

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...

This week was a busy one for me as I traveled to Austin last weekend to attend the UT/TASB Summer Conference which concluded this past Tuesday. The conference was both informative and enlightening with powerful keynote speakers such as recently retired four-star admiral and former Navy SEAL Bill McRaven, who is currently the UT Chancellor. (You will recall that he led the special operations forces that seized Osama bin Laden during the raid in Afghanistan in May 2011.) The series of sessions this week served as a great opportunity for superintendents to further develop leadership abilities without the concern of being away from district offices during the regular academic session. It was also an ideal time to network with my distinguished colleagues from school districts across the state of Texas.

I returned to the office on Wednesday, and I am happy to inform you that even during the summer months, HCDE continues to serve as a beacon of light in the teaching and learning sphere. This week, our professional development staff hosted four trainings in preparation for the 2015-16 academic year. This week's training topics and areas of interest included problem-solving in operations and algebraic reasoning (mathematics); web-based instructors' training (digital learning); launching a campus or school district project-based learning initiative (project-based learning); and teaching methods for diverse learners (diversity in teaching and learning). Our staff is not only committed to excellence within HCDE, but also excellence across Harris County as they impart their unique expertise on the educators in our client districts.

I would also like to direct your attention to page 2 of this issue of **The Connector**. I am pleased to report that 25 Harris County area schools are sharing in \$650,000 of afterschool funding for the 2015-2016 school year. Schools included in this distribution of funds are in Aldine, Alief, Galena Park, Houston, Pasadena, and Sheldon independent school districts. A Houston area charter school was also awarded. This is an exciting time for our CASE division, and we are proud to be able to distribute resources that will advance quality afterschool programming in 24 schools in six (6) Harris County area school districts, as well as to a Houston based charter school.

I am equally excited that our Teacher Alternative Certification program is preparing 30 new teachers for the classroom for the 2015-2016 school year-through an intensive program of 90 hours of training over a six-week period this summer. Upon successful completion of training, observations, and passing of subject-area state mandated tests, they will be placed in full-time teaching positions. Great things are happening at HCDE.

As I work to catch up from my absence earlier this week due to professional development, please be reminded that the July Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 21, 2015 at 1:00 p.m. Also, please remember to save the date for the HCDE Annual Staff Meeting that will be held on Wednesday, August 19, 2015 at the Humble Civic Center at 11:30 a.m.

Thanks again for your continued service to HCDE. Have a safe 4th of July holiday weekend, and I hope you enjoy this issue of **The Connector**.

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PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

25 Harris County Schools to Share \$650,000 in Afterschool Funding in 2015-2016

Twenty-five schools in Aldine, Alief, Galena Park, Houston, Pasadena, and Sheldon, and a Houston-based state charter school will receive a share of \$650,000 in afterschool funding as the 2015-2016 school year begins. The program called the Partnership Project is administered by the Center for After-School, Summer and Expanded Learning for Kids, or CASE for Kids, a division of Harris County Department of Education. Funding is designated for economically disadvantaged children ages 4-12, and is provided by the Houston-Galveston Area Council, the Texas Workforce Commission, and local foundations.



Harris County Department of Education commits local funds to supplement literacy and numeracy activities in quality, out-of-school time programming for youth. Those funds are matched with a commitment of federal childcare funds for quality improvement for school-age youth through the Texas Workforce Commission. HCDE provides a variety of resources such as training, site visits, scholarships, and a lending library to the 25 selected sites.

“The goal of the Partnership Project is to invest in comprehensive afterschool programs that have a primary focus on numeracy and literacy development,” said CASE for Kids Director Lisa Thompson-Caruthers. “CASE will provide funded project support for numeracy and literacy integration into academic and enrichment activities, as well as site-based coaching to improve overall program quality.”

The following districts and schools will receive these funds:

Aldine—Goodman Elementary (77088) \$30,000, **Frazier Elementary** (77089)) \$17,993, **Raymond Academy** (77039) \$24,000, **Stehlik Intermediate** (77038) \$24,000
Charter—Academy of Accelerated Learning (77081) \$30,000
Alief—Heflin Elementary (77082) \$30,000
Galena Park—Green Valley Elementary (77015)
Houston—Bastian Elementary (77033) \$23,655, **Benbrook Elementary** (77092) \$24,000; **Briscoe Elementary** (77011) \$19,872; **Crespo Elementary** (77012) \$24,000; **Crockett Elementary** (77007); **Dowling Middle School** (77045) \$30,000; **Eliot Elementary** (77020) \$18,000; **Field Elementary** (77008) \$24,000; **Gregg Elementary** (77087) \$30,000; **Looscan Elementary** (77009) \$30,000; **Mitchell Elementary** (77075) \$18,480; **Port Houston Elementary** (77029) \$30,000; **Scroggins Elementary** (77020) \$30,000, **Shearn Elementary** (77025) \$24,000; **Whidby Elementary** (77021) \$30,000
Pasadena—Frazier Elementary (77089) \$17,993, **Stuchberry Elementary** (77089), **Williams Elementary** (77502)

About the Center for Afterschool, Summer and Expanded Learning for Kids (CASE for Kids): CASE for Kids, formerly the Cooperative for After-School Enrichment, was launched by Harris County Department of Education in 1999. CASE for Kids is an after-school intermediary which leverages community resources and strengthens the capacity of the out-of-school time field. Services benefit approximately 11,000 kids in greater Harris County. CASE for Kids programs happen before and after school, on weekends and during the summer. Go to www.afterschoolzone.org for information.

ADVANCING TEACHING AND LEARNING by training the trainer

Trainings hosted at HCDE this week

- 06.29** | Improve Problem Solving in Operations and Algebraic Reasoning
- 06.29** | Online Instructor's Training - Part II 6/29/2015
- 06.29** | Project-Based Learning: Launching the Project in your School or District
- 07.01** | Teaching Methods for Diverse Learners: July 1, 2015 - August 1, 2015



PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

TEKS Workshop Brings Together 80 Area Math Teachers for Math Strategies



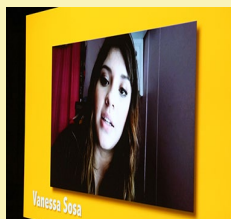
HCDE math curriculum director Nicole Shanahan and math consultant Kristen Allen worked with 80 area teachers on math strategies for the new Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) at HCDE on June 28-29

through a workshop called Improve Problem Solving in Operations and Algebraic Reasoning. The workshop used concrete pictorials and abstract operations to provide instruction on multi-step word problems in grades 2-5.

Photo: Houston Independent School District's Brandon Rogers and Spring ISD's Tim Livingston talk about new math strategies.



How Do You Get to Carnegie Hall? KHOU Airs Story about Local Teen



KHOU interviewed Scholastic Art & Writing national portfolio recipient Vanessa Sosa on June 30. The story aired with a link to the HCDE website. (HCDE is the regional sponsor of the Awards.) Next year, we are seeking judges and sponsors for the Awards as the number of students allowed to enter will be unlimited. We are estimating an additional 2,000 student entries at a minimum.

CASE for Kids to Honor its 2015-2016 AmeriCorps Members July 16 at Irvington

CASE for Kids recognizes several dozen AmeriCorps members who worked in afterschool programs during the 2015-2016 school year on Thursday, July 16 from 10 a.m.-noon at 6300 Irvington Blvd. in rooms 100 A-B. Collectively, the members provided over 30,000 hours of service to youth in Harris County through afterschool and special service projects.

Stories will be shared and special awards will be given at the recognition ceremony. Light refreshments will also be served. The CASE for Kids AmeriCorps Kids' Day Project is funded in part by OneStar Foundation and Houston Endowment, Inc.



Summer Curriculum Institute Gets 30 New Teachers Prepared for Classrooms this Fall



Teacher Alternative Certification hosted the Summer Curriculum Institute this past six weeks to provide training for 30 aspiring teachers. The intensive program provides 90 hours of training over a six-week period for degreed candidates in the pre-service phase of teaching. After potential teachers take the courses, observe in classrooms and pass the subject-area state mandated tests, they are placed in teaching positions in districts. Guidance for teachers is provided by HCDE for an additional two years.

HCDE curriculum specialists and directors assisting with the summer endeavor include Dr. Melba Kent, Jonett Miniell, Nicole Shanahan, Debra Anderson, Dr. Dierdre Sharkey, Lidia Zatopek and Mary Lynn Johnson.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Food Drive to Feed the Needy Promoted through Human Resources in June

Human Resources division staff will deliver about a dozen bags of food to the Houston Food Bank through a philanthropic employee food drive to feed the needy. Similar campaigns will be promoted throughout the year to engage employees in public service initiatives.



BOARD CONNECTION

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

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Upcoming Board Events:

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

