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FROM THE OFFICE OF JAMES COLBERT, JR.—SUPERINTENDENT

## Of Note...

The 2016-17 academic year is in its final days. I can honestly say that it has been a successful one, filled with accomplishments across all divisions within the Department. Client districts began the close down of their semesters yesterday, and by June 7, all districts will have completed their academic year.

I began this week with my ongoing Monday meetings with both my Executive Leadership Team, as well as with Board President Louis Evans, III. I also attended the IMPACT meeting this past Monday—which is composed of area school district Board Members. This meeting serves as a meeting of the minds of Harris County School District governance leaders.

This past Tuesday, our School-Based Therapy Services division held its annual end-of-the-year celebration at the HCDE Conference Center, where achievements were recognized and milestones, such as retirements, were celebrated. The event was well-attended and I was pleased to have been part of this monumental annual event.

As referenced in last week's issue of **The Connector**, I attended the Northwest Assistance Ministries (NAM) Board Meeting yesterday, in my capacity as a Board Member. This is a worthy entity that assists the community with varied needs, some of which HCDE has been instrumental in meeting, especially as it relates to serving adult learner populations.

Even as we bring the semester to a close, HCDE provided the following workshops and trainings in the areas of both teaching and learning and business planning: Public Funds Investment Training (two sessions); Build Your Bookshelf; and Exploring

the Role of Instructional Coaching. Harris County Department of Education remains committed to meeting the needs of professionals in all areas within our client school districts.

On Wednesday of next week, I am pleased to announce that our Academic and Behavior School-West location will host its graduation ceremony. It is consistently rewarding to witness the culmination of the great strides our students make to achieve their education goals. I look forward to participating in that event.

Please be reminded that the Department will be closed Monday, in observation of Memorial Day. The Department will resume its regular hours Tuesday. Starting the following week (the week of June 5), we will transition into the annual flexible summer schedule in an effort to save expenditures through reduced energy consumption and other means of significant conservation.

As usual, thanks for your continued support of and service to Harris County Department of Education. I hope you have a relaxing holiday weekend, and I hope you enjoy this issue of The Connector.

### Upcoming Events:

#### Tuesday, June 13, 2016

- 11:00 a.m.-Special Board Meeting to consider the hearing examiner's recommendation from the May 18 hearing.
- 12:00 noon- Board Budget Workshop

#### Tuesday, June 13, 2016

- Board Meeting

# Opportunity

## PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

### School-Based Therapy Services Holds Staff Appreciation Day



School-Based Therapy Services held its Staff Appreciation Day on May 23 for its several hundred staff members. The theme for this year's event was "You Bring Focus on Compassion, Understanding and Service." HCDE Superintendent James Colbert, Jr. and Assistant Superintendent Jonathan Parker expressed appreciation through their remarks, along with Therapy Services Senior Director Carie Crab. The event also featured a social gathering at lunch with door prize drawings for staff.

The guest speaker was Ricky Broussard with Project SPEAK, a training program that offers people with disabilities the unique chance to develop new skills and confidence that allows them to grow in self-advocacy, as well as community issues and public policy. Find more information about Project SPEAK at <https://imagineenterprises.org/SPEAK/index.html>.



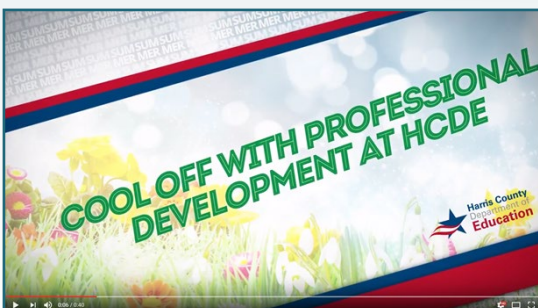
### Human Resources Promotes Health and Fitness Month with Yogurt Bar



As part of National Employee Health and Fitness Month, HCDE's Human Resources division provided a healthy yogurt bar to employees at the Irvington and North Post Oak buildings. National Employee Health and Fitness Month promotes health and fitness in the workplace and encourages employees to lead healthier lifestyles.



### Cool Off with Summer Professional Development Campaign Launched



The Teaching and Learning Center has launched a video through a social media campaign to promote a host of course offerings this summer. The "Cool Off with Summer Professional Development" video features a fun, upbeat tempo and promotes a summer learning landing page through the TLC home page.

View the video: <https://youtu.be/bkEftC2E064>

View the summer offerings: [www.hcde-texas.org/TLCsummer](http://www.hcde-texas.org/TLCsummer)



# Opportunity

## PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

### Kids' Day at HP and MLK Literacy Day



Seventy-five students from CASE for Kids took part in the Kids' Day at HP event at Hewlett-Packard on May 18. The robotics event provides mentors and volunteers from HP along with curriculum for the event. Students participated from Southwest Middle School and Academy of Accelerated Learning, Inc. charter schools; Ross and Benbrook elementary schools from Houston ISD; Francis and Goodman elementary schools, Stehlik Intermediate and Raymond Academy from Aldine ISD; Garrett Elementary from Sheldon ISD; and Kruse Elementary from Pasadena ISD.

CASE for Kids also partnered with the Houston Public Library, My Brother's Keeper Houston, and Houston ISD Literacy Department for the Community and Literacy Fair event on Saturday, May 20, 2017. The event at the Denver Harbor Multi-Service Center included two CASE for Kids vendors/providers: Language Kids World and Imagiread. During the event, each attendee received access to a free bag of groceries, free immunizations, and a free book for every child.



### ADVANCED TEACHING AND LEARNING BY TRAINING THE TRAINER

*Trainings hosted at HCDE this week*

**MAY 24, 2017**

Public Funds Investment  
Training

**MAY 25, 2017**

Build Your Bookshelf

Public Funds Investment  
Training

**MAY 26, 2017**

Exploring the Role of  
Instructional Coaching

# Value

## BUSINESS CONNECTIONS

### Business Services Hosts Training for School Districts



The Business Services division hosted investment training at Harris County Department of Education this past Wednesday and Thursday, May 24-25, 2017. The event was very well-attended by members of its target audience, including client district business managers and chief operating officers.

# Service

## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

### HCDE Chosen as Outstanding Scholastic Art & Writing Awards Regional Affiliate to be Featured at U.S. Department of Education in Fall 2017 Exhibit



*Andrea Segraves, coordinator for HCDE's Scholastic Art & Writing Awards*

Work from Harris County Department of Education's creative teens in grades 7-12 who earned Gold Key awards in the 2017 Scholastic Awards regional competition will be showcased at the U.S. Department of Education's Student Art Exhibit in Washington,

D.C. The exhibit will be featured from September 2017 through July 2018. It is the first time in its 14 years as regional sponsor that HCDE has been selected for the prominent national spotlight.

Scholastic Art & Writing is a national art and writing competition which recognizes talent from teens in grades 7-12 from public, private, and home schools. HCDE is one of 100 regional affiliates in the nation. Alumni from the program include notables such as Robert Redford, Sylvia Plath, Andy Warhol, Stephen King, and Truman Capote.

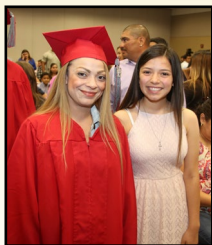
Earlier this year, HCDE received the 2017 Gold Key for Excellence in the Field Award, presented annually to an outstanding affiliate partner of the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers, sponsors of Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. The Alliance said it is proud to feature its partnership with HCDE as about 30 art pieces will be included in the regional highlight exhibit at the U.S. Department of Education.

"We are proud to be a sponsor of this program and are in awe of the talent exhibited each year by our Harris County teens and the incredible commitment and dedication of their teachers," said County School Superintendent James Colbert, Jr. "We continue to grow this program regionally to showcase our local artistic talent."

For more information about Scholastic Art & Writing, go to [www.hcde-texas.org/scholastic](http://www.hcde-texas.org/scholastic).

The Alliance is proud to feature the dedication, community engagement, and support of Harris County students and educators that our partner demonstrates by presenting the Harris County Regional Highlight at the U.S. Department of Education.

### 94 GED Grads and Families Pack the Conference Center for Commencement 2017



Ninety-four graduates were honored at the 2017 GED Graduation Ceremony on May 20, 2017 at the HCDE Conference Center. Graduates were celebrated by hundreds of family members and friends as they gained the graduation experience they never had.

For the first time, the 2017 ceremony was broadcast live on HCDE's Facebook and Youtube pages, gaining more than 1,400 views. Watch video from the event here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7gYWoxI\\_NLw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7gYWoxI_NLw). View photos here: <https://hcdetx.smugmug.com/AdultEducation/2017-Graduation-Ceremony/>.

# Service

## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

### HCDE Teacher-in-Training Jennifer Siger Named Top 'Intern of the Year' in State by Texas Alternative Certification Association



Jennifer Siger with Jonette Miniell, HCDE alternative teacher certification program

The Texas Alternative Certification Association named Jennifer Siger the 1st place winner of the Texas Alternative Certification Association Intern of the Year for 2016-2017. Siger will be presented a \$1,000 award and plaque at the Consortium of State Organizations for Texas Teacher Education in October. Harris County Department of

Education's teacher alternative certification program and principal certification program prepares over a hundred educators for leadership positions yearly throughout greater Harris County. This story about Siger's journey in her first year in training with Harris County Department of Education as teacher at Black Middle School was produced earlier this year. For more information about the teacher of principal prep program, go to [www.hcde-texas.org/teacherprep](http://www.hcde-texas.org/teacherprep) .)

View our feature story about Jennifer Siger: <https://blog.hcde-texas.org/2017/05/23/hcde-teacher-in-training-jennifer-siger-named-top-intern-of-the-year-by-texas-alternative-certification-association/>

### Harris County Educators Explore the Role of the Instructional Coach



HCDE's Teaching and Learning Center held a workshop last week that offered approaches to supporting instructional coaches at the campus or district level. More than 75 educators attended the session at Irvington Blvd. to explore the role of the instructional coach and gain models of effective communication, problem solving and observation techniques. Christina Nash with the Institute for Public School

Initiatives also lead professional learning opportunities that included increasing student learning and use of facilitation protocols to promote a culture of collaboration.



# Opportunity

## CAMPUS CONNECTIONS

### AB School West Holds Annual Spring Parent Workshop

Parents at Academic and Behavior School West attended the annual Spring Parent Workshop last week. The annual workshop provides parents with helpful information on family and child resources, stress management, therapeutic strategies, medical concerns and daily campus details. The parents that attended stayed engaged by asking questions and were grateful for the information.





# Systemic Achievement

*...with purposeful intent*

## Organizational Morale

In an effort to meet the Board's goal for me as it relates to this element of performance to

- Create an open and positive environment for sharing resources and exchanging ideas to improve organizational climate;
- Seek systematically to improve the climate by obtaining and utilizing feedback from employees of the Department;
- Model and support responsible risk-taking so that all employees can be innovative and try new ideas;
- Celebrate accomplishments and acknowledge excellence;
- Ensure fair and equitable management practices; and
- Demonstrate quality management through delegation of authority, team building, consensus development, leadership development, and self-management.



This past Tuesday, the School-Based Therapy Services division held its

annual end-of-the-year celebration with nearly 200 employees who serve our client school districts

throughout Harris County. Due to the nature of their work, and varied worksites throughout Harris County, this is one of the rare times they gather as a unit during the academic year.



The event was filled with recognition and celebration of the division's accomplishments, as well as employee milestones. It

was an honor to have been part of this annual event in the life of one of our most essential program divisions.



**By the School-Based Therapy Services division continuing this tradition, I am striving to meet the Board's expectations of me to establish a culture among staff so that all strive to achieve excellence and do not accept mediocre performance; and ensure that all supervisory staff administers personnel practices with consistency and fairness—with respect for the individual, among other related indicators.**

## HCDE BOARD

**Board President**  
Louis Evans, III  
**Position 4, Precinct 3**

**Vice President**  
Eric Dick  
**Position 2, Precinct 4**

Erica Lee Carter  
**Position 6, Precinct 1**

George Moore  
**Position 1, Precinct 2**

Don Sumners  
**Position 7, At Large**

Diane Trautman  
**Position 3, At Large**

Michael Wolfe  
**Position 5, At Large**

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