



HISD High School Teachers Collaborate with College Professors to Explore Higher Education Alignment Strategies at 5th Annual Project GRAD Houston/ University of Houston-Downtown Symposium

High school teachers gain useful insight from college professors on how to better prepare students who are transitioning from high school to college.



Over 100 teachers from six area Houston Independent School District (HISD) high schools attended the 5th Annual Project GRAD Houston/University of Houston-Downtown College Readiness Symposium. The topic this year was “Aligning Performance Expectations: High School to College.” The 5th Annual Symposium targeted 9th and 10th grade teachers from Project GRAD Houston/HISD partnering schools.

Davis High School 10th grade Math Teacher Joy Moran commented, “Through this collaboration I gained a better understanding of the college professor’s expectations for incoming freshman. I learned from the professors the weaknesses that students are experiencing when they enter college so that I can better prepare the students by being more proactive in my teaching methods.”

GRAD Executive Director, Ann Stiles, remarked, “This symposium, in its 5th year, is a great example of teachers and university professors coming together to explore ways to better serve Houston’s students, to better prepare them for the rigors of college. We know that we must see more students reach and succeed in college. That is exactly what this effort is all about. The transition from high school to college is really tough, particularly for students who will be the first generation to go. When teachers from both sides of the transition work together, students will be better served.”

“UHD professors have joined with HISD teachers to explore K-12 and higher education alignment strategies. The participants studied how the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards relate to current course objectives, how college professors believe students could be best prepared and how high school teachers can infuse college skills and knowledge in their teaching,” said Dr. Laurie Ballering, Senior Director, Project GRAD Houston.

The symposium was sponsored by the federally funded GEAR UP initiative along with Project GRAD Houston and the University of Houston-Downtown. The Project GRAD Houston/HISD partnership includes Davis, Sam Houston, Reagan, Wheatley, and Yates High Schools and the Ninth Grade College Preparatory Academy communities. Through the partnership, students are also eligible to receive Project GRAD’s \$4,000 college scholarship.



Project GRAD Houston serves 5 HISD high school feeder patterns (67 schools with approximately 45,000 students from low-income communities). Since its inception in 1994, GRAD has awarded over \$16 million in college scholarships to more than 4,000 HISD students. For more information about Project GRAD Houston, please visit our web site at: www.projectgradhouston.org or call 832-325-0467.

The mission of Project GRAD is to ensure a quality public education for all students in economically disadvantaged communities so that high school and college graduation rates increase.

