

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...

The academic year is soon to be over as we rapidly approach the month of May. Our client districts are in overdrive, and so are we as we work diligently to support the educators and students across Harris County.

I started the week in Austin for UIL sessions that commenced last weekend. Those meetings were productive and continue to serve a two-fold purpose: They serve as great opportunities for me to network with educators across the education spectrum, and they also serve as the perfect segue for me to continue to increase visibility for the Department. We, on the leadership panel of the UIL, value the perspectives all of our colleagues bring to the conversations around advancing public education.

I returned to the office on Tuesday of this week heading into budget committee meetings as our division directors continued presenting their SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis for their respective programs and services. We are making tremendous progress as we plow through the rigorous budget meeting schedule. This overall process informs the recommendations I will present for the next fiscal year.

In addition to informal meetings with superintendents from Harris County and across the state while in Austin attending UIL meetings (including superintendents of Cypress-Fairbanks, Katy, and Barbers Hill), earlier today, I met with the superintendent of Spring ISD. As mentioned in previous issues of The Connector, I will continue meeting with superintendents and district representatives from the greater Harris County and metropolitan Houston areas to further HCDE's mission.

In closing, expect to receive an email from me containing the amended language of the recently revised Senate Bill 1216 (SB1216). Also, please be reminded that our April Board Meeting is scheduled for next Tuesday, April 21, 2015. At that time, I look forward to you formally adopting the revised mission and goals of the Department that we, the Team of Eight, established. Please pay special attention to page 5 of this issue of The Connector. It contains the listing of and assignments to the HCDE Board Committees.

Thanks for your continued service to HCDE! Have a great weekend, and I hope you enjoy this issue of **The Connector**.

IN THIS ISSUE:

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43 Educators Attend Math Institute: Aligning the Pre-K Guidelines Part II

Forty-three pre-k and kindergarten teachers and administrators attended the second part of Math Institute: Aligning the Pre-K Guidelines to the New TEKS workshop at HCDE. Co-presenters were HCDE Director of Mathematics Curriculum Nicole Shanahan and math consultant Kristen Allen. The workshop featured 56 centers and eight small group instruction lessons along with 16 whole group lessons. Attendees were from Alief, Aldine, Fort Bend, Houston, Katy, Spring, and multiple private and charter schools.



Managing Misbehavior Workshop Attracts 62 Area Educators to Address Classroom Behavior

Director of Early Childhood and Special Education Curriculum Debra Anderson led the workshop Managing Misbehavior on April 14. Sixty teachers and administrators attended. The workshop led educators through scenarios and allowed attendees to work in small groups to address behavior issues in the classroom.

Social Media in Classroom Presentation Provided by HCDE's Digital Education at Texas Distance Learning Association Conference

Technology's Digital Education and Innovation division employees David McGeary and Lynnice Hockaday presented at the Texas Distance Learning Association Conference in Dallas on April 8. Their presentation provided guidelines for using social media in the classroom. The presentation was entitled: Voice Lesson in Social Media—How to Be Heard.



Social Studies Leadership Group Tours Buffalo Soldiers National Museum

Our Social Studies Leadership Group led by HCDE Social Studies Director of Curriculum Mary Lynn Johnson toured the Buffalo Soldiers National Museum located in the Museum District. Founder Paul J. Matthews directed 20 social studies teachers and administrators from area school districts through the organization's new headquarters at 3816 Caroline. The morning included professional development information provided by Johnson. The museum provides curriculum and field trip opportunities for local school districts.

Photo: Mary Lynn Johnson, HCDE and Shannon Green of the Southwest School, admire the Old Soldier statue, a prized relic at the museum.



ADVANCING TEACHING AND LEARNING by training the trainer

Trainings hosted at HCDE this week

- 04.14 | Managing Student Misbehavior
- 04.16 | HCDE Principal Certification Academy Information Meeting
- 04.17 | Engineering Adventures for the Non Engineer!
- 04.18 | 3-Day Test Prep Workshop for TExES ESL Supplemental Exam
- 04.18 | Test Prep Series for TExES BTLPT Exam

Choice Partners and TASBO

Greg Lookabaugh, Choice Partners senior manager of facility planning, recently presented a workshop at an all-day Texas Association of School Business Officials program held in Katy ISD. To read more, go to <http://www.choicepartners.org/improving-new-building-efficiency>.



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Head Start Celebrates Week of the Young Child with Center Tours

In recognition of Week of the Young Child, Head Start invited community partners and staff members to a center tour at Sheffield Head Start center on April 15. Sheffield celebrated with a sock hop theme to “sock out” obesity, complete with 1950’s dance music and decorations. Students created healthy food craft activities, featuring a taco station made of construction paper where the 3- and 4-year-old chefs created orders placed by our visitors. Another center tour was held April 16 at Baytown Head Start center.



View event photos at <http://hcdetx.smugmug.com/HeadStart/2015-Center-TourSheffield/>

CASE for Kids Featured in Texas OneStar Foundation Newsletter for Service Recognition

CASE for Kids staff members were featured in a photo in the state’s One Star Foundation newsletter through the following link: <https://t.e2ma.net/message/j8rnub/z82cvh>. One Star is the state’s funding agency for the federally-funded AmeriCorps program.



The “2015 Mayors Day & County Day of Recognition for National Service” brought together a record 280 mayors in Texas to recognize the work that AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members do in our state. CASE for Kids joined Parker at City Hall for the ceremony and photos.

HCDE Head Start Hosts Medicaid and Community Resources Forum 2015

Head Start is hosting the Medicaid and Community Resources Forum 2015 on April 16-17 at HCDE Irvington on behalf of the Texas Department of State Health Services. The forum educates social services professionals about benefits and services available through Texas agencies to assist families with community resources. It also encourages networking and collaboration throughout the community organizations. The forum attracted 250 attendees and over 30 exhibitors.

GOINGS-ON IN HUMAN RESOURCES

This week, Human Resources staff participated in the following job fairs:

Non-Profit and Government Career Fair

University of Houston Downtown

Future Teacher’s Club Meeting

Lone Star College, Tomball

Last week, they represented HCDE at the following job fairs:

Houston Area Student Teaching Job Fair

University of Houston Central Campus

Spring Teacher Job Fair University of Houston Clear Lake

Spring Teacher Job Fair Sam Houston State University

Annual Spring Job Fair Lee College

35th Annual Education Career Fair Prairie View A & M University

HARRIS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT HIGHLIGHT



Pasadena ISD’s Community School exceeds 500 high school graduates since its opening in 2010. Students, staff, district administrators and board of trustees gathered to celebrate the milestone on March 26. The Community School allows students who are a few credits shy of graduating the opportunity to earn a diploma. Flexible schedules and programs are designed to fit each student’s learning style. Learn more: <http://community.pasadenaisd.org/>

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

CASE for Kids AmeriCorps Members Engage Students in Community Service during Global Youth Service Day

AmeriCorps members working in afterschool communities for the Center for Afterschool, Summer and Expanded Learning for Kids, or CASE for Kids, celebrate a large-scale volunteer effort called Global Youth Service Day (GYSD) in April. About two dozen members are working on projects to improve their communities at seven afterschool sites in greater Harris County. CASE for Kids is a division of Harris County Department of Education.



The projects engage afterschool students in activities that improve either the program site or the community in which the students live. AmeriCorps members meet with students and determine an issue or problem to address and work with students to develop a plan to address it through community service activities. This year's projects include collecting gently used books, removing trash, sewing baby blankets, creating care packages for U.S. troops, fighting crime through raising awareness, and getting fit through exercise and healthy eating.

Global Youth Service Day is an international celebration in 100 countries that lifts up the accomplishments of millions of children and teens who improve their communities each day of the year through service. About a million youth across 6,000 communities participate in GYSD.

"Global Youth Service Day gives us the chance to recognize what our members do each day as part of their national service within our afterschool communities," said CASE for Kids Director Lisa Thompson-Caruthers. "The work they do with our youth includes giving those students the chance to grow into the leaders of tomorrow as we promote volunteerism."

Planned area projects by CASE for Kids AmeriCorps members in April include the following:

- Alief ISD, Kennedy Elementary: Kids learn about fitness and nutrition through Zumba dancing and making smoothies.
- Alief ISD, Boone Elementary: Students host a book drive for underprivileged youth and dress up as their favorite characters to encourage reading.
- Aldine ISD, Raymond Academy: Students gather books for a book drive for the school's classroom libraries.
- Aldine ISD, Stehlik Intermediate School: Crimestoppers of Houston Safe School Program provides a discussion on community safety. Students also donate books to the Boys and Girls Club.
- Galena Park ISD, Green Valley Elementary: AmeriCorps members help students decorate boxes to be filled with hygiene products for soldiers.
- Spring Spirit Baseball: Students promote the importance of volunteering and sprucing up their community by picking up trash.
- The Rhodes School (77044): Students create fleece infant blankets to donate to babies at the East Houston Regional Hospital.

AmeriCorps members work within CASE for Kids afterschool sites with youth and provide community service. In return, members receive stipends and tuition credit with a grant provided by the OneStar Foundation via the Corporation for National and Community Service. Currently members are being recruited for the summer. For information about applying, visiting www.afterschoolzone.org.

HCDE and North Harris County Education Alliance

HCDE was represented among the members of the North Harris County Education Alliance (NHCEA) Collaborative Action Network. Ready for School-Early Childhood toured the Jesse Hinojosa Early Childhood Pre-K center in Aldine ISD. Among the group touring was Communications and Public Information's (CPI's) Winford Adams. The Hinojosa Center is one of 8 dedicated Pre-K schools in Aldine ISD, and has been in operation for 18 years. The goal of the program is to provide an engaging, rich environment with an early focus on college and careers for income eligible families within the MacArthur High School feeder pattern. Hinojosa Early Childhood Pre-K also houses a Head Start program, administered by AVANCE.

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BOARD COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Any Board member may attend any committee meeting as they wish.

BOARD-APPROVED COMMITTEES	TRUSTEE(S)
Education Foundation (EFHC) HCDE Facilitator: Douglas Kleiner	Angie Chesnut, Primary Erica Lee Carter, Alternate
Head Start HCDE Facilitator: Venetia Peacock	Diane Trautman, Primary Erica Lee Carter, Alternate Clara Rojas, Community Member
Public Facilities Corporation (PFC) HCDE Facilitator: Les Hooper	Kay Smith, Primary Michael Wolfe, Alternate
COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS	TRUSTEE(S)
Audit HCDE Facilitator: Jesus Amezcua	Don Sumners, Primary Angie Chesnut, Alternate
Budget HCDE Facilitator: Jesus Amezcua	Don Sumners, Primary Marvin Morris, Alternate Ray Garcia, Community Member
CASE for Kids Cooperative for Afterschool Enrichment HCDE Facilitator: Lisa Caruthers	Erica Lee Carter, Primary Kay Smith, Alternate C.O. Bradford, Community Member
Public Relations HCDE Facilitator: Tammy Lanier	Angie Chesnut, Primary Marvin Morris, Alternate Dr. Juluette Bartlett-Pack, Community Member
Governmental Relations HCDE Facilitator: Pat Strong	Angie Chesnut, Primary Diane Trautman, Alternate Mike Wolfe, Alternate
Planning/Policy/Board Development HCDE Facilitator: Linda Pitre	Marvin Morris, Primary Angie Chesnut, Alternate
Safe & Secure Schools HCDE Facilitator: Ecomet Burley	Angie Chesnut, Primary Marvin Morris, Alternate Diane Trautman, Alternate
Special Schools HCDE Facilitator: Dee Mattox-Hall	Diane Trautman, Primary Kay Smith, Alternate Traci Jensen, Community Member
AD HOC COMMITTEE	TRUSTEE(S)
Early Childhood	Kay Smith, Primary Erica Lee Carter, Alternate Diane Trautman, Alternate

Updated 4.17.15

BOARD SPOTLIGHT

MOTTO

HCDE...Always Educating

MISSION STATEMENT

Harris County Department of Education supports Harris County by enriching educational opportunities and providing value through services.

GOALS

GOAL 1: Impact education by responding to the evolving needs of Harris County

GOAL 2: Deliver value to Harris County by utilizing resources in an ethical, transparent, and fiscally responsible manner

GOAL 3: Advocate for all learners by using innovative methods to maximize students' potential.

GOAL 4: Provide cost-savings to school districts by leveraging tax dollars

GOAL 5: Recruit and maintain a high-quality professional staff

Agreed-to by consensus at the Board's April 8, 2015 meeting and to be considered for formal adoption by the HCDE Board of Trustees at its April 21, 2015 meeting.

BOARD CONNECTIONS

Trustee Diane Trautman participates in the Week of the Young Child Head Start Tours



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 Summers
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.

