

The Connector

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

FOR THE WEEK OF
JULY 27, 2015
VOLUME 1/ISSUE 32



From the office of **JAMES COLBERT, JR. | SUPERINTENDENT**



Of Note...

With August approaching, our efforts at HCDE are turning toward back to school planning and preparation.

In last week's issue of **The Connector** I mentioned that I would be meeting with representatives from the Greater Houston Partnership. The meeting took place last Wednesday with Jesse Ayala, Public Policy Manager at the Partnership, who provided insight and direction about the exciting opportunities for HCDE to participate in Partnership education initiatives in the coming year.

Maintaining close contact with the leadership of our area school districts is a key part of my work, and to that end last week I met with Alief Superintendent H.D. Chambers. We discussed HCDE's work with the district and how we can continue to help this large and diverse district meet the needs of its students.

Our new assistant superintendent Dr. Kimberly McLeod represented HCDE during a segment on KHOU Channel 11 late last week that focused on helping parents make smart decisions about school supplies as they get their children ready for school. Dr. McLeod did a great job representing our organization. Her interview is available online at <https://youtu.be/HC9JSRJkarO> Dr. McLeod's appearance was coordinated by the HCDE Communication staff who serve as a resource to local media outlets during a month-long "back to school" campaign.

This week, I had the opportunity to meet with the North Harris County Education Alliance Leadership Council at Lone Star College. This group is focused on strengthening the partnership between Lone Star College, Aldine ISD, Spring ISD and other districts in the northern part of the county and providing clear linkages between high school and community college opportunities for students.

This week, HCDE hosted two math workshops—both of which reached maximum registration capacity. One workshop focused on developing fraction concepts and the other emphasized the new math Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for grades 3 and 4. Likewise, Business Services hosted a business and finance meeting for school district business leaders related to changes and updates in school finance matters.

Your support and passage of the 2015-2016 HCDE Budget means that all of our divisions are able to move forward with staffing plans to provide value and services to our client districts in the coming school year.

Next week I will lead our first Leadership Planning Meeting, where members of the Executive Leadership Team will discuss goals, objectives and expectations for the coming school year with managers and program directors from across HCDE.

In closing, on Sunday and Monday I will be in Austin attending the UIL Review Advisory Committee Meeting. My service as Vice-Chair of the UIL State Board of Directors provides a tremendous opportunity to promote HCDE while providing service to students, educators and families throughout Harris County and Texas.

Have a great weekend.

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Head Start Evaluates Curriculum Options for New Early Head Start Program

HCDE Head Start management recently held a curriculum fair to review and evaluate three different infant/toddler curricula to determine which one is most appropriate for implementation in HCDE's Early Head Start program. The three companies who presented their materials were HighScope, Frog Street Press and Teaching Strategies.



Each curriculum was assessed using the following criteria requirements:

- Research-based
- Aligned with Head Start outcomes
- Promotes inclusion and individualization
- Supports responsive teaching and higher-level thinking
- Family involvement component
- Assessment method
- Professional development resources

A final decision about the infant/toddler curriculum will be made by the end of this summer.

HCDE Adult Education Students Enrolled in Dual Construction/GED Class Take on Cause by Crafting, Installing Sign to Benefit Horse Therapy Nonprofit for Children with Disabilities

Adult students enrolled in a dual GED and construction skills class are constructing, delivering and installing a large, 200-pound sign as a philanthropic project for a miniature horse therapy nonprofit called Halter, Inc. in Katy, Texas. Students attend classes at Harris County Department of Education, 6311 Irvington, through a collaborative with HCDE Adult Education and partner Capital Idea-Houston. The Houston nonprofit helps to lift working adults out of poverty and into living wage careers through education. Students began the sign construction project in class and worked in their spare time to complete it.

The sign will be delivered by students and staff from Capital Idea and HCDE to the horse therapy nonprofit for children with disabilities on Aug. 1 at 1:30 p.m. It features a hand-sketch drawing of a horse. The sign is structured and designed to help the nonprofit keep track of messages from clients.



Adult Education at HCDE is supported through federal funds available locally through the Texas Workforce Commission. Students are encouraged to pursue career training while gaining their GEDs and skills in English as a second language.

"Our goal at HCDE is to create collaborative partnerships like the one we have with Capital Idea in order to grow the next generation's skilled-based workforce," said Eduardo Honold, director of HCDE Adult Education.

The class at HCDE offers introductory-level skills in safety, basic construction math, blueprint and basic carpentry techniques which are taught by Kenneth Ricaud, a facilities instructor from San Jacinto College. GED instructor Michelle Lemon works with the students to help them pass the GED.

For more information about classes in GED, adult basic education and English as a second language, call 713-692-6216 or access the schedule and class locations at www.hcde-texas.org/adulteducation . For more information about Capital Idea-Houston, visit www.capitalideahouston.org .

ADVANCING TEACHING AND LEARNING by training the trainer

Trainings hosted at HCDE this week

- 07.27 | State Template Changes and Updates
- 07.29 | Developing Fraction Concepts from the Ground Up
- 07.29 | New Math TEKS Grades 3 & 4
- Ongoing | Classroom Management: Online Course Aug 1, 2015 to Sept 30, 2015



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Assistant Superintendent Kimberly McLeod Showcased in Back-to-School Segment on KHOU

New Assistant Superintendent for Education and Enrichment Kimberly McLeod gets a thumbs up for arriving for a 5 a.m. media opportunity with KHOU Channel 11 TV on July 23 at a Walmart in southeast Houston. The segment aired on Live at 6 a.m. news on KHOU Channel 11. She served as an education expert for back-to-school supplies. She also shared her personal experience as a mother of three boys. The July 23 segment with reporter Sherry Williams is now featured through HCDE's YouTube: <https://youtu.be/HC9JSRJKar0>



Dates for 25 School Districts for 2015-2016 Now Available through Comprehensive Calendar Assembled by HCDE

Important dates for 25 school districts in greater Harris County have been assembled and published by HCDE Communication and Client Engagement. The district calendar will be available soon on the HCDE website through the home page.

| Harris County School District Calendars 2015-2016 Semester Dates and Holiday Schedules | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|----------|---|------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| District | Classes Begin | Thanksgiving | Winter Break | Spring Break | Easter | Staff/Work Days | Other Holidays | Classes End | District | District | District |
| Adrine | Aug. 24 | Nov. 23-27 | Dec. 21 - Jan. 1 | March 14-18 | March 25 | 8/13-8/14, 8/17-8/21, 1/15-6/3 | 8/7, 10/12, 1/18, 2/16, 5/18, 5/20 | June 2 | Adrine | Adrine | Adrine |
| Alford | Aug. 24 | Nov. 23-27 | Dec. 21 - Jan. 1 | March 14-18 | March 25 | 8/13-8/14, 8/17-8/21, 1/15-6/3 | 8/7, 10/12, 1/18, 5/20 | June 2 | Alford | Alford | Alford |
| Channahon | Aug. 24 | Nov. 23-27 | Dec. 21 - Jan. 1 | March 14-18 | March 25 | 8/14, 8/17-8/21, 1/15, 1/16, 2/15, 6/3 | 8/7, 1/18, 5/20 | June 2 | Channahon | Channahon | Channahon |
| Clear Creek | Aug. 24 | Nov. 23-27 | Dec. 21 - Jan. 1 | March 14-18 | March 25 | 8/17-8/21, 1/15, 1/16, 1/18, 6/3 | 8/7, 5/20 | June 2 | Clear Creek | Clear Creek | Clear Creek |
| Creech | Aug. 24 | Nov. 23-27 | Dec. 21 - Jan. 1 | March 14-18 | March 25 | 8/14, 8/17-8/21, 1/14, 2/15, 5/20-6/3 | 8/7, 1/18, 5/20 | June 1 | Creech | Creech | Creech |
| Cy-Fair | Aug. 24 | Nov. 23-27 | Dec. 21 - Jan. 1 | March 14-18 | March 25 | 8/14, 8/17-8/21, 1/15, 1/16, 2/15, 6/2-6/3 | 8/7, 1/18, 5/20 | June 1 | Cy-Fair | Cy-Fair | Cy-Fair |
| Dayton | Aug. 24 | Nov. 23-27 | Dec. 21 - Jan. 1 | March 14-18 | March 25 | 8/17-8/21, 1/14, 1/16, 1/18, 5/20, 6/3 | 8/7, 5/20 | June 2 | Dayton | Dayton | Dayton |
| Deer Park | Aug. 24 | Nov. 23-27 | Dec. 21 - Jan. 1 | March 14-18 | March 25 | 8/17-8/21, 1/15, 1/16, 1/18, 2/15, 6/3 | 8/7, 1/18, 5/20 | June 2 | Deer Park | Deer Park | Deer Park |
| Galena Park | Aug. 24 | Nov. 23-27 | Dec. 21 - Jan. 1 | March 14-18 | March 25 | 8/17-8/21, 1/15, 1/16, 1/18, 2/15, 6/3 | 8/7, 1/18, 5/20 | June 2 | Galena Park | Galena Park | Galena Park |
| Open Creek | Aug. 24 | Nov. 23-27 | Dec. 21 - Jan. 1 | March 14-18 | March 25 | 8/17-8/21, 1/15, 1/16, 1/18, 2/15, 6/3 | 8/7, 1/18, 2/16, 5/20 | June 2 | Open Creek | Open Creek | Open Creek |
| Houston | Aug. 24 | Nov. 23-27 | Dec. 21 - Jan. 1 | March 14-18 | March 25 | 8/10-8/14, 8/17-8/21, 1/14, 5/20 | 8/7, 5/20 | May 25 | Houston | Houston | Houston |
| Humble | Aug. 24 | Nov. 23-27 | Dec. 21 - Jan. 1 | March 14-18 | March 25 | 8/10-8/14, 8/17-8/21, 1/14, 5/20 | 8/7, 5/20 | June 2 | Humble | Humble | Humble |
| Katy | Aug. 24 | Nov. 23-27 | Dec. 21 - Jan. 1 | March 14-18 | March 25 | 8/17-8/21, 1/15, 1/16, 1/18, 2/15, 6/3 | 8/7, 5/20 | June 2 | Katy | Katy | Katy |
| Klein | Aug. 24 | Nov. 23-27 | Dec. 21 - Jan. 1 | March 14-18 | March 25 | 8/17-8/21, 1/15, 1/16, 1/18, 2/15, 6/3 | 8/7, 1/18, 5/20 | June 2 | Klein | Klein | Klein |
| La Porte | Aug. 24 | Nov. 23-27 | Dec. 21 - Jan. 1 | March 14-18 | March 25 | 8/17-8/21, 1/15, 1/16, 1/18, 2/15, 6/3 | 8/7, 1/18, 5/20 | June 2 | La Porte | La Porte | La Porte |
| New Caney | Aug. 24 | Nov. 23-27 | Dec. 21 - Jan. 1 | March 14-18 | March 25 | 8/17-8/21, 1/15, 1/16, 1/18, 2/15, 6/3 | 8/7, 5/20 | May 27 | New Caney | New Caney | New Caney |
| Pearland | Aug. 24 | Nov. 23-27 | Dec. 21 - Jan. 1 | March 14-18 | March 25 | 8/17-8/21, 1/15, 1/16, 1/18, 2/15, 6/3 | 8/7, 5/20 | June 2 | Pearland | Pearland | Pearland |
| Pasadena | Aug. 25 | Nov. 23-27 | Dec. 21 - Jan. 1 | March 14-18 | March 25 | 8/13-8/14, 8/17-8/21, 1/15, 1/16, 1/18, 2/15, 6/3 | 8/7, 1/18, 2/16, 5/20 | June 2 | Pasadena | Pasadena | Pasadena |
| Spring | Aug. 24 | Nov. 23-27 | Dec. 21 - Jan. 1 | March 14-18 | March 25 | 8/10-8/14, 8/17-8/21, 1/14, 5/20 | 8/7, 1/18, 5/20 | May 26 | Spring | Spring | Spring |
| Spring Branch | Aug. 24 | Nov. 23-27 | Dec. 21 - Jan. 1 | March 14-18 | March 25 | 8/13-8/14, 8/17-8/21, 1/15, 1/16, 1/18, 2/15, 6/3 | 8/7, 1/18, 2/16, 5/20 | June 2 | Spring Branch | Spring Branch | Spring Branch |
| Stafford | Aug. 24 | Nov. 23-27 | Dec. 21 - Jan. 1 | March 14-18 | March 25 | 8/13-8/14, 8/17-8/21, 1/15, 1/16, 1/18, 2/15, 6/3 | 8/7, 5/20, 1/18, 5/20 | June 2 | Stafford | Stafford | Stafford |
| Tomball | Aug. 24 | Nov. 23-27 | Dec. 21 - Jan. 1 | March 14-18 | March 25 | 8/14, 8/17-8/21, 1/14, 1/16, 1/18, 2/15, 6/3 | 8/7, 2/16, 5/20 | June 2 | Tomball | Tomball | Tomball |
| Waller | Aug. 24 | Nov. 23-27 | Dec. 21 - Jan. 1 | March 14-18 | March 25 | 8/14, 8/17-8/21, 1/15, 1/16, 1/18, 2/15, 6/2-6/3 | 8/7, 1/18, 5/20 | June 1 | Waller | Waller | Waller |

Most districts begin school this year on Aug. 24 with the exception of Pasadena ISD which starts on Aug. 25. School districts celebrate Thanksgiving from Nov. 23-27 with the exception of Houston, Klein and Spring Branch. All districts observe winter break from Dec. 21-Jan. 1, and all districts observe spring break from March 14-18. Easter is recognized by a day off on March 25. Staff work days and other holidays vary from district to district. Most districts end school on June 2 with exception of Cy-Fair (June 1), Houston (May 25), New Caney (May 27), Spring (May 26) and Waller (June 1).

You may view the calendar for the 25 school districts through the following link: [www.hcde-texas.org/users/0221/docs/District calendars 2015 2016.pdf](http://www.hcde-texas.org/users/0221/docs/District%20calendars%202015%202016.pdf)

BUSINESS CONNECTIONS

School Finance Expert Omar Garcia Meets with Districts about New Financial Issues

School finance expert Omar Garcia of BOSCO Inc. met with school business officials at HCDE on July 27 at a meeting hosted by Business Services. Discussions included the impact of the homestead exemption increase; changing fractional funding; holding harmless calculations; effective tax rate calculations and notices; and other school business matters.



Later this week Garcia releases the third version of the school finance template so that school districts may calculate the impact of changes in values, exemptions and TEA updates.

Three Journalists To Be Honored at August 18 Board Meeting

Three local journalists have accepted an invitation to be honored at the August HCDE Board of Trustees meeting. Bill Spencer of KPRC, Rebecca Jones of the African American News, and Michael Carl of KIAH will receive plaques.



Bill Spencer



Rebecca Jones



Michael Carl

An honorary video will also be shown at the meeting. HCDE issues the awards on behalf of the Texas Association of School Boards. Recipient names are published through the TASB website.



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

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Position 3, At Large

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Position 5, At Large

Upcoming Board Events:

August Board Meeting
Tuesday, August 18, 2015

Annual Staff Meeting
Wednesday, August 19, 2015

