



August, 2019

Dear HISD School Board Candidates,

Students Need Libraries in HISD is organized for the purpose of raising awareness among HISD leadership, parents, and community about the importance of strong school libraries.

Research ([Baltimore study, 2017](#)) tells us that schools staffed by certified school librarians are better able to raise literacy rates and standardized test scores. HISD has many fine library programs and top-notch library professionals across the district. We advocate for this to be true in all schools and for all students. Equity matters.

Our [SNL web site](#) is packed with information for you as Board candidates and members, as well as for all advocates for school libraries. The resources linked in this tip sheet are all found there, but we pulled out the best ones for your introduction to the topic. We know how hard you will work for students in our district, and want to help you have accurate information about ways to help them even more. Thank you for all you do as an HISD Board Trustee.

SNL is led by Debbie Hall, a retired HISD librarian; Dorcas Hand, another retired school librarian from Houston but not HISD; and Lisa Sandoz Robinson, a former teacher who staffed an HISD library. We represent a grass-roots organization of HISD school library supporters from across the district. Our membership includes active duty librarians, parents, community activists, retired librarians, and others who support school libraries. We have seen the impact that strong resources and programs organized by trained professionals can have on students hungry to learn, both in and beyond the classroom. We are working toward the goal that all students in all schools will benefit from an active, engaging library program which will allow them access to resources they need to grow as readers and learners.

We offer today a Tip Sheet for you as you gear up your campaign towards the November election. We look forward to meeting you, to answering any further questions you may have, and to building a relationship that will serve the students of HISD well after the new Board is seated in January. We welcome you to advocate with us whether you are elected or not.

Because Equity of Access to resources, technology and librarian expertise is at the core of our work, we offer you this illustration of existing inequity. This snapshot of the staffing of libraries in HISD (data from 2018) illustrates how many HISD students are working without trained library services as defined in the Tip Sheet.

Board District	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9
<b>Librarians</b>	12	7	6	8	12	7	4	8	7
<b>Teachers</b>	11	13	11	10	9	8	2	10	10
<b>Clerks</b>	11	7	10	2	2	4	3	13	3
<b>Vacancies</b>	1	11	2	5	2	3	5	5	4
<b>No Library</b>	2	1	1	4	5	1	1	2	2
<b># of schools</b>	37	39	30	29	30	23	15	38	26

*This data is from early Fall in 2018 and should be considered a close estimate or snapshot in time. Staffing in HISD in libraries and in classrooms is in a state of flux throughout the year.*

Respectfully,

Dorcas Hand ([handd51@tekkmail.com](mailto:handd51@tekkmail.com), 713-962-9352)

Debbie Hall ([debhall945@gmail.com](mailto:debhall945@gmail.com), 713-927-7407)

Lisa Sandoz Robinson ([lisasrobinson@comcast.net](mailto:lisasrobinson@comcast.net), 713-213-4847)