

# 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**

## IN THIS ISSUE



Holiday Reception at North Post Oak Rings in the Season  
pg. 2



Human Resources Hosts Mandatory Management Training  
pg. 3



CASE for Kids Hosts Put Some STEM in Afterschool  
pg. 4



2 Head Start Families Gain Refurbished Cars through Bates Custom Collision  
December 16-17  
pg. 5



Head Start Policy Council Gets Visit from Marionette Santa and Crew  
pg. 6

## OF NOTE

### BOARD

First off, I am pleased to report that Trustee Marvin Morris is doing well as he recuperates from his recent illness. Please continue to keep him in your thoughts as we wish him a speedy recovery. Please be reminded that our regularly scheduled December Board Meeting will be held next Tuesday, December 15 at 1:00. Again, I welcome Trustee Evans as he attends his first meeting during his second tenure as an HCDE Board Member. Additionally, please be reminded that a Budget Sub-committee meeting will be held at 12:30 and a PFC meeting will be held after the Board Meeting. Only President Chesnut and Trustee Evans are expected to attend the PFC meeting.

### SCHOOLS AND CENTERS

This week, I visited our Humble and Tidwell Head Start Centers. I am pleased to report that operations were running smoothly at both locations. Our Schools division is rapidly closing in on the close of the first semester of this academic year. As the semester ends next Friday, the students have been working diligently to present their various holiday productions. To that end, members of my Executive Leadership Team and I made site visits this week to see those productions in action. Our faculty and staff are certainly unique and the talents and performances they are able to pull out of our special populations of students are impressive. Our campuses, along with our client districts, will end their semesters next Friday, December 18.

### ADVANCING TEACHING AND LEARNING

There's absolutely no stopping our efforts to create value, deliver opportunity, and provide service to our clients. In the area of professional development, we facilitated numerous trainings and workshops as we advance the teaching and learning process. We hosted yet another recruitment information meeting for our Alternative Certification Program. This program is flourishing and is an essential piece of our Teaching and Learning Center. Our Human Resources division hosted a mandatory anti-bullying training session for managers, supervisors, principals, and other leaders within the organization. It was hosted by an area attorney. It was replete with useful information and will help ensure a healthy climate within the organization. It was an excellent professional development opportunity for those in leadership within the Department. Midweek, we hosted an English Language Arts Leadership Group Meeting, a math workshop entitled, Using Manipulatives to Teach the New TEKS for Grades K-2 as well as Great Explorations in Math and Science (GEMS): Ant Homes Under the Ground/Buzzing a Hive. We wrapped up the week with a focus on English and Mentoring and Coaching in the sciences based on STAAR Results.

### LEADERSHIP

HCDE continues to lead in our core competency areas. For example, our Center for Grants Development hosted a Grants Training Series Webinar on the topic, The Grant Budget: It's Not Just About the Math, and we also hosted an Attendance Officer's Share Session for area attendance officers. You may recall that, earlier this year, we facilitated a series of sessions for area truancy officers in which we dissected the laws impacting this unique group of education professionals related to the recently-passed legislation that directly impacts their daily work. We continue to enlighten and bridge gaps that exist in all areas of the education process.

### EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

Both yesterday and today, the Human Resources division hosted holiday receptions for staff at both the North Post Oak location as well as the Irvington location. Employees had an opportunity to participate in friendly, yet competitive, "Ugly Sweater Contests" which provoked fun, laughter, and goodwill. Light refreshments were served and both events were great opportunities for employees to take a moment to celebrate the season and also be appreciated for their hard work and dedication.

### EVENTS

This week we honored our Adult Education National Society inductees. Our Adult Education division proudly recognized 20 students for their diligence and commitment to continuing their educational pursuits. Please see photos inside this issue of **The Connector** for scenes from this momentous event.

### COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Next week, Head Start parents from our centers will be the recipients of the Annual Bates Car Giveaway. Two deserving mothers will receive cars packed with toys for their children, insurance coverage (for a limited amount of time), and funds to pay for gasoline. This is an exciting event and I am looking forward to attending it for the second time since joining HCDE.

### IN CLOSING

Due to the upcoming Winter Break, **The Connector** will be on hiatus until we return from the Winter Break. The Department will be closed starting Wednesday, December 23. The Department will reopen Monday, January 4. I look forward to seeing you at next Tuesday's Board Meeting and I hope you enjoy this issue of **The Connector**. Have a relaxing weekend.

# Awareness

## EMPLOYEE CONNECTIONS

### Holiday Reception at North Post Oak Rings in the Season

The HCDE Holiday Reception got off to a great start with the Connector reporting on the first party held at North Post Oak. Cookies and punch set the tone, followed by the "Ugly Sweater Contest." Contestant Dwayne Brooms, Texas Virtual School Network, earned the top honor with his vest and tie sweater. More photos will be available from Irvington through the next issue of the Connector.



# Awareness

## EMPLOYEE CONNECTIONS

### HCDE Teams Up With Workforce Solutions to Recruit Head Start Staff



On Tuesday of this week, recruiters from HCDE's Human Resources division joined forces with Workforce Solutions in Baytown to recruit candidates for vacant positions within HCDE's Head Start division.



This job fair is just one of many that the Human Resources division has participated in this year in an effort to recruit qualified and capable job candidates to fill positions within the Department.



DeDe Church

### Human Resources Hosts Mandatory Management Training

The Human Resources division hosted an engaging training on the topic of Bullying/Harassment this past Monday. The training, Bullying/Harassment Are Not Welcome Here, was hosted by Austin-based Attorney DeDe Church. It was an energizing, interactive workshop that taught the differences between bullying and harassment and how to diffuse and eliminate both types of bad behaviors in the workplace.



### Human Resources Completes Successful Toy Drive with Help of HCDE Employees

Human Resources completes its Holiday Toy Drive for Shriners Hospitals for Children on December 11. The philanthropic project collected numerous toys from employees to give to children with orthopedic conditions, spinal cord injuries, cleft lip and palate, and burn injuries. Photo: Holiday trees from North Post Oak and Irvington feature some of the toys donated by HCDE employees.



# Opportunity

## PROGRAM CONNECTIONS



### CASE for Kids Hosts Put Some STEM in Afterschool

STEM learning is a hot topic in public education and is being introduced to afterschool through CASE for Kids. In December, CASE hosted a training which incorporated STEM learning tools into out-of-school time programs. The attendees worked through curriculum with hands-on training for projects to use.



### VISTA CASE for Kids Volunteers Recognize 50th Anniversary at LBJ Library

AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers working for CASE for Kids celebrated the 50th Anniversary of AmeriCorps and VISTA in Austin on December 4. Photo: (left)

Jackie Cooper and Ashley Davis, current VISTA members for CASE for Kids, made their way to Austin to join in the celebration at the LBJ Presidential Library.

### CASE for Kids Accepts RFPs for City Connections for Spring Funding

CASE for Kids is accepting requests for proposals for the spring semester. The maximum funding will be \$10,000 per organization. Go to [www.afterschoolzone.org](http://www.afterschoolzone.org) (funding) for more information.

#### CASE for Kids City Connections

Funding Available for afterschool in Houston.

Now accepting applications!

Funding Range: Max. \$10,000

### Advancing Teaching and Learning by Training the Trainer

Trainings hosted at HCDE this week

#### DECEMBER 7 TRAININGS

Recruitment for HCDE Alternative Certification Program for Teachers - Information Meeting

HCDE Employees Only-Bullying/Harassment are not welcome here! (Mandatory training for managers, supervisors, principals; others are welcome to attend)

Online Instructor's Training - Part I (Fully Online)

#### DECEMBER 8 TRAININGS

ELA Leadership Group Meeting

Using Manipulatives to Teach the New TEKS (Grades K-2)

Great Explorations in Math and Science (GEMS): Ant Homes Under the Ground/Buzzing a Hive (6 hour G/T credit)

#### DECEMBER 9 TRAININGS

Quest for Grants Training Series Webinar - The Grant Budget: It's Not Just About the Math!

English as a Second Language ESL TExES #154 Supplemental One-Day Mini Academy

Mentoring and Coaching Elementary Science Teachers Based on STAAR Results

Mentoring and Coaching Secondary Science Teachers Based on STAAR Results

#### DECEMBER 10 TRAININGS

Digital Learning is Elementary! - Using Digital Tools and Resources in the Elementary Classroom

Attendance Officer's Share Session

Science Fiction: Teaching Weather with Children's Literature (6 hrs G/T credit)

#### DECEMBER 11 TRAININGS

Rocks from Space and Engineering - Early Solar System Clues about Earth

Wham! Zoom! Using Comic Books in your Afterschool Program

# Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

## SCENES FROM TODAY'S ADULT EDUCATION NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY INDUCTION CEREMONY



### Two Head Start Families Gain Refurbished Cars through Bates Custom Collision December 16-17

Bates Collision Centers and Harris County Department of Education Head Start honor two Head Start families as they receive the 17th Annual Bates Responsible Parenting Awards on December 16-17 at 10 a.m. Emily Webster of San Jacinto College Head Start location receives the car at the Bates Baytown location, 3219 N. Main St., Baytown on December 16 while Lynn Ponce from the Compton Head Start location gains a car on December 17 at Bates Channelview, 15532 I-10 East in Channelview.

The festive receptions are a great kick off to the holiday season of giving as families also receive gifts for their children along with insurance for six months and gas cards. We invite you to come out and share the joy of giving.

### Social Studies Leadership Group hosted by TLC Tours Holocaust Museum with Area Teachers

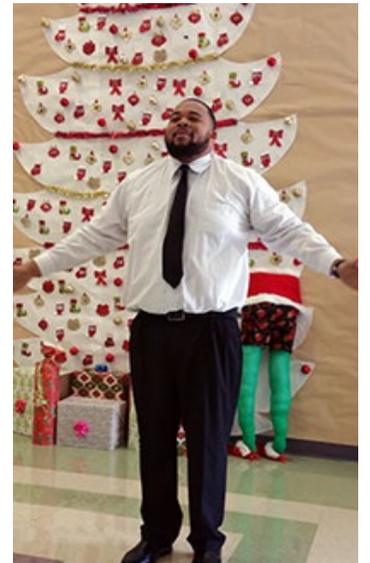
Social Studies Leadership Group members from districts throughout Harris County toured the Holocaust Museum on December 4. Dr. Mary Lee Webeck, director of the museum, presented and guided the teachers through the tour. The Teaching and Learning Center hosts the leadership groups for specific curriculum areas through monthly meetings. Members network and share resources for teaching social studies.



# Opportunity

CAMPUS CONNECTIONS

SCENES FROM THE ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIOR SCHOOL EAST LOCATION HOLIDAY PRODUCTION



# Opportunity

CAMPUS CONNECTIONS

## SCENES FROM THE ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIOR SCHOOL EAST LOCATION HOLIDAY PRODUCTION (CONTINUED)



### District Highlight: Galena Park ISD

District Highlight: Crosby ISD hosts the "Fine Arts Fa La La La La" holiday art exhibit and jazz band performance on December 11 from 6-7:30 p.m. at the Crosby High school Auditorium.



Details:  
[http://www.crosbyisd.org/images/ace/14702/gallery\\_1420\\_1448895588.jpg?sc\\_id=88035](http://www.crosbyisd.org/images/ace/14702/gallery_1420_1448895588.jpg?sc_id=88035)

# Service

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

## Head Start Policy Council Gets Visit from Marionette Santa and Crew



Children at the Head Start Policy Council December meeting got a visit from an old-fashioned, marionette Santa and his holiday crew on December 8. The children of families involved in the council ranged in age from infants to teens. The puppeteer performing told narrated holiday tales while the puppets danced along to music.

# Systemic Achievement

*...with purposeful intent*

## Organization Morale Community Relations

In keeping with the Board's expectations of me to

- Create an open and positive environment for sharing resources and exchanging ideas to improve organizational climate,
- Seek systemically to improve the climate by obtaining and utilizing feedback from employees of the Department,
- Celebrate accomplishments and acknowledge excellence, and
- Demonstrate quality management through team building

The Human Resources division hosted two Employee Holiday Receptions this week. One was held yesterday at the North Post Oak location and the other was held today at the 6300 Irvington location. I, along with members of my Executive Leadership Team, was in attendance at both receptions and they were very well-attended, and the employees enjoyed the chance to unwind in celebration of the approaching holiday. Staff had an opportunity to gather and celebrate the season over light but festive desserts. Both events served as a great way for staff to be honored and celebrated prior to the upcoming Winter Break.



**By the Department hosting this event and through my attendance (and the attendance of my Executive Leadership Team), I am meeting the Board's goal for all staff to be treated with respect and dignity, improve employee and organization morale, while ensuring all policies and practices are supported by effective procedures.**

## 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:

**DECEMBER 15, 2015**  
December Board Meeting  
1:00 p.m.

