

The CONNECTOR

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



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Week of April 18, 2016

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

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OF NOTE

Of Note

I trust this communication finds you and your families safe and dry as the city continues to weather the storms and flooding brought about by this week's weather event. Our Facilities division and I continually monitored the status of our campuses and centers across the city during the event. I am pleased to report that all is well, with only a few facilities having sustained minimum damage.

Also, to that end, the Department was closed Monday and Tuesday of this week due to widespread flooding, high water in and around the city, and torrential rains that continued to fall. Unfortunately, as a result, we were forced to reschedule Tuesday's regularly scheduled April Board of Trustees Meeting. I returned to the office Wednesday and immediately debriefed with the Executive Leadership Team on the status of our divisions and programs in the wake of area school districts being closed. As we suspected would be the case, the Texas Education Agency has issued a waiver for the two days we were closed, which primarily benefits our client districts and our School-Based Therapy Services division.

As mentioned in last week's issue of **The Connector**, the Focal Point | Executive Leadership in Action delegation of Harris County superintendents and I attended the Strategic Leader Staff Ride, as part of the United States Army War College's Battlefield Leadership Seminar Program. It was hands-down, the best, most-comprehensive and enlightening professional development experience that both our client member district superintendents who attended and I have ever experienced. This sentiment was pervasively shared by all attendees.

During the seminar program, we toured the nine pivotal locations of the Gettysburg Campaign. At each stop along the way, we explored the leadership styles of each military leader on both sides of the war. The final stop of the Staff Leadership Ride tour was profound and moving. It was the Soldiers' Cemetery. Words can't express how moving this experience was on varying levels. It was certainly a life-changing event and each of us is much richer now—especially from an executive leadership perspective—than prior to visiting the USAWC. Expect a much more detailed summary in the near future.

This week, although workshops previously scheduled for Monday and Tuesday were forced to be postponed due to school district closures, we picked up on Wednesday, where we left off by offering a variety of trainings ranging from a webinar for grant-related services, along with other workshops geared toward classroom management and leadership. HCDE is committed to creating value, delivering opportunity, and providing service to the 25 school districts within Harris County and beyond.

I am pleased to announce that the official Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) publication is ready for dissemination to the public. The PAFR provides, in an easy-to-understand manner, the financial inner-workings of the Department and serves as an annual report. It is both educational and informative to our constituents and public officials, alike. We look forward to providing you with your individual copies at the rescheduled Board Meeting.

In closing, members of the Schools division and I will depart for Chicago this Sunday to attend site visits to several alternative campuses specializing in discipline and special education. The purpose of this trip is to obtain an up-close vantage point of their successful systems in an effort to possibly replicate within our own campus operations. I will return to the office on Wednesday, April 27, 2016.

Thank you for your continued service to HCDE. I hope you have a relaxing weekend and I hope you enjoy this issue of **The Connector**.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS



Assistant Superintendent McLeod Featured in Texas School Business

Assistant Superintendent for Education and Enrichment Dr. Kimberly McLeod is featured in Texas School Business this month through the Texas Council of Women School Executives awards luncheon. Members were recognized for outstanding contributions to public education.

View the article:

http://hcde-texas.org/users/0221/images/Connector/4710_001.pdf

Advancing Teaching and Learning by Training the Trainer

Trainings hosted at HCDE this week

APRIL 18, 2016

Online: Digital Safety Academy (Part II) - Online Digital Safety and the Law

APRIL 19, 2016

Quest for Grants Training Series: The Basics of Grant Writing

4-Day Test Prep Workshop for TExES ESL Supplemental Exam.

Culturally Responsive Literacy Instruction

APRIL 20, 2016

Quest for Grants Training Series Webinar - So You Want Me to Write a Grant!

The Immigrant Experience through Time

APRIL 21, 2016

Mysterious Makers

Coding 101

Dispositions for Effective Education Leaders

Classroom Management - Connect the Dots

APRIL 22, 2016

Writing Strategies

APRIL 23, 2016

HCDE Principal Certification Academy Information Meeting

HCDE Mentioned in Houston Public Media 'Thank You' Spot

Houston Public Media is currently running a 2016 Spelling Bee 'Thank You' spot to congratulate the co-champions and offer special thanks to Harris County Department of Education as the supporting sponsor for the event. View the video at <https://youtu.be/nkST6mhZe0g>.



Center for Grants Development Presents Grant Writing Workshop for Afterschool Providers

CGD Development Coordinator Sharvon D. Pipkins presented a workshop entitled Grants for Afterschool: How to Get and Sustain More Funding at the CASE for Kids Training Series on April 13. The workshop is designed to help participants start, expand, or sustain their afterschool program. A total of 18 administrators, managers, and frontline staff of afterschool programs, child care centers, summer camps, as well as out-of-school time service providers attended the training. Participants learned how to plan, write, and secure grants from various funding agencies and sustain their program. Led by Pipkins, attendees created a customized cover letter to submit to funders and received a list of top grant opportunities to support their initiative.



Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT UPDATES

Adult Education

Hats off to the students of the Adult Education division as they make great strides!

- 35 HCDE Adult Education students obtained Core Curriculum Certification in Construction, integrated with math, reading, and language skills, in a program collaboration between HCDE and Launch Point.
- Another 25 Adult Education students received certificates to celebrate the same certification at HCDE's construction lab. Sixteen of those participants will continue studying at San Jacinto College, while others received job-coaching to begin employment within the construction industry. (Partner organization, Capital Idea, partnered with HCDE and provided these classes at no cost to our students.)
- 11 students from the Texas Industry Specific English as a Second Language (TISESL) Sales and Service class graduated from a 200-hour rigorous vocational ESL curriculum. The students are currently seeking employment and employment advancement in the retail industry.

Center for Grants Development

The Center for Grants Development continues to work with HCDE divisions to both retain current and secure new funding for HCDE programs and services. Proposal submissions and related projects include:

- Head Start- Well Wish Foundation (new funding) in the amount of \$10,000 to support the Read and Rise family literacy initiative. Sharvon Pipkins, CGD project lead
- CASE for Kids- Menninger Clinic (new funding) in the amount of \$800,000 to support an initiative for the development and implementation of an out-of-school time model to address preventive mental health needs in the county. Sharvon Pipkins, CGD project lead with support provided by Dr. Vida L. Avery and Gayla Rawlinson-Maynard

Educator Certification and Professional Advancement (ECPA)

- The division co-hosted the 2nd Annual School Reform Initiative (SRI) Facilitators Retreat conference held at the Monarch School and Institute for Neurological Differences in Houston. Over 25 leaders from across the country were in attendance representing various organizations, schools, and foundations.
- The division is also pleased to report that 26 first-year teachers and current candidates in ECPA's teacher certification program have successfully completed their third on-site Saturday seminar on Differentiated Learning.

Research and Evaluation Institute

- Director Dr. Jeannette Truxillo, in collaboration with Gayla Rawlinson-Maynard, presented at the quarterly Networking Session of District Grant Professionals. Dr. Truxillo, who has designed and conducted grant evaluations for nearly 20 years, presented **Building Evaluation Plans for Grant Programs**.

Teaching and Learning Center (TLC)

Mathematics

- Director Nicole Shanahan continues her work with 4th and 5th graders at Mangum Elementary in Southwest Charter Schools. Most recently, she presented a four-day training for nearly 100 early childhood teachers in Beaumont ISD. She also presented a new workshop called Math Institute: Aligning the PK Guidelines to the New Kindergarten TEKS for 40 pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers.

English

- English Language/Social Studies Director Kelly Tummy conducted a site visit to Barbers Hill ISD where she provided guidance and shared information related to HCDE's services through TLC.
- She also met with the Executive Director for National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) as part of a focus group to help start the rebranding of the national organization.

Service

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Area Educators Attend Teen Truth: Difference Maker Summit to Inspire Change on Campuses



More than 30 area educators attended the Center for Safe and Secure School's Teen Truth: Difference Maker Summit last week. As part of the summit, educators watched student-made videos that fueled discussions on bullying, body image, family violence, and more.

Producer and speaker J.C. Pohl also encouraged attendees to develop a better understanding of issues currently facing their schools and engage in team-building activities to strengthen the campus culture.

For more than 10 years, Teen Truth has inspired change and advanced leadership in schools, districts, and cities across North America. For more information on Teen Truth, visit <http://www.teentruth.net/>.



DISTRICT HIGHLIGHT: LaPorte ISD

La Porte ISD presents a series of one-act plays with middle- and high-school performers at 6 p.m. on April 22 in the Sonja Angelo Theatre.



Details:

<http://www.lpsid.org/apps/news/article/565270>

Four Videos Highlight Student Successes during Scholastic Art & Writing Awards



Communications created four videos to promote students in four school districts who are Gold Key Medalists in the School Art & Writing Awards. The students have the opportunity to travel to New York City's Carnegie Hall in June. One video gives an overview of student work at an Archway Gallery exhibit while three videos actually feature interviews with the students. View the videos through HCDEtv YouTube.

General video: <https://youtu.be/Sg87RpcsMtM>

Deer Park student Taylor Gleason: <https://youtu.be/gBUGp9SUj0E>

HISD student Karina Perez: <https://youtu.be/lrlnZVCIIAM>

HISD student Anna White: https://youtu.be/eGAbfkVr6_I



Teaching and Learning Center Presents Freedom Writer Manuel Scott on June 13

As part of the Leadership Speaker Series, HCDE's Teaching and Learning Center presents *How to Make Youth Thirst for Education...Even the 'Unreachables'* with Freedom Writer Manuel Scott on June 13. Scott shares his 'secret sauce' to engaging, equipping, and empowering even the most unmotivated youth to take responsibility for their own success. Through this workshop, Scott will explain, illustrate and apply each technique with real-life examples that can be applied immediately. For more information on this workshop, visit <http://goo.gl/xlJqX>.

Systemic Achievement

...with purposeful intent

Community Relations

In accordance with the Board's expectations of 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 community; and to
- Work with other governmental entities and community organizations to meet the needs of students and the community in a coordinated way

In addition to regular mentions and features in news outlets across the city and state, and sometimes nationally, HCDE continues to receive extensive media coverage through a variety of media. As a result of having attended the Texas Council of Women School



Executives awards

luncheon, Assistant Superintendent Kimberly McLeod was featured in the current issue of Texas School Business. Additionally, we continue to receive visibility via Houston Public Media as a sponsor of the Spelling Bee.

As a result of the aforementioned and many other media opportunities and through partnerships, collaborations, networking, and the continual building of relationships, I am forwarding the Board's goal of me to:

- Present a positive, professional image of the Department in all venues;
- Maintain visibility and involvement in the community with ISD superintendents, elected officials, and community leaders;
- Communicate the needs and accomplishments of the Department in a variety of formats—through written reports, communication with the media, community, school districts, political arenas and public meetings;
- Represent HCDE by attendance at events and speak professionally;
- Make professional presentations to all audiences in all arenas; and
- Listen and take into account differing viewpoints of various constituencies using good judgment.

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UPCOMING BOARD EVENTS:

May Board Meeting
 Tuesday, ?, 2016
 1:00 p.m.
 Room 400

