

The CONNECTOR

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for the HCDE Board of Trustees



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

IN THIS ISSUE



TLC Visits Title 1 Campus Golden Acres in Pasadena ISD
pg. 3



Workforce Curriculum, Grant Recognize HCDE's Commitment to Adult Learners
pg. 3



HCDE 'Goes Green' for Children's Mental Health Awareness Day
pg. 4



Nearly 250 Attend Head Start Healthy Minds Healthy Families Conference
pg. 5



Education Foundation of Harris County Hosts Energy City of the Future May 14
pg. 5

OF NOTE

As we wind down the end of the academic year, our schools are focused on STAAR testing this week. At the same time, our schools and client districts are preparing for an end of school date of either June 1 or June 2. Most districts will end the semester on June 2, while a few others will close out on June 1.

As discussed in the last issue of **The Connector**, I spent last weekend at an orientation retreat with my cohorts in the newest class of the American Leadership Forum (ALF). The retreat was held at Camp Allen in Navasota, Texas. It was an enlightening experience and was a great kick-off to the class commitment.

The ALF has worked, for the past 30 years, to intentionally bring together a mix of diverse leaders from virtually every sector of the Houston community in an effort to co-create new possibilities. The ALF philosophy is characterized by a strong belief in the human capacity for collective intelligence and the program focuses on the principles of a different kind of leadership to empower Fellows to imagine effective solutions and to also take coordinated action to address the community's many pressing issues.

As you know, I will travel with the group to Denver in July as we progress through the class. In addition, as a group, we will meet one day each month to fuel the momentum of the process and to continue our development as professionals.

On Tuesday of this week, I left for Austin where I participated in another TASBE Superintendents' Think Tank Conference. The conference began with a dinner where Texas Education Agency Deputy Commissioner A.J. Crabill was the guest speaker. Professional development topics for the week included Managing District Finances, District of Innovation Legislation, Index 4 Determination, Data Management Systems for Large Districts, as well as other relevant topics. Both the ALF and Superintendents' Think Tank Conferences are ideal professional development opportunities that afford me various perspectives on which I can apply to my work here at HCDE.

HCDE was represented at this week's Upskill Houston Meeting, as part of my role with the Greater Houston Partnership. This opportunity serves as one that will assist us as our Adult Education division continues to empower our students through various career pathways that will ultimately increase the earning power of the Adult Education population. As previously mentioned in **The Connector**, UpSkill Houston is an industry-led workforce development program to fill middle skills jobs and build careers in advanced manufacturing, construction, healthcare, oil and gas, and an variety of other fields. HCDE remains engaged in this important initiative.

You will recall that the Focal Point Harris County Superintendent delegation traveled to the United States Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. We spent a day at Gettysburg for an exceptional and unique professional development opportunity and also time at the cutting edge War College where we received training from historians as well as the War College Commandant. Attached to the email containing this week's newsletter, are two additional attachments. One is a summary of the USAWC professional development experience, and the other is an evaluation report, conducted by our Research and Evaluation division, which contains the results of the information collected about the relevance and usefulness of this experience from the Harris County superintendents who participated. I invite you to take a look at both documents. I am pleased with the outcome and the superintendents have reported the same sentiment.

My assistant, Karla Cantu, has announced that she is expecting a baby girl in November. When you see her, please feel free to extend your best wishes. Also, by now, you should have received an email from Ms. Cantu regarding the upcoming Board Walk. Please be reminded that the Board Walk is planned for Monday, May 16. We will travel to the Academic and Behavior School- West Campus, to visit that facility, as well as other alternative property locations, as identified by our realtor, as we consider action steps moving forward. To that end, please be reminded that the May Board Meeting will take place Tuesday, May 17 at 1:00 p.m. I am hopeful that you are able to join us on this important Board Walk.

In closing, I hope you enjoy this issue of **The Connector** and I look forward to seeing you at next week's Board Walk activity. Thanks for your service to HCDE and I hope you have a relaxing weekend.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

TLC Visits Title 1 Campus Golden Acres in Pasadena ISD

Teaching and Learning Center directors and staff went on a fact-finding mission to determine how staff might help Golden Acres Elementary in Pasadena ISD with resources to benefit teachers and students.

The school is launching a new initiative that uses enrichment stations or areas to motivate and engage its students. The four enrichment zones mix science, technology, writing or math with art.

Golden Acres is seeking innovative ideas for engaging the students from our staff in TLC. TLC toured the school and provided insight on resources available through HCDE.



TLC staff tour the elementary school.



Staff from TLC and teachers from Golden Acres Elementary in Pasadena ISD



Science Curriculum Director Lisa Felske discusses curriculum with teachers.

Advancing Teaching and Learning by Training the Trainer

Trainings hosted at HCDE this week

MAY 9, 2016

Classroom Management - How to Transition from Annoyance to Engagement: Changing your Viewpoint on Student Discipline

Online Instructor's Training - Part I

MAY 12, 2016

Clear Limits and Structure

Investment Training - School Finance Council

MAY 13, 2016

Social Studies Leadership Group

Investment Training - School Finance Council

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS



Workforce Curriculum, Grant Recognize HCDE's Commitment to Adult Learners

The Texas Workforce Commission Adult Education and Literacy Program requested that an HCDE Adult Education presentation be included as a new module for state professional development. The module entitled "College Prep Academy: A Day in the Life" led by division manager Angela Johnson highlights the collaboration between

Capital Idea of Houston and HCDE in providing an intensive college prep course for underprepared adults. HCDE will work with the Texas Center for Adult Literacy and Learning to develop the module.

Recently the Board's approval of the \$289,000 Workplace Literacy Grant fueled the Adult Education goal of supply services to local area employers. The goal will be to serve a minimum of five employers and 200 future employees who will be our students.

iTeach/iLearn Webinars Deliver Resources in Summer to Teachers



Digital Education and Innovation, a Teaching and Learning Center program, hosted its second iTeach/iLearn webinar this month. Summer Reel from Guthrie Virtual School in Guthrie, Texas provided the online session. The free monthly webinars supply resources on a variety of topics for pre-k through 12 teachers. Each topic is advertised in advance, and presenters include objectives and a lesson.

Three upcoming webinar initiatives will include The Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. in late May. The Smithsonian will provide a learning lab tool free of charge. Other presenters will include the Texas Computer Education Association's leader Miguel Guhlin in June and HISD's Kevin Lewis mid-June.

In additional Digital Education and Innovation news, David McGeary and Lynnice Hockaday met to discuss the Digital Trust Foundation grant with Houston ISD. HCDE and HISD will combine resources to create a more comprehensive online safety training program for school districts.

CASE for Kids News

During the Healthy Minds Healthy Families Conference held on May 6 at HCDE, CASE for Kids employee Claudia Magallan presented a workshop focused on how to connect parents through programs.



On May 9, CASE for Kids Director Dr. Lisa Caruthers stopped by and played chess with students in the YES Prep West afterschool program.



Opportunity

CAMPUS CONNECTIONS

HCDE 'Goes Green' for Children's Mental Health Awareness Day

HCDE Special Schools staff wore green on May 5 to support National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day. Each year, Children's Mental Health Awareness Day raises awareness about the importance of children's mental health and shows that positive mental health is essential to a child's healthy development.



AB School West Celebrates Cinco de Mayo, Perfect Attendance

Last week, AB School West students and staff celebrated Cinco de Mayo with an assembly complete with fun activities, food and music. The assembly was a fun way to learn about the history of Cinco de Mayo and the importance of family, tradition, and culture.



The campus also celebrated students who made the honor roll and had perfect attendance for the 5th six weeks. "These students have worked extremely hard and were excited to receive their awards," said Principal Dr. Victor Keys.

Value

BUSINESS CONNECTIONS



The Government Treasurers' Organization of Texas Present Training

The Government Treasurers' Organization of Texas (GTOT) partnered with HCDE to host investment training for investment officers. Yesterday, HCDE hosted approximately 80 attendees another 90 were in attendance today.

Service

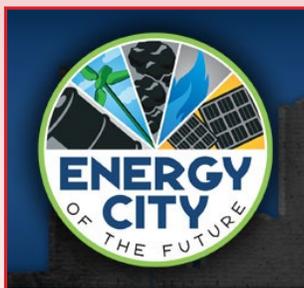
COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



Nearly 250 Attend Head Start Healthy Minds Healthy Families Conference

Nearly 250 parents, caretakers, educators, and others involved in early childhood education attended the Healthy Minds Healthy Families Conference on May 6 presented by HCDE Head Start and the HOGG Foundation of Mental Health. The conference provided training to parents, educators and other professionals working with children with challenging behaviors, and increased the awareness of mental health issues in early childhood.

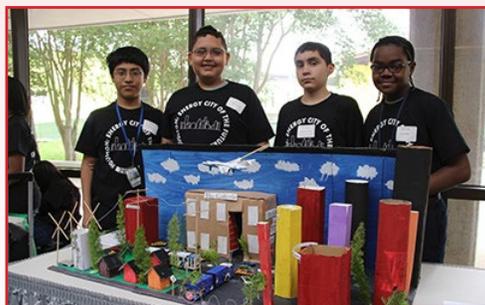
Training sessions with health professionals and others who work with children with mental health issues covered subjects like growing up with bipolar disorder, ADHD, transforming the challenging child, food choices and mental health, and suicide prevention for children and teens. Click here to view photos from the conference: <https://goo.gl/TMK4Wn>.



Education Foundation of Harris County Hosts Energy City of the Future May 14

Students from across Harris County will participate in Energy City of the Future, hosted by the Education Foundation of Harris County, on Saturday, May 14 at 6300 Irvington Blvd. This annual competition allows middle and high school students in teams of four to plan the way Houston will use energy in the year 2050.

Student teams research and present their innovative concepts for future forms of energy production and plans for transportation, recreation, education, and healthcare that will enhance the future city's sustainability. Energy City of the Future engages problem-solving skills, critical thinking, and creativity in developing a vision for the future. To learn more about this competition or to volunteer, visit <http://www.energycityofthefuture.com/>.



DISTRICT HIGHLIGHT: Goose Creek ISD



Kindergarten registration for Goose Creek CISD is set for May 18 (8:30-10:30 a.m.) and May 19 (5-7 p.m.) for 2016-2017. Online registration is highly recommended before attending.

Details:
<http://goo.gl/MrzJeP>

Systemic Achievement

...with purposeful intent

Professional Development

In accordance with the Board's expectations of me to:

- **Oversee a performance appraisal process for instructional staff that reinforces standards of excellence and assesses deficiencies; ensures that results are used in planning for improvement;**
- **Ensures that appropriate staff development is available and monitors staff development for effectiveness; and**
- **Stays abreast of developments in educational leadership and administration**

To that end, I have been immersed in numerous professional development opportunities over the past year. Most recently, I have organized and attended an exceptional executive leadership experience for Harris County Superintendents in addition to a myriad of other similar professional growth experiences.

This week alone, I participated in the following:

- The American Leadership Forum (ALF) Orientation Retreat as part of my year-long commitment as a member of the 2016-2017 class. I spent last weekend at Camp Allen in Navasota, Texas where I had the opportunity to delve into a working retreat that will empower my cohorts and me throughout the ALF experience. The purpose of this institute is to cross-share expertise in an effort to increase the intellectual investment return as it relates to governmental, education-related, and private sector entities within the city of Houston.
- For nearly the remainder of this week, I was in Austin where I participated in another TASBE Superintendents' Think Tank Conference. As part of this professional development experience, we started the conference with dinner with TEA Deputy Commissioner A.J. Crabill. Throughout the remainder of the conference, I attended sessions related to Managing District Finances, District of Innovation Legislation, Index 4 Determination, Data Management Systems for Districts, as well as other relevant topics.

In recent weeks, I facilitated the organization of the following:

- Members of the Schools division visited the Camelot Program in Chicago, Illinois and in the surrounding Chicagoland area where we had an opportunity to visit and learn from our peers in the area of alternative education management and meeting the needs of special populations. This visit was very informative and it offered all of us a different perspective as it relates to meeting the needs of our students.
- Most significantly, as part of the Focal Point initiative, I organized an exceptional professional development experience for Harris County superintendents. This was most beneficial on multiple levels for all who attended. I have included a summary report for your review, as an additional attachment to this email. Further, the superintendents have completed an evaluation and I have also attached it for your review.

By following through on these opportunities for professional growth, and by having such a philosophy trickle throughout the organization, I am furthering the Board's goal for me to

- **Ensure that staff development opportunities are communicated to and available to employees; and**
- **Assess any new and effective development tools available and determine their applicability to HCDE staff.**

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UPCOMING BOARD EVENTS:

May Board Meeting
Tuesday, May 17, 2016
1:00 p.m.
Room 400

