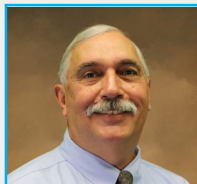


The CONNECTOR

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

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

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OF NOTE

It was another busy week at HCDE as we remain in the throes of a busy fall semester. Our fingers remain on the pulses of our client districts as we continue to meet their needs. Our programs and service divisions are doing what they do best by supporting our clients in advancing teaching and learning, as well as providing a myriad of other resources to improve efficiencies.

We learned early this week that we were included in the third of five interim Senate charges. As it relates to County School Systems, the charge is to, "Examine the structure and performance of the two remaining county-based school systems, Harris County Department of Education and Dallas County Schools. In particular, study the efficiency of these entities and determine whether those services are duplicative with education service centers or could be absorbed by education service centers." I will keep you posted on further developments as I am apprised.

This week, I had the opportunity to visit the newly-constructed Humble Head Start location. You will recall that it was necessary to relocate this site from the church where it was previously housed. I am pleased to report that—for all practical purposes—construction is complete. We are waiting to receive a permit from the Fire Marshall, and once received, the move-in will take place. We anticipate that the center will be fully operational with students by early November. Our Facilities division is to be commended for having made this happen within the timeframe provided, given the challenges they faced along the way.

Also, on Tuesday, I attended the UPSKILL Houston meeting which is a by-product of the Greater Houston Partnership. We continue to explore the opportunities that exist in industry as our goal is to increase the skills and knowledge of prospective laborers in the Houston area. Since so much of our local economy is driven by industry, it is imperative that we do what we can to advance the unique skillsets of this population. I am hopeful that we can bridge some of the gaps in this area of need through our Adult Education community. I will keep you apprised of new developments in this area.

I returned to the office today after having attended a UIL Meeting in Austin yesterday. This week's UIL Meeting was equally productive as we continued the business of governing athletics across the state. This forum continues to provide a visible platform for HCDE.

The Center for Safe and Secure Schools hosted an all-day seminar today entitled, Restorative Practices in Schools. The goal of this meeting was to empower members of the education and community-at-large to work toward breaking the school to prison pipeline. Representatives from Harris County, including Juvenile Justice professionals, as well as educators and other public servants, were in attendance to focus on preventing students from entering the juvenile justice system by taking a holistic approach to restore a child by partnering with parents, students, schools, communities, and other service providers. The workshop was not only well-attended, but also engaging with dynamic presentations by expert presenters who facilitated interactive activities for attendees.

HCDE continued to shine throughout the week by creating value, delivering opportunity, and providing service through a variety of programs and services. Our Education and Enrichment division featured a complex series of training sessions for educators in Harris County. Topics ranged from grammar to science and were exemplary of innovation in education. We continue to advance teaching and learning by training the trainer. In doing so, we reach countless students across the city and county in an effort to raise the bar of excellence.

Please be reminded of our Board Meeting next Tuesday. At that time, we will recognize our campus principals in recognition of Principals' Month.

In closing, I look forward to seeing you at our October Board Meeting. I hope you enjoy this issue of **The Connector**. Have a relaxing weekend and as always, thank you for your service to HCDE.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

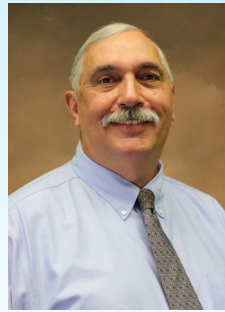
Monroe to Lead Purchasing Division at Harris County Department of Education

Bill Monroe is the new director of Purchasing in Business Services at Harris County Department of Education.

Monroe was formerly employed by Calallen Independent School District in Corpus Christi, Texas for the past 11 years in school business. He is a certified public accountant with experience both in public accounting and private industry. In addition, he is a certified public procurement officer and holds the Certified Texas School Business Officials designation.

The Richmond, Texas resident earned his bachelor's degree in accounting from Texas Tech University.

As director of the Purchasing division at HCDE, Monroe is the head administrator of procurement for HCDE internal divisions to ensure compliance with local, state, and federal regulations.



Bill Monroe

Head Start Parent Committee Officer Training Proves Successful

Head Start hosted Parent Committee Officer Training on October 8 at 6300 Irvington. The goal was to improve attendance and participation, so trainings were moved from Saturdays to Wednesdays. Senior director Venetia Peacock said the turnout was impressive. Center managers, assistant center managers, family service providers, parents, and HCDE staff trained together as teams. As a result, each center has a leadership team that is prepared to ensure that each Head Start Center thrives and continues to provide Value, Opportunity, and Service to their community.



Lights On Afterschool Day Scheduled for October 22

CASE for Kids and the Greater Houston Lights On Alliance will celebrate the 16th annual Lights On Afterschool Day on Thursday, October 22, with a rally and press conference in the City Hall Rotunda at 10 a.m. CASE for Kids Director Dr. Lisa Thompson Caruthers will provide information on the latest local research on the out-of-school time field. Youth from area programs are expected to attend and perform short songs and cheers.



Advancing Teaching and Learning by Training the Trainer

Trainings hosted at HCDE this week

OCTOBER 12 TRAINING

lead4ward: Figuring Out Figure 19 - Volume I (K-5)

OCTOBER 13 TRAININGS

Mechanically Inclined: Teaching Grammar and Editing in Context - Grades 4-10

lead4ward: Figuring Out Figure 19 - Volume II (K-5)

Seasons and Lunar Phases

OCTOBER 14 TRAININGS

lead4ward: Figuring Out Figure 19 - Volume I (6-EOC)

Quest for Grants Training Series Webinar: Finding Funding to Support Your Programs

Darkness to Light's Stewards of Children

Darkness to Light's Stewards of Children

Working Together with Paired Text to Enhance Science Understanding
SESSION FULL/CLOSED

Synthesizing the Pair: Science Integration and Comprehension

OCTOBER 15 TRAININGS

lead4ward: Figuring Out Figure 19 - Volume II (6-EOC)

Science Fiction: Teaching Weather with Children's Literature

Online Instructor's Training - Part I

ONGOING

TEXES Special Education K-12 Certification Test Preparation (Oct - Nov, 2015)

OCTOBER 16 TRAININGS

School Finance Council

Restorative Practices in Schools Overview Seminar

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

McLeod Holds Education and Enrichment Division Meeting with 5 Divisions on October 7

Dr. Kimberly McLeod led the Education and Enrichment Division Meeting, a strategic meeting involving her divisions, on October 7 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 procedural updates from Purchasing, Business Services, and the Center for Safe and Secure Schools.



Each meeting, McLeod presents awards to outstanding team members. This month, Sharvon Pipkins with Center for Grants Development, and Lili Maldonado with the Teaching and Learning Center, received the “You Make a Difference” award.



The “Rising Star” award was given to the Research and Evaluation Institute. The award acknowledges accomplishments of a division and how its

158 Educators Attend Mechanically Inclined: Teaching Grammar and Editing in Context for Grades 4-10

Teachers across Harris County gained inspiration and insight from national presenter Jeff Anderson, author of numerous writing books. Anderson presented the workshop: “Mechanically Inclined: Teaching Grammar and Editing in Context for Grades 4-10” to 158 educators this week. After the workshop, teachers benefited from a drawing, with the author giving away several of his books.

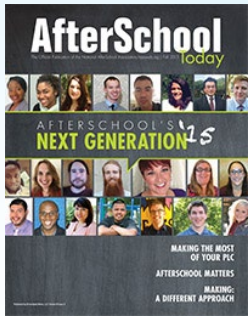


Youth Program Quality Improvement Training Set for October 20-22

CASE for Kids is collaborating with United Way of Houston, YMCA of Greater Houston, and the David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality to build a citywide/regional Quality Improvement System for 300-plus afterschool and out-of-school time programs. Long-term goals for the next five years include increased quality of programs and social and emotional learning outcomes for youth; promotion of the out-of-school time field; improved systems for supporting staff and managers; and collaboration and alignment of resources to continue the growth of the profession. During the week of October 19, 2015, CASE for Kids will be hosting three days of training on the Youth Program Quality Assessment Tool Intervention. The YPQA is a research-validated tool that was developed by the David P. Weikart Center for programs serving youth in grades 4-12. It has been used with more than 4,000 program sites across 41 states.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS



CASE Staffer Chosen for National Afterschool Association Magazine: 'Afterschool Today' Reader Advisory Panel

Kathy Evans, CASE for Kids staff member was selected by the National Afterschool Association to be one of the 25 national members of the inaugural Afterschool Today Reader Advisory Panel. The magazine serves as a vehicle to communicate information and best practices to the out-of-school time field. In her new role, Evans will be able to provide guidance (opinions and feedback) in planning and executing editorial coverage by sharing topics and issues that are important in the Houston area.

Univision 45 Reports on Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Workshop hosted by Center for Safe and Secure Schools

Univision 45 Reporter Delsey Rios interviewed HCDE's Rosa Maria Torres about the Center for Safe and Secure School's role in educating area school personnel about child sexual abuse prevention. Darkness to Light is a workshop hosted by the Center and presented by the Children's Assessment Center. Torres stressed the need to give support to educators who are working with children every day and to raise awareness and give them the skills they need to recognize the signs of child sexual abuse. The story aired on Univision 45 on October 14. View the story: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oK7WAnMDh2s>



Assistant Superintendent Jonathan Parker lunches with Channelview Head Start Students, Staff this month



Opportunity

EMPLOYEE CONNECTIONS

HCDE goes to U of H Downtown

Human Resources recruiter Roxanne Torres engages curious job fair attendee at a job fair held at the University of Houston-Downtown.



Service

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

\$280,000 in Afterschool Funding Awarded to Communities Across Houston through CASE for Kids City Connections, City of Houston

Students in communities across Houston make use of over \$280,000 in out-of-school time programs in fine arts, academic enrichment, college exploration, and fitness classes this fall. City Connections is a program administered through the Center for Afterschool, Summer and Expanded Learning, or CASE for Kids, a division of Harris County Department of Education.

The programs are provided from October 12 through December 31. Funds ranging from \$2,000 to \$10,000 are awarded through all Houston City Council districts in 81 locations throughout the city. Funding is administered to the out-of-school time organizations through CASE for Kids.



City Connections is a safety and crime fighting initiative funded directly by the City of Houston to support nonprofit organizations that address the need for youth services outside of the school day. In 2015-2016, \$495,000 is earmarked for the program, or \$45,000 for each of the 11 council districts. Projects funded by the CASE for Kids City Connections program take place in each Houston city council district in a variety of locations, including schools, community centers, and churches.

"These awards allow parents across the city to take advantage of quality afterschool programs for their children at a time when funding is waning across the nation," said CASE for Kids Director Lisa Thompson-Caruthers. "We are thankful for the forward thinking of our city leaders and their concern for the safety and enrichment of our youth."

CASE for Kids, a division of Harris County Department of Education, provides resources, trainings and funding for students in grades pre-k through 12 in afterschool programs in schools, child care facilities and community centers.

New funding will be provided to out-of-school time organizations next spring. Applications are due by January 29, 2016 for funding available from March 1 to May 31.

For more information about organizations receiving the funding and locations for programs, go to http://www.afterschoolzone.org/default.aspx?name=City_Connections. Online applications for spring funding will be available through the website on December 1.

City Connections Big Check Photo Opportunity Held by CASE for Kids at HCDE

On Thursday, October 15, CASE for Kids hosted a publicity event at HCDE for Houston City Council Members to present awards to 10 nonprofit organizations that received City Connections 2015-2016 funding. Council Member Cohen (District C), Council Member Martin (District E), Mayor Pro-Tem Ed Gonzalez (District H), and Chief of Staff Donald Perkins for Council Member Green (District K) attended the event.



Opportunity

CAMPUS CONNECTIONS

Career Fair Highlights Profession Options for AB School West Students

The annual Career Fair was held at AB School West on October 8. Speakers included the Houston Fire Department, Sheriff's Department, Army, Houston Community College, and welding professionals. Students in elementary through high school heard from presenters and how they prepared for their careers. The speakers told students about the importance of following instructions and being respectful to others. Counselor Shantel Rayford co-chaired the career event with Transition Specialist Tayyaba Ali. Students witnessed how fast firefighters have to put on their uniforms (a two-minute limit) after getting a close-up view of the fire truck. Counselor Rayford said: "It was important for the students to have positive role models and the wisdom they relayed." Ali commented that it was great for students to voice interest in multiple professions and to connect with presenters about their respective futures.



School District Highlight: Aldine ISD



Aldine ISD offers nutritious evening meals to secondary students in afterschool education and enrichment programs at no cost. The program operates Monday-Thursday weekly during the school year through the Child Nutrition Services Department. Details: <http://www.aldineisd.org/cms/One.aspx?portalId=750&pageId=5644252>

Bullying Awareness Day Promotes Taking a Stand Against Bullying

AB School West staff stood up against bullying on Bullying Awareness Day October 14. Orange is the color which represents bullying prevention. The goal was to inspire,



educate and to involve others to join the movement to prevent bullying. Counselor Shantel Rayford had small group sessions with students to talk about bullying awareness. Students wrote essays about bullying and wore "take a stand against bullying" wristbands.



Systemic Achievement

...with purposeful intent

Organization Morale

In accordance 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 systematically to improve the climate by obtaining and utilizing feedback from employees of the Department;
- Celebrate accomplishments and acknowledge excellence; and
- Demonstrate quality management through delegation of authority, team-building, consensus development, leadership development, and self-management

Our Educational Enrichment division hosted its meeting on October 7 with five divisions and with two visiting divisions. Staff from Adult Education, the Teaching and Learning Center, Research and Evaluation Institute, the Center for Grants Development, and Educator Certification and Professional Advancement came together and received procedural updates from Purchasing, Business Services, and the Center for Safe and Secure Schools. Also during this meeting, Dr. McLeod presented awards to outstanding team members through the You Make a Difference award. The Rising Star award was also presented in recognition of a division's accomplishments. Employees are routinely recognized for their contributions.

In doing so, I am ensuring that every person is treated with respect and dignity, and that I am implementing effective management practices while ensuring all policies are supported by effective procedures. In addition, I direct administrators to accomplish the mission, goals, and objectives of the Department, monitor progress, evaluate staff performance and hold staff accountable as appropriate. I also effectively delegate authority with responsibility and monitor staff to ensure support programs and services are cost effective and are of high quality.



Personnel Management

In accordance with the Board's expectation of me to

- Ensure that the system for recruiting and selection results in personnel recommendations based on defined needs, goals, priorities, and candidate credentials/qualifications;

I am pleased to report that I approved the selection and hiring of Bill Monroe to lead the Purchasing division. Mr. Monroe was formerly employed by Calallen ISD in Corpus Christi. He is a Certified Public Accountant with experience both in public accounting and private industry. He is also a certified public procurement officer, holding a Certified Texas School Business Officials designation. He graduated in Accounting from Texas Tech University. His experiences match, if not exceed, our expectations and his responsibilities to manage our Purchasing division.



Bill Monroe

In having approved this personnel management decision, among the Board's goal to ensure that I establish a culture among the staff so that all strive to achieve excellence and do not accept mediocre performance, I am also ensuring that all supervisory staff administers personnel practices with consistency and fairness. Additionally, I ensure an effective backup plan for all functional areas in the event of absence of personnel, especially key personnel.

HCDE BOARD

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Position 4, Precinct 3
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Position 7, At Large

Diane Trautman
Position 3, At Large

Michael Wolfe
Position 5, At Large

UPCOMING BOARD EVENTS:

OCTOBER 20, 2015
October Board Meeting
1:00 p.m.

