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FROM THE OFFICE OF JAMES COLBERT, JR.—SUPERINTENDENT

Of Note...

I began this week with a meeting of my Executive Leadership Team as we forecasted for the next fiscal year. As you are aware, we are in the midst of budget planning for the next fiscal year. At the conclusion of our work, during this phase of the process, we anticipate presenting the Board with a fiscally sound budget.

I continue my ongoing meetings with the superintendents of our client districts within Harris County to ensure that the Department is meeting, if not exceeding, the needs of our client school districts. The services we provide school districts are immeasurable and it is imperative that we keep our fingers on the pulses of our client superintendents.

On Tuesday, I traveled to Austin for my commitment to the UIL as a member of the State Executive Board. The meeting was held all day Wednesday. As I have mentioned in previous issues of **The Connector**, it serves as an excellent platform for HCDE to receive visibility through my affiliation with this statewide entity. Today, I attended agenda review, as well as other Department meetings.

In the area of teaching and learning, this week we facilitated the following workshops and training sessions for Harris County educators to advance public education: National Incident Management System (NIMS) ICS 300; Educator Certification and Professional Advancement Career Choice

Recruitment Seminar; Test Prep Series or TExES Core Subjects EC-6 Exam (#291)- Science Sessions ONLY; School Finance Council; and Academic Moves for College and Career Readiness.

Next week, the Human Resources division is hosting a mandatory training session for directors, managers, and principals regarding discrimination and harassment. I will also be attending this workshop that ensures that we maintain an equitable environment, and one that is free of harassment for all employees.

Additionally, the Texas Alliance of Black School Educators conference will be held here in Houston beginning Thursday through the weekend. I will attend the conference and I am also scheduled to serve as a Keynote Speaker.

Please be reminded that the February Board Meeting will be held Tuesday, February 28, 2017 at 9:00 a.m.

In closing, I hope you enjoy this issue of **The Connector** and I hope you have an enjoyable weekend.

Upcoming Event: Board Meeting

Tuesday, February 28, 2017 at 9:00 a.m.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Eric Sheninger to Lead Workshop on Digital Leadership and Social Media



On Monday, February 20, Eric Sheninger will lead a workshop at HCDE entitled “Digital Leadership and The Power of Personal Learning Networks.” Named by TIME magazine for having one of the 140 Best Twitter Feeds in 2014, Eric Sheninger helps educators harness the power of social media to improve communications and increase student engagement. The workshop is part of the leadership-based Speaker Series hosted by HCDE’s Teaching and Learning Center.

The educational landscape is changing as a result of continuous advances in technology and changing learners. As a result, educators must recognize this shift

and lead by example in order to meet the diverse needs of key stakeholders in the 21st Century.

Personal Learning Networks (PLN’s) have been around for centuries and can be defined as relationships that individuals leverage for learning. Attendees will learn how 21st Century educators can utilize the Internet and Web 2.0 tools (microblogging services, social networking websites, social bookmarking tools, RSS feed readers, tablet apps, and digital discussion forums) to create their PLN’s and customize their “always-on” learning networks to better prepare and understand the Common Core Standards, college & career readiness, technology integration, engaging learners, and effective leadership strategies.

CASE for Kids Hosts Spring 2017 Symposium February 25 at Irvington

Afterschool professionals gain a Saturday full of training in afterschool best practices and activities from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on February 25 at 6300 Irvington. The Spring 2017 Symposium provides workshops which include training through a comprehensive, proven system called Youth Program Quality Intervention. Topics include youth voice, behavior management through structure and clear limits, building community, and planning and reflection. The daylong workshops provide hands-on activities for a \$40 fee which includes lunch. Register at www.hcde-texas.org/register and search for workshop 11254. <http://www.hcde-texas.org/media/4499/2017-spring-symposium-2017.jpg>



Human Resources Hosts Valentine’s Day Social for Employees

On February 13 and 14, the Human Resources division hosted a Valentine’s Day themed social for employees at the NPO and Irvington buildings. HCDE staff enjoyed the chance to network between divisions, complete with delicious chocolate-covered strawberries!



Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

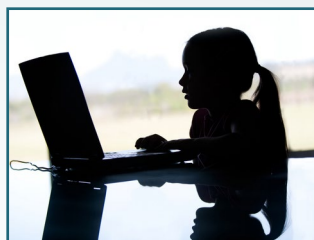
Safe and Secure Schools Director Shares Tips to Prevent against Cyberbullying



As part of Safer Internet Day, HCDE's Center for Safe and Secure Schools Director Ecomet Burley shared five tips about how students can be better citizens of the internet and avoid falling victim to online harassment.

- 1. Don't respond.** If someone bullies you, remember that your reaction is usually exactly what the bully wants. It gives him or her power over you. Who wants to empower a bully?
- 2. Don't retaliate.** Getting back at the bully turns you into one and reinforces the bully's behavior. Help avoid a cycle of aggression.
- 3. Talk to a trusted adult.** You deserve backup. It's always good to involve a parent but – if you can't – a school counselor usually knows how to help. Sometimes both are necessary. If you're really nervous about saying something, see if there's a way to report the incident anonymously at school.
- 4. Be civil.** Even if you don't like someone, it's a good idea to be decent and not sink to the other person's level. Also, research shows that gossiping about and trash talking others increases your risk of being bullied. Treat people the way you want to be treated.
- 5. Be a friend, not a bystander.** Watching or forwarding mean messages empowers bullies and hurts victims even more. If you can, tell bullies to stop or let them know harassment makes people look stupid and mean. If you can't stop the bully, at least try to help the victim and report the behavior.

On Wednesday, April 19, the Center for Safe and Secure Schools will host a cyberbullying workshop. Melissa Rangel, bilingual case manager for the Texas Center for the Missing, will focus on enhancing communication between parents and children about online safety.



ADVANCED TEACHING AND LEARNING BY TRAINING THE TRAINER

Trainings hosted at HCDE this week

FEBRUARY 15, 2017

National Incident Management System (NIMS) ICS 300

FEBRUARY 16, 2017

Educator Certification and Professional Advancement Career Choice Recruitment Seminar

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

FEBRUARY 17, 2017

School Finance Council

Academic Moves for College and Career Readiness



Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Head Start Hosts Annual Parent/Child Food Science Fair



Head Start hosted its annual Parent/Child Food Science Fair this week at each of its Head Start centers. Judges at each center selected a dish to move forward in the competition and be named the top recipe at the Policy Council Meeting next Monday night.

The Food Science Fair ignites creativity and fuels education about nutrition as students and their families select a fruit or vegetable and create a healthy dish. This year, the first place entry went to Tidwell's Galilea Lazcano with her Strawberry Balsamic Pizza with Chicken.

Baytown Head Start Center student Adrian Lucatero competed with help from his grandmother Odelia Cabrera. Their recipe for avocado salsa included grilled

tomatoes, peppers and garlic, and featured all fresh ingredients.

"I think this event is important because it's fun and teaches children about eating healthy," said Cabrera.

Like many of the students who participate in the Food Science Fair, Lucatero was involved from the beginning.

"He loves helping out with recipes, not only for this event, but during meals at home," Cabrera explains. "He wants to be a chef when he grows up."

Other winning entries in the Food Science Fair included Pazole de Pollo Verde, a Watermelon Cake and Guacamole.

Languages Other Than English Textbook/Materials Showcase Set for April 6 at HCDE



Area school district curriculum directors, principals, and teachers are invited to a free textbook and materials fair for the Languages Other Than English Showcase, or LOTE Showcase. The event will be held April 6 from 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. by several textbook publishers. Languages Other Than English Textbook/Materials Showcase. The workshop is held for educators who are involved with selecting textbooks and supplemental materials for state-wide adoption. Special Populations Director Darlene Breaux from the Teaching and Learning Center is the workshop lead. For more information, call 713-696-8223.

Service

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Houston City Council Members Gather for CASE for Kids City Connections Networking, Photo Opportunity February 23



Last year's CASE for Kids City Connections photo opportunity was held at City Hall.

Several CASE for Kids City Connections nonprofits and Houston City Council members will gather February 23 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at 6300 Irvington, room 400, to celebrate the successes of the program that brought \$45,000 from the city of Houston to afterschool through each

council district. Area afterschool providers will be on hand to receive their “big checks” through a photo opportunity.

The funding provides services from October 31 through March 31 and totaled \$550,000. Awards for each organization in council district communities ranged from \$4,000-\$10,000.

Each council member is provided 20 minutes for the photo shoot to include organizations they are partnering with through City Connections.



HCDE Employees Volunteer at Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Adoption Fair

This past weekend, several HCDE employees volunteered at the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services' annual Hearts for Children Festival and Adoption Fair. The event, held at HCDE and sponsored by the Rotary Club of Houston, gave Harris County couples and children the chance to meet and interact.

Opportunity

CAMPUS CONNECTIONS

Whole Kids Foundation Grant of \$2,000 to Fund Garden at AB School East



A school garden is in the works at Academic and Behavior School East as the campus was recently awarded a \$2,000 School Garden Grant from the Whole Kids Foundation. The

goal of the program is to promote health literacy and healthy lifestyles for 75 students and their families. By growing fruits and vegetables, students will gain a better understanding of where their food comes from, gain more positive food attitudes, and work cooperatively in groups to produce results.

Education Foundation of Harris County is a partner and will serve as the fiscal sponsor of this grant.

For more information on the Whole Kids Foundation School Garden Grant, visit <https://goo.gl/YEmSbj>.

The funds will be used for food and nutrition education at the school and provide plants and tools for gardening.

Systemic Achievement

...with purposeful intent

Community Relations

In accordance with the Board's goals for 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 community; and
- Work with other governmental entities and community organizations to meet the needs of students and the community



This week, the Head Start division hosted its annual Parent/Child Food Science Fair event at each

of its Head Start centers. Judges at each center selected a dish to move up in the competition. The winning entry and its recipe will be announced at the February Policy Council Meeting next week.



This event stirs up creativity and educates students and their families about the importance of eating healthy meals.

By hosting this event, I am working towards achieving the Board's expectations of me to

- Maintain HCDE's visibility and involvement in the community through the support of programs such as these that so greatly impact the early childhood and school-readiness arena.

HCDE BOARD

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UPCOMING BOARD EVENT:

Board Meeting

Tuesday, February 28, 2017
at 9:00 a.m.

