

The Connector

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

FOR THE WEEK OF
JULY 20, 2015
VOLUME 1/ISSUE 31



From the office of JAMES COLBERT, JR. | SUPERINTENDENT



Of Note...

It's been a great week at HCDE! Hopefully, on last Friday, you had an opportunity to see some of our students appear on the front page of the City/State section of the **Houston Chronicle** in a feature photo. Students from the Academic and Behavior School-West Campus participated in the Quad Copter Challenge. The event, which offered the students skills in teamwork, decision-making, fine- and gross-motor skills, and directional awareness, took place last Thursday. The newspaper photo from the event was captioned, *A Thrilling Flight of Fancy*. What a great experience for our students, and what top-notch, above-the-fold exposure for HCDE! (See page 2 for an image of last Friday's City/State front page.)

Because of our busy weeks, the summer is moving swiftly. On Monday of this week, we hosted three innovative workshops for area educators and other school and county officials. A cutting-edge mathematics workshop entitled, "Cooling the Curriculum Hot Spots in Math" was geared for educators of grades K-2. It focused on standards related to numbers and operations, algebraic reasoning, and data analysis. "You Gotta Have Art" celebrated its 10th Annual Workshop. This annual HCDE event emphasizes the importance of integrating art into curricula, and offers creative methods of implementation. Our Center for Safe and Secure Schools hosted an introduction to the Incident Command System which was beneficial to safety and security officials across Harris County.

On Tuesday, the math workshop continued for grades 3-5. It focused on the same standards, just at a higher level of learning, consistent with the higher grade levels. Due to ever-increasing interests in expanding math expectations, these workshops were certainly timely.

Yesterday, the School Finance Council convened and school district business officials addressed pertinent issues related to school finance. We also facilitated an informative science-based training, "Rocks from Space and Engineering- Early Solar System Clues about Earth." And, on tomorrow, the BEST Plus Refresher Toolkit training will be held. This toolkit training is associated with testing adults for English Proficiency. The course serves as a refresher for educators in the adult education population who are end-users of the system. Finally, from Tuesday through yesterday, we hosted Joe Paneitz, of Aha Education, who facilitated a summer workshop for students in grades 6-8 that promotes robotics problem-solving for the purpose of creating medical biotech robotics. This was certainly a week filled with rich training opportunities facilitated by experts from various respective fields for educators within our 25 school districts and across Harris County. HCDE consistently creates value, provides opportunity, and delivers service.

Meanwhile, this week, Assistant Superintendent Parker and I met with the District Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of Special Education of Goose Creek ISD to discuss our partnership with them in meeting the needs of their student population. It was a productive forum and we hope to continue to build upon that meeting. I also met with representatives from the Greater Houston Partnership this week in an effort to enhance HCDE's relationships with the corporate community in an effort to benefit the Department and its programs, services, and clients through various pathways.

Our staff continues to prepare for the upcoming academic session. They, too, are engaged in professional development, at all levels, to ensure best practices in pedagogy. Other program staff remains involved in the day-to-day management of our diverse summer programs. At the same time, we're gearing up for the Annual Staff Meeting which is just weeks away now.

As for the Team of Eight, we also accomplished a great deal this past Tuesday at both our Policy Meeting and at our regularly scheduled Board Meeting. I appreciate your attendance at this week's meetings, and I am grateful to you for your service to HCDE, as always.

In closing, next week, I will be meeting with the North Harris County Education Alliance Leadership Council at Lone Star College. I look forward to that collaboration and I will keep you posted on the outcomes of that meeting.

I hope you have a great weekend, and I hope you enjoy this issue of **The Connector**!

IN THIS ISSUE:

2-3 Program Connections

3

Community Connections

4

Board Connections

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Students Navigate Drone Quad Copters at the Academic and Behavior School West Campus July 16 End-of-Summer School Activity



Students navigated drone quad copters through the “Quad Copter Challenge” on July 16 at 1 p.m. at the Academic and Behavior School West Campus, 7800 Westglen Dr. The challenge was featured on the front page of the Houston Chronicle City/State section: [www.hcde-texas.org/users/0221/docs/Press releasesNewFolder/Houston Chronicle_071715 final.pdf](http://www.hcde-texas.org/users/0221/docs/Press%20releasesNewFolder/Houston%20Chronicle_071715%20final.pdf)



The end-of-summer school challenge provided the students with experience in teamwork, decision-making, fine- and gross-motor skills, and direction. Students accomplished starting the copter at the landing station and proceeding to three temporary landing platforms. A night mission was included

as copters landed on a temporary platform. All missions were timed. To view the photo album on SmugMug, go to the following link: <http://hcdetx.smugmug.com/SpecialSchools/ABC-West-Drone-Challenge/>.

Center for Safe and Secure Schools Hosts NIMS/ICS Training for Schools

The Center hosted two four-hour sessions to introduce school and nonprofit personnel to the National Incident Management System and the Incident Command System. Attendees included numerous representatives from districts, Houston Food Bank personnel, and HCDE staff. The class introduced NIMS/ICS protocol and how it could be used in an educational environment.



ADVANCING TEACHING AND LEARNING by training the trainer

Trainings hosted at HCDE this week

- 07.20** | lead4ward: Cooling the Curriculum Hot Spots in Math (Grades K-2) - Focus Standards: Number & Operation, Algebraic Reasoning, and Data Analysis
- 07.20** | You Gotta Have Art: 10th Annual Workshop
- 07.20** | Introduction to The Incident Command System
- 07.20** | HCDE Principal Certification Academy Information Meeting
- 07.21** | lead4ward: Cooling the Curriculum Hot Spots in Math (Grades 3-5) - Focus Standards: Number & Operation, Algebraic Reasoning, and Data Analysis
- 07.23** | School Finance Council
- 07.23** | Rocks from Space and Engineering - Early Solar System Clues about Earth
- 07.25** | BEST Plus Refresher Toolkit

10th Annual ‘You Gotta Have Art’ Workshop



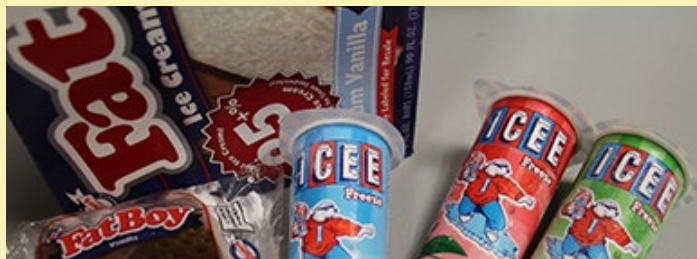
Art teachers gathered for a hands-on, three-day training at HCDE July 20-23. Attendees learned of new, economical projects to introduce to their students this fall using mainly recyclable materials. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the popular “You Gotta Have Art” workshop. Art teachers are excited about this professional development opportunity where they take home great ideas from their peers while receiving 18 hours of continuing professional education credits. This year’s workshop



was presented by Michele Rose, art teacher in Fort Bend Independent School District, and is hosted by HCDE’s Teaching and Learning Center (formerly ISS).

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Ice Cream Social Hosted by Human Resources



As rising temperatures settle into Houston, HCDE employees gathered for ice cream on July 16 in an effort to socialize and fortify. The internal event was hosted by Human Resources.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Summer Robotics Camp Focuses on Robotics Related to Medical Biotech Solutions



Joe Paneitz, owner of Aha Education, LLC, an education and consulting company, hosted a summer workshop at HCDE for children in grades 3-8 on July 20-22. The workshop promoted robotics problem-solving for the purpose of creating medical biotech robotics.

creating solutions with robotic programming and engineering,” said Paneitz, who also teaches at Channelview ISD.

Challenges for the 15 students attending the three-day camp included navigating through a room blindfolded and being guided using sensor technology to provide

solutions for the visually impaired. Students from Pearland, Klein, Humble, and Houston independent school districts attended the camp.



T together
E everyone
A achieves
M more

BOARD CONNECTION

MOTTO

HCDE...Always Educating

MISSION STATEMENT

Harris County Department of Education supports Harris County by enriching educational opportunities and providing value through services.

GOALS

GOAL 1:

Impact education by responding to the evolving needs of Harris County

GOAL 2:

Deliver value to Harris County by utilizing resources in an ethical, transparent, and fiscally responsible manner

GOAL 3:

Advocate for all learners by using innovative methods to maximize students' potential.

GOAL 4:

Provide cost-savings to school districts by leveraging tax dollars

GOAL 5:

Recruit and maintain a high-quality professional staff

Adopted by the HCDE Board of Trustees at its April 21, 2015 meeting.

HCDE BOARD

BOARD PRESIDENT
POSITION 2, PRECINCT 4
Angie Chesnut

BOARD VICE-PRESIDENT
POSITION 4, PRECINCT 3
Kay Smith

Erica Lee Carter
Position 6, Precinct 1

Marvin W. Morris
Position 1, Precinct 2

Don Sumners
Position 7, At Large

Diane Trautman
Position 3, At Large

Michael Wolfe
Position 5, At Large

Upcoming Board Events:

August Board Meeting
Tuesday, August 18, 2015

Annual Staff Meeting
Wednesday, August 19, 2015

