIC (District Education Improvement Council), SHAC (Student Health Advisory Council), and RHHS P-TECH Leadership Committee.

#### District Goal 4 - College and Career Engagement:

- We are pleased to announce that RHISD was awarded a \$1,327,720 JET (Jobs & Education for Texans) grant to further develop our Engineering and Welding programs at RHHS P-TECH. Students in the program will now be able to earn certifications in AWS Welding and Auto Cad & the FANUC Robot.
- Our partnerships with Texas Southmost College and Texas State Technical College continue to provide multiple career pathways and opportunities for our students to earn college level certifications and degrees before they graduate from high school in high wage and high demand career fields.

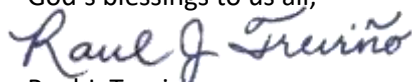
#### District Goal 5 – Fiscal Responsibility:

- On August 17, 2023, RHISD earned a “B” Rating by the Texas Education Agency for the FIRST (Financial Integrity Rating Systems of Texas). This is a letter grade increase from the previous year’s FIRST rating of a C. TEA – “We commend you for being accountable and fiscally responsible of public funds to provide the maximum allocation possible to positively impact instruction and support student outcomes.”
- RHISD continues to budget, plan, approve, and implement funding initiatives that will ensure that all district funding is prioritized to accomplish our district mission “to educate every student by creating an environment of high expectations, innovation, and strong partnerships.”

Parents and guardians, we are grateful that you have entrusted RHISD with your child’s educational experience. Through our partnership with you, we can and will provide a meaningful, safe, and successful school year for all of our students.

**“May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us and prosper the work of our hands for us— yes, establish the work of our hands.” Psalm 90:17**

God’s blessings to us all,



Raul J. Trevino  
Superintendent

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