

The CONNECTOR

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



WEEK OF MARCH 20, 2017

VOLUME 3/ISSUE 28



In this issue...

- 3 *Record-breaking 59 National Scholastic Art & Writing Medals Earned by Area Teens after Regional Advancement through Harris County Department of Education*
- 6 *Science Teachers Prepare for STAAR with HCDE Review Workshop*
- 6 *Telemundo 47 Visits Head Start Sheffield Center for Student Recruitment Story March 22*

FROM THE OFFICE OF JAMES COLBERT, JR.—SUPERINTENDENT

Of Note...

It's hard to believe that we're already in the last quarter of the 2016-2017 academic year. HCDE has accomplished numerous goals as we serve the students and educators in Harris County.

This week, HCDE returned to its normal operating hours following Spring Break last week. I began the week with my usual meeting with the Executive Leadership Team which was followed by the remainder of the week filled with other meetings and engagements, including a Board Committee meeting to review the request for qualifications regarding the Board's attorney.

I am pleased to announce that we received notification this week that HCDE has been selected as the recipient of the Alliance for Young Artists and Writers 2017 Gold Key for Excellence in the Field award among 100 national regional affiliates. This honor is being awarded to HCDE at the National Ceremony at Carnegie Hall in New York City on June 8, 2017. The award recognizes HCDE as a tremendous contributor as a regional affiliate in the program. Hats off to Andrea Segraves who coordinates this exemplary program on behalf of area schools in Harris County.

Next week, in addition to my regular schedule of activities and meetings, I will also be attending the Northwest Area Ministries (NAM) Board Meeting to fulfill my responsibility as a member of the NAM Board. I also serve as a member of the subcommittee for Workforce Development on the Board.

As mentioned in previous issues of **The Connector**, and for those of you who may be unfamiliar with NAM, the organization was formed by 10 congregations who agreed to set aside their theological differences and pool their resources in a manner to better serve the community's needs. The organization has served north and northwest Harris County since 1983, and currently has approximately 85 employees and 2,500 volunteers. I am pleased to participate as one of their active board members as it also brings additional visibility to HCDE.

This week in the area of teaching and learning, HCDE hosted the following trainings and workshops: How to Googelize Your Classroom; Revving Review for STAAR Success in Biology 2.0; School Finance Council; STAAR: A Vertical Alignment Look at RC1 (Grades 3-4, 6-7); and Leadership Day- Train Your Student Leaders to Build School Culture! HCDE continues to serve as one source for all learners in Harris County.

In closing, please be reminded that the April Board Meeting will be held Tuesday, April 18, 2017. I hope you enjoy this issue of **The Connector** and I hope you have a relaxing weekend. Thanks for your service to HCDE.

Upcoming Event:
Board Meeting
Tuesday, April 18, 2017

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

HCDE Head Start Division Celebrates the Importance of Breakfast with National School Breakfast Week



National School Breakfast Week (NSBW) is a weeklong celebration emphasizing the importance of breakfast. This year, the Head Start registered dietitians brought the importance of breakfast to children enrolled in the Head Start program to enhance the overall goal of school readiness.

HCDE's Head Start NSBW celebration took place the week of March 6-10. Children and families were invited to take part in the Breakfast Week Challenge, where parents were encouraged to bring their children in time to consume and participate in family-style breakfast. For every day the children

attended, they received a punch on the Breakfast Week Challenge punch card. At the end of the week, children that participated for the entire week entered a raffle to win a Breakfast Week basket.

Additionally, the Head Start administration participated in NSBW on March 8 with the "Shake Up Your Wake Up" campaign. The administrative staff chipped in and provided a variety of smoothie ingredients. The Nutrition Services team provided blenders and made smoothies for the staff.

For more information on National School Breakfast Week, visit <https://schoolnutrition.org/Meetings/Events/NSBW/2017>.

ADVANCED TEACHING AND LEARNING BY TRAINING THE TRAINER

Trainings hosted at HCDE this week

MARCH 20, 2017

How to Googelize Your Classroom

MARCH 21, 2017

Revving Review for STAAR Success in Biology 2.0

MARCH 23, 2017

School Finance Council

MARCH 24, 2017

STAAR: A Vertical Alignment Look at RC1 (Grades 3-4, 6-7)

Leadership Day - Train Your Student Leaders to Build School Culture!



Head Start Policy Council: Lights, Camera, Action Part of March Meeting

The Head Start Policy Council meeting March 22 included center reports from La Porte and Pugh Head Start centers.

Photo: Policy Council members from La Porte Head Start deliver popcorn to meeting attendees, including Assistant Superintendent Jonathan Parker. La Porte members created a movie about activities going on at their center, so popcorn helped enhance the experience.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Record-breaking 59 National Scholastic Art & Writing Medals Earned by Area Teens after Regional Advancement through Harris County Department of Education



Fatemeh Ebrahimi, a student at Taylor High School in Katy Independent School District, poses with teacher Ashley Niemi with her sculpture: "Talk to the Hands." Ebrahimi won a national Gold Medal for her sculpture through Scholastic Art & Writing, as well as a regional Gold Key from Harris County Department of Education. She and her teacher are eligible to travel to New York City's Carnegie Hall to gain the national award. Her sculpture is on display at Spring Street Studios, 1824 Spring St., through March 30.

Harris County student artists and writers in grades 7-12 earn 59 national Scholastic Art & Writing Medals through awards announced by the New York nonprofit Alliance for Young Artists & Writers on March 14. The students advanced from a regional competition sponsored by Harris County Department of Education, and their work is exhibited at art exhibits and celebrations in Houston.

In addition, regional Scholastic Art & Writing sponsor Harris County Department of Education is being recognized for its extraordinary dedication to the Awards program as a regional affiliate. The award for "2017 Gold Key for Excellence in the Field" will be awarded in a national ceremony at Carnegie Hall June 8, 2017. Andrea Segraves coordinates the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards for HCDE and is applauded by organizers for growing the program in Harris County.

"I remain in awe of the talent and original voice of the creative teens in our region and am humbled to be a part of this outstanding, time-honored, fine arts program," said Segraves.

Area teens competed among a record-breaking 330,000 works of art and writing submitted for judging throughout the nation across 29 different categories. Through the 2017 Awards, students receive opportunities for recognition, exhibition, publication and scholarships. Past winners include celebrated artists and writers such as Robert Redford, Andy Warhol, Truman Capote, John Lithgow, Joyce Carol Oates, and Sylvia Plath.

Sharing in the national limelight are students from public school districts Alief, Aldine, Cypress-Fairbanks, Deer Park, Galena Park, Houston, Katy, Klein, Pasadena, Pearland and Spring Branch. Private school medalists are from Duchesne Academy of Sacred Heart, The Kinkaid School, River Oaks Baptist School, Strake Jesuit College Prep School, St. John's School, St. Thomas High School, and The Village School.

Gold Key Medalists, Gold Portfolio awardees, and Silver Medal with Distinction students are invited to a ceremony in New York City's Carnegie Hall on June 8 with surprise appearances from notable celebrities and creative leaders. Work from more than 1,000 students is exhibited from June 2-12 at several prominent New York galleries. For a complete list of the 50 national awards for Harris County teens, go to www.hcde-texas.org/Scholastic.

The Awards, founded in 1923, allow creative teen artists and writers to earn recognition, exhibition, publication and scholarships. View the list of the 59 medalists: <http://www.hcde-texas.org/how-we-help-students/scholastic-art-writing-awards/scholastic-art-writing-awardees/>.

National medalists from Harris County increased from 50 in 2016 to a record 59 in 2017. Gold medalists, the top award, more than doubled in Harris County, increasing from 12 in 2016 to 28 in 2017. Nationally, about 2,500 students are recognized overall as medalists this year.

"We have an amazing number of talented teen artists in Houston and Harris County," said Harris County School Superintendent James Colbert, Jr. "We celebrate the teachers and volunteer judges, along with the community supporters who provide venues for artist ceremonies and receptions."

Four area receptions and celebrations display art and recognize the young artists in March. View the list: <https://blog.hcde-texas.org/2017/03/06/hcde-hosts-4-celebrations-with-fine-arts-supporters-to-celebrate-teen-scholastic-art-writing-awards-talent/>.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Teachers' Tips Give Teachers Activities, Info to Easily Implement in Classrooms



The Teaching and Learning Center is creating “Teacher Tips” for teachers based on workshops held at HCDE. The tips serve as dual purpose: to give teachers something they can easily implement in the classroom and also to let them know about future trainings being planned through TLC. They are featured in the HCDE News Blog and also sent through targeted emails. This week’s tip features a discipline or classroom management program developed by Flippin Group called Capturing Kids’ Hearts. View the “Teacher Tips” through our news blog. The article is entitled “4 Powerful Ways to Show Students You



Care.” The workshop coordinated through TLC Special Populations Director Darlene Breaux will be held April 5-6 at HCDE: <https://blog.hcde-texas.org/2017/03/21/4-powerful-ways-to-show-students-you-care/>

Service

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Klein ISD Student Combines Performing with Love of Writing at HCDE Scholastic Art & Writing Reception



Several hundred teen artists and writers attended an artist reception and celebration to kick off Spring Break on March 11 at Spring Street Studios in Houston. Among the talented teens

was Klein ISD eleventh grader Mary Ann Hurtado, who read her award-winning piece, “From Sea to Shining Kiosk.”

As a member of the Klein Collins High School orchestra and debate team, Hurtado is no stranger to performing for an audience. During the first of four regional receptions for Harris County Scholastic winners, Hurtado entertained the crowd with her natural writing ability and confidence speaking in public.

In addition to performing, writing is a passion of Hurtado’s. Although she normally writes poetry, music and science fiction, a recent shopping experience on Black Friday inspired her to try her hand at humor.

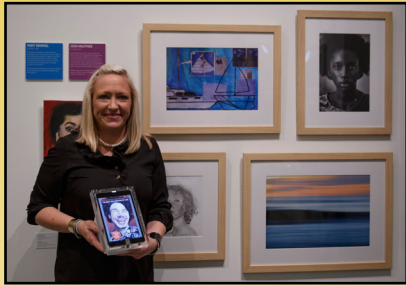
Hurtado’s story received a regional Scholastic Gold Key Award and one of five “best in class” American Voice nominations recognized nationally. She also recently received a National Scholastic Gold Key Award and is invited to attend the National Awards Ceremony at Carnegie Hall in New York City this summer.

For more information about the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards or to view the full list of regional winners, visit www.hcde-texas.org/scholastic.

Service

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

HCDE Receives National 2017 Gold Key for Excellence from Scholastic Art & Writing Awards among 100 Regional Affiliates



Andrea Segraves, HCDE's Scholastic Art & Writing Awards coordinator

Harris County Department of Education has been selected to receive the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers 2017 Gold Key for Excellence in the Field award among 100 nationwide regional affiliates. The New York nonprofit which runs the 94-year-old Scholastic Art & Writing Awards said the honor will be given to HCDE at the National Ceremony at Carnegie Hall in New York City on June 8, 2017.

Virginia McEnerney, executive director of the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers, said the award recognizes HCDE as a tremendous contributor as regional affiliate in the program.

“This Award is given annually to an affiliate partner organization that demonstrates extraordinary dedication to creative young people; preserves through challenges over time; and expands the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards program to reach more participants,” said McEnerney.

Harris County School Superintendent James Colbert, Jr. said the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards are an integral part of the services HCDE offers to support students and school districts in the county.

As a 13-year regional sponsor of the Awards, HCDE generated a 20 percent increase in art and writing submissions by youth in Harris County in 2016. The Awards allow creative teens in grades 7-12 in public

and private schools to earn recognition, exhibition, publication, and scholarships. HCDE provides adjudication for the Awards at a regional level. Students advance to gain national recognition in New York City.

HCDE's Teaching and Learning Center Director Andrea Segraves coordinates the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards for HCDE and is applauded by organizers for growing the program in Harris County.

Specifically, Segraves is commended for increased outreach to students and teachers through a promotional video, online journal/blog, and webinar trainings. Fundraising efforts were also praised.

“The students and educators in your region have benefited enormously from your commitment to supporting, recognizing and empowering the vision and voice of these teenagers,” said McEnerney.

HCDE receives the award along with art supplies and a \$100 gift certificate from the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers. For more about regional and national award recipients, where to view their work in March or to help support, enter or judge submissions, go to www.hcde-texas.org/Scholastic.

About Scholastic Art & Writing: Founded in 1923, the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards are the nation's longest-running, most prestigious educational initiative supporting student achievement in the visual and literary arts. The program has an impressive legacy of being the first to acknowledge creative talent and is today's largest source of scholarships for creative teens: www.artandwriting.org.

Service

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Science Teachers Prepare for STAAR with HCDE Review Workshop



Harris County science teachers revved up for STAAR success at this week's workshop with presenter Tobi McMillan. During the STAAR review workshop, teachers gained strategies for maximizing student achievement on STAAR as well as diagnosing student gaps. They also received materials designed to support student retention of the critical content.



Telemundo 47 Visits Head Start Sheffield Center for Student Recruitment Story March 22

Telemundo 47 Anchor/Reporter Antonio Hernandez visited Head Start Sheffield Center today for a story about student recruitment. The story ran in the 4 and 5 p.m. news on Telemundo 47, KTMD. View the story:

<https://youtu.be/2V6OaOpl4Qw> and <https://youtu.be/LkjWBuc1oPM>

Systemic Achievement

...with purposeful intent

Community Relations

In an effort to meet the Board's expectations of me as it relates to these elements of performance to

- **Work with other governmental entities and community organizations to meet the needs of students and the community in a coordinated way.**

- ARC Labs
- MIAT
- Buffalo Wild Wings
- Franklin Beauty School
- VAST
- Stuffed Baked Potato Factory
- Edubalicious Treats
- 5 Star Catering
- Divas Dent
- 90.9 KTSU
- Parris Foundation

Instructional Management

- **Ensure that goals and objectives form the basis of curricular decision-making and instruction and communicate expectations for student achievement; and**
- **Ensure that appropriate data are used in developing recommendations and making decisions regarding the instructional program and resources.**

During the week before Spring Break, the Academic and Behavior School East hosted a very well-organized and coordinated career day event for students. Representatives from the following entities were available to educate students on possible career options:



- Texas Department of Public Safety (TDPS)
- Houston Fire Department (HFD)
- Houston Police Department (HPD)
- Everest Institute



All of the representatives were very engaged with the students and presented a variety of pathways to success.

By ensuring that our campuses offer these kinds of opportunities to our students, I am working to meet the expectations of the board to identify the learning needs of the students and develop a process that ensures each student's learning goals are met or exceeded and to investigate best practices for student achievement and utilize effective practices that maximize achievement of student potential within HCDE schools. Further, I am ensuring that HCDE maintains visibility and involvement in the community.

HCDE BOARD

Board President

Louis Evans, III
Position 4, Precinct 3

Vice President

Eric Dick
Position 2, Precinct 4

Erica Lee Carter
Position 6, Precinct 1

George Moore
Position 1, Precinct 2

Don Summers
Position 7, At Large

Diane Trautman
Position 3, At Large

Michael Wolfe
Position 5, At Large

UPCOMING BOARD EVENT:

Board Meeting
Tuesday, April 18, 2017

