

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 no exception! It was a busy one, as usual, at HCDE. The summer flex schedule ended last week, and we returned to our regular business hours of 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. this week. Early in the week, I met with a representative from the United Way. Later in the week, I attended the UpSkill Houston meeting—an initiative of the Greater Houston Partnership. This meeting was held at the offices of Associated General Contractors. The purpose of this group is to serve as a greater collaborative related to workforce development initiatives. I plan to further network with one of the representatives, Mr. J.D. Slaughter, of S&B Engineers and Constructors, to explore the possibility of finding common ground between his needs for staffing within the industrial sector, and our needs to equip an adult education population with crafted skills. I will continue to update you on this consideration.

Our Educator Certification and Professional Advancement division continued to press forward this week preparing teachers and other professionals for the upcoming academic year. This week, HCDE hosted several workshops for teachers including one geared to improve writing skills: Organizing, Managing and Troubleshooting the Writing for English teachers. Two others, Figuring Out Figure 19 (Volumes I and II) were hosted for teachers of grades K-5. Literacy and TABE trainings were held as well as another in-service, TEAMS for Teachers. Once again, we continue to create value, deliver opportunity, and provide service for the students, teachers, and greater community of Harris County. HCDE continues to demonstrate its commitment to advancing teaching and learning.

Internally, our larger divisions, such as the Schools and School-based Therapy Services, have begun their returning staff orientation sessions. Meanwhile, our Human Resources division has also begun its returning staff orientation for all employees in the remaining divisions.

Our direct support divisions are counting down days to the beginning of the school year in our various districts with 24 out of 25 of the Harris County School Districts reopening their doors to students on Monday, August 24th. Pasadena ISD starts its academic year on Tuesday, August 25th. We are ready to serve.

Next week, the regularly scheduled August Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 18th. On the next day, Wednesday, August 19th, the Annual Staff Meeting will take place at the Humble Civic Center. We're excited about that event and look forward to your attendance. We have over 150 employees who will be receiving years of service awards. I look forward to meeting, for the very first time, with nearly every employee of the Department. At that time, I will reinforce the goals and mission of the Department that we, the Team of Eight, established earlier this year. This will be an exciting time for the HCDE family and the appropriate opportunity for me to help recalibrate, rejuvenate, and energize the whole.

In closing, I hope you enjoy this issue of **The Connector** and I hope you have a great weekend.

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Carmen Brown, Galena Park ISD leader, named director of Early Head Start at HCDE

Carmen Brown is the new director of Early Head Start Education at Harris County Department of Education. Brown leads the Early Head Start expansion in Baytown, Texas, a collaborative funded by a \$2.8 million federal grant. Early Head Start provides services to needy children ages birth to 3 and their families.



As the former director of Early Head Start in the Galena Park Independent School District, Brown directed the program recognized for excellence through an exemplary status by federal Head Start administration program audits.

Brown, a 30-year educator and Galena Park resident, earned her bachelor's of arts degree from the University of North Texas at Denton and a master's of social work from the University of Houston.

Through the years, she served as psychotherapist, case manager supervisor and program administrator within numerous agencies throughout greater Houston and in Washington, D.C.

Brown said HCDE Early Head Start is committed to expand quality childcare in Baytown through an addition of five classrooms to serve 40 infants and toddlers. The program also supports training and services for existing childcare agencies in Baytown.

"Our expansion allows us the opportunity to grow the scope and services for at-risk children and their families while supporting the community in building quality, childcare businesses," said Brown

For more information about the HCDE Early Childhood Head Start services, go to www.hcde-texas.org/headstart.

CASE for Kids announces 2015 Out-of-School Time Conference Sept. 25 and 26

CASE for Kids, a division of Harris County Department of Education, hosts the 2015 CASE for Kids Out-of-School Time Conference on Sept. 25 and 26 at The Westin Houston, 945 Gessner Road in Memorial City, Houston, Texas. The 3rd annual event gathers leading out-of-school time and expanded learning professionals in one location for a two-day journey that sparks deep conversations and establishes lifelong connections.



The conference that adopts the belief that "every minute matters" is packed with unique, energy-charged professional development activities.

Keynote speakers and presenters provide workshops that are designed to be applicable to any youth program, including schools, child care centers and community centers.

Cost for the two-day conference is \$100, including all meals. Price is \$75 for Friday, including the sit-down, "State of After-School" luncheon and beverage station.

Registration for only the luncheon is \$50. The Saturday event is \$25.

Contact CASE for Kids Out-of-School Time Conference Event Coordinator Nick Cantu for more information or for registration accommodations: 713-696-1331, email ncantu@hcde-texas.org or fax 713-339-9410. Go to website afterschoolzone.org for more information.

ADVANCING TEACHING AND LEARNING by training the trainer

Trainings hosted at HCDE this week

- 08.10 | Online Instructor's Training - Part I
- 08.10 | Organizing, Managing and Troubleshooting the Writing Workshop
- 08.13 | lead4ward: Figuring Out Figure 19 - Volume I (K-5)
- 08.13 | lead4ward: Figuring Out Figure 19 - Volume II (K-5)
- 08.14 | TABE 9 and 10
- 08.15 | Goal Setting
- 08.15 | BEST Literacy
- 08.15 | BEST Plus
- 08.15 | TEAMS for Teachers
- 08.15 | TEAMS for Teachers

Choice Partners Kicks Off School Year with Newsletter, School Nutrition Show

Choice Partners kicks off the new school year with the August issue of Leader's Choice, news for Choice Partners members and contract partners. Choice Partners also shares an invite to the Get Wild about School Food event on Oct. 22 at the Humble Civic Center. The Choice Partners School Nutrition Show is a lively event that showcases new commodity foods available to school districts. Students from area schools visit the show and sample the food through vendor buffet booths. Please consider attending this fun event to get informed about the healthy, tasty, food options available through Choice Partners.



Cooling the Curriculum Hot Spots in Social Studies Held at HCDE

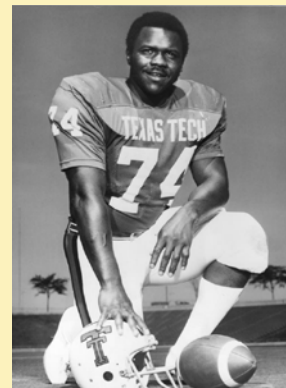
Sixty social studies teachers enrolled in a hands-on workshop with lead4ward curriculum expert Jodi Denton at HCDE. Cooling the Curriculum Hot Spots in Social Studies helped students examine the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills "spiraling standards." Spiraling allows students to continually build their knowledge in specific curriculum as they progress through each grade. The workshop encouraged teachers to help students think beyond the test and to think and participate in rigorous ways.



HCDE leader Ecomet Burley honored as Texas Tech Red Raider all-time best defensive tackle for historic 1,000th game

Ecomet Burley, director and leader of Harris County Department of Education's Center for Safe and Secure Schools, is being honored this month in Lubbock, Texas as the all-time best defensive tackle for the Texas Tech Red Raiders football team. The list released by the Lubbock Avalanche Newspaper is part of the celebration of the team's historic 1,000th game being played Sept. 5 against Sam Houston State University.

For three consecutive years, the 5-foot, 11-inch, 241-pound player from Lufkin was selected to the first team All-Southwest Conference defensive team and the NEA Sports Writers All-America second team as a junior. In 2004, he was inducted into the Texas Tech Hall of Honor as one of the all-time best at his position.



"I am humbled to receive this recognition, and I accept it on behalf of my teammates and coaches that helped me throughout my college career," said Burley.

The Center for Safe and Secure Schools which Burley leads provides resources, including training, certification and audits for school districts as it promotes school safety practices. Subjects the center addresses include bullying, emergency preparedness, Internet safety, human trafficking and bus safety.

For more information about the award and the 1,000th game: <http://lubbockonline.com/sports/2015-08-08/red-raiders-1000-defensive-tackle-ecomet-burley#.VckUNZ1Viko>

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

Teacher Writing Workshop Delivered through Author Mark Overmeyer

Presenter Mark Overmeyer, writing expert and author, delivered the Organizing, Managing and Troubleshooting the Writing Workshop on Aug. 10. The workshop highlighted lessons for both resistant and advanced writers and helped teachers to deliver effective feedback to students and their parents. Overmeyer authored the book *When Writing Workshop Isn't Working*, and teachers each received a copy of his book.



McLeod Holds Education and Enrichment Division Meeting with 5 Divisions on Aug. 10

Dr. Kimberly McLeod led the Education and Enrichment Division Meeting, a strategic meeting involving her divisions, on Aug. 10 at Irvington. The meeting included staff from Adult Education, the Teaching and Learning Center, Research and Evaluation Institute, the Center for Grants Development and Educator Certification and Professional Advancement. The meeting included team-building exercises as the groups came together to plan the new school year and meet their new leader.



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

CASE for Kids hosts summer culminating events for childcare partners

HCDE's Center for Afterschool, Summer and Expanded Learning held three Kids Day culminating events to wrap up summer programs at their partnering sites. Earlier this summer, CASE for Kids matched childcare centers up with afterschool vendors as part of their efforts to provide enrichment activities during out-of-school time. The vendors have worked in the childcare centers all summer under the guidance of CASE for Kids on projects that promote literacy and numeracy. The kids' days held this past week were their culminating events.



Kids attending summer programs at Little Stars Childcare and New Covenant Christian Daycare created art projects representing painter, Jacob Lawrence during CASE for Kids' City ArtWorks event. Lawrence painted the "Migration Series" depicting the migration of African-Americans from the rural south to the urban north during and after World War I.



Students attending the summer program at Early Explorers Learning Academy received a lesson in sublimation from Mad Science of Houston during the CASE for Kids' Mad Science culminating event. The Mad Science instructor showed the process of how dry ice transforms from solid to gas.



Beginnings and Beyond Child Care's summer program students were kept moving during the CASE for Kid's JumpBunch of Central/South Houston event. Students participated in a game of dodgeball as well as stretching exercises. Jumpbunch emphasizes fitness and physical activity within their curriculum.



TEACHING ALWAYS WORKS

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.

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Upcoming Board Events:

August Board Meeting
Tuesday, August 18, 2015

Annual Staff Meeting
Wednesday, August 19, 2015

