

The CONNECTOR

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



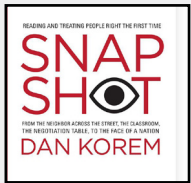
VOLUME 2/ISSUE 38
Week of June 20, 2016

From the office of JAMES COLBERT, JR. – SUPERINTENDENT

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OF NOTE

I first want to thank you for the time you devote to serving the public through the HCDE Board of Trustees. Your commitment to the students of Harris County is evident through the decisions you make and your dedication to being prudent public servants on behalf of your constituents. This month has been a very busy one for each of you, as it relates to conducting HCDE business. We have had a special call meeting of the Board, budget workshops, as well as the regularly scheduled June Board Meeting. Please know that the time you devote to the Department and its efforts does not go unnoticed. Thanks again for all you do.

Along those same lines, I appreciate your support of our budget initiatives for the next fiscal year. The outcomes of this week's Board Meeting will propel us toward achieving goals you have set for the Department, its programs and services, and for me. I am especially excited about the improvement of our facilities and the opportunity to enhance our existing programs and services.

As mentioned in last week's issue of **The Connector**, I am attending two conferences over the next several days. Immediately after Tuesday's Board Meeting, I traveled to Austin to attend the Association of Recovery Schools (ARS) Conference at the University of Texas (UT). The mission of this organization is to support and inspire recovery high schools for optimum performance—empowering hope and access to every student in recovery. Because of the population we serve, especially on our Highpoint campuses, as well as the need for such services across Harris County, I am very interested in having a presence within this realm of education services. This conference marks the organization's 15th annual event of its kind.

This weekend through the early part of next week, I will also be attending the UT/Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA) Summer Conference. This event is co-sponsored by UT's College of Education. It runs through next Tuesday. This year's conference will provide updates on some of the biggest issues facing school executives including assessment and accountability, school finance, teacher-student relationships, and more.

This week in the area of Teaching and Learning by Training the Trainer, we continued assisting our client school districts in their efforts to help students achieve through the following workshops and training sessions: Reading Interventions and Strategies, Examining Figure 19 and STAAR Supporting Standards, Quest for Grants Training Series Webinar- Diversify Your Funding Through Government, just to name a few.

I will return to the office next Wednesday, at the conclusion of the UT/TASA Summer Conference. Upon my return to the office, I will be meeting with another Harris County school superintendent as I continue to nurture HCDE's relationships with our area school district executives.

Please be reminded that the Senate Education Committee has set a date for its hearing regarding the Interim Study related to the Department. It will take place Wednesday, August 3, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. I will continue to keep you apprised of the hearing as additional information becomes available.

In closing, thanks again for your service to HCDE. I appreciate the confidence you exhibit towards the Department's endeavors as HCDE continues to excel in creating value, delivering opportunity, and providing service to the students, families, and school districts of Harris County.

I hope you enjoy this issue of **The Connector**. Have a relaxing weekend.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS



Fifth Grade Teachers Take a Closer Look at Light Reflection for STAAR Application

A dozen fifth-grade elementary teachers from Houston ISD complete a light experiment in a workshop called Grade 5: Science STAAR—A Closer Look at Force, Motion and Energy at an HCDE science workshop hosted by the HCDE Teaching and Learning Center. Science curriculum director Lisa Felske set up stations for experiments with light

reflection using flashlights and mirrors. The strategic, light reflection game called “Destroy the Monster” was a friendly competition between the teachers which they will take back to their classrooms this fall for student use. For more workshops this summer and fall, go to <http://hcde-texas.org/teachers-workroom/wms/>.



Digital Education and Innovation Collaborations Help Students Achieve

Digital Education and Innovation (DEI) recently met with Debbie Vincent in Alief ISD to work on a collaboration with HCDE and Alief’s Principles of Technology department for a Google RISE Grant that helps promote computer science education for low-income communities and minorities who are underrepresented in the field of computer science.



DEI also met with Tim Davis and the technology application support team to develop a plan of action to upgrade the current Cy-Fair ISD Moodle system. It is a collaborative effort between HCDE’s Digital Education and Innovation and Technology divisions, Cy-Fair ISD, and other third party entities to ensure a smooth and successful upgrade to support the increase in student usage for 2016-2017.

Additionally, the team presented two three-hour courses on Technology in Education and Technology across the Curriculum for candidates currently enrolled in HCDE’s Alternative Certification Program. The candidates were actively engaged in technology lessons they can integrate into the content area they will soon be teaching.

Advancing Teaching and Learning by Training the Trainer

Trainings hosted at HCDE this week

JUNE 20, 2016

Reading Interventions/Strategies

JUNE 21, 2016

Reading Interventions/Strategies (K-5)

Examining Figure 19 and STAAR Supporting Standards

JUNE 22, 2016

Quest for Grants Training Series Webinar - Diversify Your Funding Through Government Grants!

Interactive Student Notebook: Elementary Grades K-5

JUNE 23, 2016

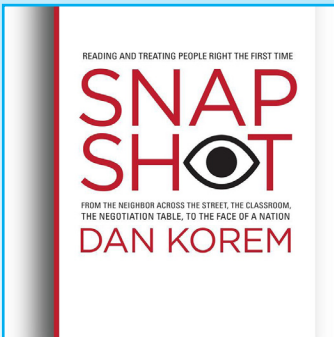
From Surviving to Thriving: How to Succeed in the Secondary Social Studies Classroom



Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Snapshot Profiler, Investigative Journalist Dan Korem Trains Educators at HCDE April 29



Snapshot profiler and investigative journalist Dan Korem trains educators to make behavioral reads on Sept. 16, from 10 a.m.-noon at Harris County Department of Education, 6300 Irvington Blvd.

Korem, the author of Snapshot—Treating People Right the First Time, brings his innovative Korem Profiling System® to show educators how to use the system with students and personnel to raise academic or leadership bars.

“The intent of sharing this valuable information is to promote school safety while also improving classroom achievement and empowering student leadership,” said Ecomet Burley, director of the Center for Safe and Secure Schools, the HCDE division hosting the training.

The training is being tailored to teachers, administrators, school law enforcement, counselors, central office and campus-level administrators, and social workers.

Register for the workshop at <http://wms.hcde-texas.org> by workshop date or workshop number 10596. Call 713-696-0771 for information.

About HCDE’s Center for Safe and Secure Schools: Developed at the request of local superintendents in the spring of 1999 to advance safe and secure environments for learning and teaching, the Center for Safe and Secure Schools is a leader in the development of increased safety and security strategies in school environments for students and educators. Learn more at www.safeandsecureschools.org. For more information or assistance with registration, call 713-696-0771.



HCDE Schools Celebrates 35 Years of Service to Client Districts

HCDE schools launched a campaign celebrating 35 years of service in helping students achieve in greater Harris County. The theme will be celebrated and elaborated upon throughout the 2016-2017 school year. Commemorative pins were created by Communication and were given to members and school principals. View the presentation video: https://youtu.be/B2RjGTY_Q08

Helton Named Contract Manager at Choice Partners



Kristi Helton has joined Harris County Department of Education as a Choice Partners cooperative contract manager. Helton has seven years of experience in school district purchasing from Goose Creek CISD and most recently Galena Park ISD. Helton will be managing the Choice Partners technology contracts.

She has a bachelor’s degree in business administration with a concentration in management from American InterContinental University of Houston. She has held a Certified Texas School Business Official (CTSBO) designation since 2009.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Center for Grants Development and Teaching and Learning Center News



The Center for Grants Development and Teaching and Learning Center (TLC) recently joined Julia Arceneaux and Jessica Rodriguez from Gulf Coast Educators Federal Credit Union to discuss upcoming opportunities for partnership.

CGD also met with School-Based Therapy Services and the Schools division to discuss 2016 program information and need for funding, and researched and identified more than 45 grants and other resources for HCDE divisions, districts, charters, and other educational community-based organizations.

They also prepared and distributed their weekly funding announcement email to HCDE divisions highlighting five proposal funding opportunities for Adult Education.

Additionally, English and Language Arts and Social Studies Director Kelly Tummy was the keynote speaker for the Katy ISD Literacy Summit for Secondary ELA teachers on June 9.



Data Upload for over 3,000 Afterschool Students Accomplished by Research and Evaluation to TEA



Research and Evaluation Institute coordinator Likita Holmes worked with staff at CASE for Kids to submit the spring data upload into Texas Education Agency's 21st Century Community Learning Center's data system. Data represented 3,358 students on 20 school campuses for CASE for Kids' Cycles 7 and 8. Data included spring grades, promotion, graduation, school activities, and school day attendance.

Adult Education Initiatives

Adult Education met with several community leaders and collaborators this month. Here is a summary of the meetings:

- Associated Builder and Contractors of Houston delegates led by Russell Hamley, chapter president of ABC, met with Superintendent Colbert, Adult Education's director Eduardo Honold, and workforce manager Angela Johnson to discuss collaborating with vocational training opportunities for underprepared adults in the Houston area. ABC works with several hundred area employers in the industrial and construction sector.
- The Houston Galveston-Area Council recognized HCDE Adult Education for its role in developing employer partnerships. The division was asked to write a nomination for the Texas Workforce Commission's Employer Partnership Award. The award recognizes extraordinary performance by an adult education grantee and includes a monetary incentive.
- Thirty community members participated in an informational session sponsored by HCDE and Pasadena ISD. It focused on educational opportunities for English language learners. Two new citizenship classes begin at the Pasadena ISD administration building in July and have childcare support from the district.



Service

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

CASE for Kids Hosts Summer Learning Day July 14



In collaboration with Harris County Precinct 2, CASE for Kids will host a Summer Learning Day on July 14 at the Youth Education Town Center II (YET Center II) located at 10918 Bentley Street. The event will feature guest readers from the community, the Houston Public Library mobile reading unit and interactive learning stations based on the theme, "Kapow! Zap! Read! Every Superhero has a Story."

Summer Learning Day is an annual national advocacy day led by the National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) to elevate the importance of keeping kids learning, safe, and healthy every summer. Learn more about this effort by visiting <http://goo.gl/aWslc>.

Energy Bus for Schools Leadership Tour Visits HCDE July 28

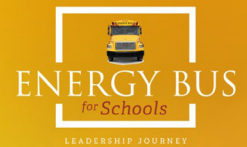
The Teaching and Learning Center at HCDE joins the Energy Bus for Schools Leadership Tour July 28 from 8:30-11:30 a.m. at 6300 Irvington as presenter Niki Spears begins a five-stop state tour to invigorate school leaders. Spears' mission is to inspire and develop leaders who positively impact schools and communities. Her model is packed with principles, ideas, and strategies to improve school culture, to build a positive staff, and to develop positive student leaders who are as young as 5. Sponsored by Jon Gordon Companies, the Energy Bus will be presented in six Texas cities before school starts. For more information:

<http://energybusschools.com/events.php>

The Energy Bus: Building Positive School Culture

Energy Bus for Schools Leadership Tour

*Transform your school culture through
the power of shared leadership*



Come join us this summer and experience the power of positive leadership for your school. We will share a proven model packed with principles, ideas and strategies to improve your school culture, build a positive staff and develop positive student leaders.

The *Energy Bus for Schools Leadership Journey* begins with children as young as 5 years old and continues for life. Our mission is to inspire and develop leaders who positively impact schools, communities and the world.

How To Register

Register Online: www.energybusschools.com/events

HCDE Date: July 28, 2016

HCDE Contact: Frances Hester, *Teaching and Learning Center*, Senior Director



Niki Spears,
Chief Energy Officer and Lead Facilitator

As a former administrator, educator, and change leader, Niki shares her passion and enthusiasm for creating positive school culture based on shared leadership - this includes students as young as 5 years of age. Niki is leading the charge to develop positive schools and student leaders and is touring around the country sharing how positive leadership can transform classrooms, schools and communities.

Niki resides in Houston, Texas with her husband and three girls.

Value | Opportunity | Service



6300 Irvington Blvd. | Houston, Texas 77022 | 713-694-6300 | www.hcde-texas.org

Service

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Curtain Call! CASE for Kids Students Perform at Kids' Day at Hobby Center



Summertime was show time on June 23 from 6-8 p.m. for students who were part of the Kids' Day at the Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, 800 Bagby. Students from 10 area schools are enrolled in summer enrichment programs coordinated by the Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids, or CASE for Kids, a division of Harris County Department of Education.

CASE for Kids sent nonprofit organizations and professional artists to work with students in their Texas Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE) 21st Century afterschool programs in elementary, middle, and high school this summer at their campuses. Kids' Day at Hobby Center is the culminating event to give students opportunities to show off what they learned. Artistic mediums include puppetry, dance, drumming, art, photography, and theatre.

Students attending were from Aldine, Sheldon, Waller, Pasadena, and Galena Park independent school districts, as well as YES Prep West Charter School.

Kids spent the day in dress rehearsals and learning the nuts-and-bolts about professional theatre productions with presentations and tours from Hobby Center staff. Later that evening, family and friends arrived for live performances.

Artists and arts organizations participating included Healthy Hip Hop, Ben Desoto Photography, Ensemble Theatre, Puppet Pizzazz, Cookie Joe (choreographer), Leraldo Anzaldua (fight director), Dinky Drum Company, Multicultural Education, Counseling through the Arts, and the Brazilian Arts Foundation.

"We believe that experiences like this with the fine arts are important to children, and afterschool supplies that possibility," said Lisa Thompson-Caruthers, CASE for Kids director. "Equally important is the experience of attending an event in our eminent Houston Theatre District, an opportunity that many of these kids might not have without the generosity of the Hobby Center."

Kids' Day sponsors included Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, Texas ACE (administered by the Texas Education Agency), the Education Foundation of Harris County, Kroger, Potbelly Sandwich Shop, and Pappas Restaurant.

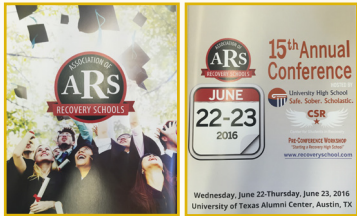
Systemic Achievement

...with purposeful intent

Community Relations Instructional Management

In accordance with the Board's goals of me to

- Establish and maintain a program of public relations to keep the public well-informed of the activities of the Department, affecting a wholesome and cooperative working relationship between the Department and the community;
- Work with other governmental entities and community organizations to meet the needs of students and the community in a coordinated way;
- Oversee annual planning for increased student learning; and
- Ensure that appropriate data are used in developing recommendations and making decisions regarding the instructional program and resources



The Association of Recovery Schools organization is hosting its 15th annual conference in Austin this week, where I am currently in attendance. This is an informative meeting of professionals who are committed to equalizing

educational opportunities for students in various stages of recovery. Given the demographics of Houston and Harris County, and especially given the population of some of our students, especially on the Highpoint campuses, I am happy to represent HCDE among this unique group of education professionals.



In doing so, I am continuing to meet the Board's expectations of me to:

- **Function as the primary ambassador for the Department;**
- **Present a positive, professional image of myself and of the Department in all venues;**
- **Maintain visibility and involvement in the community with ISD Superintendents, elected officials, community leaders and the HCDE Board;**
- **Determine the appropriate course of action to address issues affecting our students;**
- **In coordination with the home ISD, identify learning needs of students and develop a process that ensures each student's learning goals are met or exceeded; and**
- **Ensure that appropriate data are used in developing recommendations and making decisions regarding the instructional program and resources.**

As a result, and per the request of the Board, I am communicating the needs and accomplishments of the Department in a variety of formats and also listening and taking into account differing viewpoints of various constituencies using good judgment to discern the best decision and action for the Department. Moreover, I am investigating best practices for student achievement and utilizing effective practices that maximize achievement of student potential within HCDE schools.

HCDE BOARD

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UPCOMING BOARD EVENTS:

July Board Meeting
Tuesday, July 19, 2016
1:00 p.m.
ROOM 400

Senate Education Committee Hearing
Wednesday, August 3, 2016
3:00 p.m.
Capitol Extension
Room E1.028
Austin, Texas

