

The CONNECTOR

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



WEEK OF AUGUST 15, 2016

VOLUME 3/ISSUE 1



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FROM THE OFFICE OF JAMES COLBERT, JR.—SUPERINTENDENT

Of Note...

It was an exciting week at HCDE! We began the week with a meeting of my Executive Leadership Team. This past Tuesday, we had both a meeting of the PFC as well as the regularly scheduled August Board Meeting. Thanks to those of you who were able to attend. Immediately after Tuesday's Board Meeting, I headed to Austin for a UIL Meeting which was held on Wednesday. At the conclusion of the UIL Meeting, I headed back to Houston Wednesday night for Thursday's Annual Staff Meeting.

As evidenced by the newly-refreshed look and feel of **The Connector**, we are off to a brand new start with the new year that is now upon us. The official commencement of our academic year was marked by the 2016 Annual Staff Meeting. This year's event was yet another success. The atmosphere was both invigorating and motivating. We had over a thousand employees assembled at the Kingdom Builders' event venue where I was honored to have the opportunity to address so many employees gathered in one place, at one time, but moreover to recognize our hardworking and dedicated employees. Many celebrated their tenure at HCDE and received certificates and tokens in recognition of their years of service—ranging in five year increments, starting with five years of service through 25 years of service.

The theme for this year's event was R=MxW. This theme refers to a longstanding military equation which has been translated into victory time after time. In plain terms, the formula is RESISTANCE=MEANS x WILL. The backdrop philosophy is that if either the M or W variables are equivalent to zero, then the outcome will be victory. This formula is applied as our military prepares for battle and assesses the constitution of its opposition. Interestingly enough, this formula is applicable in nearly any situational challenge we might encounter.

That explained, HCDE is resilient and our employees are dedicated. If we, as a whole, continue to help students achieve, offer value, opportunity, and service to member school districts, and perform at our peak levels, then the Department will continue to make a difference in the lives of learners (of all ages) within Harris County.

Yesterday's event was also bittersweet as I extended farewell to both Board President Angie Chesnut and Trustee Marvin Morris. It was a pleasure to have

served under their leadership and to have the opportunity to publicly thank them for their support and for their many years of dedicated service—especially in the presence of the hundreds of employees who don't have the opportunity to attend monthly Board Meetings. President Chesnut has served HCDE for 23 years, and both she and Trustee Morris have been solid champions for the children of Harris County, throughout their tenures as HCDE Board Members. Please see the next two pages of this issue of **The Connector** for scenes from yesterday's convocation.

As mentioned in last week's issue of **The Connector**, most of our client school districts are beginning their academic year next week. We, too, are at the start of our academic year, and our program and service division employees are ready for the task at hand. The summer, in most instances, was spent with our staff immersed in professional development opportunities and workshops, tweaking programs and services to further our efficiencies, and gearing up for another year of excellence—within all of our schools, service-providing divisions, and programs. Collectively, HCDE is ready to take on the challenges of this year, with each division having the bar set high.

In the area of teaching and learning, this week we continued with Part III of the Online Instructor's Training. Our Educator Certification and Professional Advancement division hosted its Career Choice Recruitment Seminar and the Center for Grants Development hosted its Quest for Grants Training Series Webinar: So You Want Me to Write a Grant! We ended the meeting with the HCDE Principal Certification Academy Information Meeting. We continue to improve student achievement, one teacher in Harris County, and beyond, at a time.

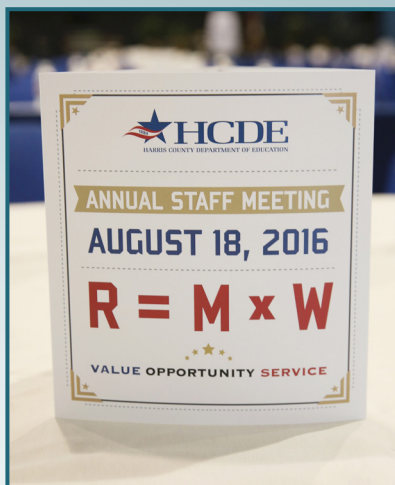
Next week, our teams will be engrossed in the process of ensuring all programs, schools, and external-service providing divisions are off to a running start as many of our groups are at the start of their year, effective Monday. I will also continue my meetings with area leaders in my ongoing efforts to increase their knowledge of the value HCDE brings to the community-at-large.

In closing, thanks again for your service to HCDE. I hope you enjoy this issue of **The Connector** and I hope you have a relaxing weekend.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

SCENES FROM ANNUAL STAFF MEETING 2016



Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

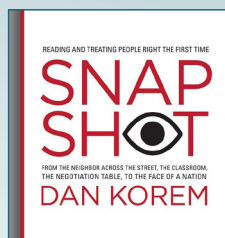
SCENES FROM ANNUAL STAFF MEETING 2016



Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Snapshot Profiler, Investigative Journalist Dan Korem Trains Educators at HCDE September 16



Snapshot profiler and investigative journalist Dan Korem trains educators to make behavioral reads on April 29, 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 www.hcde-texas.org/register by workshop date or workshop number 10764. 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.

Head Start Kicks Off School Year at Back-to-School Meeting



Back-to-School kicked off for HCDE Head Start staff through a meeting with approximately 300 employees at 6300 Irvington. HCDE Assistant Superintendent for Academic Support Services Jonathan Parker joined Head Start Senior Director Venetia Peacock in the welcome back with a message of solidarity. Topics ranged from introduction of new staff members to new student orientation and included an “Ask the Director” segment.

Before business got underway, staff enjoyed a few minutes of networking over dessert.



Head Start Staff Train, Gain CPR/First Aid/AED Training for Infants, Children, Adults



More than 100 employees from HCDE Head Start receive CPR training in one of multiple classes in preparation for the new school year. Training includes CPR/First Aid/AED for infants, children and adults. This month 1,240 children and their families will be enrolled to attend Head Start and Early Head Start classes in Harris County at 16 area locations. For more information about enrolling, call 713-672-9343.

Luz Pacheco from Dogan Head Start Center teams with Martha Gonzalez-Tripiean from La Porte Head Start to learn to treat a choking infant.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

CASE for Kids City Connections Afterschool Funding Deadline Set for September 7 for School Year



Dr. Lisa Thompson-Caruthers presents a check last school year to nonprofit Peoples United Summit in Councilmember Dwight Boykins' city council district.

CASE for Kids City Connections announces afterschool funding opportunities available through 2016-2017 City Connections. City Connections is an approximate \$660,000 initiative funded by the City of Houston and administered through CASE for Kids to support nonprofit organizations that address the need for youth services outside the school day. Projects take place in a variety of Houston city council district locations, including schools, community centers, and churches. Deadline for applications is September 7 for the funding period from October 31, 2016 through March 31, 2017. All funding will be announced by October 7. Access the flier and the request for proposal information: http://www.afterschoolzone.org/default.aspx?name=City_Connections

Adult Education Partnership Highlighted in Construction Citizen

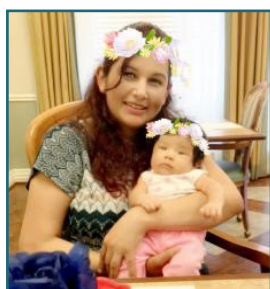


integrated education and training services in the construction industry.

“Funding through the Harris County Department of Education has allowed us to provide the commercial apprenticeship training class at no cost,” said Lisa Boyette, director of training at ABC’s Construction and Maintenance Education Foundation. “Organizations such as NextOp, who work with transitioning military veterans, are fully taking advantage and enrolling several candidates.”

A recent article in Construction Citizen features the partnership between Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) of Houston and the HCDE Adult Education division. The partnership aims to provide

Beyond the GED: A Success Story



Leticia Alanis is among the many adults who achieve great success after obtaining a GED from HCDE. She began classes at the Baytown Learning Center in 2009 and obtained her GED in 2011. After earning her GED,

she then enrolled at Lee College and began working as a part-time educational aide at HCDE.

Continuing to simultaneously work and take classes, Alanis was hired full-time by the Adult Education division in April 2016. This past May, she became a mother to daughter Aliyanna, and also managed to complete her associate’s degree in Natural Science. Alanis is working hard at balancing work and family life, but she is proof that hard work, determination, and a commitment to life-long learning are the keys for success beyond the GED.

Value

BUSINESS CONNECTIONS

HCDE Business Services Receives Awards of Excellence for Public Financial Transparency



Harris County Department of Education Business Services division received two awards

from national and international financial associations in recognition of its ongoing initiatives to achieve public financial transparency.

The awards come from the Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO) and the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). Harris County Department of Education Assistant Superintendent of Business Services Jesus Amezcua says the awards bestowed by both organizations are welcome acknowledgements of ongoing efforts to achieve excellence in financial reporting.

“HCDE continues to provide value for our local school districts while responding to their needs in a fiscally responsible manner,” Amezcua said. “This is our public duty.”

The Association of School Business Officials award provides ASBO’s Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting for fiscal year 2015 for meeting and exceeding the program’s high standards for financial reporting and accountability through the HCDE Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.

The Government Finance Officers Association award is for achievement of excellence in financial reporting for the comprehensive annual financial report, or CAFR, for fiscal year ending August 31, 2015.

Service

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

TLC Partners to Bring National Scholastic Exhibit to Houston



The Teaching and Learning Center’s Andrea Segraves recently met with New York City’s National Scholastic Affiliate Beth Harrison and Museum of Fine Arts Houston staff to partner in bringing the National Traveling Scholastic Exhibit to Houston. This exhibit features the nation’s most talented artists and only makes four stops across the nation.

ADVANCED TEACHING AND LEARNING BY TRAINING THE TRAINER

Trainings hosted at HCDE this week

AUGUST 15, 2016

Online Instructor’s Training - Part III

AUGUST 16, 2016

Educator Certification and Professional Advancement (ECPA) Career Choice Recruitment Seminar

AUGUST 17, 2016

Quest for Grants Training Series Webinar - So You Want Me to Write a Grant!

HCDE Principal Certification Academy Information Meeting

Systemic Achievement

...with purposeful intent

Community Relations

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;
- Model and support responsible risk-taking so that all employees can be innovative and try new ideas;
- Celebrate accomplishments and acknowledges excellence;
- Ensure fair and equitable management practices;
- Demonstrate skill in anticipating, managing, and resolving conflict; and
- Demonstrate quality management through delegation of authority, team-building, consensus development, leadership development and self-management



Throughout the year, I ensure that each of the elements related to Organizational Morale are in motion as a result of my systemic leadership style. Yesterday, the apex of such a culmination was climaxed at this year's Annual Staff Meeting event held at the Kingdom Builders' event venue.

The event was high-energy and celebrated the accomplishments of both divisions and individual employees. It

acknowledged excellence across the board of the Department, and moreover, it created an open and positive environment. Immense planning went into the event to ensure that employees would leave with a renewed sense of purpose, energy, motivation, rejuvenation, and an all-around desire to succeed.



I look forward to this annual event, as well as any similar event throughout the year, where I have the opportunity to not only build up staff, but also consistently articulate my goals, expectations, and objectives for HCDE.

In doing so, I strive to also meet the Board's expectations of me to create and maintain an environment in which every person is treated with respect and dignity-while at the same time accomplishing the goals related to employee recognition and the acknowledgement of excellence. Simultaneously, my leadership style allows me to ensure the other elements of performance related to this goal are the result of systemic achievement.

HCDE BOARD

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Erica Lee Carter
Position 6, Precinct 1

Marvin W. Morris
Position 1, Precinct 2

Don Sumners
Position 7, At Large

Diane Trautman
Position 3, At Large

Michael Wolfe
Position 5, At Large

UPCOMING BOARD EVENTS:

September Board Meeting
September 20, 2016

1:00 p.m.

Room 400

