

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...

Let me begin by thanking you for your support in the adoption of our new mission and goals. Both a sound mission and goals play an integral role in any successful organization. I am pleased that we are now moving forward with clear focus as it relates to our overall direction. The Board's action this week served as a sound compass as we advance education in Harris County. I thank you for your support during Tuesday's Board Meeting, and for your input along the way as we developed the guiding principles for Harris County Department of Education.

Yesterday, the Budget Committee resumed meeting with remaining division directors as they present their proposed budgets for next fiscal year. Our rigorous budget process continues to move forward as we near the end. I will continue to keep you apprised as we move through this planning cycle.

Earlier this week, I met with Susan Carroll, an investigative reporter with the Houston Chronicle. Over the past several months, Ms. Carroll has submitted a significant number of public information requests related to the various operations of HCDE including employee stipends, consultant contracts, the relationship between the Department and the Education Foundation, procurement practices, financial reporting systems such as the monthly check register, Choice Partners cooperative, and other areas of interest. We have worked diligently to process and satisfy her requests in accordance with the law. The primary purpose of Ms. Carroll's meeting with me was to establish dialogue about HCDE. While Ms. Carroll has indicated that she intends to write an article discussing her findings related to HCDE, she also stated that she would be both fair and balanced in her reporting. I will inform you once I am aware of her intended print date.

Our facilities continue to play a vital role within the community arena. On this past Tuesday night, from 5-10 p.m., the HCDE Conference Center served as the venue for the HISD Food Commodity Tasting Meeting in connection with Aramark. We are also gearing up to host Head Start's 2015 Healthy Minds, Healthy Families Conference next week, in conjunction with our community partner, the Hogg Foundation. HCDE continues to serve as a beacon in the community that supports public education.

Next week, I will be traveling to Austin to attend the Senate Education Committee's hearing on Senate Bill 1216 (SB1216) and its recent modification. I look forward to answering questions our state legislators have as well as having the opportunity to discuss the economic and programmatic benefits HCDE brings to the education community across Harris County.

In closing, please see both page 4 and the back cover of this week's newsletter for a listing of the recently revised Board Committees along with the newly approved mission statement and goals. I am excited about the work our Team of Eight has accomplished and the future endeavors upon which we will embark.

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

IN THIS ISSUE:

2 Program Connections

3 Community Connections

4-5 Board Spotlight

Three CASE for Kids AmeriCorps Members Host Fitness Challenge in Alief ISD

Three CASE for Kids AmeriCorps members at Kennedy Elementary in Alief ISD took a fitness challenge as their activity to recognize Global Youth Service Day. On April 17, students at the school took the Zumba challenge and danced the afternoon away. Members hosted a competition and later prepared healthy smoothies for the youth whom they had served throughout the year in afterschool.

“GYSD is important to me because it’s our day to reflect with our co-members about how to better the world and better ourselves,” said AmeriCorps member Ashley Turner, 23. “We chose fitness and nutrition because we know that in a digital age, students are playing video games indoors and tend to not be as active.” Ashley gave recognition to her AmeriCorps team members Adrienne Collins, 23, and Trevor Mickins, 25 for their roles in the success event.

About 30 students participated in the AmeriCorps fitness challenge. Seven other GYSD events are being held throughout the month to celebrate global youth service.



HCDE Alternative Certification Hosts ‘Mock Principal Interviews’ for Its Teacher Candidates

HCDE’s Alternative Certification manager Jonett Edwards Miniel conducted an Effective Interviewing Workshop for our aspiring alternative certification teachers on April 20. The purpose was to ready them for interviewing for their first teaching

position. Four Houston ISD principals graciously gave their personal time to attend and conduct mock interviews and provide specific feedback to the teachers on their responses. The principals also provided interviewing tips. One participant said she especially appreciated the chance to “practice with an actual principal and receive feedback about my answers.” Special thanks was given to Dr. Lindsey Pollock, principal of Garden Oaks Montessori; Martha Griffin, dean of instruction at Yates High School; Dr. Deirdre Sharkey, principal of Attucks Middle School; and Bobby Pollock, retired principal of Looscan Elementary School. **(Note: One-hundred percent of HCDE alternative certification teachers gain employment upon completion of the program.)**



Preparing for the ESL Certification Exam: HCDE Assists Students in Prep for Upcoming Testing Dates

Alternative Teacher Certification Coordinator Ellie Colvin provides feedback for an aspiring teacher who is preparing for the ESL teacher certification exam. Alternative Certification provided test prep opportunities for numerous teacher certification exams this spring.



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Houston ISD hosts Food Tasting Event at HCDE April 20

Houston ISD held its HISD Nutrition Services Food Tasting Event at HCDE April 20 with Aramark Food Service as several hundred attendees tasted food fare which could be offered in HISD cafeterias next year. Entries ranged from chicken ranch flatbread to Asian salad to creole stewed corn.

HCDE provided space for the district to host the event as a community partner.

Many of the recipes were created by HISD culinary students. Attendees included assistant superintendents, students, food managers, and other HISD employees.

HISD Menu Tasting Here



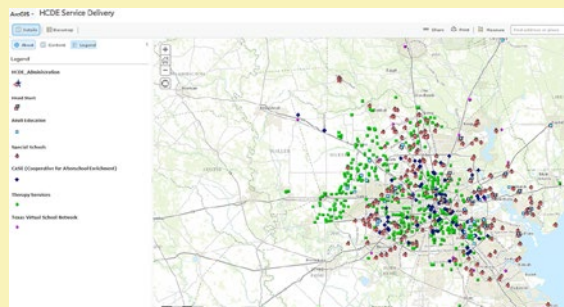
HCDE Head Start Hosts Medicaid and Community Resources Forum 2015

Head Start hosted 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. The forum attracted 250 attendees and over 30 exhibitors. Attendees were grateful for the opportunity to learn about topics ranging from diabetes to human trafficking.



Technology Completes HCDE Service Delivery Interactive Maps to Show Sites, Service Areas

Technology has completed a project with HCDE service divisions and the HCDE Executive Leadership Team for interactive maps to be featured on the HCDE website. The maps target “student-teacher-family” services and “school district” services and show demographic areas we serve by county precincts (for student-teacher-family) and by area school districts (for school districts). The maps will go live by April 27. To locate the maps, go to the website home page and look to the bottom left-hand corner. Locate the link that says: Find our services with the icon with an arrow-and-map. It is located under the button “Subscribe to HCDE Newsletters.”



ADVANCING TEACHING AND LEARNING by training the trainer

Trainings hosted at HCDE this week

- 04.20 | Online Instructor's Training - Part I
- 04.22 | The Quest for Grants Training Series Webinar - Building a Grants Development Office
- 04.23 | Ethics For Accountants
- 04.23 | ARD Committee Training for Facilitators and Teachers

HARRIS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT HIGHLIGHT



Channelview High School students recently participated in the Shattered Dream program, a campaign to prevent teens from drinking-and-driving. The educational program hosted by Ben Taub Hospital's Trauma Services includes a simulated drunk-driving car crash scene near the school and the aftermath that follows. Area emergency management teams assist with the program. Details: <http://www.cvisd.org/site/default.aspx?PageType=3&DomainID=4&ModuleInstanceID=148&ViewID=047E6BE3-6D87-4130-8424-D8E4E9ED6C2A&RenderLoc=0&FlexDataID=10357&PageID=1>

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 |
| 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 |
| CASE for Kids Cooperative for Afterschool Enrichment HCDE Facilitator: Lisa Caruthers | Erica Lee Carter, Primary Kay Smith, Alternate |
| Public Relations HCDE Facilitator: Tammy Lanier | Angie Chesnut, Primary Marvin Morris, Alternate |
| 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 |
| 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

Adopted by the HCDE Board of Trustees at its April 21, 2015 meeting.

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:

**Tuesday,
May 19, 2015
May Board Meeting**

