Harris County Department of Education Blog Archive

January 1, 2017 - December 31, 2017



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1. 2017

1.1 January

Angelica finally thrives at HCDE's Academic and Behavior School West (2017-01-09 11:20) - hcdetx





No school seemed right for Angelica Garcia – until her district enrolled her in HCDE's Academic and Behavior School West for students with intellectual, developmental and behavioral disorders.

Angelica is a student with auditory, visual and orthopedic challenges. While her peripheral vision is intact, Angelica is legally blind and deaf, and she gets around with the help of a wheelchair.

Parents Rolando and Yoahanka speak only Spanish, but they use a homespun sign language with their daughter. Previous schools understandably had difficulty communicating with Angelica, which caused frustration and acting out.

After being dismissed from the Texas State School for the Blind due to behavior issues, Angelica came back to Houston, where her parents were relieved to discover that Harris County school districts have the unique option to contract with HCDE.

[youtube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kRRjy6xjtdo]

Angelica has been receiving one-on-one help at AB School West since February 2016, and her family has already seen tremendous progress.

"I'm very proud of Angelica," said Yoahanka. "She is visibly happier since attending AB School West and looks forward to going to school every day."

HCDE's AB Schools provide learning environments for 249 students with intellectual or developmental disabilities or challenging behaviors. Low student-to-teacher ratios lead to students receiving the support they need to reach their goals. Described by her teachers and therapists as friendly, determined and independent, Angelica is thriving at AB School West. These days, her perpetual smile shows how much she loves going to school. She recently received the perfect attendance award and is currently on the honor roll. Her family has also mentioned that she is calmer and happier outside of school.

At AB School West, Garcia works daily with special education teacher Anderson Thompson III and blind/deaf intervener Gloria See. Working as a team, Thompson handles most of Garcia's instruction, while See works as her eyes and ears to connect Garcia to the classroom and her peers.

"The atmosphere of the school creates opportunities for student success," explains Thompson. "Because we work with smaller groups of students, we can engage them and provide them with the attention they need. They feel a sense of accomplishment here."

This kind of specialized instruction and care in the classroom creates an enriching learning environment for Garcia, as well as the 83 other students who attend AB School West.

What makes the school unique is that each student has an individualized learning plan. Also, classes are small, with a 5-2 student-to-instructor ratio. Students range in age from 5 to 22 and are placed in age-appropriate classes.

Houston-area school districts contract with HCDE for services. Students are bused by their home districts to two schools—in east and west Houston. For more information on HCDE's Academic and Behavior Schools, visit [1]www.hcde-texas.org/schools.

1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/schools

Famed Freedom Writer Manny Scott engages educators to equip at-risk youth Jan. 19 at HCDE (2017-01-17 08:54) - hcdetx





Manuel Scott, Freedom Writer helps teachers engage unmotivated youth Jan. 19.

Freedom Writer Manny Scott, portrayed in a MTV hit movie, inspires and motivates educators through a workshop scheduled for Thursday, Jan. 19 from 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at Harris County Department of Education, 6300 Irvington, Houston, Texas.

The former dropout whose character was portrayed in the 2007 movie starring Hillary Swank and Patrick Dempsey shares five proven methods to engage, equip and empower unmotivated youth to take charge or their own success. Those same tools were used to reach him in his troubled youth.

As a writer and national speaker, Scott is a sought-after, dynamic presenter who has traveled with his famed Freedom Writer teacher Erin Gruwell to inspire and equip educators to make a

difference. He is also a doctoral student who studies the ways culture affects change.

To register for the workshop, go to www.hcde-texas.org/register and search by date (Jan. 19). Media wishing to attend the event, please email cvaughn@hcde-texas.org or call 713-696-0756.

About Harris County Department of Education (HCDE): Serving students, teachers, schools and communities throughout Harris County, HCDE is a local governmental organization providing value for school districts while supporting educational opportunity. Partnering with Harris County school districts, HCDE maximizes local resources and respond to the needs of locally elected school boards and education leaders. HCDE services include school-based therapy for students, afterschool programs, Head Start, educator training, adult education and programs to promote safe schools. To learn more about how your county department of education can help you: [1]www.hcde-texas.org.

1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

HCDE Awarded Meritorious Budget Award for 2016-2017 Budget Year by Association of School Business Officials International (2017-01-17 09:20) - hcdetx





The Association of School Business Officials International has awarded Harris County Department of Education its Meritorious Budget Award for excellence in budget presentation for the 2016-2017 budget year.

The award promotes and recognizes excellence in school budget presentation and enhances school business officials' skills in developing, analyzing and presenting a school system budget. HCDE Assistant Superintendent for Finance Jesus Amezcua leads the Business Services division which prepares the budget.

"This award is given to school districts that meet or exceed a rigorous review by professional auditors, so we are very proud of our Business Services division which prepares the report and its commitment to financial transparency," said HCDE County School Superintendent James Colbert.

ASBO is a professional, international organization founded in 1910 that provides programs and services to promote the highest standards of school business management practices, professional growth and effective use of education resources.

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texas.org.

HCDE's role in innovative 'Women in Construction' model recognized through \$20,000 Texas Workforce Commission Award (2017-01-17 09:41) - hcdetx





A \$20,000 award given to the Gulf Coast Adult Education Consortium at the Texas Workforce Conference highlights the work of Harris County Department of Education in supporting a construction training program for women. The innovative, workforce-context classes supported the S &B Engineers and Constructors "Women in Construction" training program.

The award allows the consortium and HCDE to share an innovative, workforce and education training model which elevates women in the construction industry.

"We are proud of this model and the work we have done with our workforce partner S &B Engineers and Constructors," said HCDE County School Superintendent James Colbert. "This award allows us to share this model and replicate it with other adult education providers through conferences and meetings."

As an Adult Education and Literacy contractor for the Houston-Galveston Area Council, HCDE's Adult Education division collaborated with United Way THRIVE of Houston and other organizations to implement the Women in Construction Project, a customized, hiring-and-training program. The program resulted in 15 women completing S &B Engineers and Constructor's 12-week, on-the-job

training program in pipefitting while the female students also gained contextualized math instruction from HCDE. This program led to jobs with S &B, a starting wage of \$18, benefits and the possibility of additional training.

The award from Adult Education and Literacy State Leadership funds was given in December 2016 to recognize exemplary program performance and support innovation through dissemination of information about models and proven practices within the state.

"The funds will be used to develop conference presentations highlighting the Women in Construction Project in AEL and workforce development conferences across the state," said Eduardo Honold, director of HCDE Adult Education.

For information about workforce development GED or ESL classes offered through Harris County Department of Education Adult Education, visit www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation.

About HCDE Adult Education: With a 30-year track record, HCDE Adult Education provides classes to adult learners with a goal to "learn to earn," including adult basic literacy and math skills, GED, English as a second language and vocational training. Classes are held in 35 community locations throughout Harris and Liberty counties. Communities include Baytown, Alief, Channelview, Cy-Fair, Deer Park, Galena Park, Goose Creek, Katy, Klein, Pasadena, Sheldon, Spring Branch and Liberty. Corporations also benefit from HCDE services provided to English language learning employees aimed at improving productivity and safety in the workplace. For more information, access www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation.

About Harris County Department of Education (HCDE): Serving students, teachers, schools and communities throughout Harris County, HCDE is a local governmental organization providing value for school districts while supporting educational opportunity. Partnering with Harris County school districts, HCDE maximizes local resources and responds to the needs of locally elected school boards and education leaders. HCDE services include school-based therapy for students, afterschool programs, Head Start, educator training, adult education and programs to promote safe schools. To learn more about how your county department of education can help you: www.hcde-texas.org.

Infuse Passion and Purpose into Planning: Attend the Early Childhood Winter Conference Jan. 28 (2017-01-18 15:25) - hcdetx



Are you an early childhood educator looking for new strategies for student engagement? Attend Harris County Department of Education's 31st Annual R.T. Garcia Early Childhood Winter Conference on Jan. 28, 2017 for the opportunity to learn and network with other early childhood experts. The conference will be held from 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. at the Kingdom Builder's Center, located at 6011 W. Orem Dr. in Houston.

Be ready to sing, move and dance with keynote speakers Don Monopoli and Gilberto Soto, and learn to infuse passion and purpose into early childhood planning with more than 80 breakout sessions. Educators will leave with easy-to-implement, research-based strategies designed for students in pre-kindergarten through second grade.

Visit [1]www.hcde-texas.org/ECWC or follow the event on Facebook to stay informed and find information on speakers and the various sessions offered. Register [2]HERE.

[youtube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AQSEyEHoBtg]

About the Blogger:

Harris County Department of Education's Communication team helps promote the efforts of HCDE's programs and services to the education community. Our close-knit, award-winning team works together on creative strategies to effectively support the organization. We're always looking to

share great stories and on occasion contribute to the HCDE blog, School Bell.

Let us know what interests you! Send us your questions and suggestions on future blog topics at schoolbell@hcde-texas.org. And don't forget to follow us!

Facebook: [3]https://www.facebook.com/HCDEtx Twitter: [4]https://twitter.com/HCDEtx YouTube: [5]http://www.youtube.com/user/HCDEtv Pinterest: [6]http://www.pinterest.com/hcde/

- 2. https://workshops.hcde-texas.org/iebms/portalsearch/Results.aspx?Workshop=10912
- 3. https://www.facebook.com/HCDEtx
- 4. https://twitter.com/HCDEtx
- 5. http://www.youtube.com/user/HCDEtv
- 6. http://www.pinterest.com/hcde/

^{1.} http://www.hcde-texas.org/ECWC

Manny Scott gives educators a 'renewed heart' for reaching youth (2017-01-19 16:30) - hcdetx





More than 130 educators in and around the Houston area signed up to hear Manuel Scott's emotional presentation entitled "How to Reach 'Unreachable' Youth."

Scott, one of the original *Freedom Writers* profiled in the 2007 movie, led a workshop on Jan. 19 at HCDE's fifth-floor conference center. Scott spoke both to the importance and difficulty of the work that educators do.

He said his goal was for attendees to leave with a "renewed heart" for understanding, engaging, reaching and teaching despondent students in every school.

Scott started out by sharing details of his early days as a troubled youth who faced family and neighborhood violence at every turn. Scott said his lowest moment came when his best friend was murdered, at which point he gave up on school and resigned himself to the life of a dropout.

"How do you reach that kid?" Scott challenged the audience.

He went on to offer the following pieces of advice based on his doctoral research and life experiences.

- 1. Develop real relationships Situations at home often leave young people to be suspicious of adults and unable to see who's trying to help. Investing time and interest in youth, listening to them and building trust are keys to real relationships.
- 2. Grab their attention Because educators today are competing with peers, TV, social media and a multitude of other distractions, they must get creative about keeping students engaged and keeping them focused on goals.
- 3. Be proactive Scott talks about "turning the page," or making a profound and lasting choice to improve the quality of one's life. Reaching "unreachable" youth takes more than just casual advice; it requires urging others to take proactive steps.

Interested in more offerings from HCDE's Teaching and Learning Center? [1]See upcoming events.

For more information about Manuel Scott, go to [2]www.mannyscot.com.

2. http://www.mannyscott.com/#/page/1

^{1.} http://www.hcde-texas.org/who-we-are/divisions-and-leadership/teaching-and-learning-center/upco ming-workshops/

Teacher Tip: Begin with the End in Mind (2017-01-23 18:02) - hcdetx

[1]



Since we all come to education through the heart and vision of serving others, we sometimes fail to see the "end" of each year coming. So as the second semester is getting underway, get yourself a bright-colored folder and write "End of Year" on it.

You need several items in there: lists of items you have loaned to other teachers, books you have loaned out to students, cumulative attendance reports, how many more rulers you will need next year—anything you think you will need to remember come May. Also start keeping a list of things you want to do better next year, conferences you would like to attend, and books that will help grow your craft. Having all these items in one place will help make your end-of-year run more smoothly and will also help give you focus for the start of next school year.

Teachers can live moment to moment some weeks and can forget to see the bigger picture during the school year. We are worried about how each and every student is doing, how we are getting our appraisal paperwork in, and how we will find time to call parents each week.

So start with the end in mind. Find time to populate your "End of Year" folder.

(Tip provided by Kelly Tumy, director of English/language arts and social studies at the HCDE Teaching and Learning Center. To contact Tumy about professional learning opportunities, email [2]ktumy@hcde-texas.org or call 713-696-1310.)

[3]http://www.hcde-texas.org/who-we-are/divisions-and-leadership/teaching-a nd-learning-center/

1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/01/tumy-photo.jpg

2. ktumy@hcde-texas.org

^{3.} http://www.hcde-texas.org/who-we-are/divisions-and-leadership/teaching-and-learning-center/

Jean Polichino, director of School-Based Therapy Services, retires after nearly 30 years of service (2017-01-24 09:05) - hcdetx





In 1988, Jean Polichino was flipping through the *Houston Chronicle* classifieds when she came across an ad. Harris County Department of Education was looking for an occupational therapist who could be contracted to work in Spring Branch ISD, which happened to be where Polichino had attended high school.

So began a nearly 30-year career with HCDE that ends this month, with Polichino retiring from her post as director of School-Based Therapy Services, the division she has helped mold into a statewide information resource and a provider of vital services to more than 7,700 students annually.

"HCDE has afforded me a rich and meaningful professional life," Polichino said, but the truth is that her service and leadership have paid large dividends back to the organization and its members – particularly to the school districts that rely on HCDE for well-trained, quality occupational therapists and physical therapists.

The fruits of Polichino's labor, she's proud to say, extend beyond the Harris County classrooms where HCDE therapists provide much-needed services. In 2014, School-Based Therapy Services launched TxSpot.org as a way to share information geared specifically for therapists working in public education throughout the state of Texas. A mere two years later, Polichino received word that the Texas Education Agency refers school therapists looking for specialized information about their practice in schools to none other than TxSpot.org.

Polichino named the creation and growth of TxSpot.org as one of her proudest accomplishments as director, but her long career at HCDE has provided other memories and milestones.

"In my first year working as an occupational therapist in Spring Branch ISD, I met a fourth-grader with a learning disability for written expression," Polichino began, adding that the child was humiliated by her poor writing grades.

Polichino worked with the student, listening to her challenges and gaining her trust, and finally suggested strategies to help her with written assignments.

"She successfully employed the suggestions and was thrilled to find that despite her learning disability, she could produce work similar to her classroom peers," Polichino said. "I was struck by the transformation in her self-confidence and by the depth of her gratitude. It opened my eyes to the significant difference a therapist can make for children with disabilities at school."

Making a "significant difference" in the lives of students with disabilities has been something of a motto for Polichino ever since. She has watched this commitment of HCDE therapists lead to tangible success for students, as in the case of Kyle Abbott.

Now an adult with cerebral palsy, Abbott received early intervention services from an HCDE occupational therapist and physical therapist while in the Katy TYKE Early Childhood Intervention program, and then had the same therapists in Cypress Fairbanks ISD until he graduated from high

school. He has since earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Texas A &M, and he's landed a job working for the Houston Astros – a dream job of sorts.

Abbott's appreciation for the intervention that his HCDE therapists provided became apparent when he attended one of their retirement celebrations.

"It's good to have the same professional or therapist throughout the years so they get to know you both on an educational and personal level, so they understand what your goals are and where you want to go in life," Abbott said.

Now that Polichino's time with HCDE draws to a close, she remains optimistic about watching its important work continue.

"Because of the support and guidance provided by the HCDE Board of Trustees and Mr. Colbert, the division is well positioned for continued growth long term," she said. "HCDE School-Based Therapy Services is ready to take on the future!"

For more information about HCDE's School-Based Therapy Services, go to [1] www.hcde-texas.org/therapyservices.

1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/therapyservices

Early childhood contracts renewed for access through HCDE Choice Partners (2017-01-26 17:08) - hcdetx





Contracts for early childhood supplies, LED lighting, roofing and more were renewed at the January 2017 board meeting of Harris County Department of Education and are accessible through HCDE Choice Partners cooperative. Governmental entities that have signed an interlocal contract with HCDE may access these legally procured contracts.

Renewed contracts include

Construction-JOC (JOC-IDIQ): Falkenberg Construction Co. Inc.;

Early Childhood Supplies and Related Items: Charles J. Becker & Bro. Inc. doing business as Becker's School Supplies; Brattle Publishing Group LLC; Complete Book and Media Supply LLC; Express Booksellers LLC doing business as Express Booksellers; Kaplan Early Learning Company; Learning Resources doing business as Educational Insights; Music in Motion Inc.; National Educational Systems; S &S Worldwide Inc.; Therapro Inc.; Varsity Brands Holding Co.

Inc. - BSN Sports LLC doing business as US Games; and Anna Walther - Wood Etc. Co. doing business as Wood Etc. Co.;

Janitorial Cleaning Services: Ambassador Services LLC; GMW Quality Cleaning Solutions doing business as Hospitality Cleaning Solutions; and Soji Services Inc. doing business as Metroclean Commercial Building Services;

LED Lighting and Related Items: Aleddra Inc.; BTM Solutions LLC; Consolidated Electrical Distributors Inc.; Crawford Electric Supply Co. Inc.; Eco Induction Systems LLC doing business as EIS Lighting; Summit Electric Supply Co. Inc.; D Reynolds Company LLC doing business as The Reynolds Company; Unified Sunergy Systems LLC; and XtraLight Manufacturing Ltd.;

Roofing, Waterproofing and Moisture Control (IDIQ):*American Contracting U.S.A. Inc.; Atlas Universal Inc.; CS Advantage USAA Inc.; D & G Quality Roofing Inc.; Fusion Trading LLC doing business as Hi-Mark Roofing & Waterproofing; J Reynolds & Company Inc.; John A. Walker Roofing Co. Inc.; and Sea-Breeze Roofing Inc.; and*

Technology Products and Services:Barnes & Noble Booksellers Inc.; Bass Computers Inc.; Double M Laser Products Inc. doing business as Enhanced Laser Products (ELP); FireFly Computers LLC; Gaggle.Net Inc.; Houston Information Team LLC (HIT); Insight Investments LLC; Insource Technology Direct LLC; iTech Enterprises doing business as iTech Solutions; LyncVerse Technologies Inc.; NWN Corporation; Netsync Network Solutions; Phonoscope Enterprise Group; Phonoscope LightWave Inc.; Rugged Protection LLC; Set Solutions Inc.; SHI/Government Solutions; Way Tech LLC doing business as Silicon Mountain Memory; Total Technologies LLC; True North Consulting Group LLC; and Tele-Communication Inc. doing business as Unified Communications.

New Members

Organizations and governmental entities that became members when contracts were approved by the HCDE Board of Trustees on Jan. 26 include **Burleson County**, Burleson; **Denison Independent School District**, Denison; **Girl Scouts of Southwest Texas**, San Antonio; **city of Keene**; **Pawnee Independent School District**, Pawnee; **city of Prairie View**; **city of Seguin**; and **Wylie Independent School District**, Wylie.

About Choice Partners: Choice Partners national cooperative offers quality, legal procurement and contract solutions to meet the purchasing needs of governmental entities. Contracts are competitively bid so governmental entities can act immediately to access the contract they need, saving time and money on the bidding process and purchase. Choice Partners includes contracts for education, facilities, food, services, technology and supplies, including a unique supply catalog. For more information, call 877-696-2122 or visit [1]www.choicepartners.org.

1. http://www.choicepartners.org/

Students with unique education challenges succeed with help from HCDE's School-Based Therapy Services (2017-01-30 11:27) - hcdetx

Harris County Department of Education's School-Based Therapy Services provides on-campus therapy to help students who struggle with autism, intellectual disabilities and other physical challenges.

Our highly-trained Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists and Music Therapists provide 53 percent of all of the special education services for the entire county.

See how our therapists make a difference in students' lives:

Racko's story

[youtube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dcll2sOTZmU]

Tatiana's story

[youtube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BvE0Fe9e314]

For more information on HCDE's School-Based Therapy Services, visit [1]www.hcde-texas.org/therapyservices.

1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/therapyservices

Adult learners, leaders inducted into Adult Education National Honor Society (2017-01-30 12:09) - hcdetx





Going back to school as an adult requires grit and determination. Factors like age, health, children and work often affect the journey. Twenty-four students shared stories of strife and success as they were inducted by Harris County Department of Education into the Adult Education National Honor Society in December.

The event, held on Dec. 7, 2016, was an emotional hour filled with pride and gratitude as student leaders were commended by their teachers.

Included was a student from Galena Park who overcame drug problems and suffered from low self-esteem. Another 84-year-old student from Mexico dropped out of school in fourth grade to work to feed his family before attending HCDE's learning center in Pasadena. A third Alief-area mother of five suffered domestic abuse but is determined to get an education to raise her boys.

The National Adult Education Honor Society recognizes adult learners who excel as leaders and overcome difficult circumstances to pursue adult learning successes. Inductees also visibly improve their lives and others' through learning.

Students are nominated for induction into the honor society by their teachers and live in neighborhoods throughout greater Harris County. Students are given positive recommendations for employment and educational advancement recommendations as a result of the inductions. They receive a pin and certificate at the ceremony. GED graduates receive a gold honor cord to wear during commencement to recognize the honor.

"Our adult students are dedicated and eager to learn when they come into our classes," said

HCDE Adult Education Director Eduardo Honold. "There are so many success stories, but these students are recognized as leaders among their peers."

The following students were inducted into the National Adult Education Honor Society at HCDE in 2016: Nancy Aguilar, Victoria Andrade, Maria Arias, Carolina Bustos, Eva Castillo, Marina Cebrian, Adela de la Cruz, Maria Dominquez, Joshua Doyle, Salvador Escobedo, Veronica Espinola, Astrid Gamarra, LaShanda Glass, Adolfo Gomez, Norge Gomez, Kelsey Hess, Jucelin M. Linares, Marlon Maitland, Yuri Mandujano, Maria D. Marcial-Gallardo, Job Neasbitt, James Quinn, Daniel Rodriguez and Shawnetta Talton.

Profiles of three inductees:

Salvador Escobedo, 84, Pasadena, (teacher Evelyn Steptoe):

When Salvador Escobedo first walked through the doors of HCDE Adult Education's Sunset location, he had a fourth grade education and knew very little English. Now, due to remarkable attendance and dedication, Salvador reads and writes English very well and is teacher Evelyn Steptoe's nominee for the National Honor Society Outstanding Learner award.

In his native Mexico, Salvador was not able to finish his studies because he had to work to help support his family. That teamwork spirit carried over into his GED and English as a second language (ESL) classrooms, according to Steptoe.

"Salvador has been a mentor to many of the students in the GED classroom," Steptoe said. "He loves working in groups."

Formerly a TV repairman, Salvador is looking into new career paths and is even considering enrolling in college to advance his options.

Josh Doyle, 26, Irvington Learning Center, (teacher Brigett Bentley):

Josh Doyle is an HCDE Adult Education student who broke the mold and excelled in his construction class. Before enrolling at HCDE's 6311 Irvington location, Josh was a high school dropout from a family that did not produce many male role models; most men he knew were not successful, and some were incarcerated.

His teacher, Brigett T. Bentley, nominated Josh for the National Honor Society Outstanding Learner award because he not only showed extra dedication and zeal for learning but also shared his time with struggling classmates.

"Josh came to class daily with a sense of purpose, vigor and appetite to learn," said Bentley. "He encouraged other students to have an open mind and saw them as team members rather than as individuals."

Now that he has completed his six-week course, the Galena Park resident is applying to jobs and looking forward to making his family proud.

LaShonda Glass, 32, Alief, (teacher Barbara Booker):

As a mother of five boys, LaShonda Glass strives to lead by example and demonstrate the importance of education. Glass has overcome mountainous obstacles to get to where she is today, including

homelessness, but her determination and resilience allowed her to persevere.

"I'm very determined and know that with a better education, life has so much more to offer," said Glass.

Glass possesses natural leadership abilities in her current job as an office manager, as well as in the classroom. Her GED teacher Barbara Booker says Glass is always willing to assist other students in class.

"She grasps the concepts quickly and is willing to share what she learns with others." Glass dreams of one day owning her own company and says that dream, along with her five boys, keeps her motivated and positive.

About HCDE Adult Education: With a 30-year track record, HCDE Adult Education provides classes to adult learners with a goal to "learn to earn," including adult basic literacy and math skills, GED, English as a second language and vocational training. Classes are held in 35 community locations throughout Harris and Liberty counties. Communities include Baytown, Alief, Channelview, Cy-Fair, Deer Park, Galena Park, Goose Creek, Katy, Klein, Pasadena, Sheldon, Spring Branch and Liberty. Corporations also benefit from HCDE services provided to English language learning employees aimed at improving productivity and safety in the workplace. For more information access www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation or 713-692-6216.

Early Childhood Winter Conference Attracts more than 1,000 Educators for Day of Networking, Engagement (2017-01-30 15:36) - hcdetx



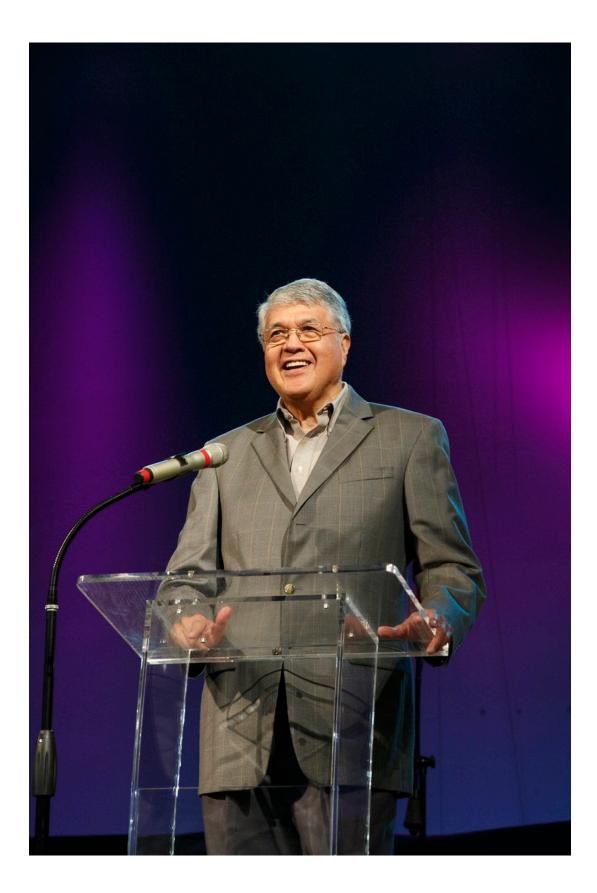
More than 1,000 early childhood educators from across Texas attended the 31st Annual R.T. Garcia Early Childhood Winter Conference on Jan. 28 to gain new strategies for student engagement and network with experts in their field. Educators danced and sang with keynote speakers Don Monopoli and Gilberto Soto and learned to infuse passion and purpose into early childhood planning with more than 80 breakout sessions. They also left with easy-to-implement, research-based strategies designed for students in pre-kindergarten through second grade.























Visit [1]www.hcde-texas.org/ECWC for more information on this engaging and interactive conference.

1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/ECWC

1.2 February

Make eye contact, demonstrate love for students to activate problemsolving (2017-02-01 11:16) - hcdetx





When faced with misbehavior or disrespect, many teachers naturally resort to traditional systems of reward and punishment. Gold stars, names on the board, isolation from the group – these tactics are often passed down as ways to control classrooms, but since they are not grounded in brain science, they are often ineffective at helping students learn and develop. **Conscious discipline** may sound like the latest buzzword in early childhood and special populations education, but **Elizabeth Montero-Cefalo** says it's more than that.

"Adult behavior regulates child behavior," Montero-Cefalo said at Saturday's 31st Annual R.T. Garcia Early Childhood Winter Conference. Her featured presentation on conscious discipline asked teachers not just to focus on the child's behavior but to reflect on their own as a way to **bring more love – and ultimately more learning – into the classroom.** Conscious discipline is a brain-based, comprehensive self-regulation program that has reached more than three million children. It's the brain child (so to speak) of **Dr. Becky Bailey**, an internationally recognized expert in childhood education and developmental psychology. One of conscious discipline's most recognizable practices

is the "I love you" ritual, which seeks to ensure first and foremost that children feel safe and loved – necessary prerequisites before children's frontal lobes can be activated and problem-solving can take place. Teachers who kneel to make eye contact with students and establish loving connections with them, either through words or through touch, are already practicing conscious discipline. Bigger disciplinary challenges require more self-regulation and understanding of the neural pathways that lead to decision-making. To learn more, go to [1]www.consciousdiscipline.com. To see more professional learning opportunities for teachers and educators, [2]see our upcoming workshops.

1. http://www.consciousdiscipline.com/

2. http://hcde-texas.org/who-we-are/divisions-and-leadership/teaching-and-learning-center/upcoming -workshops/

Talk to your students about cyber bullying, share these top five tips (2017-02-07 10:48) - hcdetx





Today is [1]Safer Internet Day, part of a global drive to raise awareness about internet safety issues and to promote safe, responsible use of the internet, especially for young people. As educators, we play a vital role in **equipping youth with the skills to manage their internet use confidently, creatively and responsibly.** Many teachers and parents are already aware

that the internet can present unique safety challenges - chief among them the threat of cyberbullying.

According to the [2]i-SAFE foundation, more than half of adolescents and teens have been bullied online, and about the same number have engaged in cyberbullying. This remarkably common safety threat can take many forms, from spreading rumors through social media to circulating unflattering or suggestive pictures via text. While it can be tempting to turn a blind eye to these practices and stick with a "kids will be kids" approach, the reality is that **cyberbullying can be highly detrimental to a student's psychological wellbeing.** In the worst case scenario, it can be deadly.

Talk to your students about cyberbullying and share these tips on how they can be better citizens of the internet and avoid falling victim to online harassment.

- 1. **Don't respond.** If someone bullies you, remember that your reaction is usually exactly what the bully wants. It gives him or her power over you. Who wants to empower a bully?
- 2. **Don't retaliate.** Getting back at the bully turns you into one and reinforces the bully's behavior. Help avoid a whole cycle of aggression.
- Talk to a trusted adult. You deserve backup. It's always good to involve a parent but if you can't a school counselor usually knows how to help. Sometimes both are needed. If you're really nervous about saying something, see if there's a way to report the incident anonymously at school.
- 4. **Be civil.** Even if you don't like someone, it's a good idea to be decent and not sink to the other person's level. Also, research shows that gossiping about and trash talking others increases your risk of being bullied. Treat people the way you want to be treated.
- 5. **Be a friend, not a bystander.** Watching or forwarding mean messages empowers bullies and hurts victims even more. If you can, tell bullies to stop or let them know harassment makes people look stupid and mean. If you can't stop the bully, at least try to help the victim and report the behavior.

On Wednesday, April 19, HCDE's Center for Safe and Secure Schools will host a Cyberbullying workshop. Melissa Rangel, bilingual case manager for the Texas Center for the Missing, will focus on enhancing communication between parents and children about online safety. [3]Learn more and register online today.

-Ecomet Burley, director, Center for Safe and Secure Schools, Harris County Department of Education

- 1. http://us6.campaign-archive1.com/?u=fcaa73d53911340a72d92d73f&id=dab7f1f644&e=7aa8d77529
- 2. http://www.bullyingstatistics.org/content/cyber-bullying-statistics.html
- 3. https://workshops.hcde-texas.org/iebms/portalsearch/Results.aspx?Workshop=11264

Crabb named new senior director for School-Based Therapy Services at HCDE (2017-02-08 09:56) - hcdetx





Carie Crabb is the new senior director for Harris County Department of Education's School-Based Therapy Services. HCDE's team of highly trained physical, occupational and music therapists pro-

vide on-campus support for more than 7,000 students with autism spectrum disorders, intellectual disabilities and other challenges in greater Harris County.

Crabb has 28 years of experience as a school-based therapist. After graduating from Houston Community College in 1988, she began working at HCDE as a physical therapist assistant and was assigned to Houston Independent School District. She later obtained her master's degree in physical therapy at Texas Woman's University and returned to HCDE as a physical therapist.

During her time at HCDE, Crabb has served Houston, Galena Park, Pasadena, Goose Creek and Humble independent school districts as a therapist. Crabb joined the management team in 2004, where she has partnered with various school districts, the Gulf Coast Co-op and the Mental Health and Mental Retardation Early Childhood Intervention program.

Her expertise in physical therapy led her to serve as the HCDE center coordinator for clinical education for professional physical therapy and physical therapy assistant students who attend local colleges and universities. She has also served on the advisory boards for the Houston Community College and Wharton County Junior College Physical Therapy Assistant Programs and has been a guest lecturer for the Texas Woman's University doctoral program for physical therapy.

"I am committed to improving educational success for Harris County students through provision of high quality therapy services in partnership with the area school districts and charter schools," said Crabb. "I have been very fortunate to have a career I truly love and I'm excited about this next chapter at HCDE."

Crabb will begin her role as senior director on Feb. 1, 2017. She replaces retiring senior director Jean Polichino, who has led the division since 2007.

For more information about HCDE's School-Based Therapy Services, visit [2]www.hcde-texas.org/therapyservices.

About Harris County Department of Education (HCDE): Serving students, teachers, schools and communities throughout Harris County, HCDE is a local governmental organization providing value for school districts while supporting educational opportunity. Partnering with Harris County school districts, HCDE maximizes local resources and responds to the needs of locally elected school boards and education leaders. HCDE services include school-based therapy for students, afterschool programs, Head Start, educator training, adult education and programs to promote safe schools. To learn more about how your county department of education can help you: [3]http://www.hcde-texas.org.

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1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/02/crabb.jpg

2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/therapyservices

3. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Harris County Department of Education names 2017 Regional Scholastic Art & Writing awardees (2017-02-08 15:06) - hcdetx





Harris County teen artists and writers from 18 area school districts and multiple charter, private and home schools earn Scholastic Art & Writing Awards as regional sponsor Harris County Department

of Education names the 2017 awardees.

Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, founded in 1923, provides young artists and writers in grades 7-12 with the opportunity to showcase their work as it identifies and documents their outstanding achievements. The mission of the Awards is to bring outstanding visual art and writing created by teens to a national audience by displaying the work and encouraging creativity and career development. Former Scholastic Art & Writing notables who won awards in high school include Truman Capote, Stephen King, Andy Warhol, Sylvia Plath, Robert Redford, and Zac Posen.

Access the complete list of student award recipients:

[1]http://www.hcde-texas.org/how-we-help-students/scholastic-art-writing-aw ards/scholastic-art-writing-awardees/

List of awards ceremonies and receptions at galleries throughout Houston: [2]https://docs.google.com/document/d/1A2fAHj4pSLW67S2ct05Kli9ezsN8S2YIF9 IX6ukmrxg/edit

HCDE Scholastic Art & Writing Awards coordinator Andrea Segraves said judges reviewed 8,748 art and writing entries at the regional level. Segraves thanked the several hundred volunteer judges who assisted in selecting the awards.

A total 1,839 students earn Gold Key, Silver Key and honorable mention awards, along with American Visions and Voices nomination awards from Scholastic Art & Writing, a national competition hosted regionally by HCDE. Gold Key art winners (307); Gold Key writing winners (92); and American Vision awardees (10) now advance to the national competition in New York City. National medalists are announced in March.

The 10 American Visions & Voices Nominees are announced each year as "best of show" finalists in both art and writing to advance to national competition. Each nominee earns a \$250 scholarship from sponsor Texas Arts Supply, and one in each category earns a national medal to be announced in March.

The five nominees for art awards are Chimi Abuede, Elsik High School, Alief ISD; Alexis Cazares, Sam Rayburn High School, Pasadena ISD; Vittorio Covarrubi, Strake Jesuit High School; Citlali Francisco, Kleb Intermediate, Klein ISD; and Nia Pereda, Bondy Intermediate, Pasadena ISD. The five writing nominees are Tiffany Ajumobi, The Kinkaid School, Mary Ann Hurtado, Klein Collins High School, Klein ISD; Sophia Li, St. John's School; Jillian Romero, Doerre Intermediate School, Klein ISD; and Julia Smith, St. John's School.

The following school districts, private schools, charter schools and home school students are represented in the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards:

School districts: Aldine, Alief, Clear Creek, Crosby, Cy-Fair, Deer Park, Galena Park, Goose Creek Consolidated, Houston, Huffman, Humble, Katy, Klein, New Caney, Pasadena, Pearland, Spring Branch and Tomball.

Charter schools: Harmony Schools, Impact Early College High School, Calvin Nelms Char-66 ter and KIPP Academy.

Private: Annunciation Orthodox School, Concordia Lutheran, Duchesne Academy, Episcopal High, Emery Weiner, Founders Christian, Incarnate Word, Post Oak High, Presbyterian, River Oaks Baptist, St. Agnes Academy, St. John's Middle and Upper schools, St. John XXIII, St. Thomas High, Second Baptist, Strake Jesuit, The Kinkaid School and the Village School.

"We celebrate the talent of these young artists and writers at multiple ceremonies throughout Harris County," said Harris County School Superintendent James Colbert. "We are proud to sponsor this competition and look forward to showcasing the work of these amazing youth."

For more information about HCDE's regional Scholastic Art & Writing Awards and opportunities to sponsor, judge and enter the competition, go to [3]www.hcde-texas.org/scholasticartandwriting.

Photo:

Cypress-Fairbanks ISD's Jersey Village High School Gold Key recipient, Iliana Ramirez, senior, with her Gold Key Award photo.

About Scholastic Art & Writing Awards: For 94 years, the Awards, presented by the nonprofit Alliance for Young Artists & Writers, have identified the early promise of some of our nation's most accomplished visionaries and encouraged young artists and writers to pursue a variety of creative career paths and endeavors. In 2016, a record-breaking 320,000 works were submitted for adjudication at the regional level, with more than 2,500 public, private and home-schooled students receiving national recognition.

Each year, exhibition, publication and scholarship opportunities are made available to students honored through the program. More about the Awards at [4]www.artandwriting.org

About Harris County Department of Education (HCDE): Serving students, teachers, schools and communities throughout Harris County, HCDE is a local governmental organization providing value for school districts while supporting educational opportunity. Partnering with Harris County school districts, HCDE maximizes local resources and responds to the needs of locally elected school boards and education leaders. HCDE services include school-based therapy for students, afterschool programs, Head Start, educator training, adult education and programs to promote safe schools. To learn more about how your county department of education can help you: [5]http://www.hcde-texas.org.

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- 1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/how-we-help-students/scholastic-art-writing-awards/scholastic-art-wri ting-awardees/
- 2. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1A2fAHj4pSLW67S2ct05KIi9ezsN8S2YIF9IX6ukmrxg/edit
- $3. \ \texttt{http://www.hcde-texas.org/scholasticartandwriting}$
- 4. http://www.artandwriting.org/
- 5. http://www.hcde-texas.org/
- 6. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Choice equals voice: Writing contests help with STAAR prep (2017-02-13 12:44) - hcdetx





Paula Shamburger, Deer Park ISD ELA teacher

Whether we like to admit it or not, writing in the English language arts classroom is often driven by the STAAR test. We want our students to explore many different genres, but **the pressure to prepare them for that 26-line expository essay is all too real.** But let's face it, a 26-line form does not lend itself to authentic writing. Instead, teachers often drudge through the task of grading formulaic essays that lack voice and craft. It's maddening I tell you. Maddening.

So what's a desperate teacher to do? For me, the answer lies in the **Scholastic Art and Writing Awards**. This program offers students the opportunity to broaden their creative writing skills while having the chance to earn regional and national recognition. The idea is introduced fairly

early in the school year, so students have enough time to work on their piece. They can choose from different categories such as short story, flash fiction, science fiction, fantasy, poetry, humor and personal memoir. I discovered something important after my students began turning in their submissions. Choice equals voice. Perhaps the freedom to choose their genre gives them the confidence to take risks they wouldn't normally take. Maybe the idea of broadening their audience and being acknowledged by someone other than just Mrs. Sham is exciting to them. Whatever it is, they take ownership of their work, become more engaged in the writing process, and gain confidence as real writers.

[1]Check out the 2017 Regional Scholastic Art & Writing awardees

Teachers benefit, too. There are so many opportunities for lessons during the process that cover a wide range of TEKS. First and foremost, we cover the characteristics of different genres, audiences and purposes. This leads to lessons on the elements of plot, character development, conflict and theme. Grammar skills are taught in the context of their own writing. **Students learn sentence structure, sentence variety and word choice.** We practice with different leads and conclusions. We'll even break away from the grip of the expository essay, opting instead for mysteries, humorous stories, imaginative stories, clever stories and sometimes deeply personal stories. Their work tells me something about my students – what they like, what they find funny, what challenges they face. Ultimately, I learn who they are.

Luckily for me, **I've had the pleasure of watching several students receive regional awards.** Last year, I was fortunate enough to sit in Carnegie Hall in New York City and watch in awe as one of my students was nationally recognized for her flash-fiction piece. It's a moment I'm sure she will never forget, and I can assure you I won't either.

If you're a teacher like me with students who are reluctant to write or struggle to find their voice in their writing, give a contest like the Scholastic Writing Awards a try. Maybe a passion for writing won't be ignited in each individual, but hopefully your students will begin to **see writing as something other than a chore or a standardized test.** Perhaps like Sylvia Plath, Stephen King and Truman Capote – all former Scholastic Writing Award winners – students may find a spark that uncovers a hidden talent.

(Contributed by Paula Shamburger, English/language arts teacher, Deer Park Junior High, Deer Park ISD)

1. http://blog.hcde-texas.org/2017/02/08/harris-county-department-of-education-names-2017-regional -scholastic-art-writing-awardees/

Perhaps the freedom to choose their genre gives them the confidence to take risks they wouldn't normally take.

10 teen artists, writers earn 'best of class' for regional Scholastic Art & Writing Awards hosted by HCDE (2017-02-20 17:11) - hcdetx





Ten of the 8,748 art and writing entries submitted by students in grades 7-12 in Harris County have earned the "best in class" designation through Harris County Department of Education's regional Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. The 10 were named 2017 "American Voices & American Visions Nominees."

The 10 nominees include:

Art: American Visions art nominees: Chimi Abuede, Elsik High School, Alief ISD, mixed media entry called "A Book of Chile"; Alexis Cazares, Sam Rayburn High School, Pasadena Independent School District, painting entry called "Close Shave"; Vittorio Covarrubi, Strake Jesuit College Preparatory, drawing and illustration entry called "The Heart of Houston"; Citlali Francisco, Kleb Intermediate, Klein ISD, drawing and illustration entry called "Color Me"; and Nia Pereda, Bondy Intermediate, Pasadena ISD, mixed media entry called "Bursting at the Seams."

Writing: American Voices writing nominees: Tiffany Ajumobi, The Kinkaid School, writing portfolio; Mary Ann Hurtado, Klein Collins High School, Klein ISD, humor entry called "From Sea to Shining Sea"; Sophia Li, St. John's School, personal essay entry called "The Tainted"; Jillian Romero, Doerre Intermediate School, Klein ISD, flash fiction entry called "When They Fell"; and Julia Smith, St. John's School, short story entry called "The Bird."

The students are honored through \$250 scholarships provided by Texas Art Supply, a longtime regional supporter of Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, said Andrea Segraves, coordinator for HCDE's regional Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. Their work advances to be judged in New York City along with the regional winners in other cities throughout the nation. Ten will be chosen later this spring to be the national awardees who will be recognized at Carnegie Hall.

"We are extremely proud of our Harris County teen artists and writers who took part in the 2017 regional Scholastic Art & Writing Awards," said Harris County School Superintendent James Colbert, Jr. "We also thank the judges who took time to serve Harris County youth."

To see a list of the 1,839 students who earned Gold, Silver and Honorable Mention Awards this year, go to: [2]http://www.hcde-texas.org/how-we-help-students/scholastic-art-writing-aw ards/scholastic-art-writing-awardees/

View the list of receptions and ceremonies being hosted at fine arts venues that include Spring Street Studios, Texas Art Supply, the Alley Theatre and MATCH: [3]https://docs.google.com/document/d/1A2fAHj4pSLW67S2ct05KIi9ezsN8S2YIF9 IX6ukmrxg/e-dit

About Scholastic Art & Writing: Founded in 1923, the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards are the nation's longest-running, most prestigious educational initiative supporting student achievement in the visual and literary arts. The program has an impressive legacy of being the first to acknowledge

creative talent and is today's largest source of scholarships for creative teens.

About Harris County Department of Education: HCDE helps school districts in the state's largest county meet the needs of uniquely challenged learners, directly serving students at their schools or one of four HCDE-operated campuses across the county. Learn about these services and more at [4]www.hcde-texas.org.

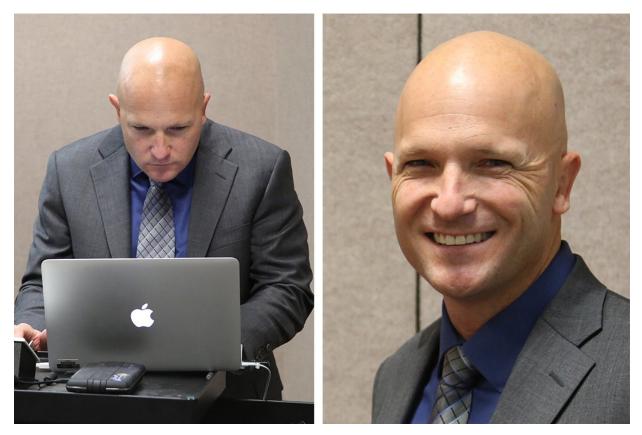
1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/02/citlalifrancisco_kleinisd.jpg

2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/how-we-help-students/scholastic-art-writing-awards/scholastic-art-writing-awardees/

- 3. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1A2fAHj4pSLW67S2ct05KIi9ezsN8S2YIF9IX6ukmrxg/edit
- 4. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Eric Sheninger, digital leadership expert, shares tools for better engagement (2017-02-21 12:03) - hcdetx





It's no wonder that many of today's educators have pushed to bring more technology into the classroom. Students want it, and the potential for learning seems limitless.

Limitless, yes, but not guaranteed, said Eric Sheninger, senior fellow and thought leader on digital leadership with the International Center for Leadership in Education (ICLE). As part of The Teaching and Learning Center's Leadership Series, Sheninger coached attendees on the strategies and behaviors that must accompany technology-based teaching – and warned of the ways that iPads in the classroom can go wrong, fast.

"If we can't show evidence of growth, we're wasting our time," Sheninger said. "Show me the evidence."

Sheninger said he hears plenty about "blended learning" and "1 to 1" rollouts, but many educators spearheading these initiatives are often shocked to find that the impact on test results is minimal. School boards and other stakeholders naturally want to see evidence that investments in technology are working, and when educators can't provide it, opportunities get missed.

"Show me data. Show me examples of student work aligned to assessments," Sheninger said.

Sheninger introduced a number of inexpensive, web-based tools that can aid learning, such as [1]Mentimeter, a real-time surveying tool that can go beyond the traditional "raise your hand" method. Another is [2]TodaysMeet. But tools are only as powerful as those using them, Sheninger

explained. They don't in and of themselves guarantee learning.

According to Sheninger, among the key concepts behind better digital leadership are voice, choice and advocacy ([3]see his blog for elaboration). These concepts are important not just for administrators leading a group of teachers, but for anyone who seeks to model appropriate behavior and empower others to reach their goals. They work in the classroom, as well.

Interested in attending a leadership workshop at Harris County Department of Education? [4]Check out our upcoming events.

1. https://www.mentimeter.com/

2. https://todaysmeet.com/

 $3. \ \texttt{http://esheninger.blogspot.com/2017/02/agency-important-for-students-and.\texttt{html}}$

4. http://www.hcde-texas.org/who-we-are/divisions-and-leadership/teaching-and-learning-center/upco ming-workshops/

Small class size at Harris County Department of Education's special school broadens student's future (2017-02-22 09:00) - hcdetx





In a classroom at Harris County Department of Education's Academic and Behavior School West, Camden Cotlar is one of about six students quietly working under the supervision of two teachers. His wavy red hair is nearly all that makes Camden stand out physically from his classmates, each of whom remains focused on an activity or computer-based test. Then, Camden raises his hand.

He waits to be called on.

"Ms. Jones, there's a possibility of a virus on this computer," Camden says aloud.

While the five-syllable "possibility" may seem advanced for the typical ABS West fifth-grader (especially a self-described "class clown" who calls lunch his favorite subject), it's also a word that tellingly points to Camden's unique situation. ABS West, with its specially trained staff and small class sizes, has made room for possibility in Camden's life. According to his mother, Cheri Cotlar, that wasn't always the case.

"He is very bright, very gifted – but also very challenging," Cotlar said, explaining that while Camden has had a string of good conduct in recent months, he has a history of difficult behavior.

According to ABS West Principal Dr. Victor Keys, Camden has the handicapping condition of emotionally disabled. His behavior, which included aggression toward both peers and adults and wandering out of classrooms at previous public and charter schools, used to lead to a number of parent phone calls. Cotlar, a nurse by profession, said it interrupted her work life and kept her on a part-time schedule.

Now, thanks to the friendly and capable staff at ABS West, Cotlar feels that her son is finally

getting the specialized education suitable to his learning style. She says that Camden, like many children with ADHD, is "a little behind" socially, but he's made progress at ABS West.

"Matthias, Leo...," Camden begins, rattling off a list of his best friends.

"Three years ago, he couldn't talk about friends," Cotlar says.

Cotlar credits the environment at ABS West for helping Camden both in and out of the class-room.

"I love it so much because of the communication between teachers and parents," she says. "Everybody knows everybody, and they're interested in how the student responds at home."

"That just doesn't happen at bigger schools," she adds.

Camden is aware of the connection between his behavioral history and the number of schools he attended before finding a home at ABS West. Most recently, he attended Harmony Public Schools, which contracted with Harris County Department of Education to enroll him at ABS West. Cotlar says she imagines that there are many more students in schools across the area who could thrive, as Camden has, at a campus like ABS West.

"He had all 100s on a progress report," she says, proud but in awe. "Hundreds – that means he didn't miss anything."

After a pause, Camden looks up and says, "I had help."

Harris County Department of Education helps school districts in the state's largest county meet the needs of uniquely challenged learners, directly serving students at their schools or one of four HCDE-operated campuses across the county. These campuses are equipped with specialized support programs and a low teacher student ratio of two teachers for every six students. Learn more at [1]http://www.hcde-texas.org/who-is-hcde/

1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/who-is-hcde/

Teaching tip: Regulate discussion with a talking piece (2017-02-27 10:11) - hcdetx





Those who remember reading William Golding's *The Lord of the Flies* in fifth grade may recall the significance of the conch shell. The band of schoolchildren marooned on a deserted island must invent a new social order, deciding early on to abide by the "rule of the conch," which states that nobody may speak unless he's holding it.

Teachers who lead discussions or sharing circles may find it difficult to maintain order and respect, especially when they've got a large or rambunctious group. The solution: introduce a talking piece. Whether it's a conch, a stick, a feather (like those used in some Native American rituals) or any other unique object, a talking piece – along with a few simple rules – makes group discussion less of a free-for-all and more of an opportunity for learning. That includes learning to listen.

"The most important piece is that those in the circle feel what they have to say matters," said Life Anew founder and talking circle expert Sherwynn Patton at a recent workshop hosted by HCDE's Center for Safe and Secure Schools, "even if they choose to be silent."

Patton's goal is to help teachers, counselors, administrators and other school-based professionals to implement restorative discipline practices on their campuses. These practices are an alternative to outdated, less effective "punitive" modes of discipline that tend to lead to increased suspension rates among minority students and those with disabilities.

"We cannot put a book in their hands until they know how much we care," Patton said to the group of educators in their own talking circle. While speaking he held a plastic baby bottle – a talking piece selected, he said, to remind the adults gathered around him of the care that they naturally extend to young people.

Some teachers may shy away from open discussion due to the classroom management challenges it poses, but with a talking piece – and a few gentle reminders of the rules – many may be surprised how well it works.

Interested in restorative discipline practices? [1]Check out Intro to Restorative Principles and Circles on March 8.

1. https://workshops.hcde-texas.org/iebms/portalsearch/Results.aspx?Workshop=11250

Supply catalog and JOC trades contracts awarded (2017-02-28 14:50) - hcdetx



Supply catalog and Job Order Contracting on-call trades contracts were renewed at the February 2017 board meeting of Harris County Department of Education and are accessible through HCDE Choice Partners cooperative. Governmental entities that have signed an interlocal contract with HCDE may access these legally procured contracts.

Newly awarded contracts include

Academic programs for QZAB Projects: Action Potential Learning, LLC; Appleton Learning Corporation; Cengage Learning, Inc.; Education Galaxy, LLC; Gamesalad, Inc.; KAMICO Instructional Media, Inc.; McGraw-Hill Education, Inc. doing business as McGraw-Hill School Education, LLC; W. Oscar Neuhaus Memorial Foundation doing business as Neuhaus Education Center; Sirius

Education Solutions, LLC doing business as Sirius Education Solutions; and 1Studentnest, Inc.;

Job Order Contracting/CSP IDIQ On-Call Trades: Aggieland Construction, LLC; ASA Builders; and RMB Management, LLC doing business as Corestone Construction Services; ERC Environmental & Construction Services, Inc. doing business as ERC; Evolve Holdings, Inc.; Dura Pier Facilities Services, Ltd. doing business as Facilities Sources; Fusion Trading, LLC doing business as Hi-Mark Roofing & Waterproofing; Horizon International Group, LLC; Texas Liqua Tech Services, Inc. doing business as Liqua Tech; Maintenance Solutions, Inc.; Mart, Inc.; Millennium Project Solutions, Inc.; Mooring Recovery Services, Inc. doing business as Mooring USA; Nash Industries, Inc.; Tandus Centiva US, LLC; and BR Kym, Inc. doing business as Worth Hydrochem of Houston 22; and

Moving, Storage and Related Items: A-Rocket Moving & Delivery, Inc. doing business as A-Rocket Moving & Storage, Inc. and Roadrunner, Ltd doing business as Roadrunner Moving & Storage.

Renewed contracts include

Carpet Cleaning and Related Items: Strumbono, LLC doing business as Corporate Care; GMW Quality Cleaning Solutions doing business as Hospitality Cleaning Solutions; and The King's Southern Division, LLC doing business as The Kings;

Disaster Recovery Consultants: Adjusters International, Inc.;

Drug and Alcohol Testing Program: Forward Edge, Inc. and Pinnacle Medical Management;

Fine Paper: Western - BRW Paper Company, Inc. doing business as Bosworth Papers, Inc. and Butler Business Products;

Graduation, Yearbooks and Commemorative Items: Pride and Recognition, Inc. doing business as Balfour Company; Taylor Publishing Company doing business as Balfour Publishing; Graduate Sales & Recognition, LLC doing business as Herff Jones; and Jostens, Inc.;

Insurance and Third Party Administration Services: Brown & Brown Insurance Services of San Antonio, Inc. doing business as Alamo Insurance Group; Financial Benefit Services, LLC (FBS); Curtis M. Finley doing business as Finley Financial Services; and Total Compensation Group Consulting, LP doing business as TCG Consulting;

Materials, Parts, Equipment, Supplies and Related Items for Maintenance and Operations: Alklean Industries, Inc.; Eagle United USA doing business as Eagle Mountain Flag & Flagpole; Convict Hill Floorcovering & Design, Inc. doing business as Lady Liberty Flag and Flagpole; Micro-X1, Inc.; and Visiontron Corporation;

Online Tutoring Services: Focus Care, Inc. doing business as FEV Tutor, Inc.; and On The Third Day Christian Ministries doing business as Laureate Learning Center;

Travel Services: GBJ, Inc., doing business as AFC Transportation; Travel Corp, LLC doing business as Corporate Travel Management, Allure by ctm and BH Goodman Bus Service, Inc.; doing

business as Goodman Bus Service;

Tree Trimming, Landscaping, Debris Removal and Other Related Services: Asplundh Tree Expert Company; Yellowstone Landscape; The F. A. Bartlett Tree Expert Company doing business as Bartlett Tree Experts; Central Landscape & Maintenance; and Metropolitan Landscape Management, Inc.; and

Uniforms and Accessories – Purchase and Rental: Al's Formal Wear of Houston, LTD doing business as Al's Formal Wear; Aviva Wholesale, Inc. (formerly: Nur International, Inc.); Boss & Hughes, LLC; VarsityBrands Holding Co., Inc. doing business as BSN Sports, LLC; Corporate Incentives, Inc.; Fruhauf Uniforms,Inc.; JW Drouin & Associates, LP doing business as J. Harding & Co.; Texas Motion Sports, LLC; TheMariachi Connection, Inc.; and Triple D Uniform Rental, Inc.

In addition, contracts for the 2017-2018 Choice Partnes Supply Catalog, which includes hard bids for more than 1,100 items. Catalog items will be available from April 1, 2017, to March 31, 2018, and include

Art Supplies: PDG Industries doing business as Alamo Classroom Solutions; Blick Art Materials, LLC doing business as Blick Art Materials; Butler Business Products, LLC; Early Childhood, LLC doing business as Discount School Supply; Liberty Data Products, Inc. doing business as Liberty Office Products; Nasco Education, LLC doing business as Nasco; Pyramid Paper Company doing business as Pyramid School Products; S &S Worldwide, Inc.; School Specialty, Inc.; and Standard Stationery Supply Company;

Athletic Supplies: Varsity Brands Holding Company, Inc. doing business as BSN Sports, LLC; North Houston Athletics, LLC; Pyramid Paper Company doing business as Pyramid School Products; S &S Worldwide, Inc.; and School Specialty, Inc.;

Classroom Teaching Supplies: PDG Industries doing business as Alamo Classroom Solutions; Butler Business Products, LLC; DGS Educational Products; Early Childhood, LLC doing business as Discount School Supply; Liberty Data Products, Inc. doing business as Liberty Office Products; Pyramid Paper Company doing business as Pyramid School Products; S &S Worldwide, Inc.; School Specialty, Inc.; and Standard Stationery Supply Company;

Food Service Supplies: Calico Industries, Inc.; Central Poly-Bag Corporation; Devin Distributing & Packaging, Inc.; Pollock Investments, Inc. doing business as Pollock Paper Distributors or Pollock Packaging; and Pyramid Paper Company doing business as Pyramid School Products;

Janitorial Supplies: Western-BRW Paper Company, Inc. doing business as Bosworth Papers Company, Inc.; Buckeye International, Inc. doing business as Buckeye Cleaning Center-Houston; Calico Industries, Inc.; Capital Plastics International, Inc.; Conroe Paper & Chemical, Inc. doing business as Crown Paper & Chemical; Devin Distributing & Packaging, Inc.; High Point Sanitary Solutions; Last Group Enterprises, Inc.; Matera Paper Company, Inc. and Pollock Investments, Inc.; doing business as Pollock Paper Distributors or Pollock Packaging;

Medical Supplies: Beautiful Ventures, Inc. doing business as BVI Resources; Henry Schein, Inc.; Lippert Components Manufacturing, Inc.; Priscilla M. Ayerite doing business as NAO Global

Health, LLC; Pyramid Paper Company doing business as Pyramid School Products; and School Health Corporation;

Office Supplies: Western-BRW Paper Company, Inc. doing business as Bosworth Papers; Butler Business Products, LLC; Challenge Office Products, Inc.; City Office Supply, Inc.; Daniel Office Products, Inc.; DD Office Products, Inc. doing business as Liberty Paper, Infinity Office Solutions; Liberty Data Products, Inc., doing business as Liberty Office Products; Nasco Education, LLC doing business as Nasco; National Art & School Supplies; Pyramid Paper Company doing business as Pyramid School Products; Reliant Business Products, Inc.; School Specialty, Inc.; Standard Stationery Supply Company and Express Business Products;

Technology Supplies: ACCO Brands Corporation doing business as ACCO Brands USA, LLC; Butler Business Products, LLC; DD Office Products, Inc. doing business as Liberty Paper, Infinity Office Solutions; Liberty Data Products, Inc. doing business as Liberty Office Products; Pyramid Paper Company doing business as Pyramid School Products; School Specialty, Inc.; Scott Electric and Xpress Business Products.

New Members

Organizations and governmental entities that became members when contracts were approved by the HCDE Board of Trustees on Feb. 28 include **Bells ISD**, Bells; **Brown County**, Brownwood; **Comal ISD**, New Braunfels; **Educational Service Center (ESC) Region 11**, White Settlement; **Houston Kidz Center, LLC**, Houston, Texas; and **city of Jacinto City**.

About Choice Partners: Choice Partners national cooperative offers quality, legal procurement and contract solutions to meet the purchasing needs of governmental entities. Contracts are competitively bid so governmental entities can act immediately to access the contract they need, saving time and money on the bidding process and purchase. Choice Partners includes contracts for education, facilities, food, services, technology and supplies, including a unique supply catalog. For more information, call 877-696-2122 or visit [1]www.choicepartners.org.

1. http://www.choicepartners.org/

1.3 March

5 Houston City Council members meet with CASE for Kids City Connections afterschool providers at Harris County Department of Education (2017-03-03 11:45) - hcdetx





Neighborhoods in each of 11 Houston City Council districts benefit from funding from the city of Houston designated for afterschool programs this school year. The city partnership is provided through the Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids, or CASE for Kids "City Connections," a program hosted through Harris County Department of Education.

CASE for Kids hosted five council members and their nonprofit afterschool providers on Feb. 23 as they met for networking and photos. Houston City Council members included Robert Gallegos, District I; Jerry Davis, District B; Dave Martin, District E; Karla Cisneros, District H; and Brenda Stardig, District A.

Funding began Oct. 31 through April 30 for organizations selected as afterschool providers in District A. Awards range from \$4,000- \$10,000 for each organization. The partnership with the city of Houston and CASE for Kids provides \$45,000 in funding for nonprofit organizations in each of the 11 Houston City Council districts A-K. In addition, Council Members had the opportunity to increase their grant budget with special district funds.

"Afterschool programs are important as they keep children in our city safe and provide enrichment," said Harris County School Superintendent James Colbert, Jr. "We are humbled by hosting this event which allows our city leaders to come together and celebrate their successes with these afterschool providers."











HCDE hosts 4 celebrations with fine arts supporters to celebrate teen Scholastic Art & Writing Awards talent (2017-03-06 12:40) - hcdetx

[1]



2016 reception

Harris County Department of Education stages four events to highlight the talents of more than 1,000 local teens who earned Scholastic Art & Writing Awards Gold and Silver Key Awards. Regionally sponsored by HCDE, the Awards showcase art and writing from Harris County students in grades 7-12 in public, private and home schools. For the complete list of Awards recipients and for more details, go to [2]www.hcde-texas.org/scholastic.

Regional Scholastic Art and Writing Award events span throughout March. Here is a list of events:

Artist Reception at [3]Spring Street Studios, Saturday, March 11, 2-4 p.m. Join us for a gallery full of art in a festive celebration of talent as we honor both students in grades 9-12 who earned Gold and Silver Keys for their art and writing. This come-and-go event includes read-ings from teen writers. Light refreshments are served. Location: 1824 Spring St., Houston, TX 77007

Artist Reception at [4]Texas Art Supply, Thursday, March 23, 4:30-6:30 p.m. View a gallery full of art and hear selections from writers as we honor both students in grades 7-8 who earned Gold

and Silver Keys for their art and writing. This is a come-and-go event. Light refreshments are served. Location: 2001 Montrose Blvd., Houston, TX 77006

Artist Ceremony at Alley Theater, Saturday, March 25 for 9-12 grade students. Students receive Gold and Silver Key Awards at the Alley, 615 Texas Ave., Houston, TX 77002. Silver Key Art: 8:30-9:30 a.m. Gold Key Art: 10-11 a.m. Gold and Silver Key Writing: 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Artist Ceremony at Midtown Arts and Theater Center Houston, or Match, Thursday, March 30 for 7-8 grade students. Location: 3400 Main St. Houston, TX 77022. Silver Key Art and Writing: 5:30-6:30 p.m. Gold Key Art and Writing: 7:30-8:30 p.m. (*Parents/guests and educators must RSVP through the MATCH website.*)

About Scholastic Art & Writing: Founded in 1923, the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards are the nation's longest-running, most prestigious educational initiative supporting student achievement in the visual and literary arts. The program has an impressive legacy of being the first to acknowledge creative talent and is today's largest source of scholarships for creative teens. [5]www.artandwriting.org

About Harris County Department of Education: HCDE helps school districts in the state's largest county meet the needs of uniquely challenged learners, directly serving students at their schools or one of four HCDE-operated campuses across the county. Learn about these services and more at [6]www.hcde-texas.org.

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1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/03/2016.jpg

2. http://arrisCountyDepartmentofEducationhosts4celebrationswithfineartssupporterstocelebrateteenS cholasticArt&WritingAwardstalent/

3. http://springstreetstudios.info/

4. https://www.texasart.com/

5. http://www.artandwriting.org/

6. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

HCDE Tidwell Head Start program recruits students ages 3-5 for immediate openings (2017-03-07 10:53) - hcdetx





Harris County Department of Education Head Start Tidwell Center located at 8302 John Ralston Rd. is recruiting students ages 3-5. The program ensures future success for students both academically and socially and provides comprehensive health, education, nutrition and financial services to the families.

For Tidwell Head Start parent Kimmberlly Coutino, the HCDE Head Start program is a blessing in a variety of ways. Coutino, a full-time college student, knows her daughter Kaily Morales is in good hands while she attends classes. In addition to the logistic help the program provides Coutino and her family, Kaily gains social and academic skills that prepare her for elementary school.

"Kaily has grown so much since being enrolled in Tidwell Head Start," said Coutino. "Head Start has given her the opportunity to explore her creativity and take part in activities that will transition into a solid foundation for the future."

The Head Start program also emphasizes the important role parents play in their child's education. In addition to being a full-time student, Coutino attends all parent committee meetings, family connection events and is the Policy Council Representative for the Tidwell center.

HCDE provides services through 15 Head Start centers located in northeast Harris County. Additional locations include Baytown, J.D. Walker, Pugh, Fonwood, La Porte, Humble, Fifth Ward, Channelview, Compton, Coolwood, Dogan, Barrett Station, San Jacinto and Sheffield.

For information about enrollment or locations, call (713) 672-9343 or visit [1]www.hcde-texas.org/headstart.

Photo: Tidwell Head Start parent Kimmberlly Coutino with 3-year-old daughter Kaily Morales.

1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/headstart

Spring Street Studios reception for regional HCDE Scholastic Art & Writing awardees kicks off Spring Break 2017 (2017-03-07 15:53) - hcdetx

Several hundred high school teen artists and writers kick off Spring Break 2017 by attending an artist reception and celebration Saturday, March 11, from 2-4 p.m. at Spring Street Studios, 1824 Spring St., Houston, TX 77007. About 600 art works will be displayed at the gallery through the Harris County Department of Education Regional Scholastic Art & Writing Awards.

A reading from featured teen writer Mary Ann Hurtado, Klein Collins High School, Klein ISD is part of the festivities. She reads from her humor entry: "From Sea to Shining Sea." Hurtado earned one of five "best in class" American Voice nominations at the national level from HCDE. More teen writers and artists will be on hand for the meet-and-greet event.

The free, high-energy reception is one of four celebrations planned in March. For more information about Scholastic Art & Writing, go to [1]www.hcde-texas.org/scholastic.

Photo: Featured mixed media Gold Key Award artwork from Summer Elliott, Clear Springs High School, Clear Creek ISD. Elliott's entry now advances to national judging in New York City.

About Scholastic Art & Writing: Founded in 1923, the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards are the nation's longest-running, most prestigious educational initiative supporting student achievement in the visual and literary arts. The program has an impressive legacy of being the first to acknowledge creative talent and is today's largest source of scholarships for creative teens: [2]www.artandwriting.org.

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- 1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/scholastic
- 2. http://www.artandwriting.org/
- 3. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

HCDE communicators earn 28 awards from Texas School Public Relations Association (2017-03-07 18:35) - hcdetx



Harris County Department of Education Communications and Creative Services and Client Engagement earned 28 awards at the 2017 Texas School Public Relations Association Star Awards competition. Awards were announced at the association's 55th annual conference in Galveston, Texas on February 22.

Awards for HCDE staff include two best of categories, nine gold awards, 10 silver awards and seven bronze awards. The association received over 1,000 entries in categories which included website, newsletter, writing, annual report and social media. The list of awards follows:

Best of Category:

- Internal Newsletter, print: "The Hub" employee newsletter
- Internal Newsletter, electronic: "The Connector" HCDE Board newsletter

Gold:

Internal newsletter printed (The Hub), internal newsletter electronic (The Connector), internal newsletter digital (The Hub), poster (Scholastic Art & Writing), annual report (Head Start), annual report (PAFR), photo (CASE for Kids), logo/trademark (Choice Partners), Video (HCDE), website (HCDE)

Silver:

Flyer (Learning Tips for Parents: CASE for Kids), Image identity package (Choice Partners), writing 100

(Head Start annual report), news release (Adult Education grads), photo (Head Start), advertisement (Choice Partners), video (Human Resources), video (Head Start recruitment), e-newsletter (Center for Safe and Secure Schools), photo (Head Start ribbon-cutting)

Bronze:

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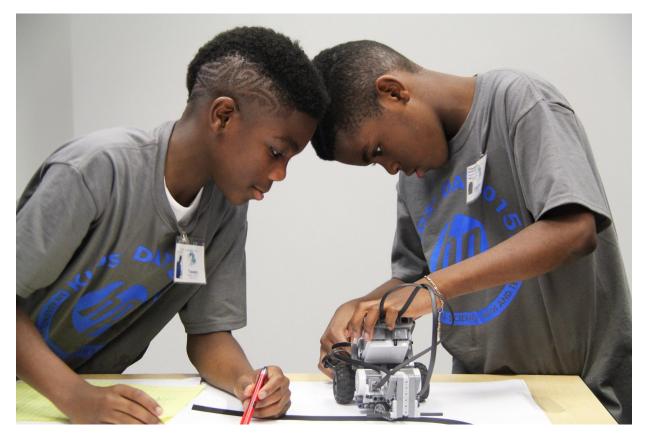
Writing (Teaching and Learning Center), photo (CASE for Kids), video (Head Start), video (Education Foundation Ecobot), video (Business Services), computerized (Media Honor Roll), computerized (infographic)

About Harris County Department of Education: HCDE helps school districts in the state's largest county meet the needs of uniquely challenged learners, directly serving students at their schools or one of four HCDE-operated campuses across the county. Learn about these services and more at [1]www.hcde-texas.org.

1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Think deeper: The trick to getting more out of science fairs (2017-03-08 08:00) - hcdetx





Typically, students are left to their own devices to come up with an idea for science fair. Eager parents may also help them scour the internet for step-by-step instructions that they can follow like a recipe. This is not how science fair should be. Instead, it should inspire children to learn more about something they are already curious about. Sometimes, all an internet-generated idea requires is modification to make it a testable question instead of a demonstration. One way to get students to think deeper about their own science fair ideas is to go through a peer review process before getting started.

Before scientists can get published, their work must undergo peer review. Scientists in the same field will review experiments and reports and provide feedback. Only when the work has been shown to meet good scientific standards is it published. Before scientists can even begin their work, they must also undergo a peer review process for grant funding. Scientific peers read the grant proposal and provide feedback, and funding is given only when they agree that the work has scientific merit.

This same process can be used to help students understand more about the actual scientific process. Have each student explain their idea for science fair, and their student peers have the opportunity to provide feedback about the ideas. You might be surprised at the level of critical thinking that will occur. Typical responses might be, "You already know the answer to that question," or "Why do you want to do an experiment on *that*?" The teacher will need to make sure the feedback is constructive, but this type of class discussion can be valuable when it comes to developing an interesting, untested question. Also, by learning how peer review works – and its value – students are well on their way to becoming *real* scientists.

(Blog contributed by Lisa K. Felske, curriculum director of science, HCDE's Teaching and

Learning Center)

Harris County Department of Education administrator McLeod to lead Texas Alliance of Black School Educators (2017-03-08 15:18) - hcdetx





Kimberly McLeod, Harris County Department of Education assistant superintendent for Education and Enrichment, was sworn in as president of the Texas Alliance of Black School Educators, Saturday, Feb. 25 during the organization's 32nd annual state conference held at the Hyatt Regency

Hotel in Houston, Texas.

McLeod's ambitions to lead the organization are enriched by her leadership experience. She currently oversees six divisions in her daily professional capacity at HCDE.

As she begins her three-year term, McLeod said that creating momentum and sustainability within an organization of 1,000-plus volunteers will be challenging yet rewarding.

"Our volunteers remain passionate in their drive to support TABSE as the organization continues to empower educators," she said. "As their leader, their enthusiasm is my inspiration."

As McLeod settles into office, her goals are to extend focus on governance and policy, to help local affiliates strengthen their programs for a more local impact and to focus on leadership preparation and development throughout the state. Her term ends February 2020.

TABSE membership is open to anyone who teaches or serves children of African descent and who shares their mission of empowering those leaders with the skills they need to exact their desired outcome.

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1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

How HCDE helps learners (video) (2017-03-09 12:32) - hcdetx



View our video about how HCDE helps learners:

[youtube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pQ-Y-v9LK0I]

Lookabaugh named executive director of Facilities Support Services (2017-03-09 15:45) - hcdetx





Gregory Lookabaugh is the new executive director of Harris County Department of Education's Facilities Support Services division. Formerly senior manager of facilities planning, Lookabaugh

brings more than 35 years of experience working with educational institutions to his new role at HCDE. His main duties include leading an extensive team of employees as they consult in departmental operational reviews, training, facility design and construction management assistance, as well as facility maintenance and operations management.

Lookabaugh holds a bachelor's degree in engineering/industrial technology from Lamar University. His many professional accomplishments include serving as a life member of the Texas Association of School Business Officials and as a board member of the Custodial Management Association of Texas. In 2009, Lookabaugh assisted the United States Department of Energy in preparing the Guide to Operating and Maintaining Energy Smart Schools to educate school districts across the nation in energy conservation.

Many conferences and organizations have sought Lookabaugh's expertise in facilities management. He was a keynote speaker at the Ohio Association of School Business Officials Facility Masters Conference in 2016, and he regularly presents at both the annual and midwinter TASBO conferences.

A veteran of the US Navy, he received an honorable discharge in 1981. He lives in Montgomery, Texas. Healthy Minds Healthy Families Conference equips professionals, caregivers of children with challenging behaviors (2017-03-09 15:50) - hcdetx





Harris County Department of Education Head Start is hosting the 3rd annual Healthy Minds Healthy Families Conference on May 5 from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. at 6300 Irvington. Cost of the workshop is only

\$10 and includes lunch and free parking through a grant-funded initiative from the Hogg Foundation. The conference is open to early childhood educators, families, members of the Head Start community and others who work with children with challenging behaviors. The focus of the event is to provide participants with tools for working with children with challenging behaviors and increase public awareness of mental health issues among children and adults. Conference funder the [1]Hogg Foundation advances recovery and wellness in Texas by funding mental health services, policy analysis, research and public education. To register for the conference, visit [2]www.hcde-texas.org/register and search by date or workshop number 11212. For information, call 713-696-2170.

1. https://hogg.utexas.edu/

2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/register

Teacher Tip: 4 powerful ways to show students you care (2017-03-21 17:32) - hcdetx





Capturing Kids' Hearts curricula provides strategy and training for teachers and administrators to achieve success in the classroom.

Look around, and you will see people reading texts, emails, posts, blogs, tweets and chats. Communication is everywhere in our society! How do you communicate with your students? I'm not talking about the platform. I'm talking about the heart.

Do your students know you care about them first as a person and second as a learner?

Would they say you are a good listener?

When it comes right down to it, people really do need to "know how much we care before they care how much we know."

Simple yet powerful ways to demonstrate you care:

- Ask them about their hobbies, interests, and extracurricular activities.
- Listen with your eyes and heart, not only your ears.
- Empower them! Ask your students for feedback. Give them a voice in the classroom.
- Celebrate their successes!

(Article contributed by Debi Lokey, Leadership Development Senior Strategist, Flippen Group,

www.flippengroup.com.)



Capturing Kids' Hearts is a curricula created by the Flippen Group to provide strategy and training for teachers and administrators to achieve success in the classroom. HCDE's [3]Teaching and Learning Center provides classes at our headquarters at 6300 Irvington, Houston, Texas. **Upcoming class at HCDE, April 5-6**: [4]Register

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- 1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/03/shutterstock_335541383.jpg
- $2. \ \texttt{https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/03/capturingkidshearts.jpg}$
- $3. \ \texttt{http://hcde-texas.org/who-we-are/divisions-and-leadership/teaching-and-learning-center/}$
- 4. https://workshops.hcde-texas.org/iebms/portalsearch/Results.aspx?Workshop=11021

Record-breaking 59 national Scholastic Art & Writing Medals earned by area teens after regional advancement through Harris County Department of Education (2017-03-21 18:16) - hcdetx





& Writing Medals through awards announced by the New York nonprofit Alliance for Young Artists & Writers on March 14. The students advanced from a regional competition sponsored by Harris County Department of Education, and their work is exhibited at art exhibits and celebrations in Houston.

The Awards, founded in 1923, allow creative teen artists and writers to earn recognition, exhibition, publication and scholarships. View the list of the 59 medalists: [2]http://www.hcde-texas.org/how-we-help-students/scholastic-art-writing-aw ards/scholastic-art-writing-awardees/ .

National medalists from Harris County increased from 50 in 2016 to a record 59 in 2017. Gold medalists, the top award, more than doubled in Harris County, increasing from 12 in 2016 to 28 in 2017. Nationally, about 2,500 students are recognized overall as medalists this year.

"We have an amazing number of talented teen artists in Houston and Harris County," said Harris County School Superintendent James Colbert, Jr. "We celebrate the teachers and volunteer judges, along with the community supporters who provide venues for artist ceremonies and receptions."

Four area receptions and celebrations display art and recognize the young artists in March. View the list: [3]https://blog.hcde-texas.org/2017/03/06/hcde-hosts-4-celebrations-with-fi ne-arts-supporters-to-celebrate-teen-scholastic-art-writing-awards-talent/.

In addition, regional Scholastic Art & Writing sponsor Harris County Department of Education is being recognized for its extraordinary dedication to the Awards program as a regional affiliate. The award for "2017 Gold Key for Excellence in the Field" will be awarded in a national ceremony at Carnegie Hall June 8, 2017. Andrea Segraves coordinates the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards for HCDE and is applauded by organizers for growing the program in Harris County.

"I remain in awe of the talent and original voice of the creative teens in our region and am humbled to be a part of this outstanding, time-honored, fine arts program," said Segraves.

Area teens competed among a record-breaking 330,000 works of art and writing submitted for judging throughout the nation across 29 different categories. Through the 2017 Awards, students receive opportunities for recognition, exhibition, publication and scholarships. Past winners include celebrated artists and writers such as Robert Redford, Andy Warhol, Truman Capote, John Lithgow, Joyce Carol Oates and Sylvia Plath.

Sharing in the national limelight are students from public school districts Alief, Aldine, Cypress-Fairbanks, Deer Park, Galena Park, Houston, Katy, Klein, Pasadena, Pearland and Spring Branch. Private school medalists are from Duchesne Academy of Sacred Heart, The Kinkaid School, River Oaks Baptist School, Strake Jesuit College Prep School, St. John's School, St. Thomas High School and The Village School.

Gold Key Medalists, Gold Portfolio awardees and Silver Medal with Distinction students are invited to a ceremony in New York City's Carnegie Hall on June 8 with surprise appearances from notable celebrities and creative leaders. Work from more than 1,000 students is exhibited from June 2-12 at several prominent New York galleries. For a complete list of the 50 national awards for Harris County teens, go to .

Photo: Fatemeh Ebrahimi, a student at Taylor High School in Katy Independent School District, poses with teacher Ashley Niemi with her sculpture: "Talk to the Hands." Ebrahimi won a national Gold Medal for her sculpture through Scholastic Art & Writing, as well as a regional Gold Key from Harris County Department of Education. She and her teacher are eligible to travel to New York City's Carnegie Hall to gain the national award. Her sculpture is on display at Spring Street Studios, 1824 Spring St., through March 30.

About Scholastic Art & Writing: Founded in 1923, the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards are the nation's longest-running, most prestigious educational initiative supporting student achievement in the visual and literary arts. The program has an impressive legacy of being the first to acknowledge creative talent and is today's largest source of scholarships for creative teens [4]www.artandwriting.org

About Harris County Department of Education: HCDE helps school districts in the state's largest county meet the needs of uniquely challenged learners, directly serving students at their schools or one of four HCDE-operated campuses across the county. Learn about these services and more at [5]www.hcde-texas.org.

1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/03/fatemehebrahimi_katyisd.jpg

2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/how-we-help-students/scholastic-art-writing-awards/scholastic-art-writing-awardees/

3. https://blog.hcde-texas.org/2017/03/06/hcde-hosts-4-celebrations-with-fine-arts-supporters-to-celebrate-teen-scholastic-art-writing-awards-talent/

4. http://www.artandwriting.org/

5. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

HCDE receives national 2017 Gold Key for Excellence from Scholastic Art & Writing Awards among 100 regional affiliates (2017-03-23 07:29) - hcdetx





Harris County Department of Education has been selected to receive the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers 2017 Gold Key for Excellence in the Field award among 100 nationwide regional affiliates. The New York nonprofit which runs the 94-year-old Scholastic Art & Writing Awards said the honor will be given to HCDE at the National Ceremony at Carnegie Hall in New York City on June 8, 2017.

Virginia McEnerney, executive director of the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers, said the award recognizes HCDE as a tremendous contributor as regional affiliate in the program.

"This Award is given annually to an affiliate partner organization that demonstrates extraordinary dedication to creative young people; preservers through challenges over time; and expands the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards program to reach more participants," said McEnerney.

Harris County School Superintendent James Colbert, Jr. said the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards are an integral part of the services HCDE offers to support students and school districts in the county.

As a 13-year regional sponsor of the Awards, HCDE generated a 20 percent increase in art and writing submissions by youth in Harris County in 2016. The Awards allow creative teens in grades 7-12 in public and private schools to earn recognition, exhibition, publication and scholarships. HCDE provides adjudication for the Awards at a regional level. Students advance to gain national recognition in New York City.

HCDE's Teaching and Learning Center Director Andrea Segraves coordinates the Scholastic 122

Art & Writing Awards for HCDE and is applauded by organizers for growing the program in Harris County.

Specifically, Segraves is commended for increased outreach to students and teachers through a promotional video, online journal/blog, and webinar trainings. Fundraising efforts were also praised.

"The students and educators in your region have benefited enormously from your commitment to supporting, recognizing and empowering the vision and voice of these teenagers," said McEnerney.

HCDE receives the award along with art supplies and a \$100 gift certificate from the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers. For more about regional and national award recipients, where to view their work in March or to help support, enter or judge submissions, go to [2]www.hcde-texas.org/Scholastic.

Photo: Several of HCDE's staff members who help support Scholastic Art & Writing gather at one of four celebrations in March 2017 to honor teen artists and writers: (left) Joyce Akins, Liliana Maldonado, Rosa Murillo and Andrea Segraves, coordinator for HCDE's regional Scholastic Art & Writing Awards.

About Scholastic Art & Writing: Founded in 1923, the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards are the nation's longest-running, most prestigious educational initiative supporting student achievement in the visual and literary arts. The program has an impressive legacy of being the first to acknowledge creative talent and is today's largest source of scholarships for creative teens: [3]www.artandwriting.org.

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- 1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/03/423a3491.jpg
- 2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/Scholastic
- 3. http://www.artandwriting.org/
- 4. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Summer STEM programs keep young brains blooming (2017-03-27 11:38) - hcdetx





Summer STEM programs offer countless benefits for students who want to keep their minds engaged during time off from school. Stepping away from the more rigid structure of the traditional classroom, these science camps encourage trial, failure and creative experimentation, which are essential to becoming future leaders in science and technology. Luckily, for those in the Houston area, there are many exciting opportunities going on throughout the summer, including:

[1] Alexa Café: All Girls STEM Camp at Rice University

Girls ages 10 – 15 can attend this collaborative program that combines technology, entrepreneurship, and social activism, empowering the next generation of women in STEM. Week-long courses run from June 19 through July 28.

[2]Camp Cardiac at the University of St. Thomas

This program for high school students includes CPR certification, hands-on workshops, basic knowledge lectures on heart anatomy and physiology, Pig Heart Dissection, introduction to various careers in healthcare, and a medical student forum. Camp runs from July 10- July 14.

[3]Camp Neuro at the University of St. Thomas

The primary focus of this program for high school students is on care and maintenance of the brain. It also covers topics in psychology and provides an excellent starting point for careers in all fields of medicine. Camp runs from July 17- July 21.

[4]Camp Zoofari at the Houston Zoo

Kids ages 4-16 can take a variety of week-long summer camps. Half-day and full-day camps are available from May 29 through August 11.

[5] Explorations Summer Camps at the Houston Museum of Natural Science

Week-long camps for students ages 6-12 run from Jun 5 through August 18th. [6]ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Summer Science Camp This program is a two-week residential camp for students entering 6-8th grade. Through its innovative, student-centered, inquiry-based curriculum, campers will complete a minimum of 56 hours of advanced STEM study taught by highly gualified educators from area school districts and university faculty. University of Houston, June 18-23 and June 25-30 (application deadline April 7) Lamar University, June 12-23 (application deadline April 26) [7]G.R.A.D.E. Camp Pre-College the University of Houston A week long day camp designed to help girls entering 8th-12th grade discover what engineering is all about through hands on experience. There are two week-long courses in June, but the first one is full. You can still apply for the June 19-23 program. [8]iD Tech Camps at the University of Houston Kids ages 7-18 can learn about coding, game design, 3D printing, robotics, engineering, video production and more. Week-long courses run from June 12 through July 28. [9]Lone Star Discovery College (various locations) Discovery College provides the opportunity for children ages 6-17 to explore and expand their interests and skills using engaging, hands-on curriculum in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics) focused classes held in a campus-based educational environment. Week-long camps for kids ages 6-17 run from June 12 through July 13. [10]Stem Enhancement in Earth Science (SEES) Summer Intern Program at NASA This program for high school students provides selected students with exposure to Earth and space research. Interns will learn how to interpret NASA satellite data while working with scientists and engineers in their chosen area of work. Student interns will work remotely in June and July and then travel to Johnson Space Center for a residential portion on July 17-29. Deadline to apply is April 4, 2017. [11]Summer Program for Upward Bound at the University of Houston Downtown This is an intensive six-week summer program for students attending five Houston ISD high schools (Austin, Kashmere, Westbury, Worthing, and Yates). Upward Bound offers its students classes in mathematics, performing arts, physics, chemistry, environmental science, geography, composition, literature, computer science, social issues, foreign languages and cultures, and PSAT preparation. [12] Tapia Center Math and Science Camps at Rice University Week-long residential camps in math, physics and computer science run from June 4-July 29. Registration must come through a school. [13]Technical Summer Program with Houston Department of Public Works and Engineering In this six-week paid summer internship program, high school students ages 16-21 will learn more about the daily operations of the Houston Department of Public Works and Engineering department and the City of Houston. (blog contributed by Lisa Felske, curriculum director for science at the Teaching and Learning Center at HCDE)

7. https://www.egr.uh.edu/grade/about

^{1.} https://www.idtech.com/locations/texas-summer-camps/houston/alexa-cafe-rice-university/

^{2.} http://www.campcardiac.org/houston.html

^{3.} http://www.campneuro.org/houston.html

^{4.} http://www.houstonzoo.org/education/camp-zoofari/

^{5.} http://www.hmns.org/education/summer-camp/

^{6.} http://www.theharrisfoundation.org/sitecontent/565/summer-science-camp/category/457/education.a spx

8. https://www.idtech.com/register/#/reg-flow/avail-charts-filters?lid=72

- 9. http://www.lonestar.edu/discovery-college.htm
- 10. http://www.csr.utexas.edu/internship/
- 11. https://www.uhd.edu/academics/university-college/upward/Pages/upward-summerprogram.aspx
- 12. https://tapiacenter.rice.edu/tapia-camps
- 13. https://www.publicworks.houstontx.gov/sdd/sddtsp.html

How HCDE Serves Harris County Students (2017-03-28 09:48) - hcdetx



Each year, HCDE helps thousands of Harris County students through Head Start, school-based therapy services, adult education and more. See how HCDE's many [1]programs and services benefit students:

[youtube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pQ-Y-v9LK0I]

1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/who-is-hcde/

Klein ISD student combines performing, love of writing at HCDE Scholastic Art & Writing reception (2017-03-28 15:09) - hcdetx





Several hundred teen artists and writers attended an artist reception and celebration to kick off Spring Break on March 11 at Spring Street Studios in Houston. Among the talented teens was Klein ISD eleventh grader Mary Ann Hurtado, who read her award-winning piece, "From Sea to Shining Kiosk."

As a member of the Klein Collins High School orchestra and debate team, Hurtado is no stranger to performing for an audience. During the first of four regional receptions for Harris County Scholastic winners, Hurtado entertained the crowd with her natural writing ability and confidence speaking in public.

In addition to performing, writing is a passion of Hurtado's. Although she normally writes poetry, music and science fiction, a recent shopping experience on Black Friday inspired her to try her hand at humor.

Hurtado's story received a regional Scholastic Gold Key Award and one of five "best in class" American Voice nominations recognized nationally. She also recently received a National Scholastic Gold Key Award and is invited to attend the National Awards Ceremony at Carnegie Hall in New York City this summer.

For more information about the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards or to view the full list of regional winners, visit [1]www.hcde-texas.org/scholastic.

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1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/scholastic
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Harris County Department of Education Baytown Head Start program recruits students for immediate openings (2017-03-30 16:35) - hcdetx





Harris County Department of Education Head Start Baytown Centers are recruiting students ages 6 weeks to 3 years old for Early Head Start and ages 3 to 5 for Head Start. The Early Head Start Center

is located at 1319 N. Pruett St. and the Head Start center at 1725 N. Pruett St. These programs ensure future success for students both academically and socially and provide comprehensive health, education, nutrition and financial services to the families.

Tiana Toliver, parent to current Baytown Head Start student Hannah, credits the HCDE Head Start program for changing her life back in 2011. After leaving an abusive marriage, and not sure what to do next, Toliver enrolled her oldest child in Head Start and found she excelled in the classroom. While her daughter was attending Head Start, Toliver obtained a certificate in medical coding and billing to support her family.

Since 2011, Toliver has had three children attend Head Start and has seen the benefits it provides.

"Both of my daughters that moved on to elementary school are currently on the honor roll in Goose Creek CISD," said Toliver. "I believe that is a result of the knowledge and support they received from the teachers in HCDE's Head Start program."

HCDE provides services through 15 Head Start centers located in northeast Harris County. Additional locations include J.D. Walker, Pugh, Fonwood, La Porte, Humble, Fifth Ward, Channelview, Compton, Coolwood, Dogan, Barrett Station, San Jacinto, Sheffield and Tidwell.

Photo: Baytown parent Tiana Toliver stands with daughter, Hannah.

For information about enrollment or locations, call (713) 672-9343 or visit [1]www.hcde-texas.org/headstart.

1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/headstart

1.4 April

Teaching Tip: Change your perspective for a more engaged classroom (2017-04-03 13:52) - hcdetx





As a teacher, I often battled with stale spots in the back of my classroom. As much as I tried to walk around, I found that my students in the back of the class would lose touch with the classroom culture and feel more isolated from the front of the room. One day, to keep tabs on the back of the class, I decided to teach while standing on a table instead of just standing by the whiteboard. I originally did this to better see the kiddos in the back of the room. The unexpected outcome, however, was a highly engaged classroom!

Changing perspective helped me to better engage with groups of students that I couldn't quite reach in my original approach. This change also invigorated my students by giving them a new way to see and interact with me.

While standing on a desk is probably not advisable for safety reasons, you can change your classroom's perspective by moving your desk somewhere else, changing the orientation of student desks, or inviting your students to change the way that they are sitting in their chairs. The possibilities are endless, and the rewards are worth it.

(Contributed by David McGeary, curriculum director for digital education and innovation, HCDE's Teaching and Learning Center)

'Little Free Libraries' to make big literacy impact through 'Groomed for Literacy' collective with HCDE adult learners, City of Houston Public Library (2017-04-04 18:17) - hcdetx



Fifty little libraries which could make a big literacy impact in needy children's lives are being painted by adult learners enrolled in workforce development classes at Harris County Department of Education and other volunteers. The event will be held on Friday, April 7, from 10 a.m. to noon at 6300 Irvington Blvd., Houston, Texas.[1]



The collaborative program created by the Houston Public Library, in partnership with Put It In A Book Foundation, called "Groomed for Literacy" provides the wooden little libraries filled with books to barber shops in targeted areas with low-literacy, and low-income youth who have low access to quality books.

The little free libraries feature a barber shop storefront décor complete with red-white-and-blue barber poles. The little free libraries were donated by the Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation and the Little Free Library organization. Other partners in the project include the Friends of the Houston Public Library, City of Houston Health Department – My Brother's Keeper, Hott Blocc Barbershop (pilot location) and Franklin Institute.

"Our adult education students involved with this project can connect with this cause to promote literacy among youth as many of them return to school to better themselves," said Harris County School Superintendent James Colbert, Jr. "They see the value in this program and are offering to volunteer their time to encourage youth to read."

This past fall, students in an adult education workforce development class helped to construct the little free libraries at the launch event announcing the program. After painting is completed, the Houston Public Library will work with local barber shops to implement the program. Service areas include Fifth Ward, Third Ward, East Little York, Independence Heights, Clinton Park, Sharpstown, Gulfgate, Hobby and several dozen additional neighborhoods.

Several of the students putting finishing touches on the little free libraries are enrolled in a con-

struction class through HCDE. The basic construction and safety skills class is called Core Curriculum Certification.

Student Leonardo Cordova took the class with a number of other employees laid off from General Electric last December.

"It's a good feeling to help other people," said Cordova. "I look forward to volunteering to get the job done."

Harris County Department of Education Adult Education provides opportunity for adult learners to enroll in GED or English as a second language classes while also preparing them for new careers in the construction industry. For more information about classes, go to [2]www.hcdetexas.org/adulteducation.

Photo: (left) Harris County Department of Education teacher Clifton Hypolite helps adult learner Leonardo Cordova with finishing touches on a prototype "little library" which will hold free age appropriate books. The collaborative between HCDE Adult Education and the City of Houston Public Library System provides 50 little libraries for barber shops located in targeted neighborhoods with low-literacy, low-income youth. The workforce class taking on the project provides a combined GED class with Core Curriculum for construction.

About HCDE Adult Education: With a 30-year track record, HCDE Adult Education provides classes to adult learners with a goal to "learn to earn," including adult basic literacy and math skills, GED, English as a second language and vocational training. Classes are held in 35 community locations throughout Harris and Liberty counties. Communities include Baytown, Alief, Channelview, Cy-Fair, Deer Park, Galena Park, Goose Creek, Katy, Klein, Pasadena, Sheldon, Spring Branch and Liberty. Corporations also benefit from HCDE services provided to English language learning employees aimed at improving productivity and safety in the workplace. For more information, access [3]www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation.

Harris County Department of Education: HCDE helps school districts in the state's largest county meet the needs of uniquely challenged learners, directly serving students at their schools or one of four HCDE-operated campuses across the county. Learn about these services and more at [4]www.hcde-texas.org.

About Groomed for Literacy: Groomed for Literacy, is an innovative effort being taken by the Houston Public Library, community leaders and organizations to connect youth, specifically boys of color, to literacy, books, positive role models and valuable educational resources in their community to help address the literacy gap. This initiative will help ensure that these youth regardless of their background will have an additional sources of support and opportunity to better their educational outcomes. The goals of Groomed for Literacy are to: increase the number of books in the community, increase the number of books on the home, provide library resources to youth and their families in support of literacy attainment, create a vehicle for community members to partner in support of literacy advancement, support citywide efforts for kindergarten readiness and reading at grade level, increase public awareness regarding the importance of access to books and literacy, and increase the number of Little Free Libraries with the city.

Thirty communities have been identified as meeting the criteria for having high populations of individuals with low literacy, high populations of individuals with low income and low access to quality books. The goal is to place a total of 1-2 Little Free Libraries in select barbershops within the targeted communities.

Groomed for Literacy key partners include: Little Free Library, Put it in a Book Foundation, Hott Blocc Barbershop, Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation, My Brother's Keeper, and Friends of the Houston Public Library.

About Put It In A Book Foundation: Put It In A Book Foundation was created by two KIPP (Knowledge is Power Program): Houston Public Schools educators whose vision is to change children's lives through the power of a book. As educators they know the importance of books in the home and they wanted to go Beyond Z for their students and families by free books to them. They are currently in the process of applying for our non-profit and tax exempt status. Our mission is to change the lives of the youth through the power of a book. Their main focus areas are Literacy, College Readiness and Financial Literacy.

About the Houston Public Library: The Houston Public Library (HPL) operates 35 neighborhood libraries, four HPL Express Libraries, a Central Library, the Houston Metropolitan Research Center, the Clayton Library Center for Genealogical Research, The African American Library at the Gregory School, and the Parent Resource Library located in the Children's Museum of Houston. With more than eight million visits per year in person and online, HPL is committed to excellent customer service and equitable access to information and programs by providing library customers with free use of a diverse collection of printed materials and electronic resources, Internet, laptop and computer use, and a variety of database and reference resources with live assistance online 24/7.

- 1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/04/421a88921.jpg
- 2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation
- 3. http://www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation
- 4. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Teaching Tip: Recognize students for jobs well done (2017-04-10 13:51) - hcdetx





Think back to a time when someone recognized you for an accomplishment or the amount of time you put forth toward a team goal. Remember how you felt? We all enjoy being recognized for a job well done or even asserting effort toward a challenging task, and the same is especially true for students.

Using the practice of recognition can be a powerful motivator in the classroom. Many times, a statement as simple as "I appreciate that you didn't give up when the work challenged you today" is exactly what a student needs to hear to stay motivated.

(Contributed by Debi Lokey, Leadership Development Senior Strategist, Flippen Group, [1]http://www.flippengroup.com.)

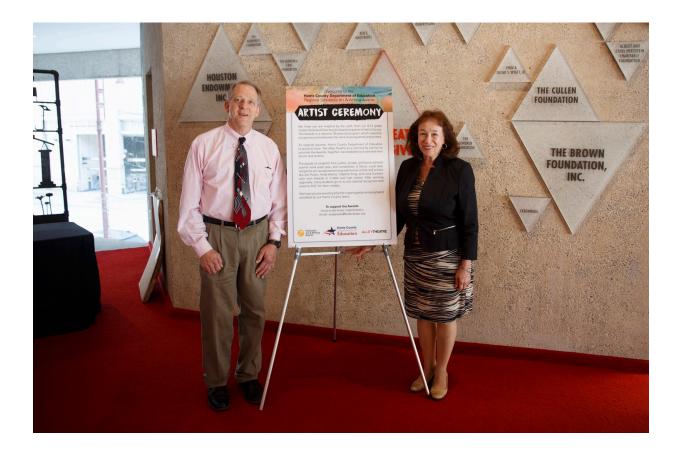


Capturing Kids' Hearts is a curricula created by the Flippen Group to provide strategy and training for teachers and administrators to achieve success in the classroom. HCDE's [2]Teaching and Learning Center provides classes at our headquarters at 6300 Irvington, Houston, Texas. **Upcoming class at HCDE, June 7-8**: [3]Download the registration form.

- 1. http://www.flippengroup.com/
- 2. http://hcde-texas.org/who-we-are/divisions-and-leadership/teaching-and-learning-center/
- 3. http://www.hcde-texas.org/media/4563/ckh1_registration_flyer_harriscounty_cf07_2016-2017.pdf

Klein ISD Teacher Mike Keimig Receives HCDE Susan O'Connor Award for Teaching Excellence (2017-04-12 15:47) - hcdetx





Klein ISD English Teacher Mike Keimig has been actively involved in the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards for nine years. To him, the Scholastic Awards provide his junior high students opportunities to publish their work, earn scholarships, and most importantly, find their voice and learn to enjoy writing.

This year, Keimig received the 2017 Susan O'Connor Award for Teaching Excellence, a prestigious award highlighting his exemplary work and commitment to expanding opportunities for creative young people through the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards.

The Susan O'Connor Award, named after writing teacher and Scholastic Awards advocate Susan O'Connor, is presented annually by Harris County Department of Education to one regional teacher who has made an impact on students' lives through the Awards.

"I encourage my students to participate in the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards because I've found they show amazing individual voice when presented with an opportunity to be heard," said Keimig.

In addition to expanding opportunities through the Scholastic Awards, Keimig supports and challenges his students every day as their teacher. For Klein ISD parent Karen Dupont, Keimig has also become a mentor for her two boys, ninth grader Jacob and 11th grader David. Keimig taught Jacob in eighth grade at Doerre Intermediate and continues to support him in high school. After being inspired to enter the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards by Keimig, Jacob discovered a passion for writing and received National Silver and Gold Key Writing Medals. Although he didn't

teach Dupont's oldest son David, Keimig tutors him for the English End-of-Course exam. Due to David's Asperger's, a form of autism, he needed additional help with writing. When Dupont reached out to Keimig he offered to tutor David without hesitation. "Mr. Keimig has allowed David to make incredible strides in his written and spoken communication," explains Dupont. "His help means so much to our family." Dupont adds that Keimig makes an impact on his students by challenging, motivating and supporting them and is a positive mentor for them at the intermediate age. Keimig was recognized at the Regional Scholastic Art and Writing Awards Ceremony at the Alley Theater on March 25, where he was presented with a check for \$500 from award namesake Susan O'Connor. He is also invited to attend the National Awards Ceremony along with his students at Carnegie Hall in New York City this summer. "I'm so thankful for the wonderful opportunities my students have received from Harris County Department of Education and the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards." said Keimig. "It truly does change young adults when they have opportunities to be recognized outside of the school setting." Founded in 1923, the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards are the nation's longest-running, most prestigious educational initiative supporting student achievement in the visual and literary arts. The program has an impressive legacy of being the first to acknowledge creative talent and is today's largest source of scholarships for creative teens. For more information on the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards, visit [1]www.hcde-texas.org/scholastic.

1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/scholastic

Contracts for athletic surfaces and event rentals awarded (2017-04-18 15:35) - hcdetx





New contracts for athletic surfaces and event rentals were awarded at the April 2017 board meeting of Harris County Department of Education and are accessible through HCDE Choice Partners cooperative. Governmental entities that have signed an interlocal contract with HCDE may access these legally procured contracts.

Newly awarded contracts include

Athletic Surfaces (JOC-IDIQ): Dynamic Sports Construction, Inc.; Fisher Tracks, Inc.; and Playgrounds Today, Inc. doing business as PTI Sports and Recreation Construction; and

Event Rentals: Sky High Party Rentals; and Southern Sound System, Inc. doing business as Southern Sound & Lighting.

Renewed contracts include

Building Cleaning, Exterior: Ameri-clean; Hardy & Hardy, Inc.; and Mid-Continental Restoration Company, Inc.;

HVAC Equipment and Service (JOC-IDIQ): Custom Air Products & Services, Inc.; ERC Environmental & Construction Services, Inc. doing business as ERC; Emcor Gowan, Inc. doing business as Gowan, Inc.; Heat Transfer Solutions doing business as HTS Texas; Climatec, LLC; and The Brandt Companies, LLC; and

Modular Buildings: Aries Building Systems, LLC; Industrial Laminates Corporation doing business as ILCOR Builders; McGrath Rent Corp and Subsidiaries doing business as Mobile Modular Management Corporation; and Palomar Modular Buildings LLC; and

Playground Systems (JOC-IDIQ): Adventure Playground Systems, Inc.; and Playgrounds Today, Inc. doing business as PTI Sports & Recreation Construction.

New Members

Organizations and governmental entities that became members when contracts were approved by the HCDE Board of Trustees on April 18 include **Celeste ISD**, Celeste, Texas; **city of Duncanville; Hays County**, San Marcos, Texas; **city of Missouri City; Pilot Point ISD**, Pilot Point, Texas; and **Whitesboro ISD**, Whitesboro, Texas.

About Choice Partners: Choice Partners national cooperative offers quality, legal procurement and contract solutions to meet the purchasing needs of governmental entities. Contracts are competitively bid so governmental entities can act immediately to access the contract they need, saving time and money on the bidding process and purchase. Choice Partners includes contracts for education, facilities, food, services, technology and supplies, including a unique supply catalog. For more information, call 877-696-2122 or visit [1]www.choicepartners.org.

1. http://www.choicepartners.org/

Harris County Department of Education Board approves plans for first public recovery school in Harris County (2017-04-18 15:39) - hcdetx





The Harris County Department of Education Board of Trustees voted 4-0 on April 18 to approve the budgeting and implementation of a recovery high school, the first public Harris County substance-use prevention high school. The Texas Education Agency reported that in 2014-2015, there were approximately 11,000 Harris County students that had drug offense issues, according to TEA Disciplinary District Data.

The school will be available to all 25 school districts in Harris County on a contractual basis and will serve 30 students as it is opened with a target date of September 2017. HCDE will renovate a 20,000-square-foot HCDE school facility located in the Greenspoint area in north Houston at 11902 Spears Road. The HCDE Board of Trustees approved \$950,000 in start-up funding for the project.

"It's a good thing we are doing this because it's a chance to help students in a revolutionary way," said HCDE Board Vice President Eric Dick. "I had a troubled youth and am glad to be a solution to the problem."

The goal of the recovery high school is to provide support and assistance to students after successful completion of a rehabilitation program. Students continue to receive counseling and support as they attend their school.

A low student-to-teacher ratio will be implemented as the school provides an academic curriculum along with life skills and recovery coaching. Staff at the school will include teachers, recovery coaches and counselors. The school will accept students from all areas of Harris County. "We recognize those who struggle each day in the fight against addiction—the students, parents, teachers and community," said Harris County School Superintendent James Colbert, Jr. "This school represents a big step in recovery for students in Harris County."

Photo: HCDE Superintendent James Colbert, Jr. and HCDE Assistant Superintendent for Academic Support Services Jonathan Parker along with HCDE Board of Trustees Vice President Eric Dick and trustees Erica Lee Carter and Diane Trautman met with Recovery School supporters who spoke in favor of the school at the April 18 board meeting.

About Harris County Department of Education: HCDE helps school districts in the state's largest county meet the needs of uniquely challenged learners, directly serving students at their schools or one of four HCDE-operated campuses across the county through its HCDE Schools division. [2]Two schools support students with intellectual or behavioral disabilities and two alternative schools provide education for adjudicated or expelled youth. [3]View our video and learn more about these services and more at [4]www.hcde-texas.org.

- 1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/04/recovery-school.jpg
- 2. https://youtu.be/_51JaryucXc
- 3. https://youtu.be/uk-802PNeVU
- 4. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Bank of Texas volunteers become superheroes at Fifth Ward Head Start Center (2017-04-19 13:22) - hcdetx





Once a month, students at Harris County Department of Education's Fifth Ward Head Start Center eagerly await visits from their superheroes, Chris Frey and Gary Whitt with Bank of Texas, Houston. Frey, commercial relationship manager, and Whitt, senior vice president, are community volunteers with the Real SuperMENtors Read program and serve as consistent, positive role models for Fifth Ward students.

Three years ago, Frey and Whitt eagerly joined SuperMENtors to promote community involvement, encourage reading and, most importantly, support Head Start students. Since they began volunteering, they've watched students become more engaged as their relationships with the professionals grow.

"You can see the difference from the beginning of the year to the end, and from the 3-year-old to the 4-year-old students," said Whitt. "The students we've known for a year and developed relationships with are much more engaged."

While the 3-year-old students at Fifth Ward are always excited to see Whitt, excitement erupts when he enters the 4-year-old classroom and he is greeted with big smiles and a group hug.

The SuperMENtors program is part of the ongoing Head Start Significant Male Initiative established to encourage male involvement throughout the HCDE Head Start centers. Community volunteers like Frey and Whitt provide more than a fun, engaging lesson. They promote reading and writing while creating a consistent support system for students. "I think there's value in professionals coming in and spending time with students in their environment," said Frey. "The SuperMENtors program is easy to commit to and is very rewarding. That's why I keep coming back."

Frey and Whitt also hope to use their superhero status with the students to demonstrate the importance of community involvement.

"We want to instill that even though we work and are involved in business, we're still involved in our community," said Whitt.

For more information or to participate in the Head Start Real SuperMENtors Read program, visit [1]https://goo.gl/X0YTYU.

1. https://goo.gl/XOYTYU

Three tips for using social media in the classroom (2017-04-20 10:30) - hcdetx





When it comes to social media, many educators see Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram as distractions – not tools for learning. However, social media can help connect students to the classroom, involve parents and advertise amazing things going on at school. The benefits of social media can far outweigh the risks as long as teachers set solid parameters and take proper precautions.

Here are three tips to help teachers safely maximize social media usage in the classroom:

- Build a following: Consider creating an account just for your classroom (such as a Facebook page or Twitter handle) and invite another teacher or campus administrator to join the page. Whether you choose to use a tool like [1]Remind or announcements in a dedicated Learning Management System, having a way to deliver information without the worry of replies can help you stay connected to your students without inviting inappropriate comments.
- 2. **Talk it out:** By involving your students in a discussion on appropriate and inappropriate communication through social media early in the year, you can clearly establish expectations for sending and receiving information without the confusion of attempting to "build the ship as you sail it."
- 3. **Go dark:** If you have existing social media accounts for personal use, make sure the privacy settings are up-to-date. Better yet, avoid posting or sharing content that you wouldn't want your students to see. Teachers should always show caution when sharing personal information that students can access.

Want to see how it's done? Follow HCDE on [2]Twitter and [3]Facebook.

(Contributed by David McGeary, curriculum director for Digital Education and Innovation, HCDE's Teaching and Learning Center)

- 1. https://www.remind.com/
- 2. https://twitter.com/HCDEtx
- 3. https://www.facebook.com/HCDEtx/

1,000-plus student robotics enthusiasts expected for Ecobot April 22 and 29 at two venues (2017-04-20 16:27) - hcdetx





More than 1,000 young robotics enthusiasts in grades 4-8 throughout greater Harris County come together for the 9th annual All-Earth Ecobot Challenge on two consecutive Saturdays, April 22 and 29 from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Their challenges include maritime missions, vaccine development, flood control and forest firefighting.

What: All Earth Ecobot Challenge supports robotics for more than 1,000 area students

Who/When/Where:

April 22, 8 a.m.-noon and 1-5 p.m., 6th-8th graders, Berry Center, 8877 Barker Cypress Rd., Cypress, TX 77433

April 29, 8 a.m.-noon and 1-5 p.m., 4th-5th graders, Humble Civic Center, 8233 Will Clayton Parkway, Humble, TX 77338

The All-Earth Ecobot Challenge is coordinated by the Education Foundation of Harris County and the Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids, or CASE for Kids, a division of Harris County Department of Education. The challenge is one of the largest robotics events for students in Texas and has touched the lives of 6,000 students since its inception.

The students work on their robotics challenges using the Lego Mindstorm kits in their afterschool programs and through community organizations.

"These children are our future programmers, scientists and forward-thinking leaders of the next generation," said James Colbert, Jr., HCDE superintendent. "We are teaching teamwork and higher-level thinking skills like problem-solving. Along the way, these youth meet corporate mentors who are volunteers and sponsors."

Robotics has become a mainstay as a youth hobby, just like cheerleading, soccer or chess. Robotics is also embedded into careers as companies look for new talent and lend support to future young engineers.

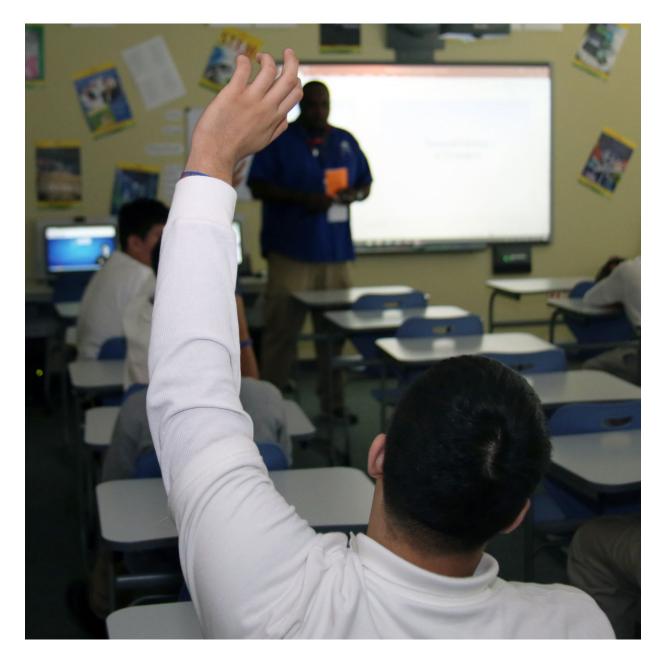
Corporate sponsors include Amec Foster Wheeler, Oceaneering and CenterPoint Energy. Foundation sponsors include Brown Foundation, the Houston Foundation and Houston Super Bowl Host Committee & National Football League Foundation. Presenting sponsors are the Education Foundation of Harris County, CASE for Kids and HCDE.

About Harris County Department of Education: HCDE helps school districts in the state's largest county meet the needs of uniquely challenged learners, directly serving students at their schools or one of four HCDE-operated campuses across the county. [2]View our video and learn more about these services and more at [3]www.hcde-texas.org.

- 1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/04/423a4603.jpg
- 2. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pQ-Y-v9LK0I&t=55s
- 3. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Teaching Tip: Promote trust and risk-taking in the classroom (2017-04-26 11:50) - hcdetx





Every organization has a culture – especially schools. Leaders should be asking, "Is this the culture I want for my school?" There are several indicators of a positive and healthy classroom culture, but two of the most important are trust and risk-taking.

Trust is the result of a safe community in which students believe that someone has their back. Do your students trust you and one another? Do they work well together in groups? Are they open with their thoughts, feelings and ideas?

We are born taking risks. A toddler's first step is a risk as well as a cause for celebration, even if the toddler falls. At some point, cheers for risk-taking dwindle and the focus shifts to winning results. Students fear not having the "right answer," so they quit raising their hands.

Teachers should ask themselves: Is risk-taking rewarded or discouraged in my classroom? Do students participate even when they aren't 100 % sure of the "correct" answer? Are there so-

cial consequences when students take risks? What can I do to promote risk-taking in my classroom?

Capturing Kids' Hearts is a curricula created by the Flippen Group to provide strategy and training for teachers and administrators to achieve success in the classroom. HCDE's Teaching and Learning Center provides classes at our headquarters at 6300 Irvington, Houston, Texas. Upcoming class at HCDE June 7-8. [1]Download the registration form.



(Contributed by Debi Lokey, Leadership Development Senior Strategist, Flippen Group, http://www.flippengroup.com.)

1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/media/4563/ckh1_registration_flyer_harriscounty_cf07_2016-2017.pdf

1.5 May

Harris County Department of Education Highpoint East students learn value of 'WORK' (2017-05-01 15:54) - hcdetx





More than 150 students attended the 2017 Teen Summit at Highpoint East, where they heard from a former NBA player and Harris County judge and broke into sessions that addressed the theme of WORK, meaning "Worthy of Respect and Knowledge." The event, held on Tuesday, April 25, was aimed at bringing students together to learn skills and discuss concepts essential to meeting their professional goals.

"Our goal for this year's Teen Summit was to provide our students an opportunity to see, hear and experience real life situations beyond the classroom," said Highpoint East Principal Marion Cooksey.

Harris County Judge Joe Stephens, of Justice of the Peace Court Precinct 3-1, kicked off the day's schedule with an inspiring keynote address. The former Houston Rockets NBA player and North Shore Senior High school alum said he could relate to the struggles of the average Highpoint East student, but that those struggles need not define them.

"Shoot for the moon," Stephens said, "If you don't make it, you'll land among the stars."

Highpoint East is Harris County Department of Education's alternative school for troubled youth. Highpoint East uses a multi-pronged approach to helping students get back on track and return to their home districts to graduate. A low student-to-teacher ratio along with a personalized plan for social and academic reform helps students become successful.

Following the keynote message, students broke into workshop sessions aimed at addressing key concepts for succeeding beyond the classroom. These included financial literacy, dressing for

success, proper hygiene and social acceptance.

Social studies teacher Eric D. Joseph called these topics, which also included living above the influence of drugs and alcohol and teambuilding, "pressing" for the Highpoint East community.

"We envisioned addressing these issues by way of experiential learning and exposure because we believe that to be the best vehicle for solutions," Joseph said.

Addressing students in his "Respect and Appropriate Communication" workshop, Officer K. Elis shared insights about how to talk appropriately and safely to police – advice that could end up saving a student's life.

"Don't make any sudden moves, and always keep your hands where officers can see them," Elis said.

Broderick Wyatt, a Highpoint East teacher, led an engaging seminar on financial literacy, helping students understand the differences between riches and wealth and encouraging them to be smart about spending money.

"If you had a million dollars, what would you do with it?" Wyatt asked the class.

A roomful of hands went up.

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1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Sleep deprived students? 3 tips for healthful snoozing (2017-05-02 11:05) - hcdetx





Every teacher has had the experience of leading an engaging, standards-aligned lesson only to look over and see little Johnny's eyes closing or Jane's head flat on her desk. How can they learn if they're not getting the right amount of sleep at home? Getting a good night's sleep is important at any time of the year, but it's especially critical when students are testing. Brains need to be at optimum condition to net the best scores.

Carl Hunt and [1]James B. Maas, of the National Center on Sleep Disorders Research ([2]NCSDR), offer the following tips for how to get a healthful night's sleep. Principals, teachers, parents, students and all school staff should all wake up and listen!

- 1. Establish a reasonable bedtime. Most elementary school children should be going to bed by 9 p.m. Some children who require more sleep might need to hit the hay earlier.
- 2. Avoid caffeinated beverages and foods high in sugar in the late afternoon and evening. This may be obvious to some, but withholding sugar and caffeine from kids can also lead to other health benefits.
- 3. Allow plenty of time to wind down before bed. Children should not be bringing their smartphones or tablets to bed with them. They need about an hour of down time to prepare to fall asleep. Such relaxing activities as taking a bath or reading a story can help children fall asleep more easily.

(Contributed by Andrea Segraves, director, HCDE's Teaching and Learning Center)

1. https://jamesmaas.com/

2. https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/about/org/ncsdr/

Teacher Appreciation: Retired lawyer Hubacker finds second career teaching ESL to adult students at Harris County Department of Education (2017-05-04 16:26) - hcdetx



English as a second language teacher Harriet Hubacker found her second calling 20 years ago after retiring as a lawyer. Realizing she wasn't ready for retirement, she returned to school for her linguistics degree with a goal to teach adult learners. On May 3, 2017, the Harris County Department of Education teacher received a bundle of bright flowers and a huge thank-you balloon from 30 of her students.

These are the moments teachers live for and remember forever.

Homemade cards of thanks tell the story of student gratitude. Her students knew few words in English before entering her classroom in the Spring Branch Community Center. Those onceforeign words are made familiar with each lesson. Slowly the words flow and sentences are formed, with subject-verb transition still a little unpolished.

"Been best teacher," said one card crafted by an older learner. "Teach me English and been patient," said another from student Fabiola Quintanilla. Other messages included "love my teacher" and "I am learning English."

A second surprise came as Telemundo 47 reporter/anchor Antonio Hernandez visited the classroom

to televise the story about the students' appreciation for their teacher.

"I don't know where you are at right now, but I know where you can be," Hernandez said, relating a story of his struggles earlier in life.

"I don't know what your past is, but your future starts today," said Hernandez, "Come to school, learn a lot, and read everything. The more you learn, the better your life can be, and it starts right here."

About HCDE Adult Education: With a 30-year track record, HCDE Adult Education provides classes to adult learners with a goal to "learn to earn," including adult basic literacy and math skills, GED, English as a second language and vocational training. Classes are held in 35 community locations throughout Harris and Liberty counties as HCDE serves over 8,000 adult learners. Communities include Baytown, Alief, Channelview, Cy-Fair, Deer Park, Galena Park, Goose Creek, Katy, Klein, Pasadena, Sheldon, Spring Branch and Liberty. Corporations also benefit from HCDE services provided to English language learning employees aimed at improving productivity and safety in the workplace. For more information, access [1]www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation or 713-692-6216.

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1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation
2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Nearly 300 Attend Head Start Healthy Minds Healthy Families Conference (2017-05-08 14:27) - hcdetx





Nearly 300 parents, caretakers, educators and others involved in early childhood education attended the Healthy Minds Healthy Families Conference on May 5 presented by HCDE Head Start and the HOGG Foundation of Mental Health. The conference provided training to parents, educators and other professionals working with children with challenging behaviors, and increased the awareness of mental health issues in early childhood.

Training sessions with health professionals and others who work with children with mental health issues covered subjects like growing up with autism, domestic violence, yoga for the young child, mental health and suicide prevention for children and teens.

For more information about HCDE programs and services, visit [1]www.hcde-texas.org.

1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Tip for Teachers: Make Time for Yourself (2017-05-08 16:14) - hcdetx





Teaching can be, especially around this time of year, a taxing profession. Very few professions cycle like ours does each year, starting over with a new crop of clients each fall. Good advice for any teacher in May is to take care of yourself and do something on a weekend or a week night that has nothing to do with school.

Houston has some of the best museums and arts opportunities for incredibly reasonable prices. Did you know that the Museum of Fine Arts Houston is free on Thursdays courtesy of a wonderful grant from Shell? Also, the Holocaust Museum is free every Thursday from 2 to 5 p.m., as well as the Buffalo Soldiers Museum from 1 to 5 p.m.

The Alley Theater has incredibly reasonable ticket prices, and Arthur Miller's "A View from the Bridge" is playing there through May 21. Take a night off from grading papers or setting up tomorrow's science experiment and feed your creative soul. Remember to enjoy yourself and take time to decompress. Summer is almost here.

(Contributed by Kelly Tumy, curriculum director for English, language arts and social studies, HCDE's Teaching and Learning Center)

Academic and Behavior School students improve critical thinking, selfesteem through chess tournament (2017-05-09 14:11) - hcdetx





Students at Harris County Department of Education's Academic and Behavior Schools will participate in a Chess Tournament on Wednesday, May 10 from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at 6300 Irvington Blvd. The tournament is hosted in partnership with Perfect TEAMPLAY Inc., a nonprofit organization that uses chess to mentor and motivate today's youth.

HCDE's Academic and Behavior Schools provide an enriching and supportive learning environment for students with intellectual, developmental and behavioral disorders. Students participating in the tournament practice critical thinking and strategy, as well as work on social skills and learn to accept consequences and criticism. Since chess is a game that expands the mind, it can also improve overall behavior and increase attention span and self-esteem.

HCDE County School Superintendent James Colbert will join the tournament and play against select students from both Academic and Behavior Schools.

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2. https://youtu.be/uk-802PNeVU

3. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Strife in Life: GED 2017 graduation focuses on successes of adult learners at Harris County Department of Education (2017-05-09 14:42) - hcdetx





GED Graduation 2017 is slated for May 20 at 11 a.m. in the Harris County Department of Education Conference Center, 6300 Irvington Blvd., Houston, Texas. The ceremony focuses on the successes of adult learners as they return to school to get their GEDs. The theme "Strife in Life" captures the personal stories from students who share their successes and struggles.

View the video:

https://youtu.be/MuwuUvXGSSQ

The number of participating students grows as HCDE adult learners who have gained their GEDs throughout the school year reply to take part in the popular commencement. Last year over 100 students participated.

HCDE Communications and Creative Services will be streaming Facebook Live throughout the ceremony. The commencement speaker will be Michele Paul, executive director of Capital Idea Houston. Paul is a life coach who is a popular motivational speaker.

Graduates will arrive early for photos, media interviews and networking, but the commencement is set from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

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vides classes to adult learners with a goal to "learn to earn," including adult basic literacy and math skills, GED, English as a second language and vocational training. Classes are held in 35 community locations throughout Harris and Liberty counties as HCDE serves over 8,000 adult learners. Communities include Baytown, Alief, Channelview, Cy-Fair, Deer Park, Galena Park, Goose Creek, Katy, Klein, Pasadena, Sheldon, Spring Branch and Liberty. Corporations also benefit from HCDE services provided to English language learning employees aimed at improving productivity and safety in the workplace. For more information, access [2]www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation or 713-692-6216.

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1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/05/045.jpg

- 2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation
- 3. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Students in HCDE special schools use chess to strengthen socialization, academic skills (2017-05-11 08:53) - hcdetx



[youtube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R3GA75xboCI]



The game of chess is more than simply moving rooks and knights on a board, as students at Harris County Department of Education's Academic and Behavior Schools know well. After weeks of preparation culminating in a chess tournament, students gained countless social and academic skills. These strategies can be applied to the classroom and beyond.

Through a partnership with nonprofit organization Perfect TeamPlay Inc., nearly 30 students at AB School East and West joined the Chess Club, where Coach James Hudson taught them more than just the rules of the game.

"Perfect TeamPlay Inc. is a nonprofit that uses chess and other activities to mentor and motivate students," said Hudson. "In addition to academic benefits, chess provides students with skills to become productive citizens."

Since many students at HCDE's AB Schools deal with intellectual or behavioral challenges, chess offers benefits that can be applied to any situation in life. From critical thinking and strategy, to patience and time management, chess can be used as a fun education and socialization tool. Since chess is a game that expands the mind, it can also improve overall behavior and self-esteem. AB School West Principal Dr. Victor Keys also notes that students "practice following directions and accepting consequences and criticism – qualities that are important in the real world."

HCDE staff and parents have also noticed the students are using these skills in their everyday life.

"We've noticed the skills our students gained through chess - time, attention, patience and strategy – have transferred into the classroom and throughout the school community," said AB School East Principal Mindy Robertson.

During the chess tournament, students were encouraged to participate in a Chess Math challenge, a new aspect of the Perfect TeamPlay Inc. tournaments. The challenge involved giving each chess piece a corresponding number and incorporating that into various mathematical equations. Several students excitedly volunteered to participate in the challenge while being cheered on by their peers. The exercise further advances student math skills; and it also works to build self-confidence. HCDE Ecobot Challenge Inspires Next Generation of Female Engineers (2017-05-11 15:56) - hcdetx





Each year, more than 1,000 Harris County students participate in the HCDE All-Earth Ecobot Challenge to show off their STEM skills in an environmental-themed robotics challenge. Noticeable this year was the number of all-female engineering teams in the competition. At a time when women are still underrepresented in the science and engineering workforce, programs like the Ecobot Challenge seek to inspire all students to explore STEM fields.

For many of the girls at this year's event, the challenge was their first taste of engineering. Many were already interested in math and science, but through this challenge they were able to develop their skills in engineering, programming and leadership. Humble ISD 4th grader Courtney Daniel explained how she and her team honed a variety of skills during the challenge.

"For engineering, you need to have great math and science skills, and for Ecobot you need to have time management skills, be confident in yourself and be creative," said Daniel.

The challenge also requires teams to be flexible and find different ways of solving problems. This is important for students to learn early on because encountering obstacles and challenging problems is in the nature of work in STEM fields. Daniel appreciates that through the Ecobot Challenge, girls can experiment with their skills in a fun, safe environment.

"This is an event for children that is really fun, so if you make a mistake, it's okay," said Daniel.

Baylor College of Medicine Academy (BCMA) Robotics Teacher and long-time Ecobot volunteer, Misty Kirkland, believes in addition to inspiring young girls to continue in STEM fields, the annual challenge shows students what they're capable of and strengthens their skills.

In her Computer Science Concepts course, she watched one of her female Ecobot teams, the Dream Girls, figure out their strengths and use them to their advantage.

"Once they saw what they were capable of, their team melded," said Kirkland. "One realized she was best at programming, while another became the team leader and kept the group organized and on track."

The Dream Girls, made up of eighth graders Nadia Sadler, Ja'Coria Dean, Serena Hammond and Clareka Bailey, placed second overall during the 6-8 grade challenge.

"I think more girls should try engineering. Don't second guess yourself and underestimate your abilities," said Sadler, the team's leader. "You can do anything you put your mind to."

The annual All-Earth Ecobot Challenge is hosted by the Harris County Department of Education's Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment, or CASE for Kids, and the Education Foundation of Harris County. To learn more about this event, visit [1]http://www.ecobotchallenge.com/.

^{1.} http://www.ecobotchallenge.com/

Community garden to become hub for learning to special populations students at HCDE school (2017-05-15 08:38) - hcdetx





A community garden becomes a hub for learning to 100 special populations students enrolled in Harris County Department of Education's Academic and Behavior East campus as the school gains \$2,500 in grant funding.

A groundbreaking ceremony is scheduled for Thursday, May 18 at 1 p.m. at the school, located in southeast Houston at 7703 South Loop East. Students will work in a small, raised garden plot created for the groundbreaking ceremony. They will plant seedlings of the fruits and vegetables, which will then be harvested this fall.

Grant funding of \$2,000 for the community garden is supported by Whole Kids Foundation Garden Grant in partnership with Unilever. Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation also contributed \$500 to the garden. The funds come to the school through the Education Foundation of Harris County.

Mindy Robertson, principal of the school and visionary for the project, said about 10,000 square feet will be used for the garden in a field adjacent to the school. Raised beds and hanging plants are planned, with plenty of walking space for children with physical challenges.

"Academically, students will benefit by learning math and science skills used to plan, build and maintain the garden," said Robertson, explaining the real-world experience the garden lends.

Tracy Shepard-Rashkin, Unilever Sustainable Communities lead, said the company started its efforts to support school gardens in New York City in 2016 and is now expanding the program to Houston.

"As part of Unilever's broader commitment to food that tastes good, does good and doesn't 192

cost the Earth, we are on a mission to improve access to fresh food and healthy cooking," said Shepard-Rashkin. We have partnered with Whole Kids Foundation to fund five school gardens within Houston this year, prioritizing schools that have a high percentage of students who are receiving free or reduced lunches and are within USDA defined low food access areas. We are so excited to be working with HCDE schools to create a brighter future for these kids and their families."

The school provides an enriching and supportive learning environment for students with intellectual, developmental and behavioral disorders. Students in grades 6-12 will be working in the garden. Another school hallmark is its low, teacher-to-student ratio of 2-to-6.

From measuring and staking out garden space to preparing the soil, planting the seeds, watering, composting, weeding and harvesting, students with a spectrum of physical and mental challenges benefit from the community garden.

Nonverbal life skills students enrolled at the school benefit from the tactile qualities of the garden, the feel and smell of the soil and plants.

"The majority of our students have a sensory disorder," said Robertson. "A garden on our campus not only gives students a sense of serenity, but it also instills self-esteem and independence as they learn to care for the garden."

With childhood obesity on the rise in Houston and one in three youth at risk, the garden is a good source for physical activity and healthy eating practices, said Robertson. The school resides in a "food desert" area, a low-income area with few grocery stores selling healthy food.

The community, including parents and area residents, will be welcomed to volunteer in the garden.

HCDE Superintendent James Colbert, Jr. says he looks forward to celebrating the first harvest with students and community. He hopes to join students in cooking the fruits (and vegetables) of their labor in the school's cafeteria.

"Our students take the work they do very seriously," said Colbert. "This will be a source of community pride, and we thank Unilever, Whole Kids Foundation, Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation and the Education Foundation of Harris County for their support."

About Harris County Department of Education: HCDE helps school districts in the state's largest county meet the needs of uniquely challenged learners, directly serving students at their schools or one of four HCDE-operated campuses across the county through its HCDE Schools division. [1]Two schools support students with intellectual or behavioral disabilities and two alternative schools provide education for adjudicated or expelled youth. Learn about these services and more at [2]www.hcde-texas.org.

^{1.} https://youtu.be/_5lJaryucXc
2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

HCDE La Porte Head Start program recruits students ages 3-5 for immediate openings (2017-05-15 16:25) - hcdetx





Harris County Department of Education La Porte Head Start Center located at 927 S. 1st St. is recruiting students ages 3 to 5 years. The program ensures future success for students both academically

and socially and provides comprehensive health, education, nutrition and financial services to the families. For La Porte Head Start grandparent Amanda Kastl, the HCDE Head Start program is a blessing in a variety of ways. Not only does 4-year-old granddaughter Rayne gain socialization skills and early preparation for elementary school while attending Head Start, but the La Porte family service providers helped Kastl through her most challenging times. After losing both parents, two brothers and a niece in the span of a couple years, the La Porte Head Start staff became a support system for Kastl and guided her through the steps to get her Texas realtor license when she was struggling emotionally. "I was maxed out emotionally," said Kastl, "but the family service providers at La Porte helped me set goals and provided support when I needed it most." Grateful for the help Head Start has provided her family, Kastl stays involved in the center through volunteer work, the parent committee and the Head Start Policy Council. She was also integral in creating a safer experience for La Porte students while at school. After recognizing that the small, two-lane road in front of the center was unsafe for families to drop off and pick up students, she worked with city officials to install school zone signs and "No Parking" signs, and convert the road to a one-way thoroughfare to decrease hazardous traffic. HCDE provides services through 15 Head Start centers located in northeast Harris County. Additional locations include Baytown, J.D. Walker, Pugh, Fonwood, Humble, Fifth Ward, Channelview, Compton, Coolwood, Dogan, Barrett Station, San Jacinto, Sheffield and Tidwell. For information about enrollment or locations, call (713) 672-9343. For information about community partnerships or donations, call Armando Rodriguez at (713) 696-2179 or email arodriguez@hcde-texas.org. Visit [1]www.hcde-texas.org for general information about HCDE Head Start and locations.

1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Strife in Life: Adult Education Graduation Snapshot with Anslem Alexander (2017-05-15 17:54) - hcdetx





(Harris County Department of Education's GED Graduation 2017 is scheduled for May 20 at 11 a.m. at 6300 Irvington, Houston, Texas, 77022 in our conference center. This story is part of

a series of interviews with our adult students called "Strife in Life." For class information, go to [2]www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation.)

View video:

[youtube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iorSDHV6UNQ]

When approximately 80 adult learners don red robes to receive recognition at Harris County Department of Education's Adult Education graduation ceremony on May 20, Anslem Alexander will proudly be among them.

For Alexander, a native of Trinidad and Tobago (an island nation in the Caribbean), the event will be the emotional culmination of a year-long endeavor to earn his GED. Given that his educational goals have had to compete with working full-time and being a father, Alexander has not always had an easy time focusing on his studies.

"It's hard to work, go to school, and then you have to study at night," Alexander, a Baytown resident who immigrated to the U.S. three years ago, said. "You just can't go to school, go back home and go to bed."

Still, Alexander didn't view whether to pursue his GED as a tough choice.

"I decided to get my GED because I am an electrician, but since being in the U.S. I've had problems getting a job," he said. "Some of the jobs I really wanted I didn't get it because they said you have to have a diploma or GED."

In addition to expanding his professional opportunities, Alexander said his elevated educational status comes with a new level of dignity.

"In life, one of the things I always wanted to be was an educated person," he said. "Having a GED, you can tell yourself, 'Hey, I am an educated person."

"I felt like a million bucks," Alexander said, when he learned that he had completed the requirements for the degree.

Alexander credits his HCDE Adult Education teachers for helping him along the way, repeating that they were "very helpful, very encouraging."

As far as next steps go, Alexander has already enrolled at Lee College in Baytown to start courses in the fall. He will be pursuing his dream of becoming an electrical engineer.

"Education is the key to open doors in this life," Alexander said, admitting that he's had to hold back some tears of joy since receiving the news that he's graduating in May."

Tears came, they just didn't fall," he said, laughing.

2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation

Strife in Life: Adult Education Graduation Snapshot with Adolfo Gomez (2017-05-16 15:13) - hcdetx





(Harris County Department of Education's GED Graduation 2017 is scheduled for May 20 at 11 a.m. at 6300 Irvington, Houston, Texas, 77022 in our conference center. This story

is part of a series of interviews with our adult students called "Strife in Life." For class information, go to [1]www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation.)

View video:

[youtube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vp71uzF57Ds]

Adolfo Gomez, 35, came to the United States at age 21 from Mexico. He has worked religiously for up to 20 hours each day as a day laborer. Last year, he enrolled in an English class at Harris County Department of Education. The teacher said: "Don't just learn English. You can learn anything you want."

That moment stuck with Gomez as he thought about his little girl, 10, and wife Doris. He decided to go for his GED at a HCDE community class at Hastings High School in Alief.

Days were long and then came class and studies.

"Then I also had to be a father and a husband," he said.

He believes a higher power gave him the wisdom to go back to school.

"I did this for my family and my future," he said, clutching a graduation cap that would soon bear his tassel. That's why I'm here right now."

Gomez, now a foreman in a glass and aluminum company, will continue his studies at a local college. He wants to become an architect.

"So when I become an architect, I will be an example to my daughter," he said. "I believe in education. It's the key to opening doors."

About Harris County Department of Education: HCDE helps school districts in the state's largest county meet the needs of uniquely challenged learners, directly serving students at their schools or one of four HCDE-operated campuses across the county. Learn about these services and more at [2]www.hcde-texas.org.

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1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation
2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/
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2017 School Safety Summit highlights community-minded approach to protecting schools (2017-05-17 06:00) - hcdetx



[1]



Harris County Department of Education is partnering with Crime Stoppers of Houston for the 2017 School Safety Summit, a free event to be held Monday, June 12, 2017, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. The annual event will bring school-based law enforcement officers, school administrators and those interested in school safety together for a summit about the issues facing schools in 2017-2018.

This year's theme, "I PLEDGE TO KEEP MY SCHOOL SAFE," emphasizes the ways that the combined work of individuals leads to a community-minded culture and increased safety.

Keynote speaker will be Juliet Stipeche, City of Houston director of education. Along with representatives from a variety of local, statewide and national agencies, Stipeche and other presenters will touch on critical school safety issues including mental health, human trafficking, internet crimes, police-student interactions, restorative discipline and updates to juvenile law.

Breakout sessions on these topics will be led by representatives from the Harris County District Attorney's Office, Drug Enforcement Administration, Love 146, Restorative Justice Collaborative of Houston, The Harris Center, Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force and the Klein ISD Police Department.

For the third consecutive year, the School Safety Summit will take place at Harris County Department of Education, 6300 Irvington Blvd., Houston, Texas. Those interested in attending may pre-register online at www.hcde-texas.org/register at no cost. Participants who pre-register will receive a free breakfast and lunch at the event. TCOLE credits are available for registrants.

About the Center for Safe and Secure Schools: Developed at the request of local superintendents in the spring of 1999 to advance safe and secure environments for learning and teaching, the Center for Safe and Secure Schools is a leader in the development of increased safety and security strategies in school environments for students and educators. Learn more about the trainings and other opportunities we offer at [2]www.safeandsecureschools.org.

About Harris County Department of Education (HCDE): Serving students, teachers, schools and communities throughout Harris County, HCDE is a local governmental organization providing value for school districts while supporting educational opportunity. Partnering with Harris County school districts, HCDE maximizes local resources and respond to the needs of locally elected school boards and education leaders. HCDE services include school-based therapy for students, afterschool programs, Head Start, educator training, adult education and programs to promote safe schools. To learn more about how your county department of education can help you: [3]www.hcde-texas.org.

- 2. http://www.safeandsecureschools.org/
- 3. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

^{1.} https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/05/school-safety-summit-2017-web-002.jpg

Contracts for bottled water, bread and more awarded for access through HCDE Choice Partners (2017-05-17 14:24) - hcdetx



Contracts for bottled water and bread were awarded at the May 2017 board meeting of Harris County Department of Education and are accessible through HCDE Choice Partners cooperative. Governmental entities that have signed an interlocal contract with HCDE may access these legally procured contracts.

Newly awarded contracts include

Bottled Drinking Water, Coolers and Related Products: DS Services of America, Inc. doing business as Sparkletts; Lone Star Coffee, LLC; Nestle Waters North America doing business

as ReadyRefresh by Nestle, a division of Nestle Waters North America; and Quench USA, Inc.

Bread Products: Kurz & Co.; and

Dairy and Related Products: Borden Dairy Company doing business as Borden Dairy Company of Texas, LLC;

Renewed contracts include

Athletic and Physical Education Supplies and Related Items: Custom Sportswear, Inc.; Educator's Depot, Inc.; Michele M. Summerall doing business as Getpoms.com; The Prophet Corporation doing business as Gopher Sport/Play with a Purpose/Gopher Performance; North Houston Athletics, LLC; Richey & Son, Inc. doing business as Richey Athletics; School Specialty, Inc.; Sideline Interactive, LLC; Soccer 4 All, Inc.; The Soccer Wall Company doing business as Soccer Innovations and Varsity Brands Holding Co., Inc.; BSN Sports, LLC doing business as U.S. Games;

Boxes, Packaging Supplies, Freight Services and Related Items: Cardinal Delivery Service, LLC; and Veritiv Operating Company;

Chemical Products and Services: Auto-Chlor Services, LLC; EcoLab, Inc.; Cordell Incorporated doing business as Hygeia Enviro-Clean; Magnus Procurement & Logistic Solution, Inc.; and PortionPac Chemical Corporation;

Commercial Food Distributor: Gordon Food Service, Inc.; Jake's Finer Foods, Inc.; and Labatt Institutional Supply Company doing business as Labatt Food Service, LLC;

Commodity Processing of USDA Foods: AdvancePierre Foods, Inc.; Alpha Foods Co.; Chinese Food Solutions, Inc. doing business as Asian Food Solutions; Basic American, Inc. doing business as Basic American Foods; Bongards Creameries; Cargill Kitchen Solutions, Inc.; ConAgra Foods, Inc.; Lamb Weston; Goodman Food Product doing business as Don Lee Farms; ES Foods; Foster Poultry Farms doing business as Foster Farms; Pilgrim's Pride Corporation; High Liner Foods USA, Inc.; Let's Do Lunch, Inc. doing business as Integrated Food Service; Smucker Foodservice, Inc.; J R Simplot Company; J.T.M. Provisions Co., Inc.; Jennie-O Turkey Store Sales, LLC; Land O' Lakes, Inc.; M.C.I. Foods, Inc.; Maid-Rite Specialty Foods, LLC; McCain Foods USA, Inc.; Michael Foods, Inc.; National Food Group Inc.; Out of the Shell, LLC doing business as Red Gold, LLC; Rich Chicks; Rich Products Corporation; Rose & Shore; Schwan's Food Service, Inc.; Tabatchnick Fine Foods, Inc.; Tasty Brands, LLC; The Father's Table, LLC; Trident Seafoods Corp.; Tyson Prepared Foods, Inc.; Wawona Frozen Foods, Inc.;

Fire, Safety, Security, Surveillance Equipment and Installation Services: Digital Air Control, Inc. and QSS, LLC doing business as Quality Security Systems;

Frozen and Chilled Beverages: Sunny Sky Products, LLC and Trident Beverage, Inc.;

HVAC Equipment and Service (JOC-IDIQ): A/W Mechanical Services, LP; Dura Pier Facili-208

ties Services, Ltd doing business as Facilities Sources; HVAC Mechanical Services of Texas, Ltd doing business as Hunton Services and Letsos Company;

Insurance Services: Tristar Risk Management;

Modular Buildings: GroundFORCE Building Systems, LLC;

Office Supplies and Related Items: Western - BRW Paper Company, Inc. doing business as Bosworth Papers; Butler Business Products, LLC; Challenge Office Products, Inc.; Jerry LaTour doing business as Hallmark Office Products, Inc.; Reliant Business Products, Inc.; School Specialty, Inc. and Tejas Office Products, Inc.;

Printing, Copying and Related Items: Houston Independent School District; Long Plan Printing, Inc. doing business as LP Printing; Color One Systems, Inc. doing business as Texas Litho; and Thomas Reprographics, Inc. doing business as Thomas Printworks; and

Produce: Brothers Produce, Inc.; Chefs Produce of Houston, Inc.; Hardie's Fruit and Vegetable Co.- Houston L.P doing business as Hardie's Fresh Foods; and Scarmardo Produce Inc.

New Members

Organizations and governmental entities that became members when contracts were approved by the HCDE Board of Trustees on May 16 include **Bay City Library Association**, Bay City; **city of Cerritos; Farmersville ISD**, Farmersville; **city of Harlingen**; **Howard College**, Big Spring; **Hutto ISD**, Hutto; **city of Lake Jackson**, Lake Jackson; **Kennedale ISD**, Kennedale; **Purple Hearts, Inc.**, Fort Worth; **Reeves County,** Pecos; **Riverbend Retreat Center**, Glen Rose; **city of Wallis;** and **Washington County,** Brenham.

About Choice Partners: Choice Partners cooperative offers quality, legal procurement and contract solutions to meet the purchasing needs of governmental entities. Contracts are competitively bid so governmental entities can act immediately to access the contract they need, saving time and money on the bidding process and purchase. Choice Partners includes contracts for education, facilities, food, services, technology and supplies, including a unique supply catalog. For more information, call 877-696-2122 or visit [1]www.choicepartners.org.

1. http://www.choicepartners.org/

Strife in Life: Adult Education Graduation Snapshot with Infant Eggleton (2017-05-17 15:09) - hcdetx





(Harris County Department of Education's GED Graduation 2017 is scheduled for May 20 at 11 a.m. at 6300 Irvington, Houston, Texas, 77022 in our conference center. This story

is part of a series of interviews with our adult students called "Strife in Life." For class information, go to [1]www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation.)

View video:

[youtube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i_oXjyBOonk]

At just 27 years old, 2017 GED graduate Infant Eggleton has faced more hardships than most. Through her determination and positivity, and support from teacher Rosie Coleman, she will walk the stage and receive her GED on May 20 with approximately 79 other adult learners.

Earning her GED is a crucial step for Eggleton, who is trying to make life better for her three children. In May 2016, Eggleton's youngest child was diagnosed with meningitis and they spent two months in the hospital. Eggleton wasn't financially stable at the time and didn't know where to turn for help. Her three children were taken from her, and this pushed Eggleton to make a change.

"Ultimately, I'm grateful for the push because I get to be a better mom," said Eggleton. "Getting my GED proves that I can complete something positive. I know I'm going to make my kids proud of me."

Eggleton found the support system she needed at Memorial Assistance Ministries through HCDE's Adult Education program and completed the program in just three months.

"Rosie Coleman is the best teacher I've ever had," said Eggleton. "She pressed me to keep going. She is the support system I always wanted and needed."

Eggleton is optimistic about her future and plans to continue school in June to become a dental hygienist.

"Getting my GED is not the end of what I can do, it's the beginning of what I'm going to do."

1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation

Summer learning opportunities ... for teachers!? (2017-05-18 11:26) - hcdetx





"It must be nice to have summers off!"

If you're a teacher, you've heard this line before, haven't you? This naive exclamation typically comes from someone who does not understand the professional responsibilities of teachers and what most teachers *really* do over the summer. We search out professional learning to make us better at the craft of teaching.

Taking classes over the summer not only allows teachers to focus on their profession, it also creates a space for teachers to reflect, process and apply. Taking a photography course in June, for example, can lead to thinking in July and early August about how best to incorporate that learning into students' lives.

Summer is also a time to recharge, and even a cooking class or a book club that has no focus on school-related tasks can be just the ticket to a new teaching idea or greater enjoyment in the classroom. Inspired teachers are more effective teachers.

[wpvideo YatjTo5P]

Pumped about professional learning this summer? [1]Check out the Teaching and Learning Center's summer workshops.

(Contributed by Kelly Tumy, curriculum director for English, language arts and social studies, HCDE's Teaching and Learning Center)

1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/who-we-are/divisions-and-leadership/teaching-and-learning-center/upco ming-workshops/

Strife in Life: Adult Education Graduation Snapshot with Veronica Espinola (2017-05-18 16:28) - hcdetx





(Harris County Department of Education's GED Graduation 2017 is scheduled for May 20 at 11 a.m. at 6300 Irvington, Houston, Texas, 77022 in our conference center. This story is part of

a series of interviews with our adult students called "Strife in Life." For class information, go to [1]www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation.)

View video:

[youtube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=slieZ0nnWaM]

Veronica Espinola, the mother of a teenaged son who earned her GED through Harris County Department of Education's Adult Education program, wasn't expecting that learning high school math would bring her closer to her son, but it did – in unexpected ways.

"It was hard to start because I have two jobs, and I'm a mother," she explained. "It's hard to balance both jobs morning and night."

But when Espinola faced her most challenging subject – math – she found that she could relate to her son, who is a ninth-grader, on a new level. It gave them something to talk about.

"I think since we were on the same level, we were able to joke around about homework – about slopes and formulas," she said.

Espinola said she made it through to graduation by setting a goal and focusing on the reason why she set out for it in the first place.

"The reason I decided to go back to school was because I wanted to be an example to my son," Espinola said. "I want to be able to provide a better lifestyle for him."

While there were challenges at times, especially when it came time to schedule classes around her busy life as a working mother, Espinola remained laser-focused on her goal.

"I said I was going to finish by December 2016, and I did," she said. "It was worth it."

About Harris County Department of Education: HCDE helps school districts in the state's largest county meet the needs of uniquely challenged learners, directly serving students at their schools or one of four HCDE-operated campuses across the county. Learn about these services and more at www.hcde-texas.org.

1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation

Strife in Life: Adult Education Graduation Snapshot with Estrella Torres (2017-05-19 07:12) - hcdetx





(Harris County Department of Education's GED Graduation 2017 is scheduled for May 20 at 11 a.m. at 6300 Irvington, Houston, Texas, 77022 in our conference center. This story is part of 220

a series of interviews with our adult students called "Strife in Life." For class information, go to [2]www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation.)

View video:

[youtube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V9hNX6QPhR8]

Before Estrella Torres found out about Harris County Department of Education's Adult Education program, she was beginning to think she might never earn a high school diploma. Now, she's receiving her GED after just one session – with nothing less than perfect attendance!

Torres, 19, the single mother of a 5 year old, faced a number of medical setbacks throughout high school that made finishing, less and less likely.

"I came back to get my GED because I had to drop out two years ago because I got really sick," she said. "I spent most of my time in the hospital."

Depression followed, and Torres, who has diabetes and a disability, learned that going back to her previous high school was not an option. HCDE's Adult Education program was.

"I just had to overcome," she said, adding that she is "proud" to be earning her GED the same year that she intended to graduate high school. "I was the only one in my class to get perfect attendance."

With this big achievement behind her, Torres now has her sights on a post-secondary education and career.

"I want to go to a two-year college to study medical billing and coding," she said.

She credited HCDE's Adult Education teachers for helping her along, referring to them as "wonderful" and "very helpful."

As for those who are in a similar situation, Estrella has some words of advice.

"It is a little bit hard, but you've just got to be really determined," she said.

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1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/05/estrella.jpg

^{2.} http://www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation

^{3.} http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Strife in Life: Adult Education Graduation Snapshot with Mathew Mbaeri (2017-05-19 15:06) - hcdetx





(Harris County Department of Education's GED Graduation 2017 is scheduled for May 20 at 11 a.m. at 6300 Irvington, Houston, Texas, 77022 in our conference center. This story is part of

a series of interviews with our adult students called "Strife in Life." For class information, go to [2]www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation.)

View video:

[youtube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GBue8PYiwc0]

At age 56, single father of five Mathew Mbaeri set out to find a new career path last year and enrolled in GED classes as part of his master plan.

Mbaeri moved to the United States in 2006 from Nigeria and has since worked hard to make a living for his children, ages 16-23.

The Alief resident decided that finally, it was time to make time for his own future. "My kids said Dad, how can you go back to school?" he said, laughing at the memory of his new beginnings. Mbaeri answered pointedly: "So I can be like you guys."

Through God's grace and with lots of studying, Mbaeri said he passed all parts of his rigorous test after completing his GED class. Soon he will enroll in a workforce class at HCDE so that he may study to become certified in construction. After that, he wants to focus on becoming a civil engineer.

"The point is, education has no age limit," he said. "Even if you are 70 or 80."

Returning to school 20 years after dropping out is not easy, he said, but it's definitely doable with help from good teachers.

This year his oldest graduates from college, and he is one proud papa. He admits to feeling a bit wiser himself.

"Go back to school and take care of yourself," he said. "Education is power-and knowledge."

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1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/05/matthew.jpg

2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation

3. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

HCDE teacher-in-training Jennifer Siger named top 'Intern of the Year' by Texas Alternative Certification Association (2017-05-23 13:31) - hcdetx

[1]



(The Texas Alternative Certification Association named Jennifer Siger the 1st place winner of the Texas Alternative Certification Association Intern of the Year for 2016-2017. Siger will be presented a \$1,000 award and plaque at the Consortium of State Organizations for Texas Teacher Education in October. Harris County Department of Education's teacher alternative certification program and principal certification program prepares over a hundred educators for leadership positions yearly throughout greater Harris County. This story about Siger's journey in her first year in training with Harris County Department of Education as teacher at Black Middle School was produced earlier this year. For more information about the teacher of principal prep program, go to [2]www.hcdetexas.org/teacherprep .) Rookie middle school teacher Jennifer Siger works with students she calls "inbetweeners." The often misunderstood middle schoolers can be a challenge, she acknowledges, but they're also a joy to be around. The teacher-in-training enrolled in the Harris County Department of Education teacher alternative certification program gets plenty of support from teacher veterans who are her instructors. Siger began preparing for her new career through evening, weekend and online classes at HCDE last year and is already working as a teacher. The HCDE educator preparation program provides a personalized training experience for aspiring teachers as qualified college graduates enter the program and spend seven to 10 months in pre-service training taking teacher preparation courses. The next 12 months are spent teaching. Small group instruction is hallmark to the program, with a range in classroom size of eight to 20 students in the teacher prep course. Since 2011, the program has recorded a 100 percent pass rate for students completing the courses and taking the certification exams, said Lidia Zatopek, director for HCDE's Educator Certification and Pro-

fessional Advancement. Assistance is provided in securing teaching assignments in elementary or secondary education classrooms. Siger chose English language arts and reading 4-8 as her teaching discipline and teaches sixth grade English language arts at Frank Black Middle School in the Houston Independent School District, a partner with HCDE in the program. Because of the brain changes teens undergo through puberty, the teacher prep program includes adolescent psychology and brain development discussions for teachers that aspire to teach these budding adolescents. They're very unsure of themselves and make a lot of poor choices because of it," said Siger, a mother of two from Klein. She enrolled in the HCDE alternative certification program to make the switch from private to public school teacher, a move which requires Texas Teacher Certification. "On the other hand, they are so ready and excited to learn about the world at large. "They are starting to envision themselves as individuals and are hungry to explore the possibilities available to them." Along with teaching the writing, technology, hands-on activities and teamwork are prominent in her classroom. During a bottle-flipping persuasive writing exercise, student teams weigh the pros and cons of flipping water bottles which should land upright. It's currently trending, but schools don't like the menacing noise and mess that results in student grandstanding. A video shows the principal giving his take on why he doesn't like the practice. She hands out laptops for students to use to get their research to support the side they take. Collaboration is rampant. Siger watches for attention-deficit behaviors and redirects students to the assignment. "One, two," she says. "One, two, eyes on you," the class choruses, returning to their lists of pros and cons. Best teaching practices are at the heart of the alternative certification program at HCDE, Siger said. Keeping teens engaged in their studies means exploring what works and doesn't. "Most (teacher prep) programs would give you tools and say here, now go do it," she explained. "HCDE helps its teachers every single step of the way. The facility and staff are top notch, and they are very invested in us. It's cliché to say it's a big family...but I know they care about me, and that's important to me." Siger was inspired to enter the teaching profession by a teacher who made a difference in her life. She was a sixth grade English teacher and instilled a love for books. While she doesn't expect to make a difference in all her students' lives, she knows she is making a difference with many. That's good enough, she says. "I smile all day at work," Siger said. "These kids are truly a joy to be around." (Siger was recently nominated for the Texas Alternative Certification Association Intern of the Year Award. Winners will be determined by the association by June.) (For information about the HCDE teacher alternative certification program, call 713-696-1348, email [3]hcdeacp@hcde-texas.org or go to [4]www.hcde-texas.org/teacherprep.) Photo: Jennifer Siger teaches sixth grade at Frank Black Middle School in Houston Independent School District through the Harris County Department of Education teacher alternative certification program. Her student Valeria Martinez shows off a poster she is using in her persuasive writing exercise about a new teen craze called "bottle flipping." About Harris County Department of Education: HCDE helps school districts in the state's largest county meet the needs of uniquely challenged learners, directly serving students at their schools or one of four HCDE-operated campuses across the county. Learn about these services and more at [5]www.hcde-texas.org .

- 1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/04/421a8915.jpg
- 2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/teacherprep
- 3. mailto:hcdeacp@hcde-texas.org
- 4. http://www.hcde-texas.org/teacherprep
- 5. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

School safety and mental health: The time to prepare is now (2017-05-25 10:02) - hcdetx





As the school year winds down, it's natural that our attention turns to the fun and freedom of the summer months. Recent events in the news, however, demonstrate that we must be vigilant about the safety of our youth at all times – we must not let our guard down. Also, any time that tragedy occurs on such a large scale, those of us who are teachers, educators, counselors, parents and school safety officers must pay extra attention to the sensitivities of our young people. Now more than ever, school safety and teen mental health should be foremost on our minds.

"What can I do to make sure my school is safe and my students receive the assistance they need?" "How can I, along with my school, be better prepared for the dangers that students face on a daily basis?" "What types of resources are available to help me?"

If you're asking yourself these questions, then please consider joining us on June 12 for the School Safety Summit at Harris County Department of Education. This no-cost event, which offers free breakfast and lunch, is co-sponsored by HCDE's Center for Safe and Secure Schools and Crime Stoppers of Houston.

Juliet Stipeche, from the city of Houston Mayor's Office, will be the keynote speaker. She will be followed by a number of breakout sessions led by representatives from The Harris Center, The Harris County District Attorney's Office, Drug Enforcement Administration, Love 146, Restorative Justice Collaborative of Houston and others.

HCDE is proud of its partnerships that help bring important – in some cases, life-saving – information to those of us fighting to protect students in the Harris County area.

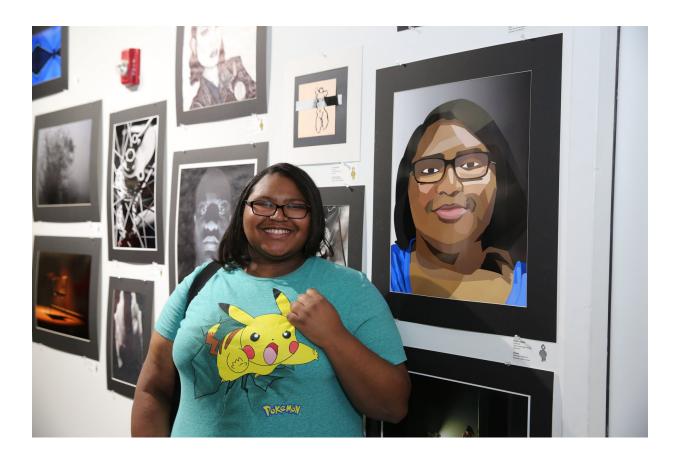
[1]Learn more about this event | [2]RSVP online for breakfast and lunch

TCOLE credits will be available to those who attend.

(Contributed by Ecomet Burley, director, Center for Safe and Secure Schools)

1. http://www.safeandsecureschools.org/SiteAssets/School%20Safety%20Summit%202017%20web.pdf
2. https://workshops.hcde-texas.org/iebms/portalsearch/Results.aspx?Workshop=11262

HCDE chosen as outstanding Scholastic Art & Writing Awards Regional Affiliate to be featured at U.S. Department of Education in fall 2017 exhibit (2017-05-30 18:20) - hcdetx





Work from Harris County Department of Education's creative teens in grades 7-12 who earned Gold Key awards in the 2017 Scholastic Awards regional competition will be showcased at the U.S. Department of Education's Student Art Exhibit in Washington, D.C. The exhibit will be featured beginning September through October 2017. It is the first time in its 14 years as regional sponsor that HCDE has been selected for the prominent national spotlight.

Scholastic Art & Writing is a national art and writing competition which recognizes talent from teens in grades 7-12 from public, private and home schools. HCDE is one of 100 regional affiliates in the nation. Alumni from the program include notables such as Robert Redford, Sylvia Plath, Andy Warhol, Stephen King and Truman Capote.

Earlier this year, HCDE received the 2017 Gold Key for Excellence in the Field Award, presented annually to an outstanding affiliate partner of the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers, sponsors of Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. The Alliance said it is proud to feature its partnership with HCDE as about 30 art pieces will be included in the regional highlight exhibit at the U.S. Department of Education.

"We are proud to be a sponsor of this program and are in awe of the talent exhibited each year by our Harris County teens and the incredible commitment and dedication of their teachers," said County School Superintendent James Colbert Jr. "We continue to grow this program regionally to showcase our local artistic talent."

For more information about how to enter, judge or sponsor the awards, go to [2]www.hcde-texas.org/scholastic.

Photo: Kenedi Cooper of Klein Forest High School stands by her digital self portrait at a Harris County Department of Education regional Scholastic Art & Writing Awards exhibit at Spring Street Studios, Houston in March 2017.

About Harris County Department of Education: HCDE helps school districts in the state's largest county meet the needs of uniquely challenged learners, directly serving students at their schools or one of four HCDE-operated campuses across the county. Learn about these services and more at [3]www.hcde-texas.org.

1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/05/423a3479.jpg

2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/scholastic

3. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Harris County Department of Education Head Start hosts job fair for early childhood teachers and other positions (2017-05-31 10:53) - hcdetx





Harris County Department of Education Head Start is hosting a job fair to recruit teachers, teaching assistants and other staff members to join any of its 15 locations spread throughout northeast Harris County. The recruitment event will be held Friday, June 23, 2017, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at HCDE's Compton Head Start Center located at 9720 Spaulding St., Houston, Texas 77016.

Qualifications for Head Start Teaching Assistant, Early Head Start Teacher and Head Start Teacher include experience working with young children and in interest in early childhood education. Those who hold child development associate (CDA) degrees are strongly encouraged to apply. Interested candidates may reserve interviews by calling 713-696-2177 or by emailing [1]HSeducation@hcde-texas.org.

In addition to the Compton Head Start center, HCDE provides services to facilities in Baytown, J.D. Walker, Pugh, Fonwood, Humble, Fifth Ward, Channelview, Coolwood, Dogan, Barrett Station, San Jacinto, Sheffield and Tidwell. Head Start ensures future success for students both academically and socially and provides comprehensive health, education, nutrition and financial services to the families.

[2]See more info about qualifications. Visit [3]www.hcde-texas.org for general information about HCDE Head Start and locations.

About the HCDE Head Start/Early Head Start/Early Child Care Partnership: Through Head Start/Early Head Start, we serve 1,330 students ages 6 weeks to 5 years in northeast Houston. Within the Early Child Care Partnership, we serve 60 additional children at five community child care centers in our service area. Students receive free healthy meals and snacks as well as vision, hearing, nutrition and developmental screenings. Our students benefit from indoor/outdoor play

in a healthy environment. Centers follow curriculum approved by the Texas Education Agency. Health, education, nutrition and financial services benefit enrolled children and their families to ensure success. Head Start recognizes the role of parent as first and foremost teacher. Parents are encouraged to volunteer and grow through the program.

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1. mailto:HSeducation@hcde-texas.org

2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/media/4645/headstartjobfair-june2017.pdf

- 3. http://www.hcde-texas.org/
- 4. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Cheered by families and staff, students at specialized school mark new chapter in their education (2017-05-31 17:08) - hcdetx





Three graduating seniors from the Harris County Department of Education's Academic and Behavior School West were recognized, and more than two dozen students were promoted to middle school and high school at a graduation ceremony Wednesday that drew parents and staff from area school districts.

AB West Principal Victor Keys, joined by HCDE Superintendent James Colbert Jr. and Assistant Superintendent Jonathan Parker, praised the students and their families for overcoming obstacles, and thanked all who had provided support along the way.

"Our students have worked really hard and they have done an outstanding job getting along," Keys said. "We have a saying here: 'without them there is no us'."

HCDE's AB campuses serve students who have intellectual and developmental disabilities and have been referred by their home campus's Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) committee. Each classroom at an AB campus is staffed with a highly qualified, certified teacher and an educational aide who serve up to six students – providing small group instruction.

Colbert praised the school's leadership, teachers, and educational aides - as well as the students' families.

"I just want to say a big thank you to parents. We appreciate the support you provide to the students every single day," Colbert said. "We have a staff that is absolutely dedicated to serving our fine school districts. We are extremely fortunate to have such dedicated staff who absolutely love your children."

In 2015-2016, more than 800 students from Harris County school districts were served at a specialized HCDE-operated campus, where 100 percent of students are considered to be at-risk.

HCDE also provides special education services through school-based therapists who travel to campuses, homes, or wherever students receive their education.

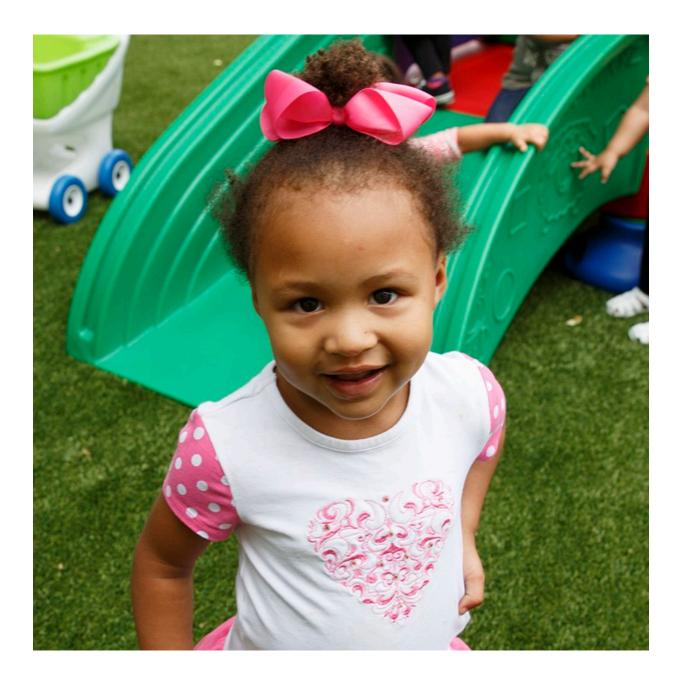
Photo: Graduate Sandra Smith celebrates her success with HCDE leaders. Other 2017 graduating seniors not pictured are Diego Sanchez and Claressa Jackson.

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1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/05/421a0139.jpg
2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

1.6 June

Teaching Tip: Finish friendly and strong (2017-06-01 09:56) - hcdetx





enter the room is a strategy great teachers use to create a positive classroom climate.

Have you thought about using the same train of thought at the end of a class period or school day? What ends your time with your students: the bell, or you?

Finishing strong with a positive, meaningful message is a great way to send your students on their way. You can use quotes, videos, poems, short stories, class mottoes or pledges to end each class.

Capturing Kids' Hearts is a curricula created by the Flippen Group to provide strategy and training for teachers and administrators to achieve success in the classroom. HCDE's Teaching and Learning Center provides classes at our headquarters at 6300 Irvington, Houston, Texas. Upcoming class at HCDE June 7-8. [1]Download the registration form.

💙 Capturing Kids' Hearts

(Contributed by Debi Lokey, Leadership Development Senior Strategist, Flippen Group, [2]http://www.flippengroup.com.)

1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/media/4563/ckh1_registration_flyer_harriscounty_cf07_2016-2017.pdf
2. http://www.flippengroup.com/

Aging workforce, robust construction climate fuel need for workforce apprenticeship programs with adult learners (2017-06-06 18:02) - hcdetx





With the blitz of baby boomer retirees in industry and construction, the shortage of skilled workers is ever so prevalent. That gap is closing thanks to a growing partnership between Harris County Department of Education and Adaptive Construction Solutions. While HCDE supplies adult academic remediation, Adaptive Construction Solutions, an ApprenticeshipUSA program, offers career training and employment.

HCDE is currently serving 102 apprentices who are military veterans training to become iron workers. The model is so successful that it is being replicated and expanded into other occupational areas per the demands of area companies.

Navy veteran Anthony Serrata Jr., 24, is eight weeks into a three-year program which will build his construction and academic skills while he is also being paid. He says he instantly felt a kinship with the other men who are in his small class and gets all the help he needs from his two HCDE teachers: a trades teacher and a math/reading remediation teacher.

"My goal was to find a trade that is meaningful and will help me be successful," said the father of two. "We've all made mistakes, but this program helps us get back on track.

While the construction teacher is showing students how to handle tools and measure materials, the academic teacher is called upon to give students a refresher course on fractions for measurement. Both teachers are available at all times to the adult learners.

Later in the day, students and teachers move to the corporation for on-the-job training.

Adult education and literacy programs in the state are now funded through the Texas Work-244 force Commission through the U.S. Department of Labor in a move to help students acquire skills needed for the workplace. Locally, ApprenticeshipTexas supports the Texas Workforce Commission's goals to expand registered apprenticeships, and Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast is the regional arm of the Texas Workforce Commission.

Through the workforce model, remedial math and language curriculum is customized by HCDE's Adult Education division to fit the needs of local employers. The foundation course is the basic National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) core instruction which teaches construction fundamentals such as construction math, hand and power tools, construction drawings and safety. Employees move on to specializations after gaining the certification.

Besides the attrition of skilled workers who are retiring, robust construction in is another force driving the demand for a new generation of skilled workers.

"So much construction is occurring in the greater Houston area, and it's projected to reach into the year 2040, so we had to take innovative steps to meet industry demands," said James Carnes, U.S. Department of Labor.

HCDE County School Superintendent James Colbert, Jr. said the Department is uniquely positioned to offer support as its adult education program reach throughout Harris County, with 200 highly qualified adult education teachers and 50 learning centers ranging from Alief to Spring Branch to Liberty.

Success of the program with HCDE is bringing additional referrals for partnerships, according to Carnes. The attrition rate of the apprenticeship program is very low, he explained.

"With the case of classroom instruction, these students need training, support, remediation the whole nine yards," Carnes said. "Harris County Department of Education provides the tools needed for remediation needed in the program. All the parts fit together."

For information about HCDE Adult Education programs and services, go to [2]www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation.

Photo: HCDE Instructor Clifton Hypolite works with student Anthony Serrata Jr. in a skilled workforce training class.

About HCDE Adult Education: With a 30-year track record, HCDE Adult Education provides classes to adult learners with a goal to "learn to earn," including adult basic literacy and math skills, GED, English as a second language and vocational training. Classes are held in 35 community locations throughout Harris and Liberty counties as HCDE serves over 8,000 adult learners. Communities include Baytown, Alief, Channelview, Cy-Fair, Deer Park, Galena Park, Goose Creek, Katy, Klein, Pasadena, Sheldon, Spring Branch and Liberty. Corporations also benefit from HCDE services provided to English language learning employees aimed at improving productivity and safety in the workplace. For more information, access [3]www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation or 713-692-6216.

About Harris County Department of Education: HCDE helps school districts in the state's

largest county meet the needs of uniquely challenged learners, directly serving students at their schools or one of four HCDE-operated campuses across the county. Learn about these services and more at [4]www.hcde-texas.org.

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- 1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/06/teacher-cliftonhypolite_studentanthonyserrata.jpg
- 2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation
- ${\tt 3. http://www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation}$
- 4. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

School Safety Summit with HCDE, Crime Stoppers to address drug trends, human trafficking, suicide prevention June 12 (2017-06-08 07:08) - hcdetx





Harris County Department of Education is partnering with Crime Stoppers of Houston for the 2017 School Safety Summit, a free event to be held Monday, June 12, 2017, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. The annual event will bring school-based law enforcement officers, school administrators and those interested in school safety together for a summit about the issues facing schools in 2017-2018.

The event begins with breakout sessions on school safety topics throughout the day. Keynote speaker will be Juliet Stipeche, City of Houston director of education.

School safety concerns range from juvenile law updates to current drug trends. Restorative Justice is introduced to help educators build relationships with students throughout the school day as a means to hold students accountable. Other breakout sessions beginning at 9:45 a.m. address Internet crimes against children, suicide prevention and human trafficking.

This year's theme, "I PLEDGE TO KEEP MY SCHOOL SAFE," emphasizes the ways that the combined work of individuals leads to a community-minded culture and increased safety.

For the third consecutive year, the School Safety Summit will take place at Harris County Department of Education, 6300 Irvington Blvd., Houston, Texas.

About the Center for Safe and Secure Schools: Developed at the request of local superintendents in the spring of 1999 to advance safe and secure environments for learning and teaching, the Center for Safe and Secure Schools is a leader in the development of increased safety and security strategies in school environments for students and educators. Learn more about the trainings and other opportunities we offer at [2]www.safeandsecureschools.org.

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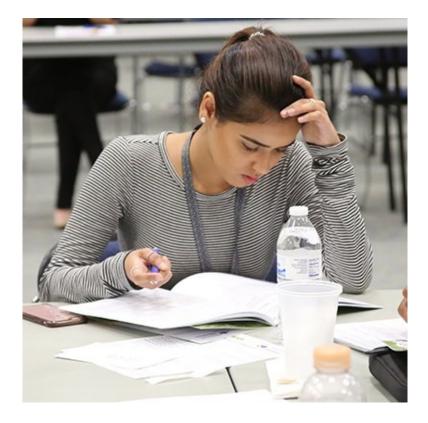
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1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/06/fb-school-building-banner-for-tanya.jpg

2. http://www.safeandsecureschools.org/

3. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Teaching Tip: Struggle is not always productive (2017-06-08 14:50) - hcdetx





Many of us in education like to say that learning is not just about getting the right answer – it's about the process of solving problems. The harder you have to think, the story goes, the more you're learning. Dan Finkle's TEDx Talk, [1]"Five Principles of Extraordinary Math Teaching," would seem to agree with this premise, and he does a good job of advocating for engaging students through struggle and play.

However, as Greg Ashman has pointed out, the School of Struggle can lead students down a dark path of non-instruction that is frustrating and unfair. "We have known since the 1980s that asking students to struggle at solving problems with little teacher guidance is a terrible way of teaching," [2]Ashman writes, adding that that Finkle's type of problem-based learning is "inequitable."

Productive struggle needs to be differentiated for our students. Those accessing the material at a lower knowledge level may get confused, and the struggle ends up doing the opposite of

motivating or engaging. Before teachers jump on board the problem-based learning bandwagon, they should consider the ways that difficulty can be too high – and harmful to the student.

(Contributed by Nicole Shanahan, curriculum director for mathematics, HCDE's Teaching and Learning Center)

1. https://gregashman.wordpress.com/2017/04/26/this-tedx-talk-about-maths-teaching-is-pretty-bad/
2. https://gregashman.wordpress.com/2017/04/26/this-tedx-talk-about-maths-teaching-is-pretty-bad/

Partnership with Walmart provides employment opportunities for HCDE adult learners (2017-06-08 16:33) - hcdetx





Community partnerships are valuable assets to any organization. For Harris County Department of Education's Adult Education division, a five-year partnership with Walmart offers employment opportunities for adult learners looking for part-time jobs, as well as interview training.

As part of their second major round of hiring with HCDE, staff from the Walmart on Crosstimbers visited the Adult Education Learning Center on June 7 to recruit prospective employees and help more than 150 students and community members fill out online applications for jobs of their choice.

"Our partnership with Walmart is very important to us," said Adult Education Program Manager Angela Johnson. "They work with our students and their schedules to ensure they can continue with their education while gaining employment opportunities."

The partnership began five years ago when Johnson noticed the Walmart at Crosstimbers was looking for extra help. After speaking with Raquel Hernandez, human resources manager and personnel coordinator for the location, HCDE and Walmart decided to work together to find a solution for both organizations.

"A lot of the students at HCDE are willing to do part-time jobs on the weekends," said Hernandez. "That's exactly what our store needs."

Hernandez also believes in the importance of hiring within the surrounding area to make sure the community's needs are met.

HCDE Adult Education staff, including classroom aide Bianca Garcia, helped spread the word 252

about the hiring event to area residents and students looking for jobs. Garcia posted the flyer on social media and invited friend Sonia Reyes to attend and meet with Walmart staff.

"This event is great because it gives people more opportunities for jobs, some of them their first job," said Garcia.

For more information on HCDE Adult Education classes, visit [1]www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation.

Photo: HCDE Adult Education classroom aide Bianca Garcia helps Sonia Reyes apply for a job with Walmart.

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1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation

- 2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation
- 3. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

HCDE employee Robert Bell supports GED students through volunteering (2017-06-13 15:28) - hcdetx





Harris County Department of Education and its employees support enriching educational opportunities in the county and provide value through service. HCDE employee Robert Bell goes a step further and carries this mission into his personal life.

For the past three months, Bell has been voluntarily tutoring adult learners in the HCDE GED program. As the HCDE network analyst and storage administrator, Bell specializes in math, a subject in which many students struggle.

"I know the issues people have with math," said Bell, "so I saw an opportunity to help out."

The additional tutoring helps students pass their GED tests and ultimately take advantage of better job opportunities. Current GED student Kimberly Schleisser, who has been working with Bell for a month, appreciates his ability to easily break down math problems.

"The tutoring is helpful because he covers everything in detail to make sure we completely understand the material," said Schleisser.

Bell also feels connected to the adult learners he tutors in several ways. His mother teaches GED and ESL classes at Lonestar College, so he is familiar with the program. More specifically, in 2015 he attended the University of Houston and received his bachelor's degree at the age of 43, so he understands firsthand the determination it takes to go back to school later in life.

"I volunteer to tutor because I understand what they're going through," explained Bell. "It's also important to me as an employee of HCDE because it's another way I can help further the goals

of our organization."

Those interested in volunteering can call the HCDE Adult Education division at 713-692-6216 and ask for Eduardo Honold, director of Adult Education.

Photo: HCDE employee Robert Bell helps Adult Education student Kimberly Schleisser with algebra in preparation of her GED test.

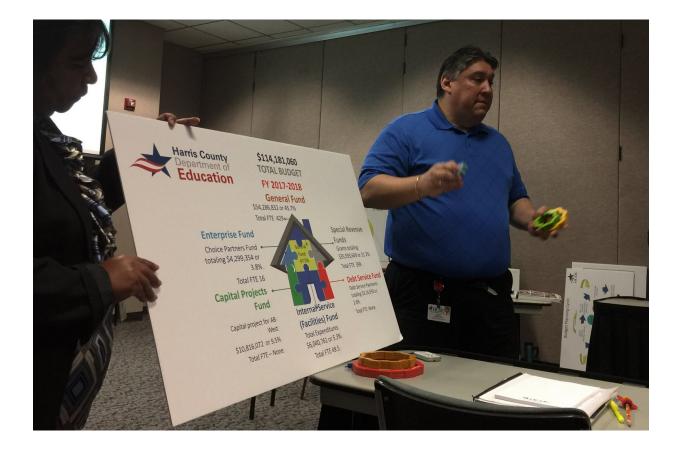
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1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Proposed HCDE budget includes plan to expand at-risk teens' access to nationally recognized debate program (2017-06-13 18:13) - hcdetx





A 2017-2018 budget plan presented to the Harris County Department of Education Board of Trustees on Tuesday, June 13, included funding for a debate program that would serve 300 low-income, at-risk high school students.

For the third consecutive year, the proposed budget also included a tax rate below the effective rate, at \$.0051. If adopted at the board's regular meeting in September, the tax rate would amount to an annual \$10.20 investment for the average homeowner – a reduction of \$0.20 from the previous year. Combined with grants, fees, and revenues from HCDE's purchasing cooperative, the \$114 million total budget funds four schools serving special needs students, school-based therapists, after-school programming, early childhood education, and adult education and workforce development in Harris County.

The proposed CASE Debates initiative would be administered by HCDE's Cooperative for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids (CASE), which services 9,000 youth in greater Harris County. The program provides three seminars for youth and coaches, along with three debate tournaments utilizing the Houston Urban Debate League (HUDL) model.

Currently only Houston Independent School District schools participate in the HUDL program. The HCDE proposal expands the program by identifying and serving at-risk teens from 20 high schools in five Harris County school districts.

"Debate sparks and nurtures critical thinking while also helping students improve communication skills," said County School Superintendent James Colbert Jr. "These are initiatives which help continue to build partnerships across school districts in Harris County." The budget also includes funding for a public recovery high school to help students who have completed a substance abuse or dependency rehabilitation program. Several capital improvement projects are proposed to help provide and enhance facilities for adult learners and special populations students.

The HCDE Board of Trustees will take action on the proposed budget at its regular meeting on July 18.

Photo: HCDE Assistant Superintendent of Finance Jesus Amezcua presents 2017-2018 budget data to HCDE trustees at a budget workshop June 13.

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1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/06/img_2570.jpg

2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Teaching Tip: Encourage students to teach each other (2017-06-14 14:42) - hcdetx





"Kids learn better from each other than they learn from us," said artist and consultant Joe Culotta, 260

while leading the 12th Annual You Gotta Have Art workshop at Harris County Department of Education. Thirteen art teachers from eight school districts and two private schools attended the two-day event, at which Culotta issued wisdom and shared ideas for how to make art class much more than craft hour. He encouraged his group of attendees to stand for the seriousness of art pedagogy while hammering the importance of play and exploration. "It's our job to develop students' sense of space and time and looking at things," Culotta said, adding that "exploration is a part of growing up." Among this year's art projects to try and emulate were books made from foil and decorated with embossing tools, watercolor paintings made by blowing soap bubbles through straws, art bugs created out of Styrofoam and molding clay, as well as countless other drawings, doodles, jewels and designs. The possibilities for uniqueness and reinvention are endless, according to Culotta, but he has one strict rule that art teachers must always follow. "Don't do it for them!" he shouted. "If my hand touches your artwork, it's no longer yours, it's mine."

HCDE physical therapist Eccles shares personal story of struggles, strengths on American Ninja Warrior June 19 (2017-06-19 14:42) - hcdetx





Charlotte Eccles

Harris County Department of Education School-Based Therapy Services physical therapist Charlotte Eccles competes in the *American Ninja Warrior* trials on KPRC Channel 2 at 8 p.m. June 19. She shares this personal account of her journey with a life-changing struggle with a brain tumor condition called acoustic neuroma. We are extremely proud to have Charlotte as our HCDE employee.

Through her position as a physical therapist in School-Based Therapy Services, she works with children with special needs in Spring Branch Independent School District in their school environment. Physical therapy in the school setting may help children with challenges that include: getting on and off the bus, adapting physical education activities, maneuvering through the cafeteria line and supporting mobility and positioning options to help students be successful in the classroom and school environment. HCDE helps more than 7,000 children with special learning needs through our 160 physical and occupational therapy practitioners at the student's home campus. We provide more than 50 percent of special education therapy services in our 25 Harris County school districts. Charlotte's story of commitment to herself, her family and her career calling are chronicled below.

By Charlotte Eccles:

I knew from the day I was diagnosed with an acoustic neuroma that I would face struggle and hardship but I also made a promise to myself on that day that I would use

my struggle to help others.

I was diagnosed two- and a-half years ago with my acoustic neuroma and had a middle fossa craniotomy four weeks later with Dr. Derald Brackmann at the House Clinic Acoustic Neuroma Center at St. Vincent Medical Center.

Although the surgery was a success because the tumor was removed and Dr. Brackmann was able to preserve my hearing, my balance nerve was cut during the operation. Immediately after surgery, I had significant challenges with balance and coordination. I also experienced temporary facial paralysis from compression to the facial nerve when my brain swelled in the ICU. I was a mom with two young daughters. I'm a pediatric physical therapist that fiercely advocates for children with special needs to believe in themselves despite their differences. My life changed in a heartbeat. I was no longer the therapist. I was now the patient with a long road to recovery ahead of me.

I underwent aggressive physical therapy. I stayed out in California for a month and then went back to Houston to continue intense physical therapy.

I remember like it was yesterday when every step with walking was unsteady and taxing, and resembled that of a toddler walking for the first time. I remember when simple tasks such as walking down the grocery store aisle made me dizzy, nauseated and off balance because of all the visual stimulation. And when I couldn't spit toothpaste out or pronounce my words correctly because my face was paralyzed.

Six months after surgery, I transitioned from a conventional outpatient physical therapy setting into a ninja gym, with a physical therapist and trainer who happened to be an American Ninja Warrior competitor. I remember the first day I walked into the ninja gym. All the obstacles that I saw were so parallel with the obstacles in life I was facing. In that moment, I knew it was going to be the place that I took back everything my tumor had stolen physically from me.

It's been a long journey for me. It has not only been a physical fight but a constant mental battle as well. But looking back, it has been an experience so valuable and one that I can honestly say I'm grateful for. A blessing in disguise for I have become so much stronger and have grown in unimaginable ways. But this is an outcome that could not even dream possible when I was first diagnosed or right after my surgery. It's been a process.

Here is the message that I am driven to share with people. One would not know anything about the physical adversity I have faced over the last two years just by looking at me. One would not recognize the emotional pain I've experienced that accompanies the trauma of having a brain tumor. People cannot see the plate in my head and cannot feel the screws in my skull. They cannot see the huge scar that is now covered by my hair. They would not know that just two years ago I was relearning to walk and had absolutely no movement in the right side of my face. Today, they would not recognize that I continue to have challenges with balance that come from a severed right balance nerve as well as the complications that I still have with my facial nerve.

But the struggle has been part of my story and I continue to charge forward enthusiastically and persistently, to push my limits, dreaming big and believing I can reach beyond my grasp to achieve anything I set my mind to. I'm definitely not the same as I was before surgery. I have a new normal. I still have to work extremely hard at balance tasks. It still takes every ounce of effort. If there is anything on the floor, like a water bottle, in the gym, I will be the one to trip and fall over it. And my smile, it's different and not as symmetric as it was before. But this I can say with confidence-it's a stronger, deeper, more witnessing smile that supersedes my previous one.

The craziest part of the whole journey – I was picked to complete this season on American Ninja Warrior. I competed in the spring in San Antonio. My episode is scheduled to air on June 19.

I couldn't be more excited to share my journey with the world. If someone told me when I was laying in the ICU that in two years I would be competing on American Ninja Warrior, I probably would have cried and I definitely would not have believed them. It would have sounded like a cruel joke.

The opportunity to compete on the show means more to me than words can express. This opportunity has given me a way to communicate to people challenged by adversity what they can do rather than what they can't. I want people to see the abilities in their disabilities and to recognize what a never give up attitude can do for them, to truly believe in no limitations and that anything is possible. What feels impossible can indeed be possible. I feel like all of us who have faced this adversity have been given a unique opportunity. We get to use our adversity to be a light, to give others hope, and make a difference.

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Before, during and after: Prepare for hurricanes with Choice Partners (2017-06-20 17:51) - hcdetx



Don't wait until the storm hits to think about hurricane preparedness. HCDE Choice Partners helps school districts and local government through all phases of disaster.

[youtube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o3aEi_PWDA4]

Houston's got talent! Students from 9 CASE for Kids summer programs paired with professional artists at Hobby Center June 22 (2017-06-21 07:00) - hcdetx





Kids hit the big stage at Hobby Center for the Performing Arts in Zilkha Hall, 800 Bagby St., for the annual Kids' Day at Hobby Center on June 22. Rehearsals for 135 students begin at 2:30 p.m., and the curtains rise at 6 p.m. for the hour-long performance. The students in elementary and middle school attend afterschool programs funded through Harris County Department of Education's Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids, or CASE for Kids.

The event gives students opportunities to learn from local professional artists in CASE afterschool summer programs. Kids' Day at Hobby Center for the Performing Arts is the culminating event. Students perform or display their artistic works ranging from movie-making to stage combat to theatre at the Hobby Center.

CASE for Kids provides resources, trainings and funding for afterschool programs, serving students in grades pre-k through 12 in afterschool programs in schools, child care facilities and community centers throughout Harris County. The students participating in Kids' Day at Hobby Center are enrolled in CASE for Kids summer programs through the Texas Education Agency's Afterschool Centers on Education's 21st Century Community Learning Center.

HCDE Superintendent James Colbert Jr. says the long-standing, fine arts, summer program helps bring attention to the importance fine arts plays in shaping a well-rounded individual, giving kids exposure to experiences with music, theatre, art and dance.

Artist professionals like Samuel Dinkins of Dinky Drum Co. LLC work with the students for several weeks in their summer afterschool programs. Other artists come from nonprofits such as FotoFest, Ensemble Theatre and the Brazilian Arts Foundation.

School districts participating include Pasadena, Alief, Aldine, Clear Creek, Galena Park and Spring Branch.

"Hobby Center is a state-of-the art facility and the staff there allows our students to see the nuts-and-bolts as well as the glitz that accompanies theater and performance," said Lisa Thompson-Caruthers, CASE for Kids director. "Fine arts are an essential element in education, and by working with these afterschool fine arts vendors, students are able to explore the fine arts."

About Harris County Department of Education: HCDE helps school districts in the state's largest county meet the needs of uniquely challenged learners, directly serving students at their schools or one of four HCDE-operated campuses across the county. Learn about these services and more at [2]www.hcde-texas.org.

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- 1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/06/423a6926.jpg
- 2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

25 students representing HCDE, local schools travel to Carnegie Hall to accept National Scholastic Art & Writing Medals (2017-06-22 13:42) - hcdetx





Twenty-five of the best artists and writers from Harris County traveled to New York City this month to be honored with National Scholastic Art & Writing Awards Gold Medals at Carnegie Hall. Harris County teens received 28 National Gold Medals for 2017, more than double the 12 earned last year, and 59 national medals in total. The Awards are sponsored regionally by Harris County Department of Education.

Students traveling to New York City's Carnegie Hall represent HCDE and the following school districts and private schools: Aldine, Klein, Deer Park, Clear Creek, Pasadena, Katy, Cy-Fair, Pearland and Spring Branch independent school districts and private schools River Oaks Baptist, St. John's School and The Village School.

"For more than 90 years, Scholastic Art & Writing Awards has recognized the vision, ingenuity and talent of our students and provided opportunities for creative teens to be celebrated," said Andrea Segraves, Harris County Department of Education coordinator for Scholastic Art & Writing. "With more than 330,000 entries nationally, we are proud of our Harris County medalists."

During the National Ceremony on June 8, hundreds of teens from across the U.S. were honored by actress and comedian Amy Schumer, Scholastic CEO and President Richard Robinson, actress Ellie Kemper, artist Paul Chan and more. Among those students was Saranna Zhang, Spring Branch Independent School District student and winner of a National Gold Key award for her artwork, "My Journey."

"This experience has really encouraged me to be more creative and open with my work," said Zhang. "It has definitely given me the motivation to keep making art and to share my views on what is important to me and the future of the world."

The Harris County writers who traveled to New York City for the Awards were Jacob DuPont, Klein ISD; Taylor Gleason, Deer Park ISD; Mary Ann Hurtado, Klein ISD; Shania Hurtado, Klein ISD; Tyler King, St. John's School; Vivian Tsao, The Village School; Peyton Vasquez, Deer Park ISD; Elizabeth Willms, Deer Park ISD; Julia Smith, St. John's School; and Urvashi Deshpande, The Village School.

The artists were Alexis Cazares, Pasadena ISD; Alexus Castillo, River Oaks Baptist; Alliemarie Crochet, Katy ISD; Fatemeh Ebrahimi, Katy ISD; Nallely Garza, Clear Creek ISD; Connie Lau, Katy ISD; Mackenzie Lopez, Klein ISD; Alec Martinez, Cy-Fair ISD; Asma Mashal, Katy ISD; Melissa Sosa, Pasadena ISD; Akhil Thadani, Aldine ISD; Bryce Williams, Cy-Fair ISD; Wendy Xie, Pearland ISD; Juwon Yoo, Spring Branch ISD; and Saranna Zhang, Spring Branch ISD.

For more information on the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards and the complete list of national medalists from Harris County, visit [1]www.hcde-texas.org/scholastic.

Photo: Harris County students attending the 2017 National Scholastic Art & Writing Awards pose on a bridge in Central Park.

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1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/scholastic
2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Teaching Tip: Make the most of summer with affordable outings (2017-06-27 13:49) - hcdetx





While some may think teachers have the entire summer to sit by the pool and have fun in the sun, teachers also spend time preparing for the next year and for personal enrichment. According to Lynnice Hockaday, digital education and innovation specialist for HCDE's Teaching and Learning Center, it won't be long before teachers are back to lesson planning and decorating the classroom.

"However, it is important to get the most out of summer," says Hockaday.

How do teachers go about doing this?

Hockaday recommends that teachers take affordable outings.

"First and foremost, take a little time to relax," she writes, "and when you are out visiting your favorite sports venue, amusement park or museum, remember to carry your educator ID."

Hockaday notes that many places offer substantial educator discounts and some free admissions.

Afterschool funding through Harris County Department of Education's CASE for Kids provides \$550,787 to fund 24 area programs (2017-06-28 15:14) - hcdetx





Afterschool is made possible for 1,600 children across Harris County for the upcoming 2017-2018 school year through \$550,787 in funding to Harris County Department of Education's Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids, or CASE for Kids. The CASE for Kids Partnership Project is the result of collaboration between HCDE, the Houston-Galveston Area Council, the Texas Workforce Commission and awarded sites. HCDE commits local funds to supplement comprehensive afterschool programming.

CASE for Kids provides resources, trainings and funding for afterschool programs, serving students in grades pre-k through 12 in afterschool programs in schools, child care facilities and community centers throughout Harris County. Specifically, Partnership Project funding begins as school opens in August and extends through summer. Amounts vary from \$10,000 to \$30,000 for each program.

The following districts and sites gain the funding: Aldine ISD (Goodman Elementary, Raymond Academy and Stehlik Intermediate); Academy of Accelerated Learning (charter); Alief ISD (Kennedy Elementary and Miller Intermediate); Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Houston (Havard, Morefield and Stafford); Houston ISD (Benbrook, Briscoe, Field, Park Place, Port Houston, Sequin, Whidby and Whittier elementary schools); Pasadena ISD (Frazier and Teague elementary schools), Precinct2gether, Inc. (YET II); Sheldon ISD (Carroll, Monahan and Sheldon elementary schools); and Southwest Schools Charter (Bissonnet Elementary).

The goal of Partnership Project is to provide supplemental funding for comprehensive afterschool programs in order to promote several areas of learning. Funding provides increased support for numeracy, literacy, and social and emotional learning, explained Lisa Thompson-Caruthers, director of CASE for Kids. "At Harris County Department of Education, we remain committed to supporting afterschool as a means to keep kids safe and provide enriching activities before and after school and during the summer months," said HCDE County School Superintendent James Colbert Jr. "Partnership Project is a cornerstone for meeting that goal."

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- 1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/06/103.jpg
- 2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

1.7 July

Save the Date: 2018 Early Childhood Winter Conference Jan. 27 (2017-07-05 13:16) - hcdetx





Save the date for HCDE's R.T. Garcia Early Childhood Winter Conference on January 27, 2018 at the Kingdom Builder's Center, 6011 West Orem.

The 32nd annual conference features keynote speakers Dr. Becky Bailey, author and national presenter, Dr. Gilberto Soto, professor of Music Education/Guitar at Texas A &M International, and more than 100 breakout sessions from in-demand presenters. As an internationally renowned expert in childhood education and founder of Loving Guidance, Inc., Dr. Bailey will focus on Conscious Discipline, a whole-school solution for social-emotional learning and self-regulation. Additionally, participants will sing, dance and move with Dr. Soto's presentation centered around music and movement to enhance learning. View the event flyer for more information: [1]http://www.hcde-texas.org/media/4676/ecwc _mailer _2018.pdf

1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/media/4676/ecwc_mailer_2018.pdf

HCDE releases Harris County School Districts Calendar 2017-2018 for 25 area districts (2017-07-06 14:10) - hcdetx

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District	Classes Begin	Thanksgiving	Winter Break	Spring Break	Easter	Other Holidays	Classes End	District
Aldine	Aug. 21	Nov. 20-24	Dec. 21 - Jan. 3	March 12-16	March 30	Sept. 4, Oct. 6*, Oct. 9, Jan. 4-5*, Jan. 15, Feb. 16*, Feb. 19, May 28	May 31	Aldir
Alief	Aug. 16	Nov. 20-24	Dec. 18 - Jan. 1	March 12-16	March 30	Sept. 4, Oct. 9*, Jan. 2*, Jan. 15, Feb. 19*	May 25	Ali
Channelview	Aug. 16	Nov. 20-24	Dec. 25 - Jan. 5	March 12-16	March 30	Sept. 4, Oct. 9*, Oct. 23*, Jan. 8*, Jan. 15, Feb. 19*, March 23*, Apr. 2*	May 25	Channelvie
Clear Creek	Aug. 21	Nov. 20-24	Dec. 25 - Jan. 5	March 12-16	March 30	Sept. 4, Oct. 6*, Nov. 7*, Jan. 8*, Jan. 15*, May 28	May 31	Clear Cree
Crosby	Aug. 17	Nov. 20-24	Dec. 22 - Jan. 5	March 12-16	March 30	Sept. 4, Jan. 8*, Jan. 15, Feb. 19*, May 28	May 31	Cros
Cy-Fair	Aug. 28	Nov. 20-24	Dec. 22 - Jan. 4	March 12-16	March 30	Sept. 4, Oct. 9*, Jan. 5*, Jan. 15, Feb. 19*, May 28	June 1	Cy-Fa
Dayton	Aug. 17	Nov. 20-24	Dec. 21 - Jan. 5	March 12-16	March 30	Sept. 4, Oct. 18, Jan. 8*, Jan. 15*, May 18	May 25	Dayto
Deer Park	Aug. 28	Nov. 20-24	Dec. 22 - Jan. 5	March 12-16	March 30	Sept. 4, Oct. 9*, Dec 21*, Jan. 15*, May 28	June 1	Deer Pa
Galena Park	Aug. 23	Nov. 20-24	Dec. 22 - Jan. 5	March 12-16	March 30	Sept. 4, Oct. 9*, Jan. 8*, Jan. 15, Feb. 16*, Feb. 19, May 5*, May 28	May 31	Galena Pa
Goose Creek	Aug. 28	Nov. 20-24	Dec. 21 - Jan. 3	March 12-16	March 30	Sept. 4, Oct. 9*, Nov. 3*, Jan. 4-5*, Jan. 15, Feb. 19*, Apr. 13*, May 28	May 31	Goose Cree
Houston	Aug. 28	Nov. 20-24	Dec. 25 - Jan. 5	March 12-16	March 30	Sept. 4, Sept. 22*, Dec. 22*, Jan. 15, May 28	June 1	Housto
Huffman	Aug. 28	Nov. 20-24	Dec. 22 - Jan. 2	March 12-16	March 30	Sept. 4, Oct. 27*, Jan. 3*, Jan. 15*, Feb. 19, Apr. 27, May 28	June 1	Huffma
Humble	Aug. 28	Nov. 20-24	Dec. 18 - Jan. 1	March 12-16	March 30	Sept. 4, Jan. 2*, Jan. 15, Feb. 19*, May 28	June 1	Humb
Katy	Aug. 16	Nov. 20-24	Dec. 18 - Jan. 1	March 12-16	March 30	Sept. 4, Jan. 2*, Jan. 15*, Feb. 19*	May 24	Ka
Klein	Aug. 21	Nov. 20-24	Dec. 22 - Jan. 5	March 12-16	March 30	Sept. 4, Oct. 13*, Oct. 16*, Jan. 8*, Jan. 15, Feb. 19*, March 29*, May 28	May 31	Kle
La Porte	Aug. 23	Nov. 20-24	Dec. 22 - Jan. 5	March 12-16	March 30	Sept. 4, Oct. 9*, Jan. 8*, Jan. 15, Feb. 19*, May 28	May 24	La Por
New Caney	Aug. 28	Nov. 20-24	Dec. 25 - Jan. 5	March 12-16	March 30	Sept. 4, Oct. 23*, Jan. 8*, Feb. 19*, May 28	June 1	New Cane
Pasadena	Aug. 21	Nov. 20-24	Dec. 25 - Jan. 5	March 12-16	March 30	Sept. 4, Oct. 6*, Oct. 9*, Jan. 8*, Jan. 15*, Feb. 16*, Feb. 19*, May 28	May 30	Pasader
Pearland	Aug. 21	Nov. 20-24	Dec. 18 - Jan. 1	March 12-16	March 30	Sept. 4, Oct. 9*, Jan. 2-3.*, Jan. 15, Feb. 19*, May 28	May 31	Pearlar
Sheldon	Aug. 22	Nov. 20-24	Dec. 25 - Jan. 5	March 12-16	March 30	Sept. 4, Oct. 20*, Nov. 1*, Dec. 22*, Jan. 8*, Jan. 15, Feb. 19*, Apr. 2, May 28	May 31	Sheldo
Spring	Aug. 17	Nov. 20-24	Dec. 22 - Jan. 5	March 12-16	March 30	Sept. 4, Sept. 18*, Oct. 9*, Nov. 6*, Dec. 11*, Jan. 8*, Jan. 15, Feb. 19*, Apr. 9*, May 28	May 31	Sprin
Spring Branch	Aug. 21	Nov. 20-24	Dec. 18 - Jan. 1	March 12-16	March 30	Sept. 4, Oct. 9*, Jan. 2*, Jan. 15, Feb. 19*, Apr. 20, May 28	June 1	Sprir Brand
Stafford	Aug. 21	Nov. 20-24	Dec. 18 - Jan. 1	March 12-16	March 30	Sept. 4, Sept. 29, Oct. 9, Oct. 20*, Jan. 2-3*, Jan. 15, Feb. 2*, Feb. 19, Apr. 16*, May 28	May 25	Staffo
Tomball	Aug. 22	Nov. 20-24	Dec. 25 - Jan. 5	March 12-16	March 30	Sept. 4, Oct. 9*, Jan. 8-9*, Jan. 15*, Feb. 16*, Feb. 19*, March 19*, May 28	May 31	Tomba

Compiled by Harris County Department of Education

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Harris County Department of Education's annual Harris County School Districts 2017-2018 Calendar is now available online. HCDE has produced the calendar for the past 15 years. It features the school year's start and end dates, spring and winter breaks, and student and staff holidays of [1]all 25 Harris County districts that HCDE serves, as approved by the district boards.

Access the consolidated calendar here: [2]http://www.hcde-texas.org/media/4680/schooldistrictcalen dar2017-18.pdf

State law mandates that schools begin no earlier than the fourth Monday of August, which lands on Aug. 28 this year. However, some Harris County districts have "district of innovation" status that allows them to waive this state regulation and opt for an earlier start date. A Texas school district must have an acceptable performance rating and create a comprehensive plan of innovation for a five-year term in order to become a district of innovation.

Students across all 25 districts have matching, week-long Thanksgiving breaks November 20-24 and week-long spring breaks March 12-16. All 25 districts are also closed on Friday, March 30 for Easter. Summer vacation starts up once again in 2018 between May 24 and June 1 for all Harris County districts.

About Harris County Department of Education: HCDE helps school districts in the state's largest county meet the needs of uniquely challenged learners, directly serving students at their schools or one of four HCDE-operated campuses across the county. Learn about these services and more at [3]www.hcde-texas.org.

1. http://hcde-texas.org/how-can-we-help-you/harris-county-schools/

- 2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/media/4680/schooldistrictcalendar2017-18.pdf
- 3. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Scholastic Art & Writing Best-in-Grade Awards encourage Harris County students to pursue talent (2017-07-07 11:25) - hcdetx





Each year, the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards inspire a love of the arts and encourage students to pursue their passions. This year, in addition to receiving National Scholastic Art & Writing Gold

Medals, two Harris County students were honored as the Best-in-Grade.

Urvashi Deshpande from Village High School won the award for 9th grade and Alec Martinez from Cypress-Fairbanks ISD received the award for 10th grade. Deshpande and Martinez were two of only a handful of students chosen as the Best-in-Grade by a special panel of national jurors. The students were honored onstage at the National Awards Ceremony at Carnegie Hall in June and will each receive \$500 cash. Deshpande, who won for her writing piece, said the award gave her confidence in her abilities as a writer. "Sometimes I have doubts about my abilities, but winning this award made me absolutely sure that writing is something I'm good at," said Deshpande. "It has motivated me to keep writing and keep sharing it with others." Martinez, who has always had an interest in film and photography, entered his first photograph into the contest this year, believing it would open up opportunities for his future. Martinez was surprised to receive a National Gold Medal and Best-in-Grade Award, encouraging him to pursue his passion. "I love photography, but I didn't realize I had talent until I received this award," said Martinez. "It's motivated me to pursue it further." Martinez hopes to one day use his photography talent as a film director, since photography and film go hand-in-hand. Although Deshpande isn't sure she'll be a writer, she knows her writing ability will benefit her in any career she chooses. Photo: Urvashi Deshpande poses with her National Scholastic Gold Medal at Carnegie Hall. For more information about the Scholastic Art & Writing Best-in-Grade Awards, visit [1]http://www.artandwriting.org/scholarships/sponsoredawards/best-in-grad e/.

1. http://www.artandwriting.org/scholarships/sponsoredawards/best-in-grade/

CASE for Kids hosts Summer Learning Day to promote numeracy, science and prevent 'summer slide' (2017-07-07 15:31) - hcdetx





Harris County Department of Education's Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids, or CASE for Kids, promotes summer learning activities in science and numeracy to help prevent "summer slide" on July 13, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at HCDE's North Post Oak Building, 6005 Westview.

Summer Learning Day is a national learning event celebrated locally by CASE for Kids with the theme "Afterschool is Out of this World." Children ages 5-13 attending Harris County summer afterschool programs in childcare facilities and nonprofit organizations will participate to experience a variety of hands-on, engaging activities that promote learning, exploration and skill development.

"This event helps students advance their academic growth during the summer by introducing math and science through challenging games and activities," said HCDE County School Superinten-

dent James Colbert Jr.

Activities include a portable planetarium from the Houston Museum of Natural Science, a rocket launch and a mock space escape room challenge. Students will also create a special intergalactic substance that they can take home.

Summer Learning Day is an annual national advocacy day led by the National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) to elevate the importance of keeping kids learning, safe and healthy every summer.

Learn more about Summer Learning Day by visiting [1]http://goo.gl/aWsLc.

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1. http://goo.gl/aWsLc
2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Chemical industry bucket assembly gives science teachers products and STEM careers to share with students (2017-07-17 17:10) - hcdetx





Chemical industry leaders show off products being manufactured at area plants to teachers through a bucket assembly at Harris County Department of Education, 6300 Irvington, July 18, from noon to 1 p.m. "Science Teachers and Industry," an annual, summer workshop held for secondary science teachers and sponsored by the Texas Chemical Council gives the teachers a better understanding of the chemical industry and Houston-area chemical plants. This year chemical industry leaders focus on educating students about STEM career opportunities available in the industry.

Academic science specialists and industry experts present a full scope of environmental viewpoints during the four-day workshop held July 17-20. Included are a field trip to a chemical plant, an overview of the Houston Ship Channel, careers in the chemical industry, and materials and experiments to take back to the classroom. The companies also use the opportunity to reinforce their concern for the health and safety of its workers, community and the environment.

HCDE science curriculum director Lisa Felske coordinates the workshop and says the teachers meet chemical engineers, plant managers and other industry professionals as they tour a chemical plant each year. While at HCDE, teachers get an overview of the cycling of plastics-from raw materials to manufactured products to plastic recycling.

"Previous years had a focus on air and water quality," Felske said. "This year we focus on careers in the chemical manufacturing industry. We have industry representatives as well as career and technical education representatives to talk to the teachers about STEM careers."

For more information about HCDE educator professional development and training, access [2]www.hcde-texas.org.

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1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/07/20170718_bucket_023.jpg

2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

3. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

For third consecutive year, Harris County Department of Education trustees approve budget with tax rate below effective rate (2017-07-18 12:59) - hcdetx

Working together with administration to keep property taxes low, Harris County Department of Education trustees on Tuesday approved a \$114 million total budget that will reduce the tax rate to \$.0051. The 2017-2018 budget supports HCDE's core services such as school-based therapy, special schools, after-school programming, Head Start, and adult education.

"I'm proud of this budget because it puts students first while maintaining our commitment to keeping property taxes low for the homeowners of Harris County," said Board President Louis Evans. "Our annual budget is an expression of our values as an elected board and as an administration. That's why it includes funding for three new projects: a ground-breaking recovery high school, a debate program for at-risk teens, and site improvements for Head Start and Adult Education facilities."

Property tax revenue, which amounts to about \$10 for the average homeowner annually, generates \$22.6 million of the overall budget. The rest of the budget is funded by grants, fees, and revenues from HCDE's purchasing cooperative.

This year, HCDE's budget includes funding for three new initiatives while holding the tax rate, which is officially adopted in September, below the effective rate for the third consecutive year:

- **County's first public recovery high school**: The budget includes funding for a public recovery high school to help students who have completed a substance abuse or dependency rehabilitation program. The school will be available to all 25 school districts in Harris County on a contractual basis and will serve 30 students when it opens in late 2017. HCDE will renovate a 20,000-square-foot HCDE school facility located in the Greenspoint area in north Houston at 11902 Spears Road.
- CASE Debates, in partnership with Houston Urban Debate League: The CASE Debates Initiative is a joint project between HCDE's Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids, or CASE for Kids, and the Houston Urban Debate League, or HUDL. HUDL currently operates solely within Houston Independent School District, where the organization has a successful track record providing debate programs and camps. The HCDE partnership expands the HUDL model to serve at-risk teens from 20 high schools in five Harris County school districts.
- **Capital improvements**: The budget includes facility improvements needed at the Baytown Head Start center, which served 176 students in 2016-2017. Also included are improvements to the Adult Education Crosstimbers center, which is expanding its focus to include workforce development.

Several of HCDE's core services support special needs students from 25 Harris County school districts. HCDE school-based therapists provide 100 percent of therapy services to special needs students in eight area school districts, including Cy-Fair ISD, Houston ISD, Katy ISD, Spring Branch ISD, and Spring ISD. Fees to school districts have not increased for three consecutive years and 292

remain below the industry average, made possible by the property tax allocation. In all, more than 7,700 special education students are served on 550 campuses throughout Harris County.

Additionally, HCDE operates four schools designed for students with severe emotional disturbances and impairments, and adjudicated youth who need intensive counseling. One-hundred percent of Harris County school districts pursue HCDE contracts, whether through tax-revenue-subsidized seats in special schools, therapy services, or the Choice Partners purchasing cooperative.

Harris County Department of Education Trustees approve CASE Debates to serve at-risk students (2017-07-18 13:32) - hcdetx





A nationally recognized debate program, the Houston Urban Debate League (HUDL), will serve 300 low-income, at-risk high school students in the Harris County area after the Board of Trustees approved the initiative on July 18.

The program, CASE Debates, is a joint project between HUDL and Harris County Department of Education's Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids (CASE for Kids), which serves 9,000 at-risk students in the greater Houston area.

HUDL currently operates solely within Houston ISD and has a successful track record providing debate programs and camps for approximately 1,000 students each year. CASE Debates will expand the current HUDL model by serving at-risk teens from 20 high schools in five Harris County school districts.

"Part of our mission is to equalize educational opportunity for students in Harris County, and this program will open doors for many at-risk teenagers," said HCDE Board President Louis Evans. "Our children will come of age in a global economy, and the ability to communicate effectively and think critically will be key to their success."

The program provides three in-depth seminars for youth and coaches along with three debate tournaments throughout the school year.

HUDL Board Chair Heather Hatfield attended the meeting in support the expansion of the program into additional Harris County school districts. "Debate changes lives," Hatfield said. "We look forward to working with HCDE and the students of Harris County."

For more information about CASE Debates, call CASE for Kids at 713-696-1331.

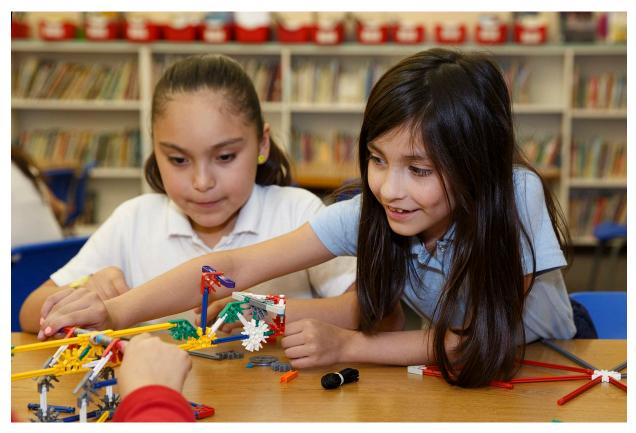
Photo: Houston Urban Debate League Chair Heather Hatfield, Harris County School Superintendent James Colbert Jr., and CASE for Kids Director Lisa Thompson-Caruthers at the July 18 HCDE Board of Trustees meeting.

About Harris County Department of Education: HCDE helps school districts in the state's largest county meets the needs of uniquely challenged learners, directly serving students at their schools or one of four HCDE-operated campuses across the county. Learn about these services and more at [1]www.hcde-texas.org.

1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

CASE for Kids provides learning tips for parents following Summer Learning Day (2017-07-20 14:15) - hcdetx





Harris County Department of Education's Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids, or CASE for Kids, offers parents summer learning tips for their students to help prevent "summer slide," or the loss of academic skills and knowledge during the summer.

According to the National Summer Learning Association, most students lose approximately two months of grade level equivalency in math during the summer and low-income students typically fall behind in reading achievement. This loss is among the most significant causes of the achievement gap between lower and higher income students and one of the strongest contributors to the high school dropout rate.

CASE for Kids hosted their annual Summer Learning Day event on July 13 to emphasize the importance of keeping students engaged, safe and healthy every summer. At this year's event, Harris County students attending summer afterschool programs in childcare facilities and nonprofit organizations experienced a variety of space-themed activities that promoted learning, exploration and skill development.

Following Summer Learning Day, CASE for Kids offers parents tips to keep students engaged and learning during the remainder of the summer and help close the achievement gap:

- 1. **Dust off the library card.** Reading is the best and often cheapest way to keep kids' minds engaged during the summer.
- 2. **Hit the "off" button.** Screen time (phone, television, etc.) should be limited during the summer. Otherwise, kids may find little motivation to get much-needed exercise or participate in other summer learning activities.

- 3. **Get creative.** Students love to paint, draw and construct when they're at school, so encourage them to do the same at home.
- 4. Leave the house. Going to a park or riding a bike may not sound like "summer learning," but studies show healthy bodies and healthy minds are linked.
- 5. **Don't forget two plus two.** Keep kids' STEM brains in gear by doing small things like measuring flour and sugar for baking, calculating the grocery bill, or using flash cards or free online worksheets.

"We're dedicated to ensuring students receive high-quality and enriching academic experiences, even in the summer," said Lisa Thompson-Caruthers, CASE for Kids director. "It's important that our students return to school in the fall ready to succeed."

Find more summer learning tips and free local activities here: [1]http://www.hcde-texas.org/media/4705/use-it-or-lose-it-flyer-2017.pdf.

For more information on preventing summer learning loss, visit [2]www.summerlearning.org.

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1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/media/4705/use-it-or-lose-it-flyer-2017.pdf
2. http://www.summerlearning.org/
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HCDE board approves new meeting date, time (2017-07-26 13:48) - hcdetx



At the July 18 board meeting, HCDE board members unanimously approved a new meeting date and time for upcoming board meetings.

Beginning August 2017, HCDE board meetings will be held on the third Wednesday of each month, with some exceptions. The new meeting time will be 1 p.m. View the revised HCDE calendar that reflects this change here: [1]http://www.hcde-texas.org/media/4739/2017-18hcdecalendar _v2.pdf

HCDE board meetings are open to the public. Board agendas can be found on the [2]Board of Trustees webpage the week before each meeting and the public can view archived videos of the meetings on [3]HCDE's YouTube channel.

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- 1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/media/4739/2017-18hcdecalendar_v2.pdf
- 2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/who-we-are/board-of-trustees/board-agenda-2017/

3. https://www.youtube.com/user/HCDEtv

Academic and Behavior School East receives Oliver Foundation Grant for school garden (2017-07-26 15:08) - hcdetx





Academic and Behavior School (ABS) East recently received a \$3,000 Healthy Choices Grant from the Oliver Foundation to enhance the school garden program. With childhood obesity on the rise in Houston, the garden program at ABS East will use nutrition and physical activity education to teach the importance of healthy lifestyles to 75 students with disabilities.

The garden will serve as a central point for individual and collective learning about the source of food and natural elements that form the basis of healthy eating. Students will share garden responsibilities, plant fruits and vegetables, and make daily visits to the garden to water, weed, touch and taste the food they're growing.

In addition to gaining positive food attitudes, students will also increase fine and gross motor skills and learn science concepts such as photosynthesis through the garden program.

Through previous grants from the Whole Kids Foundation in partnership with Unilever and Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation, ABS East students participated in a [1]garden groundbreaking event in May 2017.

The Oliver Foundation Healthy Choices Grant aims to improve healthy eating and physical activity in children, families and communities in Texas. To learn more about the Oliver Foundation, visit [2]www.oliverfoundation.com. Autism Summit 2017 set for Oct. 4-5 at HCDE offers resources to assist students with spectrum disorder (2017-07-27 14:07) - hcdetx





Autism Summit 2017 will be held Oct. 4-5 from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. at Harris County Department of Education, 6300 Irvington, Houston, Texas. The conference provides autism experts with breakout sessions on issues including autism legislation, transition services and testimonials from young adults with autism spectrum disorder. Registration for the summit hosted by HCDE's Teaching and Learning Center is \$150, with lunch provided both days. Register for the conference at [2]www.hcde-texas.org/register by title or date.

The summit features Carol Gray on Oct. 4, consultant to children, adolescents and adults with autism. Gray provides a workshop on "Social Stories™," a tool that supports safe, meaningful exchange of information between parents, professionals and people with autism. Attendees all receive certification in the methodology at day's end. Oct. 5 provides insights from keynote Dorothea Lerman, director of the Center for Autism and Developmental Disabilities at the University of Houston – Clear Lake.

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), autism spectrum disorder is a developmental disability that can cause significant social, communication and behavioral challenges. CDC statistics show that one in 68 children has been identified with autism spectrum disorder, and the condition occurs in all ethnic and socioeconomic groups. For more information about the summit, call 713-696-8223.

About Harris County Department of Education: HCDE provides special education, therapy services, early education, adult education and after-school programming. Services are funded by government grants, fees and a local property tax rate of \$.0052. For every dollar in local property tax collected, HCDE provides \$4.40 in services to the 25 Harris County school districts. HCDE also operates four campuses for students with profound special education needs and adjudicated youth

who require a low student-teacher ratio and highly structured environment. One-hundred percent of students served on HCDE campuses are at-risk. The organization is governed by an elected board of seven trustees and has 1,060 employees and 33 facilities, including 15 Head Start centers. More info at [3]www.hcde-texas.org.

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- 1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/07/supporting-families-with-autism-i1.jpg
- 2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/register
- 3. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

1.8 August

Confident HCDE Principal Academy grad Castilleja to lead HISD school (2017-08-02 11:52) - hcdetx



HCDE recruits educators for 2017-2018 principal academy



Principal Georgina Castilleja personifies a model school leader as she confidently crunches numbers in her office with a colleague. Within the hour, she cordially greets incoming Clifton Middle School sixth graders during their orientation.

The graduate from Harris County Department of Education's Principal Academy hit the ground running this July preparing for her first year as leader of the Houston ISD middle school. Meanwhile at HCDE, leaders of the principal academy are busy preparing for a new class of fall recruits.

A recommendation from a friend last year led Castilleja to enroll in the HCDE program that prepares teachers to become certified school leaders. The hybrid program is both onsite and online as principal candidates meet once a month on weekends, combined with self-paced online assignments.

To date, all students completing the program and taking the principal certification exam passed the test. Personalized leadership coaching and mentorship is delivered by a handful of educators who have a history of successful school leadership. Each alumni class is small, with customized attention.

"We do more than just help our students pass the principal certification test," said Lidia Zatopek, director of the Educator Certification and Professional Advancement at HCDE. "We want to set our future school leaders up to succeed so that they create conditions that support teaching and learning which lead to high-performing schools."

Castilleja immersed herself into education in an entry-level position as a school office clerk 17 years ago. She worked while going to college to become a reading and language arts teacher and then an ESL teacher.

"I thought I'd be a teacher for the rest of my life, and in a way I feel that is still the case," she said. "However, I felt my influence would have greater impact outside of the classroom. Maybe not greater (than a teacher), as the most significant influence is within the classroom, but perhaps a wider-reaching impact as I come into contact with more stakeholders," Castilleja said.

She says the HCDE leadership program forced her to step out of her comfort zone and explore different areas of school leadership, waters she had not tread before.

During the past year the bilingual educator was assistant principal at Sharpstown High School on probationary status as she completed the HCDE Principal Academy.

Leadership advancement coaches at HCDE, including veteran administrators Deirdre Sharkey Williams and Chaney Ledet, helped Castilleja along the way. During the year, Castilleja said she and fellow students benefitted from guest panel principals who shared their experiences.

"One of those principals in the guest panel has now become a great mentor to me, and our first connection was on a Saturday at HCDE," Castilleja said.

As the 17-year educator now prepares to lead her school of 800-plus students by example, she envisions and prepares Clifton to be a welcoming environment for all stakeholders—the students, teachers, parents and volunteers.

"I would like for people to say I work hard," she said, thinking on how she wants to be remembered. But I would also like them to say that as a coach, I built them up and helped them grow."

HCDE Principal Academy leader Zatopek beams as she recalls the growth she has seen in Castilleja, always a teacher but now a leader of her new community as principal.

"We'll always be here for her, anytime she needs it," said Zatopek.

For information about joining the "Lead Now" fall class of 2017 HCDE Principal Academy Cohort beginning Sept. 9, go to [2]www.hcde-texas.org/leadnow or email [3]hcdeacp@hcde-texas.org.

Photo: Harris County Department of Education Principal Academy graduate Georgina Castilleja meets with incoming sixth graders at Clifton Middle School in Houston ISD, where she is principal for the upcoming 2017-2018 school year.

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info at [4]www.hcde-texas.org .

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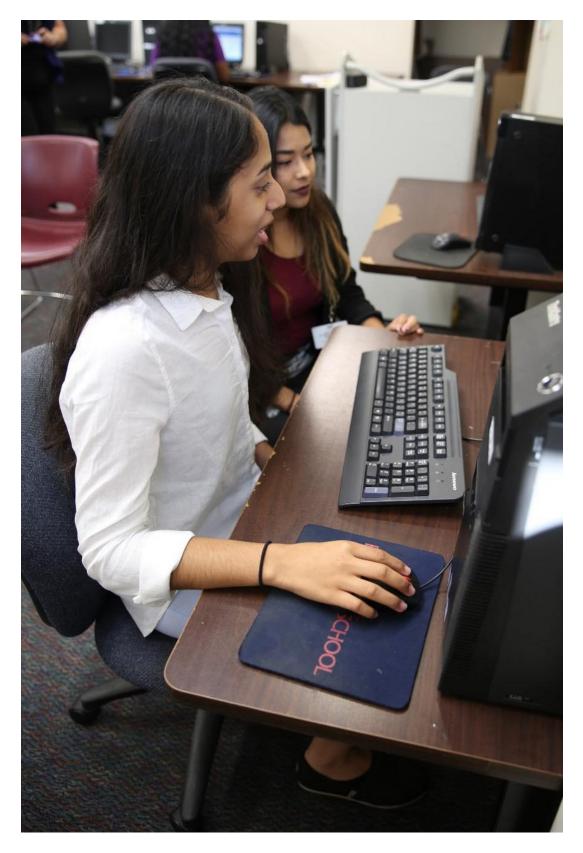
1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/08/20170725_castilleja_027.jpg

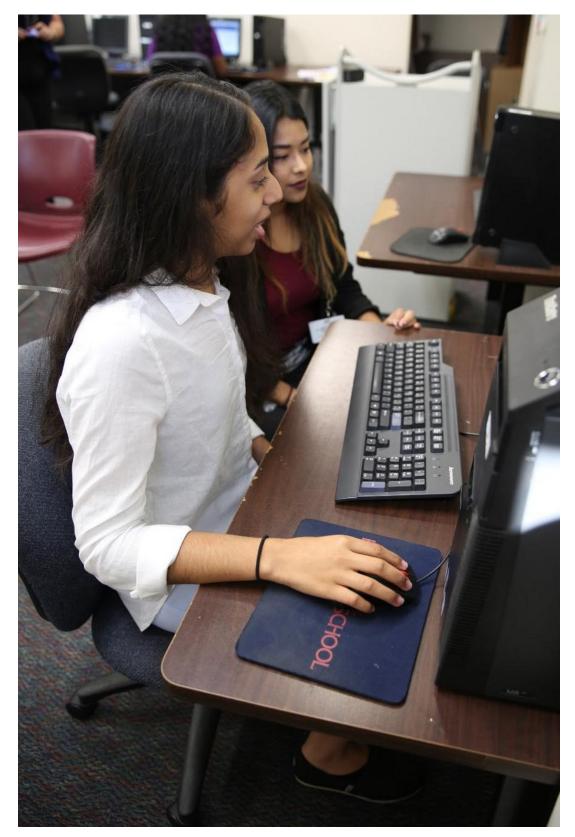
2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/leadnow

 ${\tt 3. mailto:hcdeacp@hcde-texas.org}$

4. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Free Distance Education Classes in ESL, GED offered through Harris County Department of Education (2017-08-02 12:18) - hcdetx





Adult English-as-a-second language and GED students in Harris County may enroll in self-paced, online learning classes through Harris County Department of Education beginning this fall. Classes

are free on a first-come, first-served basis through an adult learner program called Distance First.

A Saturday orientation which includes pre-testing and registration is required to enroll in the program. Dates to enroll in one of the orientation classes are Aug. 12, Sept. 9, Oct. 14 and Dec. 2 from 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. at 626 Lindale, Houston, Texas, 77022.

"Adult learners constantly juggle responsibilities that include families, jobs and other obligations," said HCDE Superintendent James Colbert Jr. "By providing a self-paced program, students can access GED or ESL lessons at home or any place with an Internet connection. We take away the stress of travel but at the same time deliver a quality program with technical and academic support."

Pre-testing and assessment determines the entry level in subjects for each student. Technology training includes instruction on how to operate software. Group activities help students build time management skills. An experience technical assistance team helps throughout the program.

"Distance First classes are presented by online instructors and support staff and offer fundamental skills training that is tailored to their needs, as well as ample technical and academic support," said Eduardo Honold, director of Adult Education at HCDE.

Students may also enroll in traditional classroom ESL, GED or workforce classes this fall. For more information about all learning opportunities and locations, go to [2]www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation or call 713-692-6216.

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- 1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/08/distance-learning.jpg
- 2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation
- 3. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Back-to-School: HCDE's CASE for Kids offers tips for finding quality afterschool programs (2017-08-03 15:38) - hcdetx





As the first day of school approaches, parents are searching for quality afterschool programs for their children to keep them learning and engaged after the school day ends. Harris County offers a wide variety of options for afterschool care ranging from tutoring and sports activities to comprehensive afterschool programs.

Lisa Thompson-Caruthers, director of Harris County Department of Education's Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids (CASE for Kids), offers five tips to help families find a program that meets their needs:

1. **Safety and Emergency Procedures:** Ask about the safety and emergency procedures in place. The program should be able to provide answers about any type of situation.

2. **Staff-to-Student Ratio:** The staff-to-student ratio and maximum group size of an afterschool program can determine how much individual attention and supervision a child receives.

3. **Staff Training:** When searching for an afterschool program, ask about staff training and if they regularly attend professional development workshops. Research shows that well-trained staff interact better with students.

4. Activities that Promote Learning: Children are more likely to develop skills if the program offers a variety of academic and recreational classes. Look for afterschool programs that participate in activities that promote learning.

5. Student Progress: Ask how the program assesses student progress to stay informed.

CASE for Kids provides resources, trainings and funding for afterschool programs, serving approximately 13,000 students in grades pre-k through 12 in afterschool programs in schools, child care facilities and community centers throughout Harris County.

When families think about afterschool programs, many focus on programs specifically for elementary students while their parents are working. Thompson-Caruthers emphasizes the importance of keeping students in middle and high school engaged in meaningful activities as well.

This year, a joint project between CASE for Kids and the Houston Urban Debate League (HUDL) will serve 300 high school students in afterschool programs at 20 schools in Harris County. The program, CASE Debates, will provide three in-depth seminars for youth and coaches along with three debate tournaments throughout the school year.

"We want to help families find a program that supplements the education students receive during the school day and extends that learning and excitement into afterschool programs," said Thompson-Caruthers.

For more information on CASE for Kids and afterschool resources, visit [1]www.afterschoolzone.org.

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1. http://www.afterschoolzone.org/
2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

RFPs solicited for afterschool vendors like Artist Boat through HCDE's CASE for Kids (2017-08-09 11:44) - hcdetx





Harris County Department of Education's Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids (CASE for Kids) is soliciting request for proposals from afterschool vendors to provide programs and services to students in elementary through high school for out-of-school time programs and services in greater Harris County. Service providers offer classes ranging from fine arts, STEM, STEAM, numeracy, literacy, career exploration and sports.

Information and applications are available through CASE for Kids. Deadline to register is Sept. 12, 2017: [1]http://www.afterschoolzone.org/default.a spx?name=Approved _Vendors

Afterschool vendor Artist Boat represents one of the innovative programs being introduced to youth in greater Harris County this year. As a CASE for Kids afterschool vendor, Artist Boat served students through a summer watershed project with kayaking, science experiments, murals and coastal waterway field trips. The unique career exploration experience for middle school students in Clear Creek ISD combined science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM). The summer enrichment activities through Artist Boat nonprofit is one of the varied services provided by out-of-school time vendors.

"This program demonstrates the life-changing experiences students can have through their afterschool program," said Lisa Thompson-Caruthers, director of CASE for Kids. "Students actually see how actions in the Galveston Bay watershed impact the health of the bay through a project that combines science both inside and outside of the classroom."

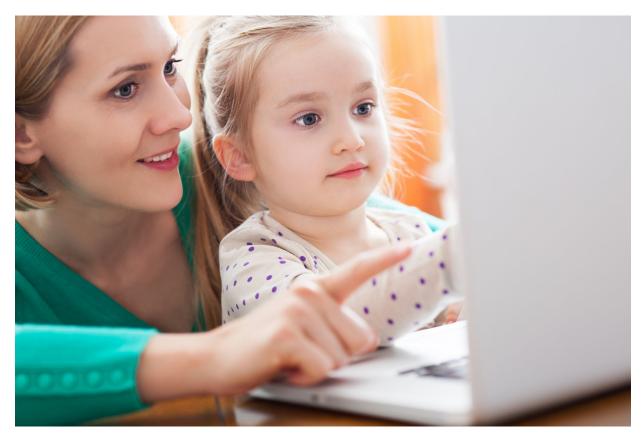
The summer program included students from Clear Creek Intermediate School 21st Century Learning Centers, a federally funded afterschool program provided through the Texas Afterschool Centers on Education and HCDE's CASE for Kids. **Photo:** Students take a kayak tour of a

watershed through Artist Boat, an afterschool vendor which provides services through Harris County Department of Education.

1. http://www.afterschoolzone.org/default.aspx?name=Approved_Vendors

Back-to-School: HCDE Provides Tips to Keep Children Safe in the Digital World (2017-08-10 09:13) - hcdetx





Technology and digital devices are ingrained in our children's daily life from an early age. With the increase in cyberbullying incidents over the past 10 years, many parents worry about the safety of their child in the digital world. Harris County Department of Education's Digital and Virtual Learning Manager David McGeary provides safety tips to help keep children from harm and become positive digital citizens.

5 tips to keep kids safe in a digital world:

- 1. Talk to kids about digital safety at a young age and do it often.
- 2. Be a part of your children's online experiences. Know the sites they visit and games they play.
- 3. Don't allow young children to spend unsupervised time online. Keep the family computer in a common area in the home. Keep charging devices out of private areas like bedrooms.
- 4. Enforce this rule: If you won't do something face-to-face, don't do it online. (Discuss social interactions.)
- 5. Humanize online social interactions. Remind them that behind every pixelated avatar is a human being.

McGeary suggests that while children may be getting information about safe online behavior from their school, students who have regular discussions with their parents about digital safety are more likely to be vigilant and self-advocate when something goes wrong online. He also suggests parents

become partners in their child's online experiences.

"Take interest in the sites your children visit and the games they play," said McGeary. "If kids are engaged in constant discussion about the digital realm, they are much more likely to approach a parent or guardian if something out of the ordinary occurs."

Next, don't allow children to spend unsupervised time online, especially when they are younger. It may be helpful to place a family computer in a common space like the living room or home office so that parents can see the screen content. Keeping device chargers out of bedrooms can also help keep children off their devices while in private areas.

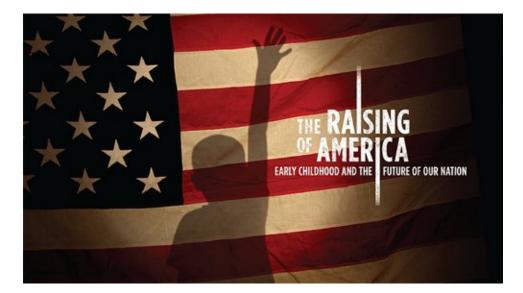
McGeary also emphasizes one key piece of advice when discussing social interactions online – if you wouldn't do something face-to-face, don't do it online. Research shows that victims of cyberbullying have often bullied someone online themselves. By humanizing the online space and developing empathy for others, parents can help their children break the cycle of victim-and-victimization.

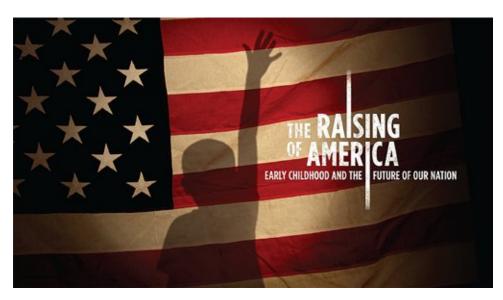
"Encourage children to engage in social activities that humanize online social interactions like sending an email to a distant family member or posting encouraging statements to friends via social media to remind them that at the end of every pixelated avatar is a human being," said McGeary.

For more resources on cyberbullying and digital safety, visit [1]http://www.cyberwise.org/digitalcitizenship-resources.

1. http://www.cyberwise.org/digital-citizenship-resources

HCDE Head Start Presents Free Community Screening of 'The Raising of America' (2017-08-14 13:14) - hcdetx





Harris County Department of Education Head Start, in partnership with Harris County Public Health, hosts a free community screening and panel discussion of the acclaimed documentary "The Raising of America: Early Childhood and the Future of Our Nation" on Aug. 26, 2017 from 8:30 a.m. – 11 a.m. at the HCDE Conference Center, 6300 Irvington Blvd.

Nearly 24 percent of American children are born into poverty today, facing multiple adversities with potential life-long consequences for their physical, socio-emotional and cognitive development. The purpose of this screening is to bring together a diverse audience to promote meaningful conversation and local action to improve conditions for families with young children in Harris County.

"It's vital for communities to support programs that build healthy and caring communities for our children at an early age," said HCDE Head Start Senior Director Venetia Peacock. "This screening is a way to connect families, organizations and community, and promote early child health and well-being."

A light breakfast will be provided at the event and parking is free. Participants will also receive a certificate for two hours of professional development for attending.

RSVP for the community screening at [1]https://www.eventbrite.com/o/13470968289. Find more information on this series at [2]http://www.raisingofamerica.org/.

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- 1. https://www.eventbrite.com/o/13470968289
- 2. http://www.raisingofamerica.org/
- 3. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

HCDE board names first public recovery high school in county 'Fortis Academy' (2017-08-16 16:53) - hcdetx

The name of the first public recovery high school in Harris County is officially "Fortis Academy" as the Harris County Department of Education Board of Trustees voted 5 to 1 in favor of the school's naming at its Aug. 16 meeting.

A 20,000-square-foot facility already owned by HCDE and located at 11902 Spears Road in the Greenspoint area in north Houston is currently being renovated and is anticipated to open during the 2017-2018 school year. The mission of the school is to make a difference in the lives of high school students who need support and assistance after successful completion of a substance abuse or dependency rehabilitation program.

Fortis Academy will serve eligible students referred and contracted by their Harris County school districts. Initially the school will accommodate 30 students and then grow to 60 and 90 seats in subsequent years.

"Fortis in Latin means strong, steadfast and courageous so we think this name is a good fit," said HCDE Board of Trustee Vice President Eric Dick. "Statistically, we know these students face difficult challenges, and I can attest from my own personal experience. We know how badly this school is needed in our Houston community."

To enroll in Fortis Academy, students must have completed a substance abuse or dependency rehabilitation program. They may attend the recovery school for the remainder of their high school years to obtain a high-quality education in a sober environment.

"Fortis Academy will combine three components: coaching, counseling and academics," said Harris County School Superintendent James Colbert Jr. "We acknowledge that relapse is higher when students return to their pretreatment high schools. Peer pressure is a powerful force, so we combine counseling and coaching centers into the traditional school day to promote continued sobriety."

Frequently asked questions are answered about the new recovery high school called Fortis Academy on the HCDE website at www.hcde-texas.org/recoveryschool.

Other action items brought before the board:

• Acceptance of \$2.2 million in federal afterschool funds via 21st Century Learning Centers and Texas Afterschool Centers for Education to serve 1,290 students in 2017-18 through the Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids, or CASE for Kids.

• Approval of \$2 million in School-Based Therapy Services contracts to serve 2,000-plus students with disabilities in Katy, Hempstead, Dayton and Pasadena ISDs in fiscal year 2018.

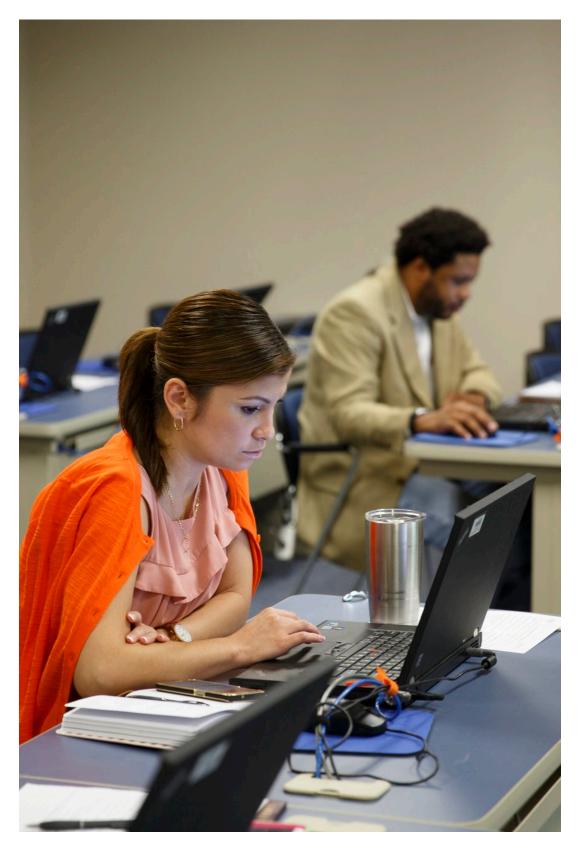
• Approval of a contract between Fort Bend Independent School District and the HCDE Teaching

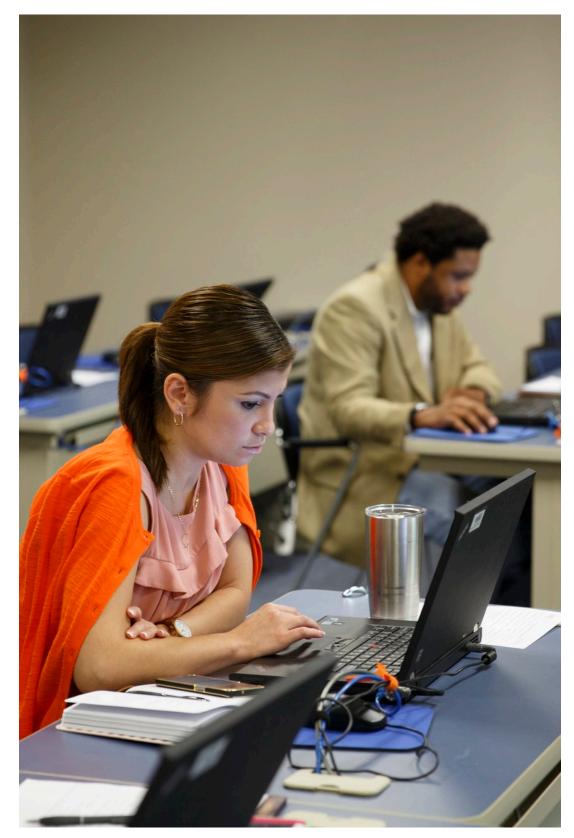
and Learning Center to provide an Equity and Culture Assessment.

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1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

HCDE Center for Grants Development hosts fall training series (2017-08-17 13:29) - hcdetx





Beginning Aug. 23, 2017, Harris County Department of Education's Center for Grants Development will host the Quest for Grants Fall Training Series. Grant Writing Best Practices, the first of seven

seminars, is an online seminar on Aug. 23 from 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Grant Writing Best Practices seminar will cover habits of successful grant specialists, mistakes inexperienced proposal writers often make, budget considerations, general proposal writing tips and more.

Tips such as avoiding organizational jargon will help grant writers create best practices for their organizations and increase their number of successful grant applications.

"In most cases, we don't know the background and the expertise of the person reviewing our proposals," said Gayla Rawlinson-Maynard, Center for Grants Development director. "Because of this, it's best to write in layperson terms, avoiding acronyms and jargon."

All seminars are \$25 for in-county attendees and \$45 for attendees coming from outside Harris County. View a schedule of the upcoming fall seminars here: [1]http://www.hcde-texas.org/media/4830/grants-flyer-training-schedule.pdf.

1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/media/4830/grants-flyer-training-schedule.pdf

Anthony Mays selected as senior director over HCDE's 4 specialized campuses (2017-08-18 07:30) - hcdetx





Anthony Mays, a 15-year education leader in middle and high schools in Dallas, Fort Worth and Pflugerville Independent School Districts, recently started his new position as senior director of Harris County Department of Education's Schools division.

The four specialized HCDE schools he will lead serve more than 25 school districts in the Harris County area. Districts contract with HCDE as the department supplies specialized environments and low student-to-teacher ratios to educate students in grades K-12 with unique needs.

Mays moves to Houston after serving as principal at Emmett J. Conrad High School in the Dallas Independent School District. His strong instructional leadership as principal is complimented by extensive experience as a special education educator. He gained his Bachelor of Arts from Huston-Tillotson College, a Master of Education from Texas State University and is currently earning his doctorate degree from Tarleton State University.

His experience with special populations students will provide valuable guidance as HCDE opens the first public recovery high school in Harris County this school year. As a goal-oriented leader, he will use his collaboration expertise to strengthen the instructional focus at all four specialized HCDE schools and to build on momentum for community support.

"I'm also eager to work with the HCDE team on developing our recovery high school for students with challenges with addictions," he said. "The opioid epidemic and other drug abuse among teens is a problem that HCDE is poised to impact here in Harris County."

The Tomball resident is a member of Texas Alliance of Black School Educators, Texas Association of Secondary School Principals and is listed in Who's Who Among America's Teachers. He is married and has three children who attend public school.

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1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Longtime education leader Breaux to head HCDE Research and Evaluation Institute (2017-08-21 06:40) - hcdetx





Current Harris County Department of Education Special Populations Director Darlene Breaux will head the Research and Evaluation Institute as its new director.

Breaux joined HCDE in 2016 to oversee continuing professional learning opportunities for teachers who educate students served through special population programs.

"Being the director of special populations has allowed me to work closely with many of the 25 school districts which HCDE serves," Breaux said. "Having this relationship allowed me to better understand district needs and how the Research and Evaluation Institute can provide information and resources that are supported by research."

One of her goals as leader is to deliver small, educator friendly highlights and summaries of current research being published through her division.

Breaux, a resident of Alief, is a national trainer, former principal and special services coordinator who has 20 years of service in education. She holds a bachelor's degree from Texas Southern University with teacher certifications in ESL and special education. She also earned a master's in educational management with principal certification from the University of Houston Clear Lake. She is currently earning her doctorate degree in instructional leadership from Abilene Christian University.

Breaux served as Miss Texas Southern University in 1990-1991. She is a member of Kappa Delta Pi National Honor Society and is active in the Alief community as a board member for the Alief YMCA. In addition, she is the former special services coordinator in Alief Independent School District.

Breaux is married and has three children.

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1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/08/20170725_breaux_018_r.jpg
2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Former CFISD communication leader named HCDE Client Engagement director (2017-08-22 10:26) - hcdetx

[1]



Stephanie De Los Santos is the new director of the Harris County Department of Education Client Engagement division. With more than 20 years of experience in education and communications, she leads the HCDE division which provides marketing support to programs and services that serve over a million Harris County students and educators.

De Los Santos is former director for communication for Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District, where she served for 12 years before joining HCDE. Prior to her years of service in CFISD, she taught in Aldine ISD for nine years. The Houston native earned both her Bachelor of Arts in Mass Media and Spanish and a Master of Education from Houston Baptist University.

"I'm excited to be a part of an organization where the well-being of Harris County students is top priority," she said. "As director of client engagement, I hope to continue the tradition of excellence not only by incorporating the years of experience I have in the field of education and communication, but also connecting with and providing support to local school districts and surrounding communities."

De Los Santos is the mother of two graduates of CFISD's Jersey Village High School who now attend Trinity University and Oral Roberts University.

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1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/08/stephanie-2-copy1.jpg
2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

1.9 September

HCDE staff prepares facilities for students' return after Hurricane Harvey (2017-09-08 15:50) - hcdetx





Harris County Department of Education staff joined many schools and districts across the area this week in assessing and repairing facilities affected by Hurricane Harvey.

The four facilities affected are the Early Head Start and Head Start centers in Baytown, the site for Fortis Academy located at 11902 Spears Road, and Academic and Behavior School East located at 7703 South Loop East.

While the damage at these sites was extensive, a team of HCDE employees worked tirelessly in the aftermath of Harvey preparing these facilities for students' return. The two Baytown Head Start centers and AB School East will welcome students when they return on Monday, Sept. 11, 2017.

As a result of the damage to HCDE's public recovery school Fortis Academy, the groundbreaking event originally scheduled for Sept. 12 is postponed.

To stay informed on HCDE recovery efforts and updates, visit [1]www.hcde-texas.org and follow us on social media at [2]facebook.com/HCDEtx/ and [3]twitter.com/HCDEtx.

- 1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/
- 2. http://www.facebook.com/HCDEtx/
- 3. https://twitter.com/HCDEtx

Fortis Academy supports Houston's recovery community at Recovery in the Park (2017-09-14 10:13) - hcdetx





Harris County Department of Education's Fortis Academy staff, along with other programs in the Adolescent Recovery Oriented Systems of Care (AROSC), celebrated Houston's adolescent recovery community at Recovery in the Park on Saturday, Sept. 9.

The annual event allows students from Harris County recovery programs to connect through a day of engaging activities and create social support groups with their peers.

"Many students don't realize they live close to others who are also going through the recovery process, so Recovery in the Park allows them to meet other students who can support them," said Sarah Scherzer, executive director of The Turning Point, Inc. and organizer of the event. "It's also important that our students see us working together and that we're invested in their success."

HCDE's Fortis Academy is the newest member of AROSC, a group of agencies in the Houston Recovery Initiative that provide substance abuse treatment, preventative care, after-care and recovery support for adolescents in the Houston area. The goal of the group is to create a continuum of care for students and ensure there are no gaps at any point in the recovery process.

"I'm honored to be part of the AROSC family and experience the kinship between organizations," said Fortis Academy Principal Dr. Anthony Moten. "Like these agencies, Fortis Academy will be life-changing and life-sustaining for Harris County students."

Fortis Academy will be the county's first public recovery high school and will open during the 2017-2018 school year. The 20,000-square-foot facility will help students who have completed a substance abuse or dependency rehabilitation program continue their high school education in a sober environment.

For more information about Fortis Academy, visit [1]www.hcde-texas.org/recoveryschool.

1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/recoveryschool

National Art.Write.Now.DC Exhibition Showcases Work from Harris County Students (2017-09-20 11:25) - hcdetx





The Scholastic Art & Writing Awards recently kicked off the Art.Write.Now.DC exhibition at the U.S. Department of Education on Sept. 15 showcasing art and writing from 33 Harris County students. This regional highlight also showcases the efforts of Harris County Department of Education to enrich the local community with the arts and to encourage students to be part of the Scholastic Awards' legacy.

Supported by the HCDE Board of Trustees and their respective school districts, 22 Harris County students traveled to Washington D.C. on Sept. 15 to view their artwork on display and receive recognition for their creativity and talent. Additionally, Aldine ISD art teacher Birgit Langhammer attended the event to represent and pay tribute to her student Freddy Diaz, a senior in Aldine ISD who passed away in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey.

Each year, the Art.Write.Now program features the year-long exhibition as well as a touring exhibition showcasing original works by teens from across the country. Curated, produced and presented by the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers, the nonprofit which administers the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, each exhibition showcases a selection of inspiring and innovative work by teens from across the country who received national honors in 2017.

Exhibition Location and Dates

• Write.Now.DC 2017-18:

- Washington, D.C., U.S. Department of Education, Sept. 15, 2017 – July 31, 2018

• Write.Now.Tour 2017-18:

-Tulsa, OK, Center for Creativity, Tulsa Community College, Oct. 2–Oct. 28, 2017 -Lexington, KY, The Living Arts & Science Center, Nov. 10, 2017–Dec. 26, 2017 -Elmira, NY, The Arnot Art Museum, Jan. 12–Feb. 24, 2018 -Youngstown, OH, The Butler Institute of American Art, Apr. 1–June 3, 2018

The students who attended are **Samantha Kelly**, Houston ISD; **Karen Flores**, Pasadena ISD; **Grace Sanders**, St. John's School; **Emma Pulaski**, Episcopal High School; **Rachel Koch**, Episcopal High School; **Summer Elliott**, Clear Creek ISD; **Allyson Su**, Katy ISD; **Helen Wang**, Pearland ISD; **Sarah Hambly**, Spring Branch ISD; **Allison Maeker**, Klein ISD; **Sri Varanasi**, Katy ISD; **Jennifer Castillo**, Aldine ISD; **Ashley Liu**, Klein ISD; **Edward Bustos**, Cy-Fair ISD; **Savannah Moore**, Humble ISD; **Franklin Nwora**, KIPP; **Chimi Abuede**, Alief ISD; **Sasha Vermeil**, Episcopal High School; **Mia Sanchez**, Klein ISD; **Alexandra Bellon**, Tomball ISD; **Saranna Zhang**, Spring Branch ISD; and **Jayasurya Dileep**, Klein ISD.

For more information on the Art.Write.Now program, visit [1]www.artandwriting.org/what-we-do/art-write-now/. For information on submitting works to the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, visit [2]www.hcde-texas.org/scholastic.

Photos from Art.Write.Now.DC



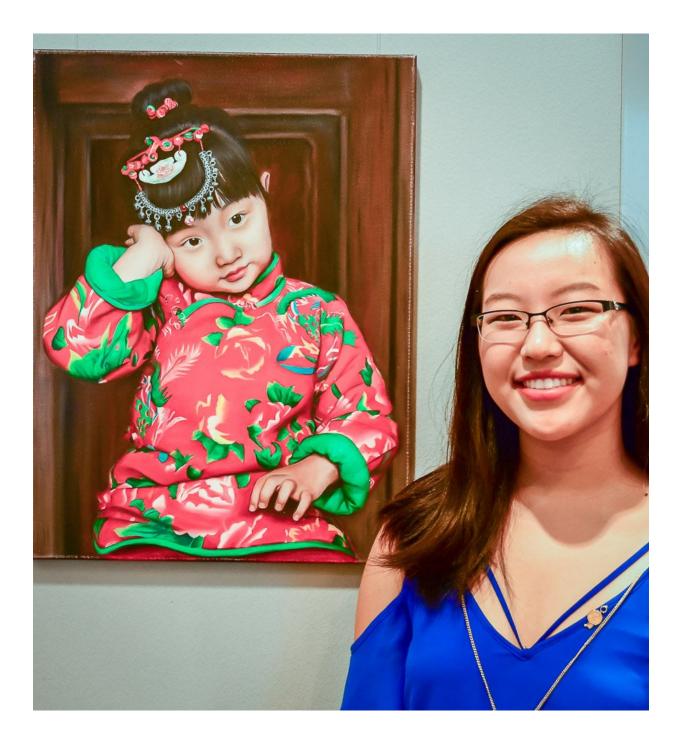


















1. http://www.artandwriting.org/what-we-do/art-write-now/
2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/scholastic

HCDE board reduces tax rate, remains below effective rate for third consecutive year (2017-09-20 16:53) - hcdetx



Sept. 20, 2017 – Supporting their commitment to keep property taxes low, the Harris County Department of Education Board of Trustees adopted a tax rate of \$.005195, a decrease from the current tax rate of \$.0052.

The unanimous vote marked the third consecutive year HCDE trustees adopted a rate below the effective tax rate, which is \$.005236.

"Our sound business model and fiscally responsible approach has made it possible to reduce our tax rate while expanding the services we offer to school districts and Harris County residents," said Board President Louis D. Evans III. "Every month we approve contracts to provide therapy services, school safety audits, and after-school programming not only because there's a need, but because of the quality and consistency we deliver."

The average residence in Harris County is valued at approximately \$169,000. With the adopted rate of \$.005195 per \$100 assessed property value, the average homeowner will pay \$8.77 annually. This generates \$22 million of the overall HCDE budget, with the remainder funded by grants, fees, and revenues from HCDE's purchasing cooperative.

The 2017-2018 budget includes funding for Harris County's first public recovery high school, designed to provide a sober environment for students to continue their studies after completing a rehabilitation program.

Fortis Academy is the newest member of AROSC, a group of agencies in the Houston Recovery Initiative that provides substance abuse treatment, preventative care, after-care and recovery support for adolescents in the Houston area. The goal of the group, said HCDE Superintendent James Colbert, is to create a continuum of care for students and ensure there are no gaps at any point in the recovery process.

"The recovery community has embraced us from Day One, and I look forward to opening the doors of Fortis Academy in 2018," Colbert said. "This is a life-changing program for teenagers who need and deserve our support, regardless of income and socioeconomic status."

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1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

\$1 Million Chevron Donation Available to Help Harris County Public School Teachers After Hurricane Harvey (2017-09-21 12:57) - hcdetx





Harris County public school teachers affected by Hurricane Harvey can now submit classroom project requests to rebuild their classrooms. Donated by Chevron Corp., \$1 million is available to help teachers get the materials and tools they need to help students learn.

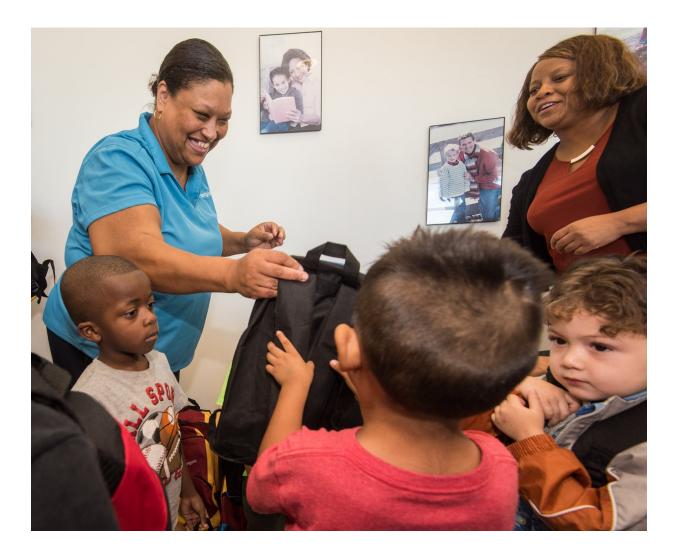
Eligible classroom projects include needed supplies and education materials, student-led project initiatives or student life essentials such as clothing, personal hygiene products and food. The deadline to submit projects is Nov. 3, 2017.

The \$1 million donation is part of Chevron's Fuel Your School program, which has helped fund 39,496 classroom projects in communities throughout the U.S. since 2010. This year, Chevron recognizes that Harris County needs are even greater than before.

Houstonians also can support students and teachers by helping to fund classroom projects – at any time and with any amount they can give – on the [1]DonorsChoose.org website. To learn more or submit a project, visit [2]www.FuelYourSchool.com.

1. http://DonorsChoose.org/
2. http://www.FuelYourSchool.com/

HCDE Head Start Centers Receive School Supplies from Houston-Based Plantgistix (2017-09-22 14:10) - hcdetx





Harris County Department of Education Head Start students at the Fifth Ward, Pugh, Dogan, Coolwood, San Jacinto and Sheffield centers received more than \$10,000 worth of backpacks and school supplies donated by Houston-based business Plantgistix.

The Plantgistix Community Outreach Committee, consisting of Darryl Dastous, Felesia Taylor, Tiffani Speller and Scott Skrabanek, delivered the backpacks on Sept. 25 to the Sheffield Head Start Center located at 14300 Wallisville Rd. Plantgistix also donated \$100 to each of the 24 classrooms for additional materials and supplies.

The committee members, along with Plantgistix CEO Marc Levine, understand the importance of early learning and the impact these supplies can make for students. The backpacks, containing essential classroom items such as colored markers, crayons, glue sticks and folders, will fill a need for many families affected by Hurricane Harvey.

"I believe everyone deserves an opportunity to grow," said Levine. "We at Plantgistix are honored to be able to help meet the needs of others."

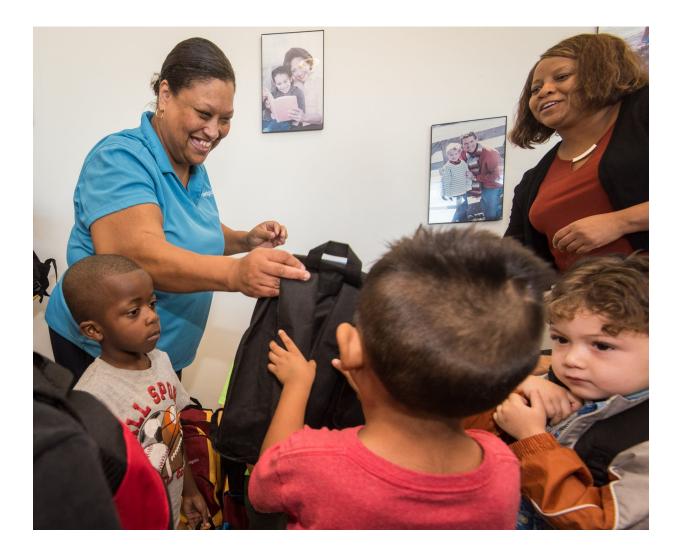
A recent survey conducted by the HCDE Head Start division showed nearly 70 families at the six centers receiving the donation experienced some sort of damage to their homes or cars. Many other families saw an impact on their financial situation as a result of the storm.

"This donation from Plantgistix is even more necessary for the success of our students in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey," said HCDE Head Start Senior Director Venetia Peacock. "We're thankful to our community partners for filling a vital need in the Head Start community."

HCDE is currently recruiting students for all 15 Head Start centers located in northeast Harris County. For information about enrollment or locations, call (713) 672-9343 or visit [1]www.hcde-texas.org/headstart. For more information on Plantgistix, visit [2]www.plantgistix.com.









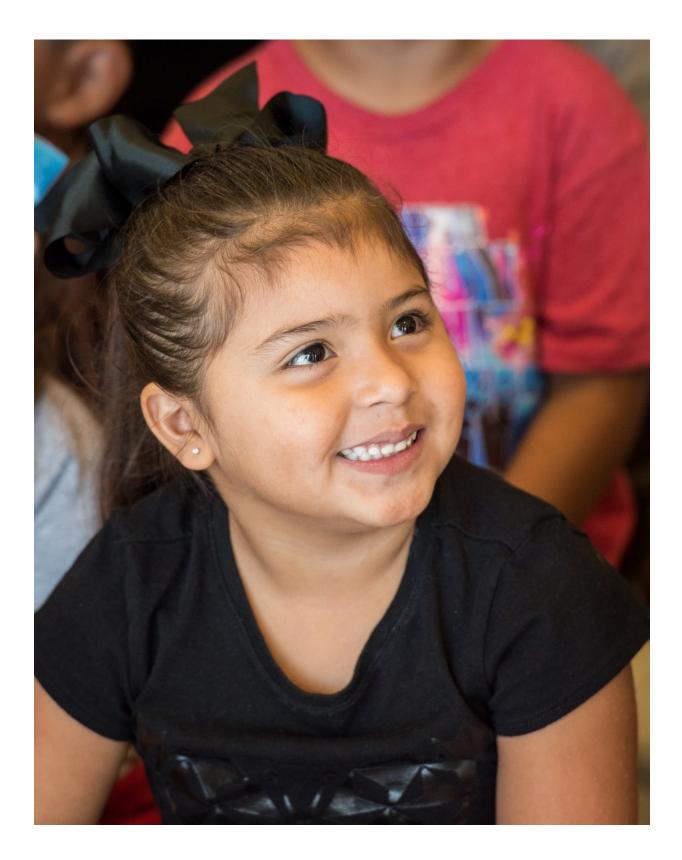














- 1. http://www.hcde-texas.org/headstart
- 2. http://www.plantgistix.com/

School-Based Therapy Services' TxSPOT shares resources for children traumatized by Hurricane Harvey (2017-09-26 12:13) - hcdetx





HCDE's School-Based Therapy Services provides resources for physical and occupational therapists statewide through their website [1]www.txspot.org, which stands for Texas School-Based Physical and Occupational Therapy. Specialized support is offered this month after Hurricane Harvey devastated the school community.

In an effort to provide support resources for students traumatized by Harvey, the division is using TxSPOT as a platform to provide information and resources.

Resources range from articles on effects of trauma on schools and learning to FAQs for special education issues resulting from Hurricane Harvey. Some information is available in Spanish. Find resources at: [2]http://www.txspot.org/SitePages/Resourcemonth.aspx.

1. http://www.txspot.org/

2. http://www.txspot.org/SitePages/Resourcemonth.aspx

93 Academic and Behavior School West students gain backpacks, supplies from HISD Hurricane Relief (2017-09-28 13:33) - hcdetx





Student Tyrique Mayfield was one of 93 students at Harris County Department of Education's Academic and Behavior School West who received a backpack Sept. 27 at a school assembly, courtesy of Houston Independent School District. Mayfield shared a customary handshake and smiled as he was handed the grey-and-black pack full of school supplies.

HISD Office of Special Education Services Program Specialist LaVora Wright attended the assembly and greeted the HISD students who are enrolled at AB West through contracted services. Harris County school districts contract with HCDE to provide specialized services along with a low, student-to-teacher ratio to education students with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The 15 HISD students enrolled at AB West received extra supplies in their backpacks, but all students were given backpacks due to the tremendous outpouring of contributions donated through Hurricane Relief Day hosted by HISD.

AB West parent Janet McCall from Fort Bend is a foster mom to three children. She also is responsible for her disabled husband. The McCall family lost their home and all their possessions during Hurricane Harvey. She received donations of clothing for AB West student La'Quesha through the assembly.

"There are days when you are really down and need to see the compassionate side of people," McCall said. "We appreciate the kindness and this heartfelt way people show compassion."

Through the assembly, four AB West teachers displaced by Harvey were also given donations from AB West staff and community.

"We are a family here at AB West, and helping those who are displaced and lost so much was 378

the right thing to do," AB West principal Victor Keys said.

To view photos from the event, go to [2]http://hcdetexas.photoshelter.com/gallery/ABW-Backpacks/G0000jQj69QCLf lk/C0000Ocq75eZ9lcU and enter password hcde1889.

Photo: Student Tyrique Mayfield accepts a backpack from HCDE principal Victor Keys and HISD program specialist LaVora Wright.

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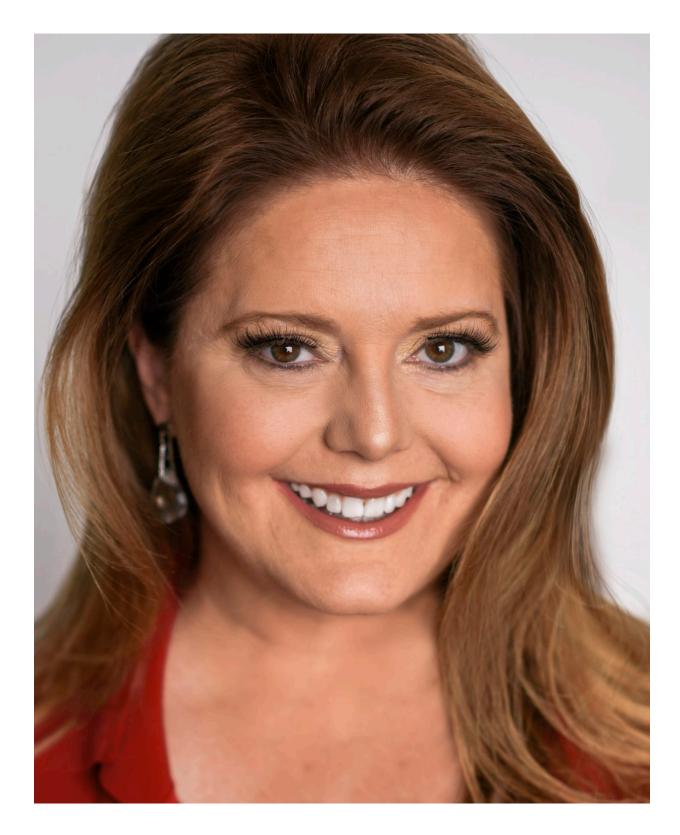
1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/09/backpack.jpg

2. http://hcdetexas.photoshelter.com/gallery/ABW-Backpacks/G0000jQj69QCLflk/C00000cq75eZ9lcU

3. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

1.10 October

3 journalists honored by HCDE, TASB for public education reporting with 2017 Media Honor Roll (2017-10-04 15:06) - hcdetx







Danica Smithwick

Three Houston journalists are being honored through the 2017 Media Honor Roll Award issued by the Texas Association of School Boards on behalf of Harris County Department of Education in

August. The journalists are Christine Dobbyn, reporter for KTRK-TV, Channel 13; Fabian Gutierrez, assignments editor for KTMD-TV Telemundo 47; and Danica Smithwick, reporter for Community Impact Newspapers.

"These three talented journalists tackle the challenges facing public education and herald the successes of our million-plus students and teachers in greater Harris County through a humanistic approach," said Harris County School Superintendent James Colbert. We appreciate their service to public education and their accurate approach and judgment in sharing public education news."

KTRK-TV reporter Christine Dobbyn is recognized for her story on afterschool students from the Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids, or CASE for Kids, who volunteered alongside their parents at the Houston Food Bank in an effort to expose the teens to the problem of hunger in their community. The story may be viewed through the following YouTube link: [1]https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJCah2v8C7Q

KTMD-TV assignments editor Fabian Gutierrez is honored for supporting HCDE Head Start and Adult Education programs throughout the year, helping get the word out about free education opportunities to the public. One story Fabian assigned was creatively angled at recruiting adult education construction workforce students: [2]https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FlzoyEDDNU0

Honoree Danica Smithwick, reporter for Community Impact Newspaper, provided a comprehensive article about Harris County Department of Education and the services it provides to Harris County school districts and citizens. Her article is available on the newspaper's website: [3]https://communityimpact.com/houston/cy-fair/at-the-capitol/2017/04/05/se n-bettencourt-targets-county-departments-of-education/.

In addition to receiving plaques from HCDE and TASB, the association also recognizes these three honorees on its website: [4]https://goo.gl/ZcedHe.

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^{1.} https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJCah2v8C7Q

^{2.} https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FIzoyEDDNU0

^{3.} https://communityimpact.com/houston/cy-fair/at-the-capitol/2017/04/05/sen-bettencourt-targets-county-departments-of-education/

^{4.} https://goo.gl/ZcedHe

5. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Groundbreaking set for Harris County's first public recovery high school Oct. 17 (2017-10-05 10:56) - hcdetx



[1]



Oct. 5, 2017 - Fortis Academy, Harris County's first public recovery high school, breaks ground this month after overcoming flood damages from Hurricane Harvey. Harris County Department of Education has invited elected officials, educators and leaders in the recovery community to view the

386

renovation of the facility, which previously served as a high school for at-risk students.

The ceremony is scheduled for Oct. 17 at 10 a.m. at the school, located at 11902 Spears Road, and will include a tour of the facility, discussion of the recovery school concept, an introduction to the school's new principal, and reveal of the school logo.

The 20,000-square-foot recovery school, located in the Greenspoint area, will open during the 2017-2018 school year to 30 students from any of the 25 Harris County school districts on a district contract basis. Fortis Academy is designed to help students who have completed a substance abuse or dependency rehabilitation program continue their studies in a sober environment.

In addition to the academic component of the traditional high school, the recovery school combines life coach support and counseling, along with data-driven best practices.

The renovation plans include the addition of a culinary kitchen and dining area to support a culinary arts curriculum. The outdoor design will feature walking trails, a ropes course for personal development and team-building, an outdoor kitchen, and a garden.

Anthony Moten, longtime principal and leader in the West Orange Cove Independent School District, will lead the school.

"Dr. Moten was selected to lead our recovery school because of his commitment and dedication to meeting students' unique needs," said Superintendent James Colbert. "The compassion and expertise that Dr. Moten brings along with him will have a long-lasting impact on students who desperately need our help."

Earning the reputation as an exceptional educator as a seven-year leader of West Orange Middle School, Moten helped transform the school that was failing to meet state standards. Under his leadership, West Orange earned eight Texas Education Agency distinctions.

Moten received his undergraduate degree from Langston University, a master's degree in education administration from Texas A &M University-Commerce and a doctorate from Lamar University. He and his family are currently living in The Woodlands.

Recovery schools are critical to recovering youth as studies show the risk of relapse is higher when students return to their pretreatment schools. HCDE recently became a member of Adolescent Recovery Oriented Systems of Care, or AROSC, a group of agencies in the Houston Recovery Initiative that provides substance abuse treatment, preventative care, after-care and recovery support for adolescents in the Houston area.

"Through our membership in AROSC, we are able to benefit from a credible knowledge base of best practices and pooled resources from the recovery community," Colbert said. "The recovery school will help students heal, grow and ultimately discover how to live their very best lives while continuing their education."

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- 1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/10/fortis-academy-rendering.jpg
- 2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Headliner workshops for educators feature national presenters, innovative topics from HCDE (2017-10-10 13:51) - hcdetx





Harris County Department of Education's Teaching and Learning Center is gearing up for a year filled with innovative and effective professional development opportunities for educators. The division is hosting headliner conferences and events during the 2017-2018 school year with high-demand presenters, in addition to weekly workshops and customized sessions for area school districts.

[2]Lead4ward: Studying the Parts that Make Up the Whole of Fractions (workshop no. 11623)

Nov. 6, 2017 (Presenter Nancy Crouch)

Is the sum of all your parts not equaling the whole when it comes to the fractions strand of mathematics? What do STAAR items demonstrate about fractional understanding? Get the big picture about fractions in elementary curriculum through concrete, pictorial and abstract thinking.

[3]Writing Strategies for Goal-Directed Instruction (workshop no. 11419) Jan. 18, 2018 (Presenter: Jennifer Seravallo)

Understand the qualities of good writing, but go beyond writing checklists and tips that tell writers what to do. Instead, learn how to craft explicit, clear strategies for students.

[4]Dyslexia Summit (workshop no. 11455)

Jan. 23, 2018

The Dyslexia Summit dives deeper into strategies, accommodations and evidence-based instructional practices that the general education teacher can use with all students.

[5]**32nd Annual Early Childhood Winter Conference (workshop no. 11478)** Jan. 27, 2018 (Presenter: Dr. Becky Bailey)

Attend this one-day professional learning conference and learn easy-to-implement, research-based classroom strategies designed for students in pre-kindergarten through second grade.

[6]Education & Equity: The Pathway to Proficiency (workshop no. 11635) Feb. 14, 2018

Cultural competence, culturally responsive teaching, rigor, differentiation, building relations and closing opportunity gaps are all addressed in this institute designed for Harris County schools.

[7]Cybersecurity in Education (workshop no. 11713) March 27, 2018

Network security breaches are on the rise in educational institutions. Districts need to be aggressive in protecting student and teacher data. Learn how districts, teachers and students can understand the liability and legal requirements of cybersecurity as we protect student data and professional reputations.

Digital Discovery Day (June 2018 date to be announced soon)

Join leaders from public and private industry. Explore the newest digital recourses and devoices. Breakout sessions will focus on hands-on experience for immediate classroom relevance. To register for these workshops or find more, visit [8]www.hcde-texas.org/register and enter date or workshop number or call 713-696-1315.

About Harris County Department of Education: HCDE provides special education, therapy services, early education, adult education and after-school programming. Services are funded by government grants, fees and a local property tax rate of \$.005195. For every dollar in local property tax collected, HCDE provides \$4.40 in services to the 25 Harris County school districts. HCDE also operates four campuses for students with profound special education needs and adjudicated youth who require a low student-teacher ratio and highly structured environment. One-hundred percent of students served on HCDE campuses are at-risk. The organization is governed by an elected board of seven trustees and has 1,060 employees and 33 facilities, including 15 Head Start centers. More info at [9]www.hcde-texas.org.

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- 1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/10/20171004_autism_149.jpg
- 2. https://workshops.hcde-texas.org/iebms/portalsearch/Results.aspx?Workshop=11623
- 3. https://workshops.hcde-texas.org/iebms/portalsearch/Results.aspx?Workshop=11419
- 4. https://workshops.hcde-texas.org/iebms/portalsearch/Results.aspx?Workshop=11455
- 5. https://workshops.hcde-texas.org/iebms/portalsearch/Results.aspx?Workshop=11478
- 6. https://workshops.hcde-texas.org/iebms/portalsearch/Results.aspx?Workshop=11635
- 7. https://workshops.hcde-texas.org/iebms/portalsearch/Results.aspx?Workshop=11713
- 8. http://www.hcde-texas.org/register
- 9. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

HCDE Autism Summit 2017 Provides Tools, Insight for Autism Spectrum Disorder (2017-10-12 11:46) - hcdetx





Fifty-four educators in the Greater Houston area attended Autism Summit 2017 on Oct. 4-5 at Harris County Department of Education. The summit featured keynote speakers Carol Gray and Dorothea Lerman and provided breakout sessions with autism experts that focused on autism legislation and transition services. Participants also heard testimonials from a panel of young adults with autism spectrum disorder.

During the first day of the summit, Gray provided a workshop on using "Social Stories[™]" to help students with autism dealing with the impact of Hurricane Harvey. Social Stories[™] is a tool that supports safe, meaningful exchange of information between parents, professionals and people with autism. On the second day, Lerman provided important insight for participants as the director of the Center for Autism and Developmental Disabilities at the University of Houston – Clear Lake.

"This Autism Summit was informative and engaging," said Leslie Willis-White with Gulf Coast Community Services Association. "It provided a different perspective for working with students with autism."

The Autism Summit also featured a "Question and Answer" session with a panel of young adults with autism spectrum disorder. The panelists included Madison Flavin, graduate student at Rice University who was diagnosed with autism at age 19; Nicholas Guillerman, Katy ISD Career and Technology teacher involved in Houston Autism Resources and Support (HARS); and Grant Manier, emerging Eco-artist who has won multiple awards for his Eco-impressionism and recently published a children's book about his experiences.

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), autism spectrum disorder is a developmental disability that can cause significant social, communication and behavioral challenges. CDC statistics show that one in 68 children has been identified with autism spectrum disorder, and the condition occurs in all ethnic and socioeconomic groups. To view photos from the summit, visit [1]https://hcdetx.smugmug.com/ISS/Autism-Summit-2017/ (password: hcde1889).





















1. https://hcdetx.smugmug.com/ISS/Autism-Summit-2017/

Harris County Department of Education breaks ground on Fortis Academy for recovering teens (2017-10-18 12:48) - hcdetx





View the Fortis Academy groundbreaking video: [1]https://youtu.be/U5d7kMOVSHo View photos from the groundbreaking event (password is hcde1889): [2]http://goo.gl/tKesbB

Elected officials and education leaders broke ground Tuesday on Harris County's first public recovery high school, designed to help students who have completed a rehabilitation program remain sober while continuing their education.

"Fortis is a very important Latin term for strength and courage and determination," said Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, whose district includes the Fortis Academy site, previously HCDE's Highpoint North campus. "You have certainly answered the question of 'What is right?' This

is the right thing to do."

More than 10,000 drug- and alcohol-related offenses occurred in Harris County's 25 school districts during the past five years. Research also shows the risk of relapse is higher when students must return to their pretreatment schools. For many adolescents, their prior high school represents the environment of previous use and contact with using friends.

"We really need to get down to the root of the problem and help these children fight their addictions," said HCDE Superintendent James Colbert. "We're going to assist kids with sobriety to make them whole again while they continue to achieve their academic goals."

Tuesday's event was attended by state Sen. Sylvia Garcia, a representative from Commissioner Jack Cagle's office, Aldine ISD Superintendent Dr. Wanda Bamberg, Spring ISD Superintendent Dr. Rodney Watson, Houston ISD trustee Rhonda Skillern-Jones, and leaders from Houston's recovery community. Several educators from area school districts including Huffman, Goose Creek and Galena Park also attended.

Harris County Department of Education Board President Louis Evans said the event was historic not just for HCDE, but for Texas' largest county.

"We are here to mark the beginning of an exciting renovation that will culminate with the opening of Harris County's first public recovery high school: Fortis Academy," Evans said. "Thanks to superintendent James Colbert; our therapeutic partner, Turning Point; and the support of superintendents and recovery advocates across the county, we are poised to make history."

Fortis Academy, located at 11902 Spears Road in the Greenspoint area, will open in the spring with an initial cohort of 30 students. The school's principal, Anthony Moten, said the therapeutic component is critical in helping students maintain the sobriety they have achieved in counseling programs prior to enrolling in Fortis.

"My connection to this mission is personal. I've seen, up close and personal, the harm and the impact that drugs and alcohol have on families and adolescents," said Dr. Moten, whose father owned a nightclub. "I'm committed and prayerful that Fortis Academy will be a life-saving and life-sustaining refuge for the adolescents of Harris County."

For more information about Fortis Academy recovery high school, go to [3]www.hcde-texas.org/recoveryschool.

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2. http://goo.gl/tKesbB

3. http://www.hcde-texas.org/recoveryschool

4. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Students to taste-test new 'selfie pizza' at largest food expo, Oct. 25 (2017-10-20 14:26) - hcdetx





Choice Partners, Harris County Department of Education's purchasing cooperative, will host 130 food and equipment vendors and 237 discerning students at the 2017 *Totally Awesome* School Nutrition Expo on Wednesday, Oct. 25, at the Humble Civic Center, 8233 Will Clayton Parkway.

The largest expo in the food program's history to date will give students from six area school districts the opportunity to sample foods from 11 a.m. to noon.

Nutrition directors will know what students like and do not like and some of the selected food preferences may find their way to their very own school cafeteria. Among the foods to sample this year comes from a locally-owned company based in Waller, Texas. Alpha Food's "selfie pizza" – a personal-sized pizza that has attracted much enthusiasm.

As school nutrition directors evaluate quality, nutritional value and student tastes, Choice Partners gathers info needed to plan for future food contract purchases for school districts. Food is purchased annually by school districts in the Harris County area for more than 100 million student lunches through contracts available through HCDE Choice Partners cooperative.

More than 130 food and equipment vendors will exhibit both classic and new products, marking more than a 50 percent increase in vendor participation over last year. Tasty Brands, a supplier of great-tasting school food that meets USDA regulations, also has its new mini ravioli dish available for students and staff to try.

School districts bringing students to participate in the event include Katy, Spring Branch, Columbia-Brazoria, Galena Park, Crosby and Cleveland independent school districts. **About Harris County Department of Education:** HCDE provides special education, therapy services, early education, adult education and after-school programming. Services are funded by government grants, fees and a local property tax rate of \$.005195. For every dollar in local property tax collected, HCDE provides \$4.40 in services to the 25 Harris County school districts. HCDE also operates four campuses for students with profound special education needs and adjudicated youth who require a low student-teacher ratio and highly structured environment. One-hundred percent of students served on HCDE campuses are at-risk. The organization is governed by an elected board of seven trustees and has 1,060 employees and 33 facilities, including 15 Head Start centers. More info at [2]www.hcde-texas.org.

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1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/10/food-co-op.jpg

2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Lights On Afterschool recognizes children affected by Harvey through celebration at Children's Museum (2017-10-25 15:42) - hcdetx





Lights On Afterschool, the national awareness-raising day to support afterschool, will be held locally in Houston on Thursday, Oct. 26 from 3-5 p.m. at the Children's Museum of Houston, 1500 Binz. The event is hosted by the Greater Houston Lights On Alliance, a collection of local organizations which support afterschool.

Locally, Lights On Afterschool! will celebrate the organizations and afterschool providers who kept the lights on for students during Hurricane Harvey and in the storm's aftermath.

About 150 children invited to the event from Alliance organizations come from areas in Houston which were heavily affected by the storm. Children will trick-or-treat in designated areas of the museum with their afterschool community from 4-5 p.m.

Event highlights include remarks by the Texas Partnership for Out of School Time; an afterschool rally; post-Harvey: Afterschool in Houston discussion; and a STEM interactive science experience called "air blaster" provided by museum staff to demonstrate the power of air mass.

A recent study completed by Harris County Department of Education's Research and Evaluation Institute circulated to local afterschool communities reported 80 percent of afterschool sites said they expect to see changes in enrollment because of Hurricane Harvey. Over half of the respondents provided afterschool programs and services in Harvey's aftermath, and many depleted resources and exhausted personnel during the weeks following the storm. Harvey afterschool relief kits will be distributed to many of the affected sites at the event.

National statistics show that 11.3 million children are alone and unsupervised from 3-6 p.m., and one in five children still don't have afterschool caregivers. Even though more youth than ever before are in afterschool—10.2 million—for every child in a program, two are waiting to get in.

This year the national celebration highlights the importance of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) activities in afterschool. Over the next decade, Texas is projected to have nearly 10 percent of the nation's STEM job opportunities, with Dallas, Houston and Austin being among the top places in the nation for STEM job seekers. Texas businesses need workers with STEM skills, and afterschool programs help prepare students for jobs in high demand, like those in the STEM fields, according to the Texas Partnership for Out of School Time.

The event is hosted by the Greater Houston Lights On Alliance, an alliance that supports the philosophy that afterschool programs keep kids safe, help working families and inspire youth to learn.

The alliance is comprised of the following organizations:

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CASE for Kids, Education Foundation of Harris County, Harris County Department of Education, YMCA of Greater Houston; Houston ISD; the City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department After-School Achievement Program (A.S.A.P.); The Mayor's Office of Education Initiatives; Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Houston; Harris County Precinct 1 Commissioner Rodney Ellis; United Way of Greater Houston; Children's Museum of Houston; South East Texas After-School Association (SETAA); and Harris County Precinct 1 and Harris County Precinct 2.

View invite: [1]http://www.hcde-texas.org/media/4945/lights-on-2017-invitation.pdf

View statistics about afterschool from TXPOST and the Afterschool Alliance: [2]http://www.hcde-texas.org/media/4966/statistics-2017.pdf

^{1.} http://www.hcde-texas.org/media/4945/lights-on-2017-invitation.pdf

^{2.} http://www.hcde-texas.org/media/4966/statistics-2017.pdf

Choice Partners Annual Nutrition Expo debuts new products to area schools (2017-10-26 11:46) - hcdetx



View photos: [1]http://bit.ly/2yO8xgr (password is hcde1889)



Choice Partnerships Food Vendor Fair at the Humble Civic Center, October 25, 2017.



Choice Partnerships Food Vendor Fair at the Humble Civic Center, October 25, 2017.



Choice Partnerships Food Vendor Fair at the Humble Civic Center, October 25, 2017. 416



Choice Partnerships Food Vendor Fair at the Humble Civic Center, October 25, 2017.

Oct. 26, 2017 - Choice Partners, Harris County Department of Education's purchasing cooperative, hosted its annual School Nutrition Expo on Wednesday at Humble Civic Center. The event featured more than 130 food and equipment vendors, making it the largest in the program's history.

"We're proud to see this event growing so that we can continue to give students and nutrition directors broader choices that meet all guidelines and taste great," said Trisha Jensen, assistant director, HCDE Choice Partners.

More than 230 students from area school districts showed up to taste-test foods, letting school district nutrition directors know selections they preferred for the school cafeteria menu. Students came from Katy, Spring Branch, Columbia-Brazoria, Galena Park, Crosby and Cleveland.

"I come every year to find out about new products," said Gail Stotler, nutrition director, Fort Bend ISD. Stotler added that this year she sampled some new chicken products that "look very good."

D'gusto Foods sent a representative for the second year in a row, this time to debut its new line of empanadas in corn dough. Oscar Velsasquez, CEO, D'gusto Food said: "I came to introduce a new product: the empanadas, which come in beef, chicken and veggie."

New products on display also included the "Selfie Pizza" from Alpha Foods, a locally-owned company based in Waller, Texas. Tasty Brands, a supplier of great-tasting school food that meets USDA regulations, also showcased its new mini ravioli dish.

As school nutrition directors evaluated quality, nutritional value and student tastes, Choice Partners gathered info needed to plan for future food contract purchases for school districts. Food is purchased annually by school districts in the Harris County area for more than 100 million student lunches through contracts available through HCDE Choice Partners cooperative.

Choice Partners next event, its annual Vendor Exhibit featuring a variety of facilities, technology, supplies and services vendors, will take place from 10 a.m to 1 p.m. Friday, Oct. 27, at Norris Events Center at City Centre. For more information about Choice Partners, go to [2]www.choicepartners.org

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1. http://bit.ly/2y08xgr
2. http://www.choicepartners.org/
3. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Lights On Afterschool recognizes children affected by Harvey through celebration at Children's Museum (2017-10-27 14:25) - hcdetx





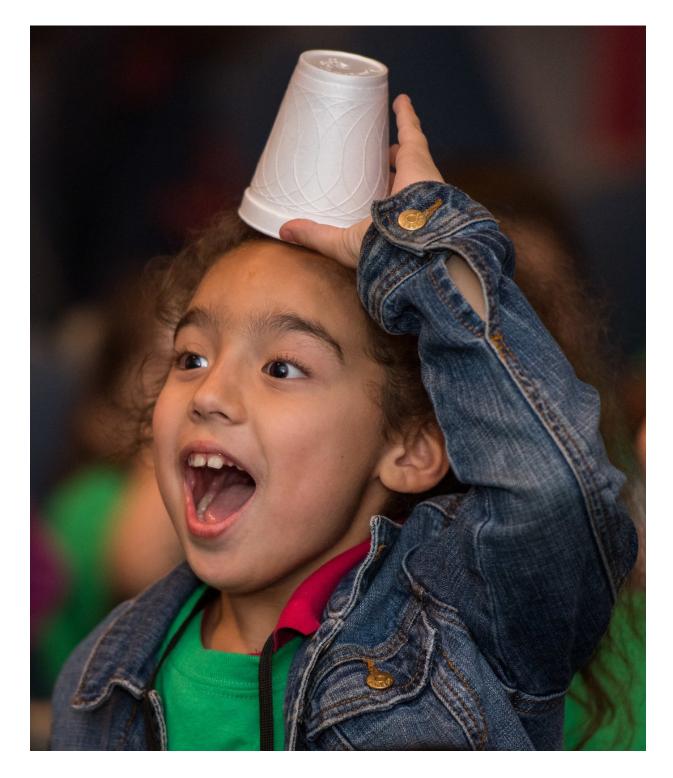
View link to photos (password is hcde1889): [1]http://bit.ly/2iOeHsX

Children affected by Hurricane Harvey were delivered the ultimate Halloween experience through the Greater Houston Lights On Alliance, a collection of local organizations supporting afterschool on Oct. 26. The event held at the Children's Museum Houston allowed 150 kids enrolled in alliance programs to enjoy the museum, trick-or-treat and participate in a fun science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) experiment.

"Harvey was a traumatic experience for children and our afterschool staff, and we recognized the need today for those children to have fun while the adults talk about meaningful issues surrounding the national Lights On Afterschool initiative and our local concerns," said director Lisa Thompson-Caruthers, Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids, or CASE for Kids.

A recent study completed by Harris County Department of Education's Research and Evaluation Institute circulated to local afterschool communities reported 80 percent of afterschool sites said they expect to see changes in enrollment because of Hurricane Harvey. Over half of the respondents provided afterschool programs and services in Harvey's aftermath, and many depleted resources and exhausted personnel during the weeks following the storm. Harvey afterschool relief kits will be distributed to many of the affected sites at the event. National statistics show that 11.3 million children are alone and unsupervised from 3-6 p.m., and one in five children still don't have afterschool caregivers. Even though more youth than ever before are in afterschool—10.2 million—for every child in a program, two are waiting to get in.

At the celebration, an initiative called Out 2 Learn network, funded through the Houston Endowment and led through United Way of Greater Houston, announced its launch. Out 2 Learn will work strategically with HCDE's CASE for Kids and the City of Houston to implement Out 2 Learn key strategies. The network is aimed at expanding access to high-quality, out of school time services to all families in the greater Houston region through a coordinated, youth-centered approach to professional development, community investment and community awareness of the importance of quality services and youth voice.



Event highlights included remarks by the Texas Partnership for Out of School Time; an afterschool rally; post-Harvey: Afterschool in Houston discussion; and a STEM interactive science experience called "air blaster" provided by museum staff to demonstrate the power of air mass.

The alliance is comprised of the following organizations:

CASE for Kids, Education Foundation of Harris County, Harris County Department of Education, YMCA of Greater Houston, Houston ISD, the City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department 422 After-School Achievement Program (A.S.A.P.), The Mayor's Office of Education Initiatives, Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Houston, Harris County Precinct 1 Commissioner Rodney Ellis, Harris County Precinct 2 Commissioner Jack Morman, United Way of Greater Houston, Children's Museum of Houston, East Texas After-School Association (SETAA), Harris County Precinct 1, and Harris County Precinct 2.

View statistics about afterschool from TXPOST and the Afterschool Alliance: [2]http://www.hcde-texas.org/media/4966/statistics-2017.pdf

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1. http://bit.ly/2iOeHsX
2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/media/4966/statistics-2017.pdf

Head Start Families affected by Hurricane Harvey receive donations from Amarillo church (2017-10-31 15:09) - hcdetx





Members of the MORE church in Amarillo, Texas recently collected donations in the form of water, cleaning supplies, clothing, diapers, bed linens, car seats and 10 Home Depot gift cards for Head Start families affected by Hurricane Harvey. On Saturday, Oct. 14, a team of church members drove to the Irvington Building to deliver the items for families in need.

"These donated items will help meet the basic needs of our Head Start families affected by the storm," said Venetia Peacock, senior director for Head Start. "We thank the MORE community for their generosity and support for our youngest learners."

A month ago, member Jennifer Scroggins approached the leaders of MORE with an idea to help those suffering from Hurricane Harvey by collecting items to donate. The leaders agreed and set a plan in motion. They spent the month allowing members of the church and community to donate items.

"This is our way of helping members grow as well as bringing some small amount of relief to a few families in Houston," said Lyndal Waldrip, administrative senior pastor. "We continue to pray for all of those affected by the hurricanes this summer."

The donations will be distributed to Area I Head Start families who have indicated a need for certain items.

For information about Head Start enrollment or locations, visit [1]www.hcde-texas.org/headstart.

^{1.} http://www.hcde-texas.org/headstart

1.11 November

CASE for Kids Out-of-School Time Conference Nov. 10-11 tailored to afterschool leaders, staff (2017-11-01 16:14) - hcdetx



Conference is headlined by sociologist/author Karen Pittman and entertainer SaulPaul



The CASE for Kids Out-of-School Time Conference on Nov. 10-11 at the HESS Club, located at 5430 Westheimer, Houston, Texas, gives afterschool leaders and staff professional learning opportunities focused on out-of-school time programming. The event is hosted by Harris County Department of Education's Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids, or CASE for Kids. The theme "keeping afterschool cool" provides refueling opportunities for professional development, resources, networking and inspiration.

Friday's session from 11:30 a.m.- 5 p.m. is tailored to administrators and leaders and includes learning sessions and networking opportunities. Headlining the event is Karen Pittman, co-founder and president of the Forum on Youth Investment. Pittman is a sociologist and recognized leader in youth development who formerly served the Clinton administration as director of the President's Crime Prevention Council. She later joined ret. Gen. Colin Powell to collaborate through America's Promise. She has authored three books and several dozen articles on youth issues. Snacks, lunch and an afternoon social hour are included, and cost is \$60. [1]Register at [2]www.hcde-texas.org/register and enter workshop number 11689.

Saturday's session from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. is for front-line and site-based staff who work with youth in afterschool programs. Pittman and other area trauma experts return for a panel discussion on Hurricane Harvey students. Possible health and behavior challenges are discussed, with best practices and behavioral strategies applied. In addition, area afterschool providers share their expertise and offerings for out-of-school time programming. CASE for Kids showcases items from its SMART Zone, a free, comprehensive collection of resource materials available to all Harris County out-of-school time programs.

"Musician with a Message" SaulPaul entertains on Saturday during the lunch hour. The musi-

cian from Houston has performed two TED talks and tours multiple music festivals throughout the year, including the famed South by Southwest in Austin, Texas. Best known for his ability to improvise through freestyle, he has performed for the NFL and at the Kennedy Center. Part rapper and part singer-songwriter, SaulPaul entertains and blends his message with guitar.

Cost for Saturday is \$50 and includes 4.5 training hours along with continental breakfast, lunch and snacks. [3]Register at [4]www.hcde-texas.org/register and enter workshop number 11690.

For more information about the CASE for Kids Out-of-School Time Conference, as well as specific professional development sessions offered each day, go to [5]www.afterschoolzone.org . View the schedule at a glance: [6]https://goo.gl/9V7g9j .

1. https://workshops.hcde-texas.org/iebms/portalsearch/Results.aspx?Workshop=11689

- 2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/register
- 3. https://workshops.hcde-texas.org/iebms/portalsearch/Results.aspx?Workshop=11690
- 4. http://www.hcde-texas.org/register
- 5. http://www.afterschoolzone.org/
- 6.https://goo.gl/9V7g9j

Purchasing professionals connect with more than 70 businesses at Choice Partners Vendor Fair (2017-11-02 16:24) - hcdetx





More than 200 purchasing and facilities professionals attended the Choice Partners Annual Vendor Exhibit on Oct. 27, at CityCentre in Houston. As members of Choice Partners, HCDE's purchasing cooperative, these professionals had a chance to learn about important legislative updates and meet with more than 70 facilities, technology, supplies and services vendors.

The event kicked off with a presentation from Sarah Langlois, an attorney with Rogers, Morris and Grover. Langlois provided attendees with updates to laws affecting purchasing professionals, particularly those who work in school districts.

For example, Texas recently passed legislation that makes it illegal to enter into contracts with companies that boycott Israel. This means that school districts and other governmental entities need to add new language to their vendor registration packets verifying the status of their contract-holders.

After Langlois' presentation, the Vendor Exhibit opened up. It featured 80s-themed décor and costume, as well as many wearing orange and blue in support of the Houston Astros' World Series games. Members spoke of the value of learning about new products, while vendors said they enjoy coming every year to put faces to names and get the word out about their business.

1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/11/20171027_vendors_215.jpg

Financial mathematics grant awarded to HCDE brings personal money management training to Harris County educators, teens (2017-11-06 16:38) - hcdetx





Harris County teachers will be equipped to teach a new high school course called "financial mathematics" through a \$19,000 grant provided to Harris County Department of Education's Teaching and Learning Center through the Texas Financial Education Endowment.

The teacher's training project provides assistance to 70 high school math and career and technical education educators in all 25 Harris County districts. The training program implemented by HCDE's Learning Center is called "New Course, New Challenges: Tackling Texas Financial Literacy through Financial Mathematics Professional Development."

The new personal money management course fulfills a third-year math credit for students in grades 11-12. The course may be taken instead of algebra 2. Math competencies related to real-world experiences include some of the following: net pay, income taxes, mortgage payment calculation, property taxes, mortgage insurance, closing costs and interest costs.

"We will be helping Harris County high schools to offer this course to their students," said Nicole Shanahan, HCDE math curriculum director who will lead the project. "Through the course, students apply critical thinking skills to analyze personal financial decisions based upon the current and project economic factors," she said.

HCDE will collaborate with a financial industry expert to design six lessons of the financial mathematics. The six-module content includes employment earnings, federal taxes, financial institutions and accounts, types of credit, investment options and retirement plans, and types of insurance. Teachers gain the six lessons to teach the course through a one-day, six-hour workshop offered through HCDE.

The financial mathematics grant was written through HCDE's Center for Grants Development.

It will be implemented beginning Jan. 1, 2018 through Dec. 31, 2019. Teachers interested in the training may email Nicole Shanahan, [1]nshanahan@hcde-texas.org.

1. mailto:nshanahan@hcde-texas.org

The right fit: HCDE Principal Academy grad Katie Bradarich leads iconic Houston ISD Lanier Middle School (2017-11-07 12:26) - hcdetx



[1]



Nov. 7, 2017 - Middle school principal Katie Bradarich spent 20 years in corporate management and doesn't remember laughing a lot along the way. As the new principal of Lanier Middle School—a Houston ISD school steeped in history and rich with diversity as an international baccalaureate school and fine arts magnet school–laughter has become the integral part of her school day.

"This isn't a job for me; it's the job for me," said Bradarich, a 2015 graduate of Harris County Department of Education's Principal Academy who has found her calling working with students who are growing into adolescence, developmental years she calls "a magical age."

"Dr. B," as she is fondly addressed by students, parents, teachers and staff, decided to become a principal after moving to Houston to work in curriculum and instruction with children with neurological differences. She holds a bachelor's degree, a master's degree in teaching and a Ph.D. in teaching and learning. She was referred to the principal certification program at HCDE from several colleagues.

As she bonded with the members of her small, education cohort at HCDE and her education instructors, she coupled her management skills with her love of teaching to become a "learning leader," a phrase she uses to describe a principal's leadership role.

The hybrid principal training program at HCDE is both onsite and online as principal candidates meet once a month on weekends. Meetings are combined with self-paced, online assignments. Guests who are tenured education leaders act as panelists to share rich experiences with candidates. The program holds a 100 percent principal certification exam pass rate.

"Leadership advancement coaches at HCDE work one-on-one with our principal candidates in a structured curriculum," said Lidia Zatopek, director of the program. "But we also model effective leadership strategies such as team-building."

Bradarich supports and advises six assistant principals at Lanier along with her teachers and administrative staff. She is also responsible for helping build a strong parent-teacher organization and networks within the community.

"You cannot find a more complex and dynamic job," she said. "For me, part of being comfortable is challenge," she said.

The two-time cancer survivor said while she's not afraid of challenge, self-care is important. She reminds her staff to take time for family and themselves, especially in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey.

Within the HCDE Principal Academy, Bradarich cited collaboration as being central to the learning framework.

"The HCDE team built relationships with us and encouraged us to connect to each other," she said. "We learned a great deal from each other, as our experiences were richly diverse."

Bradarich wants to be remembered for her compassion and authenticity as she applies her skills sets as principal and leader at Lanier this year.

"All of my studies, degrees and previous work experience have been preparing me to lead at this school," she said.

For more information about the Principal Academy through the Educator Certification and Aca-

demic Advancement division at HCDE, go to [2]www.hcde-texas.org/leadnow. Consider attending the Leadership Matters Series for education leadership topics, including the upcoming [3]"**Princi-pal's Role in Transforming School Culture**" on Nov. 11. For more information, call 713-696-1348.

Photo: HCDE Principal Academy grad Katie Bradarich, who now leads Lanier Middle School in Houston ISD, takes a moment to reflect alongside HCDE Principal Academy Director Lidia Zatopek.

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- 2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/leadnow
- $3. \ \texttt{https://workshops.hcde-texas.org/iebms/portalsearch/\texttt{Results.aspx?Workshop=11644}$
- 4. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

^{1.} https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/11/20170811_bradarich_014.jpg

Harris County Department of Education Therapist Leah Alba Receives Tom Waugh Fellowship Pin (2017-11-09 11:48) - hcdetx





Harris County Department of Education Physical Therapist Leah Alba was recently honored with the Tom Waugh Fellowship pin on Oct. 27, 2017 at the Texas Physical Therapy Association (TPTA) Annual Conference in Corpus Christi. Alba also recently received her Doctorate of Physical Therapy from the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston.

The Tom Waugh Leadership Development Program aims to help foster and develop professional leadership skills in members of the TPTA who show potential and desire to become more active in the organization. The program includes two phases and takes two years to complete.

"Through this program, I had an opportunity to receive personalized mentorship by leaders in the organization," said Alba. "I hope to increase organizational involvement at both the local and state levels and become a better advocate for the profession of physical therapy."

The Meyerland resident has been a therapist with HCDE for 17 years and is currently assigned to work in Houston Independent School District. Before joining HCDE, Alba completed her physical therapy degree in the Philippines and worked in several different clinical settings in the U.S. including a nursing facility, rehabilitation hospital and home health. In 2000, HCDE opened the door for Alba to work with children.

"In my role at HCDE, I get to spend time with children every day," said Alba. "Hardly a day goes by that I don't see the clear and lasting impact on the way my students are able to participate and function in their classroom and around the school."

Working on school campuses throughout Harris County, HCDE's physical therapists, occupational therapists and music therapists help meet the needs of more than 7,000 students each year who struggle with autism spectrum disorders, intellectual disabilities and other challenges.

For more information about HCDE's School-Based Therapy Services, visit [1]www.hcde-texas.org/therapyservices. For information on the Tom Waugh Leadership Development Program, visit [2]http://www.tpta.org/?page=TWLDP.

^{1.} http://www.hcde-texas.org/therapyservices
2. http://www.tpta.org/?page=TWLDP

24-year education leader Arteaga to lead special populations post at Harris County Department of Education (2017-11-14 15:29) - hcdetx





Longtime education leader Brenda Arteaga is the new curriculum director for special populations in the Teaching and Learning Center, a division of Harris County Department of Education.

Arteaga is a 24-year veteran educator who most recently served as superintendent of schools

and assistant superintendent for academics and operations at Southwest Schools in Houston. Before leading the state charter schools, she worked in the Houston Independent School District for 18 years where she was principal, assistant principal, dual language/Title III coordinator and middle school, elementary and early childhood teacher.

The Harris County resident earned her undergraduate degree from University of Houston Central with specialties in interdisciplinary studies and an emphasis in reading and Spanish. She also holds certifications in bilingual/ESL and self-contained classrooms. She gained her master's degree from St. Thomas University and a doctorate in professional leadership from University of Houston.

Special populations in education are groups of people with needs that require special consideration and attention in an educational setting. Special populations may refer to students with disabilities, or students who come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The term also applies to students with limited English proficiency.

Arteaga's goals at her new post at HCDE include providing high-quality, special populations professional learning opportunities for area educators. In addition, she is driven to establish a framework for professional development learning to impact special populations learners which will focus on equity, opportunity, transformation and innovation in the educational environment.

"One way we are embarking on this journey is through hosting our Equity in Education Summit on Feb. 9," said Arteaga.

The summit will feature presenter Roger Cleveland, a national presenter at over 45 conferences which have promoted diversity, equity and inclusion. Register for the summit at [2]www.hcde-texas.org/register (workshop number 11635).

^{1.} https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/11/20171114_arteaga_0009_r.jpg
2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/register

Conference focuses on 'social and emotional learning' as forward-thinking afterschool leaders, front-line staff plan for future (2017-11-15 15:15) - hcdetx









View photos from the conference: View photos from the conference: [1]http://bit.ly/2iWNC3k (password hcde1889)

Several hundred area out-of-school time leaders and front-line staff gathered for the CASE for Kids 2017 Out-of-School Time Conference on Nov. 10-11. Social and emotional learning issues related to afterschool youth were at the core of the conference. Those involve students acquiring skills related to self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision making, relationship skills and social awareness.

Karen Pittman, keynote, sociologist and CEO for the Forum on Youth Investment, opened the conference to out-of-school time leaders with this call to action:

"Our goal is not to celebrate youth that beat the odds; our goal is to change the odds," said Pittman, who formerly served the Clinton administration as director of the President's Crime Prevention Council.

Hosted by the Harris County Department of Education's Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids, or CASE for Kids, the conference held at the HESS Club in Houston, Texas included a panel discussion with community leaders led by CASE for Kids Director Lisa Thompson-Caruthers. The conversations centered on how to integrate social and emotional learning theory and practice, outreach and advocacy efforts to best support Houston area youth. Students from the University of Houston-Downtown Center for Public Policy helped facilitate the critical conversation. Data collected will be compiled into a report by HCDE's Research and Evaluation Institute.

"As we continue to support out-of-school time professionals in gaining knowledge and skills in our field, we are specifically looking for additional social and emotional resources and interventions that supports our front-line staff," said Lisa Thompson-Caruthers, CASE for Kids director. "We must support each other as we continue to get stronger and heal from Harvey."

Front-line afterschool staff gathered Saturday for a panel discussion on students affected by Hurricane Harvey and their emotional needs.

Performer SaulPaul, part rapper and part singer songwriter, entertained and shared his story about his troubled youth followed by a successful recovery and graduation from University of Texas with honors. SaulPaul has performed multiple TED talks and has made his mark throughout the nation at music festivals, namely South by Southwest in Austin, Texas. Most recently he performed at the Capitol in Washington, D.C.

In addition to practical and innovative workshops, other highlights from Saturday included a showcase of materials from the SMART Zone, a free, comprehensive collection of resources available to all Harris County out-of-school time programs.

CASE for Kids, a division of Harris County Department of Education, provides resources, trainings and funding for students in grades pre-k through 12 in afterschool programs in schools, child care facilities and community centers throughout Harris County.

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1. http://bit.ly/2iWNC3k
2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Houston Area GIS Day helps teens realize career options using the technology (2017-11-16 16:05) - hcdetx





View photos: [2]http://goo.gl/CfBBT2 (password is hcde1889)

Through the Houston Area Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Day, high school students are learning that GIS technology applies to a majority of 21st century career paths. From disaster relief to medical fields, GIS is the way of the future.

Students from five school districts visited Harris County Department of Education on Nov. 16 where Houston-Galveston Area Council members assembled GIS labs, drone stations, geocaching, mobile command vehicles and provided GIS trivia. The annual event gives the teens a global view of how GIS works, especially in instances like Hurricane Harvey.

"There are great opportunities in this technology-driven career," said HCDE Teaching and Learning Center Science Curriculum Director Lisa Felske, who helped coordinate the event. "Students learned how all these agencies worked together to provide updated information at a city and county level. There was incredible information shared between companies, agencies and government during Hurricane Harvey."

GIS computer software is used for creating maps that are used for analyzing and reporting information such as weather, elections, flood prediction and more.

The hard-hit city of Silsbee, Texas near Beaumont is still recovering from the effects of Harvey, and Silsbee High School human geography teacher Erin Smith says GIS is continuing to help her city recover and plan for the future. Students in her human geography class are helping with that effort.

The Silsbee students are learning to use ArcGIS software from company Esri this semester. 452

They'll apply that knowledge to help with disaster relief in a community still ailing from Harvey.

"We'll plot it out in times of hurricanes and disasters and include which routes to avoid, what routes for emergency management to take, and examine the problems we encountered during Hurricane Harvey so we can learn how to better prepare," said Smith, whose "human geography" class studies how people interact throughout the world.

This year's GIS Day focused on Harvey and how GIS played an integral part in planning, response and recovery. Teens from Silsbee participated along with four other high schools in Houston and Spring.

The event was hosted by HCDE's Teaching and Learning Center and led by Felske and the Houston-Galveston Area Council's Geographic Data Workgroup. Numerous emergency response teams brought GIS-powered vehicles to the event held in the Conference Center and extending into the Irvington parking area.

Felske says future plans for GIS studies include a grant from Kinder Morgan which will allow her to create professional development for teachers who want to learn to use GIS software with their students. To learn more about the free training, email [3]Ifelske@hcde-texas.org.

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1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/11/20171116_gis_0133.jpg
2. https://goo.gl/CfBBT2
3. mailto:lfelske@hcde-texas.org
4. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Teacher tip: Use hand-clapping games to promote early childhood language skills (2017-11-17 10:22) - hcdetx





[1] (The [2]R.T. Garcia Early Childhood Winter Conference is Jan. 27, right around the corner. This year the conference includes sessions for children birth to 3. Get a glimpse of the valuable resources you'll receive by attending with our series of featured teacher tips from our superb presenters!) #ECWC18

Dr. Mike, or Mike Longoria, promotes movement to help children acquire language skills. Clapping patterns can help children conquer complex language patterns.

Lesson: Have kids get in groups of two (and later larger groups) and play hand-clapping games like "Patty Cake" while chanting to popular nursery rhymes. These might include "One,Two Buckle My Shoe," "Five Little Monkeys," etc. Change clapping patterns to more difficult patterns once students are able to keep the steady beat with traditional hand clapping. (Lesson from www.funclapping.com.)

Attend Dr. Mike's "Music, Movement and Learning" session at the Early Childhood Winter Conference Saturday, Jan. 27, at the Kingdom Builder's Center, 6011 West Orem.

Session description: Music and movement make learning fun. More importantly, experiencing it during the early years is necessary for wiring developing brains. Singing, chanting, gestures, signing and physical movement develop school readiness skills that lead to early school success. Furthermore, this approach meets the needs of all children, regardless of their linguistic, physical, emotional, cognitive or social challenges.

Learn more about the conference and [3]register at [4]www.hcde-texas.org/ECWC .

- 1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/11/mike.png
- 2. https://workshops.hcde-texas.org/iebms/portalsearch/Results.aspx?Workshop=11478
- 3. https://workshops.hcde-texas.org/iebms/portalsearch/Results.aspx?Workshop=11478
- 4. http://www.hcde-texas.org/ECWC

HCDE awarded 9th consecutive Meritorious Budget Award by Association of School Business Officials International (2017-11-29 08:30) - hcdetx





[1] Nov. 27, 2017 - Harris County Department of Education was awarded the Association of School Business Officials International Meritorious Budget Award for excellence in budget presentation. The award promotes and recognizes excellence in school budget presentation. It is awarded to school districts whose budgets have undergone a rigorous review by financial professionals.

"HCDE has applied for and gained this award for nine consecutive years as a part of our commitment for fiscal responsibility to Harris County taxpayers," said Jesus Amezcua, HCDE's assistant superintendent of Business Services.

In applying for the award, school business officials gain budget presentation practices and enhance their skills in developing and presenting a school system budget.

HCDE Business Services submitted the 2017-2018 budget to a rigorous team review based on stringent criteria, according to ASBO International Executive Director John Musso.

"The Meritorious Budget Award program helps applicants create an accessible, accurate budget that builds trust with their community," Musso said.

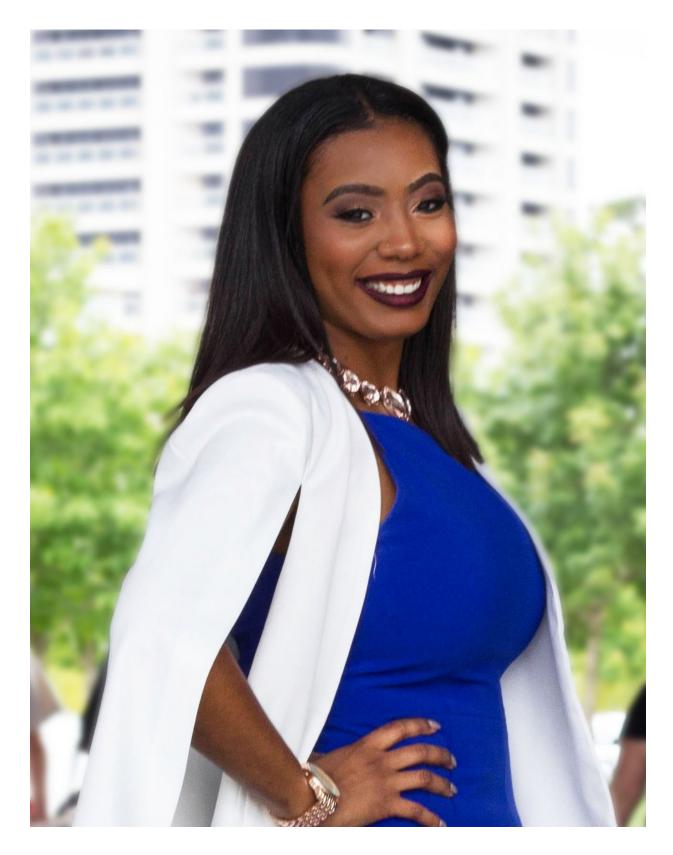
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students served on HCDE campuses are at-risk. The organization is governed by an elected board of seven trustees and has 1,060 employees and 33 facilities, including 15 Head Start centers. More info at [2]www.hcde-texas.org.

1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/11/asbo.png

2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

HCDE CASE for Kids coordinator Celestine honored with national afterschool leader award (2017-11-29 09:32) - hcdetx



[1]



As Chasidy Celestine accepts the 2018 Next Generation of Afterschool award given by the National Afterschool Association, she reflects on her own teenage afterschool experiences and how they helped shape the confident professional she is today.

The afterschool dance group she joined gave her a sense of belonging, built her self-esteem, reinforced the importance of physical health and helped her build relationships. At 27, she is confident about impacting the next generation through her work in afterschool as one of the national "30 awardees under age 30." Celestine earned the award amid a field of more than 100 young afterschool leaders throughout the nation.

The Memorial City resident is program coordinator for Harris County Department of Education's Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids, or CASE for Kids. Through her job, she coaches other out-of-school time professionals throughout Harris County via workshops she leads. She is proudest of her customized science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) workshops which use everyday household items. All her workshops encourage student voice, engagement and planning-and-refection time.

As an afterschool intermediary, CASE for Kids provides resources, trainings and funding for students in grades pre-k through 12 in afterschool programs in schools, child care facilities and community centers. As a branch of Harris County Department of Education, the division was founded in 1999 with a goal to keep kids safe, help working families and improve academic achievement.

"Chasidy is very passionate about being a resource to youth and her community," said CASE for Kids Director Lisa Thompson-Caruthers. "We are so proud that she is being recognized for the work she contributes to the afterschool field through her job as resource coordinator. She connects Harris County organizations and service providers so that we can provide high quality out-of-school time opportunities for kids."

Celestine grew up in Alief, earned a bachelor's in journalism at Stephen F. Austin University and gained a master's in public administration from Texas Southern University. While in college, she volunteered in afterschool programs and gained a job as youth involvement coach. She has worked for HCDE's CASE for Kids three-plus years.

"Afterschool gives youth a sense of belonging, teamwork, communication, responsibility, critical thinking and enhanced academic and enrichment skills," she said. "Afterschool gave me exposure to places, people and activities I would not have otherwise received."

Celestine will be featured in an upcoming issue of the National Afterschool Association's After-School Today magazine and will be recognized at the NAA national conference.

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of seven trustees and has 1,060 employees and 33 facilities, including 15 Head Start centers. More info at [2]www.hcde-texas.org.

1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/11/chasidy.jpg

2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Teacher Tip: Use 'Restorative Circles' for the early childhood classroom (2017-11-30 14:08) - hcdetx



[1]



The [2]R.T. Garcia Early Childhood Winter Conference is Saturday, Jan. 27, and you can still get 462

our early bird, value-priced discount of \$95 through Dec. 1 or pay \$110 thereafter. Get a glimpse of the valuable resources you'll receive by attending through our series of featured teacher tips from our superb presenters. This year, we supplement our grades pre-k through 2 curricula with optional sessions for educators who teach children ages birth-3. #ECWC18

Circles are being used by educators to lead discussions. It happens with a circle of students and guided interaction from the teacher. Although circles are being used in a process called restorative practice to rectify wrongdoing and conflicts, they can also be used to celebrate students or to spark talk. Circles provide educators and students an opportunity to be heard and offer their own perspectives. Use circles at the beginning or end of the day.

Join featured speaker Frances Hester as she shows you how to use circles in your early childhood classrooms. Hester is the senior director of the Harris County Department of Education Teaching and Learning Center, our educator professional development division. Attend the Early Childhood Winter Conference Saturday, Jan. 27, at the Kingdom Builder's Center, 6011 West Orem. [3]Register for the conference or learn more at [4]www.hcde-texas.org/ECWC.

Session Description: Restorative Practices are used to proactively build a classroom culture based on community and mutual responsibility and to provide a safe space for students to share their thinking in a respectful, meaningful way. The fundamental unifying premise of restorative practices is that people are happier, more cooperative, productive and likely to make positive changes in their lives when those in authoritative positions do things with them rather than to them or for them. At its core, any relationship practice is "restorative" when it builds connections and creates space for honesty. Participants will learn practical strategies to build strong, healthy relationships with students, families and colleagues. This session will provide opportunities to identify reliable methods for using circles to build community, establish norms and address behavior and relationships in order to facilitate conversation and encourage full participation.

- 1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/11/20171128_reading_01181.jpg
- 2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/ecwc
- 3. https://workshops.hcde-texas.org/iebms/portalsearch/Results.aspx?Workshop=11478
- 4. http://www.hcde-texas.org/ECWC

1.12 December

Compton Head Start Students Benefit from JetBlue's Soar with Reading Initiative (2017-12-04 11:56) - hcdetx





Harris County Department of Education Compton Head Start students, located in the Northeast Multi-Service Center, will benefit from a free book vending machine throughout the month of December as part of JetBlue's Soar with Reading Initiative.

JetBlue, along with the Houston Mayor's Office, the City of Houston Health Department and the Houston Public Library, unveiled the book vending machine at an event on Nov. 28, 2017. During the event, JetBlue volunteers also visited each Head Start classroom and read to students to get them excited about reading.

Seven total branches of the Houston Public Library system remain shut down from the effects of Hurricane Harvey, leaving hundreds of children without access to their local libraries and the services they offer. The book vending machine will dispense 25,000 brand-new, free books for kids ages 0-14 in the community throughout the month of December.

"Excitement for literacy begins at an early age," said HCDE Head Start Senior Director Venetia Peacock. "We're thankful to JetBlue and our other community partners for giving our youngest learners access to books."

JetBlue's Soar with Reading initiative encourages kids' imaginations to take flight through reading. The event held on Nov. 28 concluded the second annual JetBlue For Good Month, a month-long celebration of kindness and good deeds. For more information, visit [1]https://www.jetblue.com/corporate-social-responsibility/youth-education/.

HCDE operates 15 Head Start centers in northeast Houston. For information about enrollment or employment in Head Start, visit [2]www.hcde-texas.org/HeadStart or call 713-672-9343.

2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/HeadStart

^{1.} https://www.jetblue.com/corporate-social-responsibility/youth-education/

\$550,000 City of Houston investment in CASE for Kids City Connections feeds need for afterschool post-Harvey (2017-12-05 16:27) - hcdetx



A Division of Harris County Department of Education
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View council member photos: [2]http://goo.gl/LMu7GQ (password hcde1889)

Dec. 6, 2017 - Citizens in 11 Houston City Council districts benefit for a fourth consecutive year from a \$550,000 program funded by the City of Houston and administered by Harris County Department of Education's Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids called CASE for Kids City Connections.

Nonprofit organizations in each of the council districts receive \$45,000 in funding ranging from \$5,000 to \$15,000 for programs for children in grades K-12. Funding began Oct. 23 and continues through April 27. The city and CASE for Kids allowed school districts, charter schools, faith-based organizations or civic groups to apply through a request for proposal.

"City Connections promotes crime prevention, child safety, career exploration, enrichment activities and social and emotional learning for Houston children during a time of great need in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey," said Lisa Thompson-Caruthers, director of CASE for Kids. "A recent survey shows a significant number of afterschool programs were affected by Harvey, yet many kept their doors open in those Houston communities."

As an afterschool intermediary, CASE for Kids provides resources, trainings and funding for students in grades pre-k through 12 in afterschool programs in schools, child care facilities and community centers. As a branch of Harris County Department of Education, the division was founded in 1999 with a goal to keep kids safe, help working families and improve academic achievement.

According to HCDE Superintendent James Colbert, Jr., CASE for Kids City Connections is critically needed as Houston families continue to rebuild from Harvey.

"We are thankful the city continues to invest in our children and their families, especially as afterschool funding is being cut from other state and federal budgets," Colbert said. "Afterschool programs are important as they keep children in our city safe and provide enrichment."

Council members are invited on Dec. 5 and 6 to meet the recipients of the funding which is awarded through a request for proposal via CASE for Kids. CASE for Kids will provide photos and networking between the council members and the nonprofit organizations.

Several council districts are opting to increase funding for City Connections from their own council district service funds. Many are located in areas hard-hit by Harvey.

To find programs funded in each of the council districts, access [3]http://goo.gl/YfuAUw or learn more about City Connections at [4]www.afterschoolzone.org.

Photo: Councilwoman Karla Cisneros, left, and CASE for Kids Director Lisa Caruthers, right, pose with City Connections grant recipients Megan Steckly and Colin Dempsey of Comp-U-Dopt at City Hall, December 6, 2017. View council member photos: [5]http://goo.gl/LMu7GQ (password hcde1889)

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1. https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/12/20171206_cityconnections_0030.jpg

- 2. http://goo.gl/LMu7GQ
- 3. http://goo.gl/YfuAUw
- 4. http://www.afterschoolzone.org/
- 5. http://goo.gl/LMu7GQ
- 6. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

Teacher Tip: Use music and transitions to teach difficult concepts (2017-12-07 14:38) - hcdetx



The R.T. Garcia Early Childhood Winter Conference is Saturday, Jan. 27. Get a glimpse of the valuable resources you'll receive by attending through our series of featured teacher tips from our superb presenters. This year, we supplement our grades pre-k through 2 curricula with optional sessions for educators who teach children ages birth-3. #ECWC18



Maria Mercedes Champion, an early childhood educator in Alamo Heights ISD, teaches meaningful language development through practical activities, transitions and music.

Lesson: Well-planned songs and smooth transitions throughout the day will enhance teaching and save teachers time. Students will be able to learn difficult concepts through music and have fun while doing it.

To learn more, attend Champion's session "All Day, Every Day FUN: Meaningful Language **Development Activities and Transition**" at the Early Childhood Winter Conference Saturday, Jan. 27 at the Kingdom Builder's Center, 6011 West Orem.

Session description: Learn it today, apply it on Monday! Learn fun language development songs, activities and transitions in English and Spanish to increase phonological awareness throughout a preschooler's day.

Learn more about the conference and [1]register at [2]www.hcde-texas.org/ECWC.

1. https://workshops.hcde-texas.org/iebms/portalsearch/Results.aspx?Workshop=11478
2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/ECWC

Kids' Day Entrepreneurship delivers holiday marketplace with lessons on money management (2017-12-08 14:18) - hcdetx





View photos: [2]http://bit.ly/2karkMc (password: hcde1889)

Hands-on lessons in entrepreneurship evolved into a marketplace filled with tutus, bow ties, homemade slime, bath balm, soap bars and more at Kids' Day Entrepreneurship, Friday, Dec. 8, from 10 a.m. to noon, 6005 Westview, Houston, Texas. Hosted by Harris County Department of Education's Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids, or CASE for Kids, the event brought together about 150 students from 10 area schools.

Afterschool students from Alief, Aldine, Houston, Stafford, Spring, Clear Creek, Galena Park, Humble and Southwest Schools Charter studied entrepreneurship, marketing and money management during their afterschool programs. The curriculum created by CASE for Kids prepares students for this culminating event.

"Our afterschool students have been busy designing businesses, conducting market research, setting profit points, investigating advertising techniques and analyzing differences between spending and saving money," said CASE for Kids Director Lisa Thompson-Caruthers. "With this curriculum we create, students experience the first-hand challenges and opportunities of operating a business in a free market economy."

Kids Day at Entrepreneurship gives Houston-area students real-life, hands-on experience in business practices, economics and marketing. Guest bankers will assist the students with opening

mock checking accounts and completing mock loan applications.

As an afterschool intermediary, CASE for Kids provides resources, trainings and funding for students in grades pre-k through 12 in afterschool programs in schools, child care facilities and community centers. As a branch of Harris County Department of Education, the division was founded in 1999 with a goal to keep kids safe, help working families and improve academic achievement.

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 $1.\ \texttt{https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/12/20171208_entrepreneurship_0137.jpg$

2. http://hcdetexas.photoshelter.com/gallery/20171208-Entrepreneurship/G00000C3sYihb3YjI/C0000lsoNB
oXbmb8

3. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

28 adult learners inducted into National Adult Education Honor Society after overcoming hardships, showing compassion (2017-12-11 17:11) - hcdetx



View photos: [1]http://bit.ly/2Bc62rXv (password hcde1889)

[2]



Dec. 11, 2017 - Hardships, perseverance and acts of kindness distinguished 28 adult learners ages ranging in age from 16 to 60 as they were inducted into the National Adult Education Honor Society on Monday.

The ceremony, at Harris County Department of Education, brought together a diverse group of students and their steadfast supporters, including family members and teachers. All of the students attend classes offered through HCDE's Adult Education division in community learning locations throughout the county.

"Our adult honorees come from workforce, GED and English as a second language classes," said Eduardo Honold, Adult Education director. "They are nominated by their teachers, who recognize them as leaders who make an impact in their communities and through helping their classmates."

Induction into the National Adult Honor Society brings notoriety and written recommendations for future employment and education advancement.

"These students have persevered through multiple adversities – chaotic work schedules, illnesses, and family issues. Not only have they improved their lives through education, they've taken the time to help and support their fellow classmates," said HCDE Superintendent James Colbert, Jr. "In doing so, they prove it is never too late to learn and share your knowledge with others."

HCDE provides free classes in English as a second language, GED and workforce development at 50 locations throughout Harris and Liberty counties on a first-come, first-served basis. Communities include Alief, Baytown, Channelview, Cy-Fair, Deer Park, Galena Park, Goose Creek, Katy, Klein, Pasadena, Sheldon, Spring Branch and Liberty. For more information about classes, go to [3]www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation.

Bios from a few students being honored:

Chhayamba Nupu Lama from HCDE's ESL classroom located at the Salvation Army in Spring Branch is one of the 28 students being inducted into the honor society. He is a Buddhist monk who rides his bike to class each day and helps his fellow classmates with homework. He is learning English as his third language after already being fluent in Tibetan and Nepali. He is learning English in hopes of becoming a professional Tibetan-English interpreter and plans to specialize someday in management of nonprofit organizations. His teacher Jill Kaeser says her student is always calm, cheerful and inclusive with his classmates and assists others without being asked.

Melissa Long is a middle-aged GED student attending classes in Katy. Her teacher Lavenia Cole says Long entered her class as a self-doubting, hesitant student but has since blossomed in to a confident, engaging learner who helps her fellow classmates.

Long is a full-time bus driver who likes to motivate the children who ride on her route. Her own childhood was filled with intimidation and verbal abuse from her father. As an adult, it negatively affected her own personal relationships. Today she has shifted her focus on to her spiritual beliefs to help improve her life and the lives of others. She is achieving high scores on her GED practice tests, and she likes to help her classmates. She will take the GED in spring 2018 and hopes to participate in the HCDE graduation in May.

Diego Diaz obtained his medical doctorate degree in El Salvador. His position in his home country is equivalent to a general practitioner in America. He currently has a Green Card and will obtain his citizenship in 2018. Diego is currently working on his GED at HCDE and is also enrolled in the certified nursing assistant workforce program. Diaz had to leave his family in El Salvador to pursue the American dream for his family. After he gains his citizenship along with his nursing certification and GED, he will send for his family. His teacher Arbrenia Bryant says Diaz is always willing to translate and provide clarity about medical terminology for his classmates.

About Harris County Department of Education: HCDE provides special education, therapy services, early education, adult education and after-school programming. Services are funded by government grants, fees and a local property tax rate of \$.005195. For every dollar in local property tax collected, HCDE provides \$4.40 in services to the 25 Harris County school districts. HCDE also operates four campuses for students with profound special education needs and adjudicated youth who require a low student-teacher ratio and highly structured environment. One-hundred percent of students served on HCDE campuses are at-risk. The organization is governed by an elected board of seven trustees and has 1,060 employees and 33 facilities, including 15 Head Start centers. More info at [4]www.hcde-texas.org.

4. http://www.hcde-texas.org/

^{1.} http://bit.ly/2Bc62rXv

^{2.} https://hcdetexas.files.wordpress.com/2017/12/20171211_nhs_00561.jpg

^{3.} http://www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation

ECWC Teacher Tip: Shift perspectives to change behavior (2017-12-14 16:03) - hcdetx





The R.T. Garcia Early Childhood Winter Conference is Saturday, Jan. 27. Get a glimpse of the valuable resources you'll receive by attending through our series of featured teacher tips from our superb presenters. This year, we supplement our grades pre-k through 2 curricula with optional sessions for educators who teach children ages birth-3. #ECWC18

Dan St. Romain is a national educational consultant who is passionate about helping individuals shift their perspective on behavior. He regularly presents on topics impacting school climate, brain-based instruction, developmentally appropriate educational practices and presentation skills.

Lesson: Many teachers spend a great deal of time rewarding behavior. Stickers, tokens and behavior bucks are all used to reinforce positive behaviors. If the goal is to create internal motivation for behavior change, teachers must guard against over-emphasizing external means to do so.

To really create long-term behavior change, target one goal (that is easiest to accomplish) and have ongoing discussions of progress. Skill development, in the form of teaching, with continuous feedback on progress will be more effective in creating long-term behavior change than any item chosen from a prize box.

To learn more, attend Romain's sessions at the Early Childhood Winter Conference Saturday, Jan. 27 at the Kingdom Builder's Center, 6011 West Orem.

Session descriptions:

Systems Failure: Moving Beyond the One-Size-Fits-All Approach to Behavior Management

Join Dan to learn about the downfall of behavior tracking systems and why time out, clips systems, behavior folders and office referrals don't work. You will also discuss specific ways to support behavior with regards to prevention and intervention efforts in the classroom.

It's Just a Stage: A Guide to Developmentally Appropriate Behavior

Wondering if a student's behavior is typical? Join Dan to examine typical behaviors associated with young children in all areas of development. Gain new insight that will help you work with parents, encourage independence, make retention decisions and design appropriate interventions.

Literature, Language and Life-Skills: Oh My!

Although our inclination is to teach the way we were once taught, as times change, so must our strategies. In this fast-paced session, participants will have fun examining how social, emotional, ethical and cognitive skills can be taught through the use of literature and interactive reading strategies.

Learn more about the conference and [1]register at [2]www.hcde-texas.org/ECWC.

1. https://workshops.hcde-texas.org/iebms/portalsearch/Results.aspx?Workshop=11478

2. http://www.hcde-texas.org/ECWC

Harvey-impacted families receive gift of transportation from longtime HCDE supporter Bates Collision Centers (2017-12-15 13:40) - hcdetx





View photos: [1]https://goo.gl/Ey5jYo (password hcde1889)

Harris County Department of Education Head Start employee Bahiyyah Rashed and parent Vanessa Zuniga received the gift of transportation and Responsible Parenting Awards from longtime supporter Bates Collision Centers on Dec. 12 and 14. After losing their vehicles during Hurricane Harvey and enduring months of transportation challenges, Rashed and Zuniga were overwhelmed when receiving their rehabbed cars at the Bates Collision Baytown and Channelview locations.

The giveaway ceremony on Dec. 14 in Channelview looked different this year as Bates Collision Centers was burglarized the night before. While the rehabbed vehicle was unharmed, the wrapped gifts for the family were stolen from the facility. Owners Lee and Leila Bates, their employees and community partners came together and acted quickly to replace the gifts in time for the ceremony.

This year, more than 30 businesses in the Baytown and Channelview areas contributed to the annual car giveaways. Bates employees donated time to work on the cars and helped fill them with

gifts, and other community members and businesses donated gas, insurance and materials needed the rehab the cars.

The Bates Collision and Head Start staff were joined at the giveaway ceremonies by members of the community, local businesses, elected officials, HCDE Superintendent James Colbert, Jr., and HCDE Board members Erica Lee Carter and Michael Wolfe.



In its 19th year, HCDE Head Start's partnership with Bates Collision Centers gifted cars No. 33 and 34 to the two moms. Recipients of the Responsible Parenting Awards are chosen based on need, dedication to their child's education and commitment to becoming self-sufficient. Superintendent Colbert

believes the partnership between HCDE Head Start and Bates Collision Centers is particularly important this year as much of the county faces transportation issues post-Harvey. "Hurricane Harvey has dramatically changed what some people's holiday looks like this year," said Colbert. "It's touching and impactful that, through our partnership with Bates, we're able to give cars back to families that lost them."

1. https://goo.gl/Ey5jYo