



Of Note...

Fantastic things are happening at HCDE! This week, we hosted the Choice Partners Celebratory Luncheon in recognition of them reaching a \$1M profit for the first time ever! This was certainly worth celebrating and we continue to wish them well as they help our client school districts, municipalities, and numerous other entities save money. Again, hats off to the Choice Partners Cooperative.

I began the week, as usual, with a meeting of my Executive Leadership Team, followed by an individual meeting with Trustee Trautman regarding my annual appraisal instrument. To that end, I congratulate Trustee Trautman on her victory in last week's election. I wish her well.

This past Tuesday, I delivered the welcome at the Human Trafficking Summit, hosted by the Center for Safe and Secure Schools. This informative event was certainly centered around a pertinent topic, especially in the Houston area. Human Trafficking is a significant problem in Houston and we hope that we provided useful information that can be used to inform youth, parents, educators, and others within the community in an effort to curtail this horrific crime.

Also, on Tuesday, I met with Trustee Evans regarding my annual appraisal. I appreciate the opportunity to have these individual meetings with all of the members of the Board of Trustees to showcase the successes and accomplishments of the Department on an annual basis.

I participated in my ongoing volunteerism effort in the SuperMENTor reading initiative powered by our Area I Head Start division this past Wednesday. As always, I encourage all men within the Department and the community-at-large, to become involved in this worthwhile effort. I also made the final decision in a Christmas card contest sponsored by our Head Start division. Additionally, of course, we had a successful Board Meeting. Thanks to each of you who were able to attend. I appreciate your ongoing support to HCDE.

Yesterday, I fulfilled my responsibilities to the Northwest Assistance Ministries Board by attending their regularly-scheduled meeting. I also attended other internal meetings with staff.

Also, on yesterday, HCDE hosted another annual GEO career day on the parking lot at the Irvington location. The parking lot was filled with members from various law enforcement entities as well as the Montgomery County Emergency Management Command Post. Students from area schools learned more about careers in this area of science and engineering. It was an impressive event.

Today, I attended the Good Reason Houston Leadership Council Meeting, the board's committee on legal services RFQ, as well as the Fall Festival Celebration at Fortis Academy. This celebration at Fortis is a first for this campus. We look forward to more successful events such as this one.

This week, in the area of teaching and learning, the Department hosted or facilitated the following workshops and training sessions: Online Instructors' Training, Part III; Outer Edges Online, Creating with Google; Make Them Think: Argumentation in Middle School Science; Harris County Special Populations Leadership Think-Tank; Graham Fletcher: Light a Fire for Problem-Based Learning for grades kindergarten through second (6 hours G/T update); Learning to Lead for Success; Basics and Outer Edges-Investigating with Google; Homework Help in Out-of-School Time and School Finance Council. HCDE is to be commended for its relentless commitment to professional development for educators within Harris County and beyond.

Looking ahead into next week, I will be attending the Lone Star College Foundation's Drive for Scholarships 25th Annual Golf Tournament on Monday. I will conduct internal meetings and make site visits to campuses on Tuesday. Please be reminded that next week is Thanksgiving and the Department will be closed in observation of the holiday on Thursday and Friday. We will resume normal business hours Monday, November 26. **The Connector** will resume during the week of Monday, November 26.

I hope you enjoy this issue of **The Connector**. I wish you a relaxing weekend and a great Thanksgiving! Thanks again for your dedication to HCDE.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

December Board Meeting—Wednesday, December 19, 2018

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 12, 2018

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Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Fighting the Battle of Human Trafficking in Public Schools: Human Trafficking Summit



Educators came together to battle human trafficking among youth at the Human Trafficking Summit on Oct. 13. Co-hosted by Children At Risk and Harris County Department of Education, the event catapulted a discussion on prevention through curricula and community involvement.

David McGeary, Teaching and Learning Center Digital Learning expert, presented on

cybervictimization and human trafficking:

"This is one of the profound areas we as educators can influence to help make an impact across the topic of sex trafficking," McGeary said. "When we are talking about intervention in cyberbullying, we are talking about preparing students to be good stewards of their own presence online."

HCDE Superintendent James Colbert Jr. welcomed 60 educators attending the event along with Children At Risk CEO Robert Sanborn.

"Houston is known for a lot of things, and unfortunately one of those is human trafficking," said Colbert. "Our best weapons are passionate people who are smart and organized. The purpose of today's meeting is to collaborate and address this problem to deal with some of these monsters that victimize children. More than that, our goal is to help the victims."

Other presenters included James Caruthers, senior staff attorney at Children At Risk; Eloise Sepeda, Harmony One Restorative Justice; Linette Caroselli, mother of a child trafficking victim; Christina Crenshaw, Baylor University; and Christopher Greeley, Texas Children's Hospital.



ADVANCED TEACHING AND LEARNING BY TRAINING THE TRAINER

NOVEMBER 12, 2018

Online Instructor's Training - Part III

Outer Edges Online - Creating with Google

NOVEMBER 13, 2018

Make Them Think: Argumentation in Middle School Science

Harris County Special Populations Leadership Thinktank

NOVEMBER 14, 2018

Graham Fletcher: Light a Fire for Problem-Based Learning in Gr. K-2 [6 hours G/T update]

NOVEMBER 15, 2018

Learning to Lead for Success

Basics and Outer Edges - Investigating with Google

NOVEMBER 16, 2018

Homework help in out-of-school time

School Finance Council

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Music Motivation Drives School-Based Therapy Services Partnership with Cypress-Fairbanks



Music is the great motivator, and HCDE music therapist Ann Petty has used her music therapy training to benefit students in the classroom for 25 years, with 15 exclusively in Cypress-Fairbanks ISD.

She begins the day with Bella, 6, a wide-eyed, jubilant child at Hairgrove Elementary working with Petty in her life skills classroom. Bella repeats phrases and works on looking in the direction of the speaker. Later, she sings and plays the tambourine and drum.

Petty travels to three-to-five Cy-Fair ISD campuses a day and works with both students and their teachers, implementing activities that will support academics, social skills and communication. She also uses neurological principles for improving communication, psycho-social and cognitive skills.

Students may be getting a song strategy for counting nickels or learning an algebraic formula. Another who has attention-deficit disorder works through a music routine so that he can participate in a classroom session for up to 20 minutes.

“When I see that he is able to fulfill that goal, I know that is progress,” Petty said.

Like her counterparts who practice physical and occupational therapy, Petty must evaluate students. She will support Individualized Education Program goals and objectives prepared for students with special needs. Her responsibilities include documenting progress and collaborating with other therapists, teachers and paraprofessionals.

A music therapist holds a bachelor’s degree or higher from a college or university approved by the American Music Therapy Association. Upon graduating, a music therapist is

eligible to sit for the board certification exam granted by the Certification Board of Music Therapy.

HCDE has five, full-time and three, part-time music therapists working within contracted school districts. There are over 150 physical and occupational therapy providers within the HCDE division. Therapists work on school campuses to provide 53 percent of special education therapy services provided to the students in our 25 Harris County school districts.

Cypress-Fairbanks has contracted with HCDE School-Based Therapy Services for 40 years.

“School districts consider us their one-stop-shop for supplying their district with highly-qualified therapists,” said Carie Crabb, senior director of HCDE’s School-Based Therapy Services. “We recruit therapists, manage and train them to help students with functional tasks and academic success within the school environment so they can work, play and participate among their peers.”

Petty enjoys collaborating with staff in Cy-Fair and appreciates the resources and support she gets within the HCDE and Cy-Fair partnership.

“We’re always problem-solving and figuring things out together,” she said.

Bella sings the spider song. She learns directions like up and down and is sharing the names of other insects in the spider’s ecosystem. As a reward, she may play the rhythm sticks but must use her social skills.

“I’d like the sticks please,” she says demurely. “I’m ready.”

The music stops after a half-hour. Petty packs up her portable classroom for her next client. Bella’s teacher begins to reinforce what the little girl has just learned. Hugs and salutations go around the classroom from the music therapist named Ms. Petty, the music-maker.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Veterans Day Programs at Schools Provide Service Education



Veterans Day, the official United States public holiday observed annually on Nov. 11, honors military veterans who served in the United States Armed Forces.

At Highpoint East, JROTC students from North Shore Senior High and Stephen F. Austin High presented the U.S. flag along with a drill presentation. Highpoint transitional specialist Stevia Babers, who is also in the Navy reserves, along with teacher Dickey Swenson, retired Air Force, spoke to students about military service.

Academic and Behavior School West students learned about the branches of the military and their roles in the

security of the nation. Discussions included uniforms, location and various service professions.



“Students learned that freedom isn’t free and the significance each of these heroes plays in our daily lives in giving us these inalienable rights,” said principal Victor Keys.

Several suggestions were given on how to honor those who provide service to our country: Show up at a Veterans Day program. Fly a flag at your home. Donate to a military service organization. Ask someone about their service. Write a card or email to someone who has served as a small act of kindness. Visit a VA hospital.

Bates Collision Centers 20th Annual Rehabbed Car Giveaways Set for Dec. 12 and 13



Nothing brings on the holiday spirit like the Bates Responsible Parent Awards with Bates Collision Centers

and Head Start. Save the date for Dec. 12 at 10 a.m. at Bates Collision Channelview, 15532 I-10 East and at Bates Collision Center Baytown, 3219 N. Main St., Baytown on Dec. 13 at 10 a.m. Two Head Start mothers

will be rewarded for taking an active role in their child’s education and development.

“We are confident that their lives will be significantly improved by the gift of a car this holiday season,” said Lee and Leila Bates, who supply two rehabbed cars for the families along with gifts. The project is a volunteer project for their employees. Community members also contribute by donating insurance, gas and other necessities for car owners. Recipients are announced shortly after Thanksgiving as they are nominated by center managers and selected by the Bates.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

CASE Debates Tourney No. 2 Held at University of Houston Central



CASE Debates held its second CASE Debates tournament Nov. 10 at the University of Houston with 92 students participating.

Schools debating included high schools Elsik, Taylor and Kerr (Alief ISD), Galena Park and North Shore (Galena Park ISD), Westchester Academy of International Studies (Spring

Branch ISD), Harmony School of Advancement (charter) and Spring Early College Academy (Spring ISD).

Numerous individual speaker and team awards were awarded through the debate tournament which is supported by Houston Urban Debate League (HUDL). University of Houston Speech and Debate team members also volunteer.

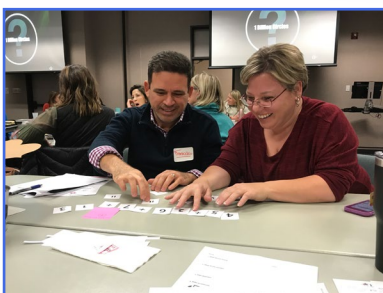


Head Start Student's Artwork Featured on Annual Holiday Card

This year, students at each of the 15 Head Start centers submitted artwork to be chosen as the Harris County Department of Education's annual holiday card.

Artwork by Pugh Head Start student Giselle Gomez was chosen by HCDE Superintendent James Colbert, Jr..

A dozen photos of submitted artwork will be featured on HCDE social media sites in December.



Light a Fire for Problem-Based Learning Grades K-2

Math expert and national presenter Graham Fletcher presented to 35 math teachers of grades K-2 on Nov. 14 with a hands-on workshop called "Light a Fire for Problem-Based Learning in Grades K-2. Teachers learned how problem-based lessons can be used to monitor student growth.



Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Scenes from Red Ribbon Week



In recognition of National Red Ribbon Week, the faculty and students at High Point East participated in a number of activities that encouraged drug-free living. This year's theme was "Our School has SWAG:

Students Who Achieve Goals". In the spirit of creating educational opportunities that improve both academics and behavior, we focused our efforts on teaching our students the dangers of drug abuse and the importance of making good choices.

The week was packed with a plethora of activities. Our Drug Counselor, Mr. Gibson hosted a "Team Up Against Drugs Rally". Ms. Burke, guest speaker from Galena Park Independent School District, presented a very lively and animated



seminar on the awareness of the killing and destruction caused by drug use in America. We also had a door decorating contest where students, along with their teachers, created a visual display encouraging others to be drug free. The winners were awarded a certificate and pizza party. Both staff and students participated in the following Red Ribbon Week activities:



- **Monday: Shade out Drugs – Sunglasses**
- **Tues. Sock it to Drugs – Crazy/ Mismatched socks**
- **Wed. Unity Day – Orange shirt**
- **Thursday: Team Up Against Drugs – Favorite team shirt/jersey with jeans**
- **Friday: You have the Power to Stay Drug Free – Favorite superhero shirt with jeans**



Houston GIS Day



Houston Area GIS Day brought together several hundred area high school students to discover geographic information systems careers. Keynote speaker Stacy Lyle, assistant professor of practice and research at Texas A&M University provided information about global mapping and careers using GIS. Activities included mapping and examining emergency management vehicles which use GIS systems. Drones were brought to show GIS systems career opportunities.

Systemic Achievement

...with purposeful intent

Community Relations

In an effort to meet the elements associated with this expectation of performance 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 the community; and
- Work with other governmental entities and community organizations to meet the needs of students and the community in a coordinated way.



Yesterday, HCDE partnered with a variety of local agencies to host Houston GIS Day, bringing together several hundred area high school students to discover geographic information systems careers. Keynote speaker Stacy Lyle, assistant professor of practice and research at Texas A&M University provided information about global



mapping and careers using GIS. Activities included mapping and examining emergency management vehicles which use GIS systems. Drones were brought in to show GIS systems career opportunities.

By HCDE continuing to participate in such endeavors, I am working to achieve the Board's goal to present a positive, professional image of the Department; maintain visibility in the community; be open to the ideas and needs of the community; and communicate the needs and accomplishments of the Department, as appropriate.

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

December Board Meeting

Wednesday, December 19, 2018

