

# The Connector

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

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



## Of Note...

We have successfully ended the first week of school for the 2015-2016 academic year. Our campuses opened their doors this past Monday, welcoming the students of Harris County. It was a day of high energy, encouraging spirits, and new beginnings for both our staff and students.

I visited both of the Academic and Behavior Schools (East and West) on the first day of school, and our campus operations were organized and on task. I had the opportunity to visit numerous classrooms, shake hands, and speak with teachers and students. This school year began on the heels of the 2015 Annual Staff Meeting. Employee morale is high, and the culture and climate of HCDE are geared for excellence. It's been a great first week of school. I am convinced that the best is yet to come.

Also, this week, we continued to create value, deliver opportunities, and provide services to the 25 Harris County School Districts, and to those that support public education. On Wednesday, we hosted the Quest for Grants Training Series Webinar entitled, "So You Want Me to Write a Grant", as well as yet another HCDE Principal Certification Academy Information Meeting. Yesterday, we held an Ethics for Accountants training and today, the School Finance Council met. Over the weekend (tomorrow), we will continue the ABE Syllabus training, TEAMS for Teachers training, Integrated Career Awareness, ESL Framework, and ESL Syllabus Training- all for our Adult Education staff.

Internally, this past week, we hosted Board Agenda Submission System training in an effort to ensure the most efficient board agenda submission and preparation process. We conducted four sessions for all staff involved in the agenda process. This training will bring much more clarity to the HCDE Board Agenda.

Next week, I will travel to Austin to attend a UIL State Executive Committee Meeting where I have served as the Vice President heretofore. I also plan to visit our Highpoint Schools, as well as more of our Head Start locations.

We look forward to an excellent school year filled with successes that I look forward to sharing with you. The first days and weeks of school are wonderful reminders of what the education business is really all about. Thanks again for your commitment to public education. There's nothing like looking into the eyes of children who can be compared to sponges, just eager to soak up knowledge, learning as much as they can.

In closing, I hope you have a great weekend and I hope you enjoy this issue of **The Connector**. Again, it was a great week at HCDE!

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# PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

## CASE for Kids Announces Keynote Speaker for Sept. 25-26 Conference: Dr. Eddie Connor, Bestselling Author

CASE-for-Kids readies for the 3rd annual Out-of-School Time Conference set for Sept. 25-26 and recently announced the keynote speaker for its "State of After-School" address luncheon on Sept. 25. Dr. Eddie M. Connor, Jr. is the bestselling author of five books and founder of the Boys 2 Books program which provides mentorship to boys through literacy, leadership, and life skills enrichment. Emcee for the luncheon is Fox 26 news anchor Melinda Spaulding.



Learn more about the conference: <http://www.afterschoolzone.org/default.aspx?name=OST-Conference>

## Educator Certification and Professional Advancement Advisory Committee Meeting

HCDE's Educator Certification and Professional Advancement division held its biannual Advisory Committee meeting August 20, introducing new members and the division's new name. Director Lidia Zatopek reviewed how the program operates, and facilitated a discussion on recommendations for improvement. During the 2014-15 school year, ECPA served 157 certification candidates, 92 seeking teacher certification, and 65 seeking principal certification. This next year, the program looks to expand its leadership program and add a second principal cohort in January. The program's accreditation status from the State Board for Education Certification continues as "Accredited," the highest rating possible, per notification by SBEC on June 22, 2015.



**ADVANCING  
TEACHING AND  
LEARNING by  
training the  
trainer**

**Trainings hosted at  
HCDE this week**

**08.27 | Ethics For  
Accountants**

**08.28 | School Finance  
Council**

**08.29 | ABE Syllabus**

**08.29 | TEAMS for Teachers**

**08.29 | TEAMS for Teachers**

**08.29 | ICA - Integrated  
Career Awareness**

**08.29 | ESL Framework**

**08.29 | ESL Syllabus  
Training**

# PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

## **City of Houston invests \$495,000 in afterschool during 2015-2016 school year with CASE for Kids City Connections**

Students throughout Houston benefit from \$495,000 in afterschool funding this school year approved by Houston City Council and administered in the 2015-2016 school year through the Center for Afterschool, Summer and Expanded Learning, or CASE for Kids, a division of Harris County Department of Education.

Funding for all 11 council districts is earmarked for nonprofit organizations that provide out-of-school time programs in school districts, charter schools, faith-based organizations or civic groups. The programs for youth in grades K-12 will be held before and after the school day, on weekends and during the summer. Providers may apply for funding through CASE for Kids at <http://www.afterschoolzone.org>. CASE for Kids provides resources, trainings and funding for afterschool programs in schools, childcare centers and community centers for children in grades pre-k through 12. Last year, CASE for Kids served 12,212 children through out-of-school time programs in greater Houston.

Allotted funding for each of the council districts is \$45,000 during two timelines. Deadline for application for the first grant term is Sept. 11, 2015 for programs delivered from Oct. 12 to Dec. 31. The second deadline for application is Jan. 29, 2016 for programs provided from March 1 through May 31.

"We are appreciative of this opportunity to serve families in Houston so that they can benefit from these enrichment programs," said Lisa Thompson-Caruthers, director of CASE for Kids. "Our city leaders are answering a critical need for child safety and community security as state and federal funding continues to decrease."

Houston City Council Member C.O. Bradford proposed and promoted City Connections funding last year when council members voted to support funding throughout all the council districts. Bradford backed a \$550,000 budget for afterschool as an integral part of effective crime prevention in Houston.

Details about the new 2015-2016 City Connections funding and the application may be accessed through the following link: <http://www.afterschoolzone.org>. For questions, call 713-696-1330 or email [caseconnections@hcde-texas.org](mailto:caseconnections@hcde-texas.org).



## **School-Based Therapy Services Gathers Staff for 2015-2016 School Year Kickoff**



School-Based Therapy Services staff gathered Aug. 20 to plan for the new school year with the theme: "Moving Mountains, Transforming Lives... One Child at a Time." Guest speaker Paula Maddox Roalson, attorney from Walsh Gallegos, presented a session on special education law. The day included returning staff updates for the 160 physical, occupational and music therapists, assistant occupational and physical therapists, and staff. Last year, our School-Based Therapy Services division served 5,000 students.

# CAMPUS CONNECTIONS

## Back-to-School Brings Anticipation, Encouragement, Pride as Superintendent Colbert Visits 2 Schools

Back-to-school started on a high note as Superintendent Colbert visited both Academic and Behavior Schools- East and West on Sept. 24. One of the students he stopped to greet was Payten Holmes, 9, who was excited about the day and eager to get to work. As students and staff settled into their routines, Colbert issued well wishes and encouragement. Back-to-school started on Sept. 24 for most districts in Harris County.



# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

## New School Districts Comprehensive Calendar Features Department's Vision: Value, Opportunity, Service

The 2015-2016 School Districts Calendar is officially available to the community via the HCDE website. The calendar features important dates from all 25 Harris County districts and also includes the Department's vision for the future: Value...Opportunity...Service. The calendars are mailed to schools after Labor Day. Find the calendar through the following link: <http://www.hcde-texas.org/users/0221/docs/HCDE-2015-16-Distr-Calendar.pdf>.

## Value Opportunity Service

Semester Dates and Holiday Schedules

**2015-2016**

## Harris County School District Calendars

District	Classes Begin	Thanksgiving	Winter Break	Spring Break	Easter	Staff/Work Days	Other Holidays	Classes End	District
Aldine	Aug. 24	Nov. 23-27	Dec. 21 - Jan. 1	March 14-18	March 25	8/12 - 8/14, 8/17- 8/21, 1/15, 6/3	9/2, 10/12, 1/18, 2/15, 5/30	June 2	Aldine
Alief	Aug. 24	Nov. 23-27	Dec. 21 - Jan. 1	March 14-18	March 25	8/17 - 8/21, 1/4, 2/15, 6/3	9/2, 10/12, 1/18, 5/30	June 2	Alief
Channelview	Aug. 24	Nov. 23-27	Dec. 21 - Jan. 1	March 14-18	March 25	8/14, 8/17- 8/21, 10/12, 1/4, 2/15, 6/3	9/2, 1/18, 5/30	June 2	Channelview
Clear Creek	Aug. 24	Nov. 23-27	Dec. 21 - Jan. 1	March 14-18	March 25	8/17 - 8/21, 10/9, 11/3, 1/4, 1/18, 6/3	9/2, 5/30	June 2	Clear Creek
Crosby	Aug. 24	Nov. 23-27	Dec. 21 - Jan. 1	March 14-18	March 25	8/14, 8/17- 8/21, 1/4, 2/15, 6/2-6/3	9/2, 1/18, 5/30	June 1	Crosby
Cy-Fair	Aug. 24	Nov. 23-27	Dec. 21 - Jan. 1	March 14-18	March 25	8/14, 8/17- 8/21, 10/12, 1/4, 2/15, 6/2 - 6/3	9/2, 1/18, 5/30	June 1	Cy-Fair
Dayton	Aug. 24	Nov. 23-27	Dec. 21 - Jan. 1	March 14-18	March 25	8/17 - 8/21, 10/14, 1/4, 1/18, 5/20, 6/3	9/2, 5/30	June 2	Dayton
Deer Park	Aug. 25	Nov. 23-27	Dec. 21 - Jan. 1	March 14-18	March 25	8/17- 8/21, 8/24, 10/12, 1/18, 2/15, 6/3	9/2, 5/30	June 2	Deer Park
Galena Park	Aug. 24	Nov. 23-27	Dec. 21 - Jan. 1	March 14-18	March 25	8/17 - 8/21, 10/12, 1/4, 2/15, 4/16, 6/3	9/2, 1/18, 5/30	June 2	Galena Park
Goose Creek	Aug. 24	Nov. 23-27	Dec. 21 - Jan. 1	March 14-18	March 25	8/13 - 8/14, 8/17 - 8/21, 10/12, 1/4, 6/2	9/2, 1/18, 2/15, 5/30	June 2	Goose Creek
Houston	Aug. 24	Nov. 25-27	Dec. 21 - Jan. 1	March 14-18	March 25	8/19 - 8/14, 8/17- 8/21, 1/4, 5/26	9/2, 9/23, 1/18	May 25	Houston
Huffman	Aug. 24	Nov. 23-27	Dec. 21 - Jan. 1	March 14-18	March 25	8/17 - 8/21, 10/23, 1/4, 1/18, 2/15, 6/3	9/2, 5/30	June 2	Huffman
Humble	Aug. 24	Nov. 23-27	Dec. 21 - Jan. 1	March 14-18	March 25	8/14, 8/17 - 8/21, 10/12, 1/4, 2/15, 6/3	9/2, 1/18, 5/30	June 2	Humble
Katy	Aug. 24	Nov. 25-27	Dec. 21 - Jan. 1	March 14-18	March 25	8/17 - 8/21, 10/12, 1/4, 4/29, 6/3	9/2, 1/18, 5/22, 5/30	June 2	Katy
Klein	Aug. 24	Nov. 25-27	Dec. 21 - Jan. 1	March 14-18	March 25	8/17 - 8/20, 10/12, 11/23-11/24, 1/4, 2/15, 6/3	9/2, 1/18, 5/30	June 2	Klein
La Porte	Aug. 24	Nov. 23-27	Dec. 21 - Jan. 1	March 14-18	March 25	8/17 - 8/21, 10/12, 1/4, 1/18, 2/15, 6/3	9/2, 5/30	June 2	La Porte
New Caney	Aug. 24	Nov. 23-27	Dec. 21 - Jan. 1	March 14-18	March 25	8/17- 8/21, 1/4, 1/18, 2/15, 5/31, 6/1 - 6/3	9/2, 5/30	May 27	New Caney
Pasadena	Aug. 25	Nov. 23-27	Dec. 21 - Jan. 1	March 14-18	March 25	8/17- 8/21, 8/24, 10/18, 1/4 - 1/5, 1/18, 2/15, 6/3	9/2, 5/30	June 2	Pasadena
Pearland	Aug. 24	Nov. 23-27	Dec. 21 - Jan. 1	March 14-18	March 25	8/17 - 8/21, 10/12, 1/4, 1/18, 2/15, 6/3	9/2, 5/30	June 2	Pearland
Sheldon	Aug. 24	Nov. 23-27	Dec. 21 - Jan. 1	March 14-18	March 25	8/13 - 8/14, 8/17 - 8/21, 10/26, 1/4, 6/3	9/2, 1/18, 2/15, 5/30	June 2	Sheldon
Spring	Aug. 24	Nov. 23-27	Dec. 21 - Jan. 1	March 14-18	March 25	8/19 - 8/14, 8/17 - 8/21, 1/4, 5/27	9/2, 1/18, 5/30	May 25	Spring
Spring Branch	Aug. 24	Nov. 25-27	Dec. 21 - Jan. 1	March 14-18	March 25	8/13 - 8/14, 8/17 - 8/21, 1/4, 2/15, 6/3, 6/6 - 6/7	9/2, 10/12, 1/18, 4/18, 5/30	June 2	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, 1/4, 2/15, 4/15, 6/3	9/2, 9/25, 1/18, 5/30	June 2	Stafford
Tomball	Aug. 24	Nov. 23-27	Dec. 21 - Jan. 1	March 14-18	March 25	8/14, 8/17 - 8/21, 1/4, 1/18, 2/12, 6/3	9/2, 2/15, 5/30	June 2	Tomball
Waller	Aug. 24	Nov. 23-27	Dec. 21 - Jan. 1	March 14-18	March 25	8/14, 8/17 - 8/21, 10, 1/4, 2/15, 6/2 - 6/3	9/2, 1/18, 5/30	June 1	Waller



Follow us!

## 25 HARRIS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Aldine

Alief

Channelview

Clear Creek

Crosby

Cy-Fair

Dayton

Deer Park

Galena Park

Goose Creek

Houston

Huffman

Humble

Katy

Klein

La Porte

New Caney

Pasadena

Pearland

Sheldon

Spring

Spring Branch

Stafford

Tomball

Waller

# BOARD CONNECTION

## HCDE Board of Trustees



## HCDE BOARD

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Position 3, At Large

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Position 5, At Large

## UPCOMING BOARD EVENTS:

**September Board Meeting**  
**Tuesday, September 15, 2015**

