

# The Connector

A weekly publication of Harris County Department of Education  
for the HCDE Board of Trustees

*From the office of* **JAMES COLBERT, JR. | SUPERINTENDENT**



## Of Note...

It's been a busy week here at HCDE. As you know, the week is compressed due to Good Friday. HCDE will be closed tomorrow. Budget meetings commenced this week and will continue throughout the month of April. The Budget Committee met Monday afternoon, and divisions began presenting their proposed FY2015-2016 budgets to members of the committee yesterday.

On Monday evening, I had the opportunity to participate in a radio interview with Larry Payne, host of Interchange, on KCOH/1230AM. It was a live, in-studio interview where Larry Payne and I discussed HCDE, and listeners were invited to call in to inquire about HCDE's programs and services. This interview offered great community exposure for the Department. It was an interesting segment and I was featured alongside another guest representing a lecture series currently underway at Rice University. The panel exchanged useful dialogue about HCDE, and it was an honor to discuss our distinguished organization through such a public medium. To that end, yesterday afternoon, I participated in a television interview that will be broadcasted on Dialogue Houston, a Houston Community College television (HCC-TV) production, also hosted by Larry Payne. I will apprise you of the television air date once it becomes available.

I continued my initiative toward establishing a valuable rapport with Harris County area school district officials. I had the pleasure of meeting with the superintendent of Cypress-Fairbanks ISD earlier this week, and I look forward to networking with the vice-president of Galena Park's School Board later today.

To update you, as a result of my meeting on last Thursday with Andrea White and other members of the Houston Chronicle Editorial Board, I am pleased to bring to your attention an editorial in today's Houston Chronicle. The editorial discusses HCDE's significance in the education community. I hope you have an opportunity to read the well-written piece that speaks to HCDE's incredible value to Harris County area school districts. I will continue to build relationships in the city and across the county from which HCDE can gain equity. You may read today's editorial by visiting the following url:  
<http://www.chron.com/opinion/editorials/article/School-support-6173487.php>

Please be reminded of our upcoming Board Training that will take place on next Wednesday, April 8 at 1:00 p.m. As I mentioned last week, please remember to prepare your personal mission statement as it relates to the Department to be shared during that training session. Also, the regularly scheduled April Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 21 at 1:00 p.m. I look forward to seeing you at both upcoming meetings.

In closing, I hope you enjoy this issue of **The Connector** and I wish you and yours a very Happy Easter weekend!

## IN THIS ISSUE:

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## Child Care, Summer Camp, Afterschool Providers Learn about Free Resources for School-age Students at Opportunity Fair

Educators of school-age children in child care, summer camp, and afterschool program locations attended the CASE for Kids Opportunity Fair held Friday, March 27. Event attendees learned about free activities and materials, funding for out-of-school time activities, program quality assistance, and training and scholarships now available to them from CASE for Kids. They also had the opportunity to meet with out-of-school time vendors.



## Revving Review for STAAR Success in 5th Grade Science

50 educators attended our 'Revving Review for STAAR Success in 5th Grade Science' workshop held March 30 at HCDE. Those attending gained strategies for STAAR that are easy to implement and help their students peak their 5th grade test scores. The workshop was hosted by HCDE Director of Science Curriculum Lisa Felske and presented by Tobi McMillam of s3strategies. This was a sold-out workshop, with multiple attendees expressing gratitude for HCDE providing the opportunity to attend.



## Save the Date: GED Graduation

Please save the date for the HCDE Adult Education GED Graduation held Saturday, May 9, at 11 a.m. in the HCDE Conference Center. Students are working exceptionally hard due to an overhaul of the GED which has made the equivalency test more difficult and expensive.

## Alternative Certification Staff Recruit Potential Teachers at Job Fair

Alternative Certification staff recruited potential candidates for the HCDE Teacher Alternative Certification Program at the RecruitMilitary Job Fair on March 26. RecruitMilitary hosts job fairs throughout the country and boasts 700,000 users, and 900,000 jobs nationwide. Approximately 900 people attended the job fair in Houston. Staffers Jonett Miniell and Amy Thompson represented HCDE.



## ADVANCING TEACHING AND LEARNING by training the trainer

### Trainings hosted at HCDE this week

- 03.30** | Online Instructor's Training - Part III
- 03.30** | HCDE Principal Certification Academy Information Meeting
- 03.26** | Math Institute - Aligning the Pre-K Guidelines to the New TEKS (Gr Pre-K and K)
- 03.30** | Revving Review for STAAR Success in 5th Grade Science
- 03.31** | Revving Review for STAAR Success in Biology
- 03.31** | iPad Palooza: Using iPads in the classroom with your ELLs
- 04.01** | Balanced Literacy: 4-Part Online Course (24 credits)
- 04.01** | Teaching Methods for Diverse Learners:
- 04.01** | Classroom Management: Online Course
- 04.01** | Revving Review for STAAR Success in 8th Grade Science
- 04.02** | Attendance Officer's Share Session

# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

## HCDE's Zatopek Provides Leadership Expertise through Consortium of State Organizations for Texas Teacher Education

Alternative Certification Director Lidia Zatopek attended the March 30 board meeting for the Consortium of State Organizations for Texas Teacher Education in Austin, Texas. The consortium is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the continual support and refinement of preparation and development programs for certificated school personnel in Texas. As a board member, Zatopek assists in organizing annual teacher conferences and meetings focused on common issues, problems and opportunities related to teacher preparation.

## Alternative Certification Director Zatopek to Serve on TEA Texas Equity Plan Stakeholders Group

Alternative Certification Director Lidia Zatopek was invited by Texas Education Agency on behalf of the Commissioner of Education Michael Williams to assist in developing the Texas Equity Plan. Zatopek is part of a group of 21 superintendents, district human resource leaders, education preparation directors, principals and teachers to help develop a plan for Texas to ensure equitable access to excellent educators for all students, or the Texas Equity Plan.



The initial practitioner's stakeholder group met March 26-27 at the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) headquarters in Austin. The meeting helped identify "root causes of equity gaps in access to high-quality educators by poor and minority children." It also provided input on meaningful strategies to address equity gaps. Zatopek will continue serve on the committee as the plan is developed.

## 25 HARRIS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS

- Aldine
- Alief
- Channelview
- Clear Creek
- Crosby
- Cy-Fair
- Dayton
- Deer Park
- Galena Park
- Goose Creek
- Houston
- Huffman
- Humble
- Katy
- Klein
- La Porte
- New Caney
- Pasadena
- Pearland
- Sheldon
- Spring
- Spring Branch
- Stafford
- Tomball
- Waller

## HARRIS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT HIGHLIGHT



Spring ISD is engaging the community using "YourVoice," an online and interactive community survey portal. The YourVoice page facilitates two-way communication and community feedback and improves transparency. Register --> <http://www.springisd.org/default.aspx?name=yourvoice>



**Board Training**  
**Wednesday,**  
**April 8, 2015**  
**1:00 p.m.**

**HCDE BOARD**

**BOARD PRESIDENT**  
POSITION 2, PRECINCT 4  
**Angie Chesnut**

**BOARD VICE-PRESIDENT**  
POSITION 4, PRECINCT 3  
**Kay Smith**

**Erica Lee Carter**  
*Position 6, Precinct 1*

**Marvin W. Morris**  
*Position 1, Precinct 2*

**Don Sumners**  
*Position 7, At Large*

**Diane Trautman**  
*Position 3, At Large*

**Michael Wolfe**  
*Position 5, At Large*

**Upcoming  
Board Events:**

**April Board Meeting**  
**Tuesday, April 21, 2015**  
**1:00 p.m.**

**T**ogether  
**E**veryone  
**A**chieves  
**M**ore

