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FROM THE OFFICE OF JAMES COLBERT, JR.—SUPERINTENDENT

Of Note...

Upon my return from the TASA/TASB Conference in Dallas, I began this week with a meeting of my Executive Leadership Team. I also conducted my other regularly scheduled Monday meetings.

Also, early in the week, I departed for Austin where I attended my UIL Meeting to fulfill my responsibilities as a Board Member. Again, this obligation serves as an excellent opportunity for me to continue to shed additional visibility in the community that supports public education with my statewide colleagues.

Upon my return from Austin, I accompanied staff on Wednesday to honor our campus principals in observation of Principals' Month. In doing so, I made site visits to each of the campuses, bearing care packages as a sincere token of my appreciation for each of them.

Yesterday, I participated in my first reading of this academic year through the Head Start SuperMENTors event at the Humble/Atascocita Head Start Center. As always, I enjoyed reading to some of youngest learners who took full advantage of this experience.

Next week, I will serve as the keynote speaker at an event for Region 13's (Austin area) Principals' Academy. I look forward to this opportunity to discuss strategies in campus administration to aspiring principals.

As you are already aware, we are in full gear finalizing the upcoming groundbreaking event for Fortis Academy which will be held next Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. Fortis Academy is located at 11902 Spears Road in Houston (77067). I look forward to each of you attending this monumental event as we formalize

our intention, with other public officials present, to expand HCDE's services to meet the needs of even more learners in Harris County.

Please be reminded that the following day is the regularly scheduled October Board Meeting which will take place at 1:00 p.m. Immediately prior to the Board Meeting, committee meetings, along with a PFC meeting, will begin at 10:30 a.m., up until the Board Meeting.

This week in the area of teaching and learning, HCDE hosted the following trainings and workshops: National Incident Management System (NIMS); Revise THIS! High School EOC Revision Strategies; and Integers and Algebraic Reasoning in Grades 6-8. Upcoming trainings and workshops include the following: Lead4ward: Studying the Parts that Make Up the Whole of Fractions; Writing Strategies for Goal-Directed Instruction; Dyslexia Summit; 32nd Annual Early Childhood Winter Conference; Education and Equity; Cybersecurity in Education; and Digital Discovery Day.

In closing, I look forward to seeing you at both the Fortis Academy Groundbreaking as well as the October Board Meeting.

As always, thanks for your service to HCDE and I hope you enjoy this issue of **The Connector**. Have a relaxing weekend.

Tuesday, October 17, 2017

- Fortis Academy Groundbreaking

Wednesday, October 18, 2017

- Board Meeting

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Headliner Workshops for Educators Feature National Presenters, Innovative Topics from HCDE



Harris County Department of Education's Teaching and Learning Center is gearing up for a year filled with innovative and effective professional development opportunities for educators. The division is hosting headliner conferences and events during the 2017-2018 school year with high-demand presenters, in addition to weekly workshops and customized sessions for area school districts.

Lead4ward: Studying the Parts that Make Up the Whole of Fractions (workshop no. 11623)

Nov. 6, 2017 (Presenter Nancy Crouch)

Is the sum of all your parts not equaling the whole when it comes to the fractions strand of mathematics? What do STAAR items demonstrate about fractional understanding? Get the big picture about fractions in elementary curriculum through concrete, pictorial and abstract thinking.

Writing Strategies for Goal-Directed Instruction (workshop no. 11419)

Jan. 18, 2018 (Presenter: Jennifer Seravallo)

Understand the qualities of good writing, but go beyond writing checklists and tips that tell writers what to do. Instead, learn how to craft explicit, clear strategies for students.

Dyslexia Summit (workshop no. 11455)

Jan. 23, 2018

The Dyslexia Summit dives deeper into strategies, accommodations and evidence-based instructional practices that the general education teacher can use with all students.

32nd Annual Early Childhood Winter Conference (workshop no. 11478)

Jan. 27, 2018 (Presenter: Dr. Becky Bailey)

Attend this one-day professional learning conference and learn easy-to-implement, research-based classroom strategies designed for students in pre-kindergarten through second grade.

Education & Equity: The Pathway to Proficiency (workshop no. 11635)

Feb. 14, 2018

Cultural competence, culturally responsive teaching, rigor, differentiation, building relations and closing opportunity gaps are all addressed in this institute designed for Harris County schools.

Cybersecurity in Education (workshop no. 11713)

March 27, 2018

Network security breaches are on the rise in educational institutions. Districts need to be aggressive in protecting student and teacher data. Learn how districts, teachers and students can understand the liability and legal requirements of cybersecurity as we protect student data and professional reputations.

Digital Discovery Day (June 2018 date to be announced soon)

Join leaders from public and private industry. Explore the newest digital recourses and devoces. Breakout sessions will focus on hands-on experience for immediate classroom relevance.

To register for these workshops or find more, visit www.hcde-texas.org/register and enter date or workshop number or call 713-696-1315.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Surprise Patrol Honors Four Principals During National Principals Month



Superintendent James Colbert took his surprise patrol to congratulate all four of our Schools Division principals during National Principals Month which is celebrated in October. He delivered customized Tote umbrellas and goodie bags to each with a surprise Facebook Live. National

Principals Month recognizes the essential role that principals play in making a school great. National Principals Month is marked by national and state resolutions supporting the event, as well as acknowledgements from top government officials. However, the most important National Principals

Month celebrations are the ones that take place in schools and communities across the country like ours!

Marion Cooksey, Highpoint School East:

<https://www.facebook.com/HCDEtx/videos/10155816090439510/>

Mindy Robertson, Academic and Behavior

School East: <https://www.facebook.com/HCDEtx/videos/10155816168064510/>

Dr. Victor Keys, Academic and Behavior School

West: <https://www.facebook.com/HCDEtx/videos/10155816240134510/>

Dr. Anthony Moten, Fortis Academy: (video not available—see photo)

HCDE Schools Division Attends Professional Development Training



This week, approximately 300 staff members from HCDE's special schools attended professional development sessions led by the Teaching and Learning Center. The sessions ranged from suicide prevention training, to increasing secondary science literacy to engaging learners across curriculum areas.

ADVANCED TEACHING AND LEARNING BY TRAINING THE TRAINER

OCTOBER 10, 2017

National Incident Management System (NIMS) ICS 100,200,700,800

OCTOBER 12, 2017

Revise THIS! High School EOC Revision Strategies

OCTOBER 13, 2017

Integers and Algebraic Reasoning in Grades 6-8

Service

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Students to Taste-Test New ‘Selfie Pizza’ at Largest Food Expo Ever



Choice Partners, Harris County Department of Education’s purchasing cooperative, will host 130 food and equipment vendors at the 2017 “Totally Awesome” School Nutrition Expo, making it the largest expo in the food program’s history. The event will take place Wednesday, Oct. 25, at Humble Civic Center.

Students from area school districts will taste foods, letting the school district nutrition directors know what they like and don’t like. Among the foods to sample this year is Alpha Food’s “selfie pizza” – a personal sized pizza that has attracted

much enthusiasm. Alpha Foods is a locally-owned company based in Waller, Texas.

As school nutrition directors evaluate quality, nutritional value and student tastes, Choice Partners gathers info needed to plan for future food contract purchases for school districts. Food is purchased annually by school districts in the Harris County area for more than 100 million student lunches through contracts available through HCDE Choice Partners cooperative.

More than 130 food and equipment vendors will show off both classic and new products. Tasty Brands, a supplier of great-tasting school food that meets USDA regulations, also has its new mini ravioli dish available for students and staff to try.

Center for Safe and Secure Schools Hosts NIMS Training



Every campus will respond to some type of emergency during the school year, whether it’s a fire, storm, flood or active shooter. HCDE’s Center for Safe and Secure Schools helped area schools stay up-to-date with National Incident Management System (NIMS) certification this week. The course included introductions into the Incident Command System, National Response Framework and more.

Service

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Head Start Students Receive New School Uniforms Through Operation School Bell



Approximately 250 Head Start students from Dogan, Fonwood and Pugh centers received new school uniforms this week as part of the Assistance League of Houston's Operation School Bell program. The students received a \$75 voucher to cash in at the Uniform Superstore in Greenspoint Mall on Saturday, Oct. 7 and Thursday, October 12. Members of the U.S. Coast Guard joined the Assistance League of Houston at both events.

View all photos from the events at <https://goo.gl/ZHYDRx>. For more information on Operation School Bell, visit www.assistanceleague.org.

Scholastic Teens from Harris County Featured in U.S. Department of Education Blog

Harris County students were featured in the U.S. Department of Education's Homeroom BlogCheck as they visited Washington, D.C. last month to be recognized at a reception. The blog features photos, quotes and stories from Harris County teens at the exhibit. View the story:

<https://goo.gl/CaQ8MY>



Systemic Achievement

...with purposeful intent

Organizational Morale

In an effort to meet the expectations of this element of performance as it relates to the Board's goals for me to:

- Create an open and positive environment for sharing resources and exchanging ideas to improve organizational climate;
- Seek systemically to improve the climate by obtaining and utilizing feedback from employees of the Department;
- Celebrate accomplishments and acknowledge excellence



This month has been declared as Principals' Month. In light of this important observation of these essential leaders on our school campuses, we salute them for their leadership and innovative

ideas related to the teaching and learning process.

Yesterday, in recognition of them, I visited each of our campus locations to offer my sincere gratitude to each of them. I arrived bearing care packages for them in appreciation for all they do.

It was an absolute honor to celebrate Dr. Victor Keys (AB-West); Mindy Robertson (AB-East); Marion Cooksey (HP-E); and Dr. Anthony Moten (Fortis Academy).

By recognizing our principals during Principals' Month, I am striving to meet the Board's expectations of me to ensure high organizational morale among the staff of HCDE.



HCDE BOARD

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

Tuesday, October 17, 2017

- Fortis Academy Groundbreaking

Wednesday, October 18, 2017

- Board Meeting

