

The CONNECTOR

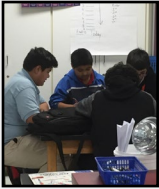
A weekly publication of Harris County Department of Education
for the HCDE Board of Trustees



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Week of February 8, 2016

From the office of **JAMES COLBERT, JR. – SUPERINTENDENT**

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OF NOTE

As usual, this week was one filled with tasks and accomplishments across the Board at HCDE. I met with the Superintendent of Pearland ISD as I continued discussions with Harris County area superintendents about the upcoming Focal Point initiative. To that end, as mentioned in previous issues of **The Connector**, the inaugural Focal Point meeting will take place next week, Wednesday, February 17, 2016. Dr. Bob Thompson and I met today to refine the final plans and agenda for next week's premier event. I am excited about the possibilities that exist within this cohort.

I also met with Jose' Villarreal, Executive Director of AVANCE. (The mission of AVANCE is to unlock potential by strengthening families in at-risk communities through effective parent education and support programs.) We exchanged dialogue of an exploratory nature to see how collaborating might prove to be mutually beneficial.

In an effort to advance our efforts with the United Way, I met with Dorian Cockrell of THRIVE-a United Way initiative. As we move forward with S&B Construction and their goal to place women on non-traditional industrial career paths, Mr. Cockrell and I discussed other possible avenues through which HCDE and United Way can band together to soar to even higher heights. I will keep you abreast of future discussions in that direction.

In creating value, delivering opportunity, and providing service, HCDE hosted numerous trainings this week. Our Leadership Speakers Series featured Dr. Ervin Knezek of Lead Forward this past Monday. We continued with Science STAAR trainings for grades 5 and 8 with a Closer Look at Organisms and Environments, and with a Biology EOC session: A Closer Look at Cell Structure and Function. Yesterday, the Social Studies Leadership Group, composed of Social Studies educators across Harris County, convened at HCDE and we ended the week today hosting a Test Prep Series for TExES Core Subjects in the area of Social Studies only.

Next week, I leave for Austin Monday afternoon to attend a UIL Meeting on Tuesday. I will be returning from Austin late Tuesday and will be in the office Wednesday.

In closing, please be reminded that our February Board Meeting will be held on the fourth Tuesday of this month, February 23, 2016, instead of the third Tuesday.

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

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

CASE for Kids News

CASE for Kids is starting off the New Year strong. As of January 2016, 21st CCL has served 1036 parents from both cycle 7 and cycle 8. We served 210 people in the CASE training series in January. The Lending Library has had 24 schools and childcare centers come check out three or more items, each, from the library in the month of January.

January 30

Three CASE staff members presented at the R.T. Garcia Winter Conference. The ladies presented on STEM, Bounce, and Put Swirl in Afterschool. It was a fun filled day for the CASE staff.



February 1

Bendbrook Elementary School engaged in a Helicopter mapping activity that allowed the students a chance to fly a helicopter around an obstacle course of their own creation in the classroom. The students created an obstacle course with material found around the classroom and used math knowledge to determine the route the helicopter would take.



February 3

Stehlik Intermediate School gathered their classrooms together to have a peer-mentoring and building relationships project. The afternoon started with the 5th grade coming in to help the kindergarten class bake crescent rolls. It continued with

the two groups pairing up and making meaningful connections with kids of a different age group.

February 4

CASE for Kids met with the directors of childcare centers and community centers to discuss the available resources and needs they may have. The Lending Library was open and available to the directors to see all we have in store to help promote learning at their centers.

Advancing Teaching and Learning by Training the Trainer

Trainings hosted at HCDE this week

FEBRUARY 8, 2016

Lead Forward

FEBRUARY 10, 2016

Grade 5 Science STAAR: A Closer Look at Organisms and Environments

FEBRUARY 11, 2016

Grade 8 Science STAAR: A Closer Look at Organisms and Environments

FEBRUARY 12, 2016

School Finance Council

Biology EOC: A Closer Look at Cell Structure and Function

Social Studies Leadership Group

FEBRUARY 13, 2016

Test Prep Series for TExES Core Subjects EC-6 Exam (#291) - SOCIAL STUDIES Sessions ONLY



Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Popular lead4ward CEO, Founder Dr. Ervin Knezek Presents at HCDE



The Leadership Speakers Series featured popular lead4ward presenter, founder, and CEO Ervin Knezek on February 11. Eighty administrators and teachers attended the session called STAAR: Relevant Review. The workshop examined trends in student performance. Knezek is a Texas-born educator who uses creative, strategic approaches to education to inspire and motivate educators throughout the nation.



Creating Synergy through Collaboration

Frances Hester and Andrea Segraves met with Dr. Dennis Brown, President of Lee College, to form future partnerships among several HCDE divisions, specifically several initiatives within the Teaching and Learning Center.

The mission of Lee College is to serve as a focal point for the development of educated, gainfully-employed, and socially-aware residents of our local community. Its vision is to provide knowledge and skills to successfully navigate in the modern world.



ECPA Hosts Winter Retreat for State Alternative Certification Association

The Educator Certification and Professional Advancement (ECPA) division recently organized and hosted the annual Texas Alternative Certification Association's Winter Retreat at HCDE. This association represents all non-traditional education preparation institutions in the state— including district, university, non-profit, and private entities, allowing the organization to serve as a voice for alternative certification in Texas. It also provides a vehicle for all alternative certification programs to work together, thereby improving current alternative certification programs. Over 50 deans, directors, and representatives of educator preparation programs from across the state attended this ECPA-hosted, two-day event.

Value

BUSINESS CONNECTIONS

Choice Partners Publications

Choice Partners recently released its most recent issue of Co-opportunities. Please visit http://www.magnetmail.net/actions/email_web_version.cfm?recipient_id=2429968618&message_id=12047733&user_id=HCDOE&group_id=2514557&jobid=32282339 to read the current issue.



The division's other signature publication, The Leader's Choice, is available at the following URL:
http://www.choicepartners.org/admin/uploads/pdf/LeadersChoice-2016-Issue-1-online_1454441366.pdf.



Service

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Scholastic Art & Writing Awards Students Make Headlines throughout Harris County

Announcements about our regional Scholastic Art & Writing Awards recipients are making headlines in school districts and the Harris County community. Over 900 students gained Gold, Silver, and Honorable Mention awards. Here are some local articles:

Houston ISD Blog:

http://hcde-texas.org/users/0221/docs/Scholastic%20Art%20and%20Writing/HISDNewsBlog_020416.pdf

Humble Observer:

http://hcde-texas.org/users/0221/docs/Scholastic%20Art%20and%20Writing/HumbleObserver_020916.pdf

Baytown Sun:

http://hcde-texas.org/users/0221/docs/Scholastic%20Art%20and%20Writing/BaytownSun_020816.pdf

Katy Rancher:

http://hcde-texas.org/users/0221/docs/Scholastic%20Art%20and%20Writing/KatyRancher_012816.pdf



Scholastic Art Intake Provides Opportunity to View Student Pieces through Receptions, Celebrations

Gold and Silver Key Scholastic Art & Writing art was delivered by teachers throughout Harris County on behalf of their students who have earned awards. The art will be showcased through exhibits and receptions throughout Harris County. Access your invite here:

http://hcde-texas.org/users/0221/docs/Scholastic%20Art%20and%20Writing/Scholastic_Invite_Board.pdf

HCDE Hosts Houston Area Charter School Roundtable

HCDE's Business Services division hosted a Houston Area Charter School Roundtable last week for charter school board members, superintendents, and administrators. The roundtable discussed safety objectives, school finance updates including FIRST and EDGAR compliance for federal funds, grant updates from the HCDE Center for Resource Development, and legal updates specifically for charters.



Service

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



Media Interviews Ecomet Burley for Bullying Prevention Workshop

The Center for Safe and Secure Schools hosted a workshop with bullying prevention expert Fabian Ramirez on February 5. About 30 attendees came from a dozen school districts throughout Harris County. Several TV stations covered the event, including Fox 26 and KTRK. Semana News will share its story with the community next week. CSSS Director Ecomet Burley was interviewed by Fox 26 for the morning news to promote the workshop: Fox News: <https://youtu.be/KQCu6dQ7c5A>

Houston ISD Educators Figure Out ELAR TEKS Figure 19

Houston ISD educators attended lead4ward's "Figuring Out Figure 19" workshop this week that focused on using texts and genres to learn comprehension strategies for students. Participants also left with a framework for planning and implementing shared and independent reading practices.



Center for Grants Development Snapshots



Scenes from recent District Grants Networking Meeting



Scenes from the first meeting of the Board of Directors of the Association of Fundraising Professionals-Greater Houston Chapter where HCDE's Dr. Vida Avery is a member.

IN RECOGNITION



Client Development received an AVA Digital Award for the HCDE Infographic. Kudos to Louise Henry and team for work done well!

Awareness

EMPLOYEE CONNECTIONS

HCDE Wears Red to Support Healthy Hearts



CASE for Kids supports healthy hearts on National Wear Red Day

The Human Resources division sponsored National Wear Red Day last Friday to promote healthy heart awareness. HCDE employees wore shades of red to support the *Go Red for Women* cause because 80 percent of cardiac and stroke events may be prevented with education and action.



The Human Resources division wears red to encourage healthy heart awareness



AB School staff wears red to support Go Red for Women

Job Fairs this Week...

- Yesterday, Human Resources division recruiters represented HCDE at a job fair at Houston Baptist University. The event was well-attended and fair attendees expressed interest in HCDE. The HBU event was an excellent venue to recruit potential employees for HCDE.
- Tomorrow, Head Start is hosting a job fair at the Irvington location of HCDE in an effort to recruit staff to fill vacancies within the division. Staff from both Human Resources and Head Start will facilitate this event which was planned specifically for HCDE's Area I Head Start program.



Opportunity

CAMPUS CONNECTIONS



AB West Celebrates Chinese New Year

AB West students celebrated the Year of the Monkey and Chinese New Year this month with the assistance of AB West aide, Shu Nieh, who shared her culture and customs with students.

Colorful costumes augmented student presentations which shared research information they learned about the Chinese culture. High school student Jabari Christophe shared the fact that Chinese New Year falls on the new moon between January 21 and February 20.

As a fun activity, students participated in a chopsticks contest, ate Chinese cuisine, and participated in the dragon parade.



DISTRICT HIGHLIGHT: New Caney ISD



New Caney ISD presents Family Internet Safety on February 18 from 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Details:
<http://goo.gl/XKAWAj>

Systemic Achievement

...with purposeful intent

Community Relations

In keeping with the Board's expectations of me to

- Work with other community and governmental entities and educational organizations to meet the needs of students and the community in a coordinated way

The Scholastic Art intake process is underway and provides the opportunity to view student art pieces through receptions and celebrations. Gold and Silver Key Scholastic Art & Writing art was delivered by teachers throughout Harris County this week on behalf of their students who have earned these exceptional awards. This art will be showcased through exhibits and receptions throughout Harris County.



Announcements about our regional recipients are making headlines in news media outlets as a result of our ongoing public relations campaign with area media outlets through the Communication division to increase the visibility of all HCDE programs and services. This includes visibility within our school districts as well as in the Harris County community, with

over 900 students gaining Gold, Silver, and Honorable Mention awards.

HCDE is honored to serve as the liaison of this long-standing distinguished program which has rich history at the national level.

In doing so, I am working to meet the Board's goal to communicate the needs and accomplishments of the Department in a variety of formats through communication with the media, community, school districts, and other forums.

HCDE BOARD

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UPCOMING BOARD EVENTS:

FEBRUARY BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

1:00 p.m.

Room 400

