

The CONNECTOR

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for the HCDE Board of Trustees



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FROM THE OFFICE OF JAMES COLBERT, JR.—SUPERINTENDENT

Of Note...

It is hard to believe that we are entering the ninth week of the 2016-2017 academic year. I am pleased with the various initiatives our campuses, centers, programs, and divisions have implemented with the start of this new school year. This week has been active on various levels within HCDE. First off, thanks to those of you who were able to attend this week's Board Meeting. Immediately prior to the regularly scheduled Board Meeting, this past Tuesday, we had a successful Policy Committee Meeting. As always, thank you for your service to HCDE.

On Wednesday of this week, I met with the superintendent of Katy Independent School District, as I continue to keep my finger on the pulses of our client school districts. The meeting was a productive one and I look forward to building on that relationship so that we may become even more of a benefit to Katy ISD.

This week in the area of Teaching and Learning, we hosted a plethora of trainings and workshops to assist Harris County educators. As we progressed through the week, we hosted the following sessions: Early STEM with IEEE for Grades K through 5; I Don't Teach Reading; Free Editorial Cartoon Workshop; Secondary STEM with IEE for Grades 6-12; lead4ward: Algebra for the Young Minds: It's Elementary (for Grades 3-5); Quest for Grants Training Series Webinar- A Team Approach to Proposal Writing; Enhancing Academic Vocabulary with your English Language Learners; Show Me How To Do Circles!; Biology EOC: A Closer Look at Interdependence and Environmental Systems; Supporting Struggling Readers and Writers; What Great Educators Do Differently; and finally, An Introduction to the Active Participatory Approach.

Next week, HCDE will be hosting the 2016-2017 Leadership Summit where I will provide the opening remarks for the session. Later in the week, I will attend the North Harris County Education Alliance Meeting (hosted by Aldine Independent School District) in addition to participating in the Northwest Area Ministries Orientation for new board members as a result of my recent appointment to that board. Finally, I will be meeting with the superintendent of Klein Independent School District as I continue to shore up HCDE's relationships with Harris County superintendents.

As we approach the month of November, I will be reaching out to each of you personally to schedule our quarterly meetings. During the individual meetings, I will be presenting you with my self-appraisal and familiarizing you with its format and content as it relates to the Department's progress over the past year. Doing so will provide you with information relative to my year-end review. I always appreciate the dialogue and feedback from Board Members during these meetings.

In closing, you are already aware that Karla Cantu is expecting her baby within the next few weeks. I was fortunate to regain, as a substitute during her absence, Ms. Melissa McGee—the temporary assistant who has previously served in Ms. Cantu's absence. The two ladies have been cross-training over the past several days and refreshing Ms. McGee as we prepare for Ms. Cantu's leave. To that end, business will proceed as usual.

Please be reminded that the November Board Meeting will be held Tuesday, November 15, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. I hope you enjoy this issue of The Connector and I hope you have a relaxing weekend.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Center for Grants Development Leads Grant Initiatives This Fall



Center for Grants Development manager Joyce Akins and specialist Dr. Vida Avery have helped secure a ceremony site for several hundred students who will be honored this year through Scholastic Art & Writing ceremonies on March 25, 2017. The Alley Theatre in Houston's Theatre District will host the ceremony.

Director Gayla Rawlinson Maynard recently participated in a national Twitter chat titled GrantChat on the topic of cultivation and stewardship. In other news, CGD associate Kristal Johnson presented to a full audience at the United Way of Greater Houston. She taught attendees how to research grants using keyword tools and social media techniques.

Center for Safe and Secure Schools Conducts Trainings, Audits in October

Center for Safe and Secure Schools staff conducted the first in a series of trainings for area school districts on the updated version of the Safe School Alerts website. The site provides school closure and reopening information for schools in greater Harris County. Emergency management officials, educators, and media can benefit from the alerts.

Staff also completed safety audits in Beaumont ISD after auditing 30 sites in the district. To date, the center has been engaged in auditing 10 school districts during the 2016-2017 school year.



Adult Education Director Invited to Participate in Workforce Panel at Washington, D.C. Conference

Adult Education Director Dr. Eduardo Honold will participate in a panel presentation at the National Association of Workforce Boards Conference March 25-28 in Washington, D.C. The presentation focuses on integrating various funding streams from recent federal workforce legislation on an operational level. The presentation will be led by the Gulf Coast Workforce Board.

TLC Meets with Communities to Strengthen Education Outcomes



Teaching and Learning Center directors Andrea Segraves and Frances Hester joined community leaders at Lone Star College North as part of the North Harris County

Education Alliance. The coalition of business, education, and community leaders uses collective impact to improve education outcomes for students in the Aldine and Spring communities.

Dr. Kimberly McLeod and Segraves also joined educators from Columbia-Brazoria and Stafford Municipal school districts for alignment walks this month. The collaboration grew from the Spring Leadership Cohort formed from the 2015 Leadership Summit.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS



Leadership Summit 2016 Brings Together Area School Administrators October 24

Approximately 65 educators will attend the Leadership Summit set for October 24 from 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. with host and presenter Dr. Kimberly McLeod, assistant superintendent for Education and Enrichment. The Leadership Summit which is part of the Leadership Series examines creating culturally responsive learning environments and achieving academic potential for both the teacher and student through the teaching and learning process. The event, sponsored by the Teaching and Learning Center, is free for curriculum directors, principals, directors, administrators, and campus leaders. View the flier: <http://www.hcde-texas.org/media/4302/leadership-summit.pdf>.



200 Educators Gather at HCDE to Strategize with STAAR Data

Educators worked to leverage information gathered from the STAAR test so they can strategically plan for the upcoming test in spring 2017. About 200 teachers and administrators gathered at HCDE on October 13 to plan with lead4ward expert Stephanie Zelenak. Zelenak is a 17-year veteran educator who served as the Texas Education Service Center curriculum collaborative vice chair and the regional curriculum program director for Region 19 Education Service Center.



Information Session Held by Choice Partners on Procurement

More than 50 attendees gathered for a training with Choice Partners Director Jeff Drury to gain information about using job order contracting procurement this month. The session included an overview of federal law for spending U.S. Education Department funds. Assisting with the session were Drury, HCDE Assistant Superintendent for Business Dr. Jesus Amezcua, and tax accountant Selena Miller with Whitley Penn.



HCDE Observes Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Staff in the Teaching and Learning Center “sock out” cancer during HCDE’s Themed Friday campaigns for National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Next Friday employees will “pink out” breast cancer.

ADVANCED TEACHING AND LEARNING BY TRAINING THE TRAINER

Trainings hosted at HCDE this week

OCTOBER 17, 2016

Elementary STEM with IEEE K-5

I Don’t Teach Reading

OCTOBER 18, 2016

Free Editorial Cartoon Workshop

Secondary STEM with IEEE 6-12

lead4ward: Algebra for the Young Minds: It’s Elementary (3-5)

OCTOBER 19, 2016

Quest for Grants Training Series Webinar - A Team Approach to Proposal Writing

Enhancing Academic Vocabulary with your English Language Learners

OCTOBER 20, 2016

Show Me How To Do Circles!

Biology EOC: A Closer Look at Interdependence and Environmental Systems

Supporting Struggling Readers and Writers

What Great Educators Do Differently

OCTOBER 21, 2016

Introduction to the Active Participatory Approach

Service

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Lights On Afterschool! Lights Up Afterschool Initiatives



Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner led the *Lights On Afterschool!* celebration in Houston on Thursday, October 20 at the Houston Texan YMCA on Griggs Road. Mayor Turner supports afterschool in Houston and recently announced \$550,000 to

be shared throughout Houston City Council districts A-K this school year to support afterschool initiatives with children provided by Houston-area nonprofits. The program called City Connections is administered through CASE for Kids.

County Superintendent James Colbert, Jr. was on hand to lend his support for the event and to call attention to the importance of afterschool programs in greater Harris County to keep kids safe, help working families, and inspire learning.

Lights On Afterschool! Houston is part of a nationwide awareness-raising effort to call attention to the fact that 11.3

million children are alone and unsupervised after school.

The Afterschool Alliance hosted the local event. Members include CASE for Kids, After-School All Stars, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, 4-H Afterschool, Junior Achievement, the 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Young Rembrandts, and the YMCA of the USA.

Lights On Afterschool! is a project of the Afterschool Alliance, a nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring that all children have access to quality, affordable afterschool programs.



Area Students Attend Free Editorial Workshop with Professional Cartoonist Isaiah Broussard



More than 70 students from surrounding school districts attended the free Editorial Cartoon workshop held this week at HCDE. The workshop was presented by the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards and sponsored by The Herb Block Foundation.

Students worked with professional cartoonist Isaiah Broussard to explore the unique art of editorial cartooning and the various ways to make commentary on contemporary issues that matter to them. Broussard also shared his personal experience developing his artistic career.

During the workshop, students also learned how they can submit their work to the prestigious Scholastic Art & Writing Awards to receive potential recognition, exhibition, publication, and scholarships.

For more information on the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, visit www.hcde-texas.org/scholastic.



Opportunity

CAMPUS CONNECTIONS

HCDE Celebrates National Principals Month

The key to a great school is a great principal. This October, HCDE joined schools and communities across the nation to celebrate National Principals Month, a time to recognize our principals for their hard work and dedication to student success.

HCDE principals Mindy Robertson, Victor Keys, Marion Cooksey, and David Oquin were surprised on their campuses throughout the month by Superintendent James Colbert, Jr., Senior Director Dee Maddox-Hall, and Assistant Superintendent Jonathan Parker, and presented with a gift for their outstanding service to HCDE and its students.



Mindy Robertson has been principal at Academic and Behavior School East for nine years. Her experience as principal at AB East is a positive journey of professional and personal growth. After hours, she loves to shop, line dance and cook.

In his fifth year as principal of Academic and Behavior School West, **Dr. Victor Keys** oversees the total operation of the school. He's no amateur in front of the camera because he has been featured on



CNN for his work with high school dropouts. For fun, he works out, travels, and rides his bike.

Highpoint East Principal **Marion Cooksey** calls himself a lifelong learner, a testament to the fact that he's a 26-year educator. In his second career he's a drummer and has recorded two gospel albums. He's a deeply religious man who also holds a degree in bible studies.



Highpoint North Principal **David Oquin** has led his school for six years. As father to four children under age 16 with the youngest being 3 months, he loves family and faith. He's a sports fan but these days he knows more about home repair shows and children's cartoons than stats about his favorite teams!



The principals were also honored with a special video presentation and certificate by the HCDE board of trustees at the October board meeting. View the photos from Principals Month here <https://goo.gl/U8hw2U>.

Systemic Achievement

...with purposeful intent

Community Relations

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

The Teaching and Learning Center joined community leaders at Lone Star College North as part of the North Harris County Education Alliance which is a coalition of businesses and education and community leaders who converge to improve education outcomes for students in the Aldine and Spring areas.

Additionally, the Teaching and Learning Center will be hosting its Leadership Summit 2016, bringing together area school administrators on Monday, October 24. The event will take place here at the Irvington location and approximately 65 educators are expected to attend.

The summit, which is part of the ongoing Leadership Series will examine the creation of culturally responsive learning environments and achieving academic

potential for both the teacher and student through the teaching and learning process. Dr. Kimberly McLeod will serve as the presenter of the event.



Through these activities, I am working towards achieving the Board's goal for me to present a positive and professional image of the Department in all venues—community, political, educational, business, and Board; maintain visibility and involvement in the community with ISD superintendents, elected officials, community leaders, and the HCDE Board, and be open to ideas and needs, listen and accept criticism, and be willing to seek advice and counsel when necessary. Additionally, it allows me to ensure that we 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 as we represent HCDE by attendance at events and through speaking opportunities.

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UPCOMING BOARD EVENTS:

November Board Meeting
November 15, 2016
1:00 p.m.
Room 400

