

The CONNECTOR

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



WEEK OF OCTOBER 24, 2016

VOLUME 3/ISSUE 11



In this issue...

- 2 *CASE for Kids Project Coordinator Fields Selected for National Afterschool Award*
- 3 *Beren Academy Student Donates Books to Head Start through READ for Houston Initiative*
- 4 *Three Harris County Department of Education Teen Writers Featured in National Scholastic Art & Writing Awards Traveling Exhibition at MFAH*

FROM THE OFFICE OF JAMES COLBERT, JR.—SUPERINTENDENT

Of Note...

It was a productive week at HCDE. We hosted our annual Leadership Summit on Monday of this week where I provided the opening remarks. The event was well-attended and offered Harris County leaders in education exceptional opportunities to grow professionally.

On Tuesday, I attended the North Harris County Education Alliance Meeting, hosted by Aldine Independent School District. Yesterday, I attended the Northwest Area Ministries (NAM) Board Orientation in my role as a new board member. I also met with the superintendent of Klein Independent School District, as I continue to nurture HCDE's relationship with our client school districts. To that end, you may recall that I met with the superintendent of Katy last week. Last night, I attended the Houston Business Journal's 40 under 40 awards event where my mentee was recognized as a recipient.

This week, in the area of teaching and learning, we hosted the following workshops and professional development sessions: HCDE Leadership Summit 2016-2017; Restorative Discipline Practices, Session II; Teaching Social Studies with Digital Maps; Workstation Make and Take for Counting and Composing and Decomposing Numbers with Objects and Pictures for Pre-K and Kindergarten; Grade 8 Science STAAR: A Closer Look at Matter and Energy: Capturing Kids Hearts; Grade 5 Science STAAR: A Closer Look at Matter and Energy; STAAR/EOC Close-Up, RC1 History; Spanish Literacy for pre-kindergarten through Grade 2; workstation Make and Take for counting and Composing and Decomposing Numbers with Objects and Pictures for Grades 1 and 2; Embedding Positive Behavior Strategies and Supports

in the Classroom for Student Success; Educator Certification and Professional Advancement Career Choice Recruitment Seminar; English and Spanish Connections for Bilingual and ESL Teachers-Elementary level; Building Community; Science Fiction: Teaching Weather with Children's Literature; and Test Prep Series for TExES Core Subjects EC-6 Exam, Math Sessions only. We continue to offer the educators in Harris County value, opportunity, and service in an effort to help students achieve.

On Monday of next week, I will be hosting my annual all-day retreat for members of my Executive Leadership Team (ELT). There, I will discuss the mission, goals, and motto of the Department, we will review the current organizational structure in an effort to maximize resources, and we will reflect over best practices that were employed during the last academic year, as well as those to be employed this year. Finally, I will assign each member of the ELT with my goals for each of their areas of responsibility. I look forward to a day that will generate significant outcomes and achievements for the current academic year.

Please be reminded that I look forward to meeting with each of you during my quarterly meetings. I will be sharing my annual report with you during that time. I appreciate the dialogue we exchange and the feedback I receive during those meetings.

In closing, please be reminded that the November Board Meeting will be held Tuesday, November 15, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. I hope you enjoy this issue of **The Connector**, and I hope you have a relaxing weekend.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

CASE for Kids Project Coordinator Fields Selected for National Afterschool Award



CASE for Kids project coordinator Adrian Fields has been selected for the Afterschool's Next generation 2017 Award sponsored by the National Afterschool Association.

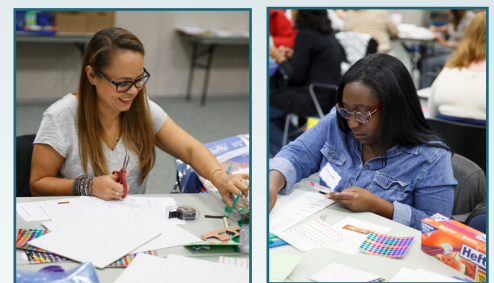
Fields, 29, competed with 100 other young afterschool leaders throughout the nation under age 30 for the title. The award is given to highlight individuals who are active in the afterschool

community and possess passion, and a commitment to youth. Credentials also include young leaders who embrace professional development.

He will be featured in the winter 2017 issue of the National Afterschool Association's AfterSchool Today Magazine. Fields also receives a free association membership and registration into the 2017 NAA Convention in Dallas. At the convention, special recognition will be given to the winners of the awards which are sponsored by S&S Worldwide.

Teaching and Learning Center Hosts "Make and Take" Workshop for Composing and Decomposing Numbers

Composing and decomposing is an important concept in the TEKS for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classrooms. During this week's "Workstation Make and Take" workshop led by Math Curriculum Director Nicole Shanahan, participants experienced 10 centers that enable independent practice so students can master these skills. Other grade levels were also encouraged to attend and explore the centers as ideas that can be adapted or used for differentiation.



Human Resources Hosts Caramel Apple Social for Employees

On October 21, the Human Resources division hosted a caramel apple social for employees at the Irvington location. HCDE staff enjoyed the healthy afternoon snack and a chance to network between divisions.



Ready, Set, Go Pink!

Staff from AB School West wore pink last week for HCDE's Themed Friday campaigns for National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Next Friday employees will say "Peace Out" to breast cancer and wear their tie-dye shirts and peace signs.



Service

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Area Educators Attend 2016 Leadership Summit Focused on Cultural Responsiveness



More than 80 area educators attended the 2016 Leadership Summit on October 24 led by HCDE Assistant Superintendent for Education and Enrichment Kimberly McLeod, known nationally and internationally as an expert consultant in the field of cultural responsiveness.

The workshop provided powerful strategies to create culturally responsive learning environments for teachers and students. Participants engaged in activities, discussions and breakout sessions that allowed leaders to embrace changes that will positively impact academic achievement in their schools and beyond.



Teaching and Learning Center Welcomes Leading Education Presenter Todd Whitaker



What are the specific qualities and practices of great principals that elevate them above the rest? Area administrators and educators found out last week at Dr. Todd Whitaker's workshop, "What Great Educators Do Differently."

The workshop blended school-centered studies and experience working with hundreds of administrators to focus on the things that the most successful principals do that other educators do not. Participants also learned to immediately implement each of these practices into their schools.

Beren Academy Student Donates Books to Head Start through READ for Houston Initiative



Robert M. Beren Academy sophomore Jeffrey Collins donated more than 350 books to the Fifth Ward Head Start Center this week through his initiative called Read, Engage and Donate for Houston, or READ for Houston. Collins and his sister Sophia also read and distributed books to

the Head Start students to take home so they can build their home libraries. The READ for Houston initiative connects those who want to give books with those who need books in an effort to boost literacy and promote the joy of reading.

ADVANCED TEACHING AND LEARNING BY TRAINING THE TRAINER

Trainings hosted at HCDE this week

OCTOBER 24, 2016

HCDE Leadership Summit 2016-2017

OCTOBER 25, 2016

Restorative Discipline Practices - Session II

Teaching Social Studies with Digital Maps

Workstation Make and Take for Counting and Composing and Decomposing Numbers with Objects and Pictures for Pre-K and Kindergarten

Grade 8 Science STAAR: A Closer Look at Matter and Energy

Capturing Kids Hearts

Grade 5 Science STAAR: A Closer Look at Matter and Energy

OCTOBER 26, 2016

STAAR/EOC Close-Up-RC1-History

Spanish Literacy PK-2

Workstation Make and Take for Counting and Composing and Decomposing Numbers with Objects and Pictures for Grades 1 and 2

OCTOBER 27, 2016

Embedding Positive Behavior Strategies and Supports in the Classroom for Students Success

Educator Certification and Professional Advancement Career Choice Recruitment Seminar

OCTOBER 28, 2016

English and Spanish Connections for Bilingual and ESL teachers - Elementary

Building Community

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

OCTOBER 29, 2016

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

Service

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Three Harris County Department of Education Teen Writers Featured in National Scholastic Art & Writing Awards Traveling Exhibition at MFAH



The “Art.Write.Now.Tour” showcases creations from some of the nation’s best teen writers and artists as it travels to the Museum of Fine Arts Houston (MFAH) November 1, 2016 through January 8,

2017. The exhibition is produced by the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers, the nonprofit organization that presents the national Scholastic Art & Writing Awards.

Featured in the tour are essays and short stories from three Houston writers who qualified for national acclaim through Harris County Department of Education’s Scholastic Art & Writing Regional Awards. Through the tour, Gold Medal works are showcased from the 2016 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards National Exhibition from teens in grades 7-12.

The MFAH Kinder Foundation Education Center Gallery where the traveling exhibition will reside is located at 1001 Bissonet. Houston is the second of four stops for the “Art. Write.Now.Tour” which features more than 50 art pieces this year and multiple prose.

The three local teens writers included in the showcase come from Deer Park and Houston:

- Peyton Vasquez, 13, of Bonnette Junior High School in Deer Park Independent School District, wrote a personal essay called “The Floppy Arm,” a situation backlash from his cancer treatments: <http://www.artandwriting.org/media/294881/>. Vasquez also won a revered The RBC “Flaunt It” Award.
- Amy Dong, 17, from St. John’s School, crafted a critical essay: “Hoping for Disaster”: <http://www.artandwriting.org/media/250213/>.

- The Village School’s Melanie Menkiti, 14, is introduced in the show with her short story called “The War”: <http://www.artandwriting.org/media/295203/>.

“We are proud that Houston gains the opportunity to display the amazing work of these visionary teens through this traveling exhibition,” said Andrea Segraves, coordinator for the regional Scholastic Art & Writing Awards and director of the Teaching and Learning Center at Harris County Department of Education. “We are exceptionally proud of these writers who are representing Houston in this national art and writing tour.”

The show arrived in Houston from Grand Rapids, Michigan and visits Bozeman, Montana and Jackson, Mississippi later this year. For information about MFAH hours and admission fees, visit: <https://www.mfah.org/visit/hours-and-admissions/>.

Now in its seventh year, the Art.Write.Now.Tour was curated this year by Johanna Burton, Keith Haring Director and Curator of Education and Public Engagement at the New Museum in New York City. The exhibition is renowned for showcasing exemplary work from teens across the country. Now in its 94th year, the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards reported a record-breaking 320,000 works submitted at the regional level for judging in 2016. Noted alumni include Sylvia Plath, Andy Warhol, Truman Capote, Joyce Carol Oates, Ken Burns, and Zac Posen.

Regional art and writing entries are currently being accepted for the 2017 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, sponsored by Harris County Department of Education. The deadline is December 15, 2016. For more information, go to www.hcde-texas.org/Scholastic.

Systemic Achievement

...with purposeful intent

Organizational Morale

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 to systemically 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 acknowledging 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.



The Human Resources division hosted its annual Go Pink campaign this month in observation of Breast Cancer awareness. Employees were encouraged

to wear pink each Friday. This annual awareness campaign encourages employee cohesiveness and healthy competition between divisions.



Last week, the Human Resources division hosted a Caramel Apple Social to bring employees together, and to kick off the fall, while also encouraging healthy snacking during this time of the year. Employees had the opportunity to drizzle caramel and add other healthy toppings on apple slices. It was another wholesome event sponsored by our Human Resources division.

To that end, I am working toward the Board's goal of me to create a cohesive environment where every person is treated with dignity and respect.

HCDE BOARD

Board President

Position 2, Precinct 4

Angie Chesnut

Vice President

Louis Evans, III

Position 4, Precinct 3

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:

November Board Meeting

November 15, 2016

1:00 p.m.

Room 400

