

# The CONNECTOR

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



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From the office of JAMES COLBERT, JR.—SUPERINTENDENT

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## OF NOTE

It's been a busy week at HCDE. I began the week meeting with my Executive Leadership Team. The meeting was productive as we continue to direct programs and services in advance of the next school year.

On Monday, I met with the board of the Education Foundation of Harris County. The meeting was well-attended and I had an opportunity to unveil the Focal Point initiative as well as inform the group of other Department initiatives. It was a positive discussion with the focus being on how the Foundation may further benefit the Department and its endeavors. I will continue to keep you apprised of future meetings with the Foundation Board.

Also this week, I had an opportunity to meet with a local member of Harris County government as we met about how we can mobilize together to expand meeting the needs of the students of Harris County. I continue to have these meetings with both local education executives, as well as public officials in an effort to help students achieve.

At the request of Board President Chesnut, I was asked to facilitate the IMPACT meeting for area school board trustees. IMPACT is a group of current and past school board presidents. The meeting went well and it was an honor for me to have an opportunity to meet with this distinguished group of officials related to governance.

Please be reminded that I will be traveling to Florissant, Colorado for the Wilderness Experience requirement as I progress through the current class of the American Leadership Forum. I will be in Colorado through Thursday, July 21. I will return to the office on the following Monday, July 25. The Wilderness Experience will prove to be a training that will be extremely beneficial to HCDE as members of my class and I expand our professional growth and development. I will provide a summary of this experience upon my return.

This week, in the area of teaching and learning, we focused on STEM. We hosted STEMscopes Implementation Training for Grades K-5 as well as 6-12. Because STEM is such an essential part of both the world and education today, HCDE remains ahead of the curve as it relates to preparing the students of Harris County for success.

Please be reminded that the July Board Meeting will take place on Tuesday, July 26. As also mentioned in previous issues of **The Connector**, the hearing for the Interim Study as it relates to HCDE will take place before the Senate Education Committee on Wednesday, August 3, in Austin, Texas. Also, the Annual Staff Meeting event will be held Thursday, August 18, at the Kingdom Builders venue. This event serves as a convocation at the start of the academic year. It allows most of the staff to convene for a motivational experience. Information regarding the Annual Staff Meeting will be forthcoming.

In closing, I hope you enjoy this issue of **The Connector**. I look forward to seeing you at the July Board Meeting and I hope you have a relaxing weekend.

# Opportunity

## PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

### 'Every Hour Counts' Chooses HCDE's CASE for Kids for 13-Member National Coalition to Promote Expanded Learning

The New York City-based coalition Every Hour Counts selected the Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids, or CASE for Kids, as one of 13 organizations nationwide that will launch an initiative to broaden expanded-learning programming. The initiative is called "Every Hour Counts National Learning Community." Every Hour Counts works to increase access to quality learning opportunities, particularly for underserved students.

CASE for Kids, a division of Harris County Department of Education, provides resources, trainings and funding for students in grades pre-k through 12 in afterschool programs in schools, child care facilities, and community centers throughout Harris County.

The network of 13 cities and counties that will join Every Hour Counts includes CASE for Kids from Harris County, Allegheny County Pennsylvania, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Fresno, Greenville, King County Washington, Newark, Richmond, Rochester, San Francisco, and Saint Paul.



The new initiative involves a peer learning community which is composed of expanded-learning systems-builders ready to take their system to the next level, according to Every Hour Counts.

The initiative involves conversations between nationwide leaders in afterschool.

"It's exciting to become a part of a national conversation about afterschool and the new initiatives on the horizon," said Lisa Thompson-Caruthers, director for CASE for Kids.

Thompson-Caruthers said a team of Houston community leaders will be traveling this summer to Chicago for a collaborative meeting with other members.

Every Hour Counts supports partnerships with more than 3,500 schools, districts, and community-based organizations that provide quality expanded-learning programming and initiatives that reach more than 500,000 students.

**About the Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment (CASE) for Kids:** CASE for Kids, formerly the Cooperative for After-School Enrichment, was launched by Harris County Department of Education in 1999. CASE for Kids is an after-school intermediary which leverages community resources and strengthens the capacity of the out-of-school time field. Services benefit approximately 12,000 kids in greater Harris County. CASE for Kids programs happen before and after school, on weekends and during the summer. Go to [www.afterschoolzone.org](http://www.afterschoolzone.org) for information.

### Advancing Teaching and Learning by Training the Trainer

*Trainings hosted at HCDE this week*

**JULY 14, 2016**

STEMscopes Implementation  
Training Grades K-5

STEMscopes Implementation  
Training Grades 6-12



# Opportunity

## PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

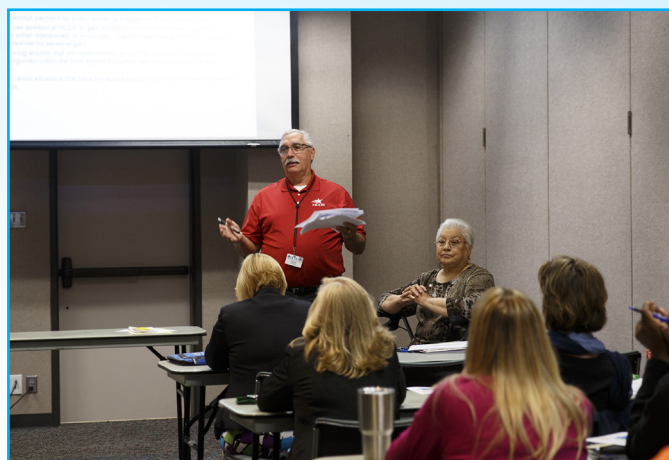
### Adult Education Classes Begin at Northwest Assistance Ministries

Registration for 50 GED and ESL students began last week at Northwest Assistance Ministries (NAM), a new partner of the Adult Education division. NAM provides a wide range of educational and social services including emergency assistance, housing, Meals on Wheels, and homeless resources. This collaboration will allow for a seamless integration of services to parents and other adults in the Spring ISD area. Future plans include the development of integrated educational and vocational training, leading to sustaining careers.



### Financial Guidelines Training, Refresher Offered for 2016 at NPO, Irvington

Business Services kicks off trainings for the financial operating guidelines this month for HCDE directors, supervisors, and managers. Trainings help management navigate procurement, contracts, budgeting and grant processes, accounts receivable process, accounts payable process, payroll, and Time Clock Plus. The trainings include frequently asked questions and best practices, with both morning and afternoon sessions offered at both Irvington and Post Oak locations. Trainings continue through July 21.



### Every Hour Counts, CASE for Kids Featured in Education Week Blog

HCDE's CASE for Kids was selected by the New York City-based coalition Every Hour Counts as one of 13 organizations nationwide to launch an initiative to broaden expanded-learning programming. The initiative called "Every Hour Counts National Learning Community" was featured in this week's edition of Education Week's Time and Learning blog. Additionally, HCDE's photograph of Harris County students performing at CASE for Kids' Day at the Hobby Center was featured in the article. Read the full article here: <http://goo.gl/DTP5C4>.



# Opportunity

## PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

### Head Start Father, Volunteer Secures Community Resources for Baytown Center



For Baytown father Jose Reyna, volunteering is a way to give back to Head Start, the program that gave so much to his daughters Sahairy and Miranda. During their time in Head Start, both children gained foundational skills needed to grow and succeed in elementary school.

Sahairy attended Baytown Head Start from 2012-2014 and Miranda attended from 2014-2016. During that time they learned to read and count, as well as other essential lessons to prepare them for kindergarten. The Reyna family's primary language is Spanish, so both children were taught English through the program.

After seeing the benefits of Head Start first-hand, Reyna decided to become involved at the Baytown center as a volunteer. He first began as a SuperMENTor in the male-mentoring reading program and volunteered in classrooms to help support staff.

"Mr. Reyna is a parent who understands the importance of literacy," said Baytown Center Manager Geneva Glapion-Refuge. "He always incorporates an element of literacy into his volunteer time with the students and makes learning fun."

Reyna soon realized volunteering was an effective way to mobilize community resources and strengthen Head Start services. He began working with staff to secure donations from various businesses and organizations for fall festival activities, promotional ceremonies, and other Head Start sponsored events. He was also a member of the Head Start Policy Council, a group of parents and guardians that act as the parents' voice in making decisions for the program.

"Head Start is not a daycare, they prepared my children to excel in elementary school and beyond," said Reyna. "They do amazing work."

Together, Head Start staff, families, and dedicated volunteers like Reyna continue to help Harris County students achieve success and develop the foundational skills needed for elementary school.

# Service

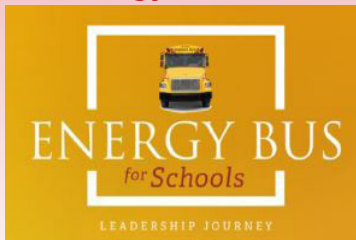
## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



### CASE for Kids Celebrates Summer Learning Day

In collaboration with Harris County Precinct 2, HCDE's Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids, or CASE for Kids, joined communities across the nation this week to celebrate Summer Learning Day. The celebration for students ages 5-17 featured guest readers from the community, interactive learning stations, and the Houston Public Library mobile reading unit. For more information, visit <http://goo.gl/liXOkk>.

### The Energy Bus for Schools Comes to HCDE



The Energy Bus for Schools - Leadership Tour is coming to HCDE on July 28 from 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. The Energy Bus for Schools aims to inspire and develop leaders who positively impact schools, communities, and the world. As part of the experience, educators will leave with ideas and strategies to improve school culture, build a positive staff, and develop positive student leaders. Register and find more information at <http://www.energybusschools.com/events.php>.

# Opportunity

## CAMPUS CONNECTIONS

### AB School West Hosts End-of-Summer School Activity Featuring Hydraulic Arm



AB School West students participated in multiple Hydraulic Arm Challenges on Thursday, July 14 as part of the school's end-of-summer activity. Each summer, AB West holds a school-wide project for its students.

Four teams competed in the Hydraulic Arm Challenges where students had to use the arm to grab items and move them from a container to a table, and stack items in a cylinder.

These challenges are designed to encourage teamwork, social and academic skills learned throughout the school year, fine- and gross-motor skills, and decision-making. To view photos from the challenges, visit <https://goo.gl/BI44SX>.

# Systemic Achievement

*...with purposeful intent*

## Community Relations

In keeping with the Board's expectations of me to

Work with other governmental entities and community organizations to meet the needs of students and community in a coordinated way

The Adult Education division recently commenced classes at a Northwest Assistance Ministries (NAM) site.

NAM is a new partner of the Adult Education division. Because NAM provides a wide range of educational and social services, including emergency assistance, housing, and Meals on Wheels

as well as homeless resources, the collaboration is an ideal partnership allowing both entities to better meet the needs of the populations we both serve. The Adult Education classes, in partnership with NAM, are held in the Spring ISD area.



In collaboration with Harris County Precinct 2, the CASE division recently joined communities across the nation to celebrate Summer Learning Day. The event, for students ages 5-17, featured guest readers from the community, interactive learning stations, and the Houston Public Library mobile reading

unit. This was an excellent opportunity to engage students during the summer months to encourage reading and continued learning.

**By HCDE taking part in these initiatives, I am forwarding the Board's goal of me to partner with community-based entities. These activities also further HCDE's visibility and involvement in the community within school districts and the community-at-large. Further, it presents a positive image of the Department and exhibits our commitment to help all students achieve.**

## HCDE BOARD

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*Position 3, At Large*

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*Position 5, At Large*

## UPCOMING BOARD EVENTS:

**July Board Meeting**

**Tuesday, July 26, 2016**

1:00 p.m.

Room 400

**Senate Education Committee Hearing**

**Wednesday, August 3, 2016**

3:00 p.m.

Capitol Extension

Room E1.028

Austin, Texas

