

The CONNECTOR

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



WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 26, 2016

VOLUME 3/ISSUE 7



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FROM THE OFFICE OF JAMES COLBERT, JR.—SUPERINTENDENT

Of Note...

It was yet another productive week at HCDE. As mentioned in the last issue of **The Connector**, I spent last Thursday through Sunday at both the TABSE Superintendent's Think Tank session as well as the TASA/TASB Conference which ran nearly concurrent with each other. Both events were held here in Houston and were excellent opportunities for professional growth and for HCDE to receive visibility in the public education community. The conferences offered excellent opportunities for networking and they allowed me to continue to shed light on the programs and services HCDE offers its client school districts. It also allowed for informative discussions surrounding the needs of our client school districts with fellow education executives. During the TASA/TASB Conference, I also attended the Texas Academic Decathlon (TAD) Board Meeting. The governing body of TAD consists of 12 superintendents from across the state, of which I remain a member.

I returned to the office on Monday of this week and began with a meeting with my Executive Leadership Team, followed by an IMPACT meeting. As previously mentioned, IMPACT is a professional development group designed especially for school board members throughout Harris County. Several school districts were represented at this week's meeting which was facilitated by Dr. Guy Sconzo, with whom we are contracting for this purpose.

I departed Houston Monday afternoon to travel to Austin to attend my UIL Executive Board Meeting. I returned to Houston late Tuesday after the UIL Meeting. Yesterday, I attended my first Northwest Assistance Ministries (NAM) Board Meeting, since having been appointed to the NAM Board. Today, I am traveling to Laredo, Texas to visit the Jose' Valdez High School, a high school for students in recovery from substance abuse and addictions. I will keep you apprised of any unique findings during that visit.

This week, in the area of teaching and learning, we hosted a series of numerous workshops, training sessions, and leadership groups including the Special Populations Leadership Group Meeting, Online Instructor's Training, Part II; Science STAAR: A Closer Look at Force, Motion, and Energy for Grades 5 and 8, lead4ward: Number Sense for Grades 1-4, lead4ward: Development of Equations and Inequalities, Math Institute—Aligning the New Pre-K Guidelines to the TEKS for Grades Pre-K and Kindergarten, Measurable Standard Based IEP Goal Development, CASE for Kids Provider Fair, HCDE Principal Certification Academy Information Meeting, lead4ward: Reading Comprehension Strategies in Action, Biology EOC: A Closer Look at the Mechanisms of Genetics, a Charter School Roundtable, lead4ward: Reading Comprehension Strategies in Action, Classroom Management—Back to the Basics, Patterns in the Sky, and Math to the Third Power. As indicated, HCDE offers professional growth and development in all grade and tenure levels in education, in addition to a variety of other sessions to seize unique opportunities for continued learning. We remain committed to helping students achieve by training the trainer.

Next week, I will continue my efforts to keep HCDE on the forefront of public education across Harris County. My discussions and meetings with superintendents and other leaders in Harris County remain ongoing and I will continue to engage in such dialogues to further broaden the awareness of HCDE to this population of stakeholders. I will be out of the office next Thursday and Friday.

In closing, I hope you enjoy this issue of **The Connector**, and as we embark upon the month of October, I wish you a relaxing autumn weekend. Thanks again for your service to HCDE.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Video Salutes Dr. Jesus Amezcua During National Hispanic Heritage Month

HCDE recognized National Hispanic Heritage Month held September 15–October 15 through a video tribute to Dr. Jesus Amezcua, assistant superintendent for Business Services.

In addition to his regular duties, Dr. Amezcua volunteers through the Head Start SuperMENTOR program, a male role model mentoring program. Through the program, he reads to children each month at a Head Start center. View the video: <https://youtu.be/O8JREcL7zZQ>.



Center for Grants Development Hosts U.S. Census Data Training

In collaboration with the U.S. Census Bureau, HCDE's Center for Grants Development hosted a three-hour workshop last week on the American FactFinder, the gateway to American Community Survey data, with Data Dissemination Specialist Lacey Loftin. The objective of the training was to teach participants how to navigate data tools, find statistics by geography, and create and download tables and maps.



A Look at Therapy Services

Assistant Superintendent Jonathan Parker visited Rummel Creek Elementary School in Spring Branch ISD where he had an opportunity to observe HCDE School-Based Therapist Beatriz Menendez in action.

Ms. "B" as the students call her, has been working for HCDE as a school-based therapist for 15 years. Menendez serves four students at Rummel Creek Elementary School in Spring Branch ISD, but is also willing to work with any student needing assistance. She works collaboratively with the administrators, teachers, staff, and parents at Rummel Creek to ensure students their individual successes. She truly cares about the progress of her students and helps them achieve by first establishing a good rapport, then developing and utilizing effective strategies. Campus principal Harn appreciates Ms. Menendez's commitment to excellence and serving students.



ADVANCED TEACHING AND LEARNING BY TRAINING THE TRAINER

Trainings hosted at HCDE this week

SEPTEMBER 26, 2016

Special Populations Leadership Group Meeting

Online Instructor's Training - Part II

SEPTEMBER 27, 2016

Grade 5 Science STAAR: A Closer Look at Force, Motion and Energy

Grade 8 Science STAAR: A Closer Look at Force, Motion and Energy

lead4ward: Number Sense (Grades 1-4)

lead4ward: Development of Equations and Inequalities

SEPTEMBER 28, 2016

Math Institute - Aligning the New Pre-K Guidelines to the TEKS (Gr Pre-K and K)

Measurable Standard Based IEP Goal Development

CASE FOR KIDS PROVIDER FAIR

HCDE Principal Certification Academy Information Meeting

lead4ward: Reading Comprehension Strategies in Action

SEPTEMBER 29, 2016

Biology EOC: A Closer Look at the Mechanisms of Genetics

Charter Roundtable

lead4ward: Reading Comprehension Strategies in Action

SEPTEMBER 30, 2016

Classroom Management- Back to the Basics

Patterns in the Sky

Math to the Third Power

Service

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Hundreds of Area Educators Learn through Teaching and Learning Center Workshops



Jim Walsh stands with HCDE Math Curriculum Director Nicole Shanahan and HCDE Special Populations Director Darlene Breaux.



Jeff Anderson teaches "10 Things Every Writer Needs to Know."

Hundreds of area educators attended workshops at HCDE last week with renowned speakers and presenters Jennifer Serravallo, Jim Walsh "Law Dawg," and Jeff Anderson.

On September 22, more than 300 educators learned to make independent reading time a joyful yet rigorous time of day through the workshop titled, "Reading Strategies for Goal-Directed Instruction." Until 2012, Serravallo was a



Katy ISD teachers learn about new reading strategies during Jennifer Serravallo's workshop.

senior staff developer at the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project helping urban, suburban, and rural schools implement exceptional literacy instruction through reading and writing workshops.

Other area administrators, counselors, and special education staff spent the day with Legal Digest's Jim Walsh for the 11th Annual Back-to-School Program. Known as the "Law Dawg," Walsh's workshop featured a comprehensive review of legal developments that will impact the day-to-day operations of public schools from the classroom to the principal's office to the board room.

On September 23, crowd favorite Jeff Anderson explained how to make expository writing come alive for students during his workshop, "10 Things Every Writer Needs to Know." Anderson took educators through several exercises from his book and each teacher received a copy for their respective professional library.



HCDE Featured in National Scholastic Art & Writing Awards Blog

As an affiliate partner and regional coordinator for the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, HCDE was featured on the national Scholastic Art & Writing Awards blog last week. The blog post highlights HCDE's regional program and includes unique ideas other regions can use in their programs. Read the full blog post here: <https://goo.gl/Dk5z7r>.

CASE for Kids Hosts Afterschool Providers Fair

HCDE's Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids, or CASE for Kids, hosted the 2016 Afterschool Providers Fair on September 28. This free annual event allows afterschool vendors to network with other providers, and schools and childcare organizations to shop the fair for CASE for Kids approved afterschool and summer providers.



Service

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

TASA/TASB Conference 2016

The TASA/TASB Conference 2016 held September 23-25 at George R. Brown gave HCDE staff and trustees opportunities to network, gain new leadership skills, and let districts know how HCDE can serve them.

HCDE participated in the vendor show with two booths from Choice Partners cooperative and Education and Enrichment. HCDE also offered representation at the Texas School Public Relations Association booth.



Opportunity

CAMPUS CONNECTIONS

Hispanic Heritage Month Celebrated at AB School West



Academic and Behavior School West held an assembly on September 23 to recognize Hispanic Heritage Month. During National Hispanic Heritage Month, which

runs from September 15 to October 15 annually, the nation recognizes contributions made by Hispanics as we pay tribute by celebrating their heritage and culture.

Students studied history and enjoyed Hispanic music, dress, and food. The commemoration of this month, which dates back to 1968, begins each year on September 15, the anniversary of independence of five Latin American countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. Mexico, Chile, and Belize also celebrate their independence days during this period. Also, Columbus Day (Día de la Raza) is celebrated on October 12 and is recognized as the day Christopher Columbus arrived in 1492.

AB School West Students Learn about Political Process, Participate in Mock Election



Election season is here and students at AB School West decided to participate in the nationwide OneVote 2016 Mock Election, the largest mock presidential election for students. Students have accurately predicted the next

president in the last five OneVote mock elections.

In addition to participating in the mock election, students learned about the Electoral College, political parties, key issues, the importance of debates and the impact of the media.

After preparing and casting informed votes, AB School West elected Hillary Clinton as the next President of the United States!

Systemic Achievement

...with purposeful intent

Instructional Management Professional Growth and Development

In an effort to meet the Board's goals for me as it relates to both Instructional Management and Professional Growth and Development:

- Oversee annual planning for increased student learning;
- Ensure that appropriate data are used in developing recommendations and making decisions regarding the instructional program and resources;
- Ensure that appropriate staff development is available and monitor staff development for effectiveness; and
- Stay abreast of developments in educational leadership and administration



HCDE has a robust professional growth and development platform through the Teaching and Learning Center. In addition to the many workshops offered on a daily basis each week, on last Thursday and Friday, literally hundreds of area educators converged between the two days to receive valuable knowledge from renowned speakers Jennifer Serravallo, Jim Walsh "Law Dawg", and Jeff Anderson.

Serravallo equipped Harris County educators to make independent reading time fun, instead of rigorous and dreaded. This

workshop, entitled, Reading Strategies for Goal-Directed Instruction, was both spirited and engaging.

On the same day, Legal Digest's Jim Walsh met with area administrators, counselors, and special education staff for the 11th Annual Back-to-School Program that featured a comprehensive review of legal developments that will impact daily operation ranging from the classroom to the principal's office to the board room.

Finally, Jeff Anderson trained teachers on how to make expository writing come alive for students in 10 Things Every Writer Needs to Know. In addition to teaching from his own book, each teacher received a copy for their professional libraries.

By offering such innovative, useful, and valuable training opportunities, HCDE is meeting the ongoing demand for educators at all levels. In doing so, I am meeting the Board's expectations of me to

- **In coordination with home ISDs, identify learning needs of students and develop a process that ensures each student's learning goals are met or exceeded;**
- **Investigate best practices for student achievement and utilize effective practices that maximize achievement of student potential within HCDE schools;**
- **Ensure that appropriate staff development is available and monitored for effectiveness; and finally,**
- **Stay abreast of developments in educational leadership and administration.**

HCDE BOARD

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UPCOMING BOARD EVENTS:

October Board Meeting

October 18, 2016

1:00 p.m.

Room 400

