

The CONNECTOR

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



Harris County
Department of
Education

WEEK OF JULY 30, 2018

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FROM THE OFFICE OF JAMES COLBERT, JR.—SUPERINTENDENT

Of Note...

The clock is winding down and time is drawing near. The summer is almost over and before we know it, students will be back in session for the 2018-2019 academic year. In the interim, HCDE is gearing up and we are in the last stages of preparing for the upcoming session.

I began this week with a meeting of the Executive Leadership Team, followed by a meeting with a mentee who is an aspiring leader in the education realm.

This past Tuesday, I visited Fortis Academy as Schools division officials are in the throes of discussions with client school districts regarding their students entering our program. We are excited about the commitments we have received thus far from area districts. Also, on Tuesday, I met with Dr. Jerry Walker from the University of Houston-Downtown. That meeting was productive and as always, I seek opportunities that are mutually beneficial between the Department and institutions that advance education.

I conducted various meetings with staff yesterday and today I conducted agenda review in preparation for the regularly-scheduled August Board Meeting, to be held Wednesday, August 15, 2018. I also had the opportunity to meet with the finalist for the position of construction director. It was a pleasure to meet the candidate and we look forward to filling the position to ensure continued operations.

I also attended the annual Harris County Precinct 2 Superintendent's Luncheon, sponsored by Commissioner Jack Mormon. The luncheon, held at Huffman ISD, was an excellent networking opportunity and was also informative. I attend this event annually and find it to be a worthwhile meeting.

This week in teaching and learning, HCDE hosted the following workshops and trainings: Social Emotional Learning Leadership Institute; Lamar CISD Secondary ELAR Training Day 1; Project WET Educator Workshop; Workstation Make and Take in Comparing Numbers for Pre-K and Kindergarten; Lamar CISD- Secondary ELAR Training Day 2; New Caney ISD- Secondary ELAR Training Day 1; HCDE Staff CPR, First Aid, and AED Training, and New Caney ISD-

Secondary ELAR Training Day 2. HCDE is a year-round source for professional development and continued education opportunities.

Looking ahead into next week, I will begin the week with a meeting of the Executive Leadership Team. Additionally, we will welcome Ms. Melissa Smith, the new executive assistant to the Board. We look forward to her onboarding.

I will head to Austin Monday afternoon to fulfill my UIL responsibilities as a member of the board and will remain in Austin through Tuesday, attending a board meeting. I will return to the office Wednesday and will conduct a meeting of the Leadership Team. I will attend the Development Committee Meeting the next day, followed by a Good Reason Houston Leadership Council event next Friday.

The Business Services division will begin its annual Financial Operating Guidelines (FOG) Training next week. This training is essential to ensure ongoing smooth and transparent business operations. This training is required for budget managers and other personnel relevant to the HCDE budget.

Please note that next week will be the Department's last week of the Summer Flex Schedule and we will return to our regular schedule on Monday August 13. Also, please be reminded (and as mentioned in last week's issue of **The Connector**) that this year's Annual Staff Meeting will be held Thursday, August 23 at the Kingdom Builders Center. Breakfast will be served at 9:30 and the event will commence at 10:00. I invite all Board Members to attend this annual event. HCDE Trustees in attendance will be recognized. I look forward to an exciting event and I hope to see you there.

In closing, I hope you enjoy this issue of **The Connector** and I hope you have a relaxing weekend. Most importantly, stay cool during these hot summer days.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

August Board Meeting
Wednesday, August 15, 2018

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Teaching and Learning Center Hosts Learning Forward Coaches Academy

HCDE's Teaching and Learning Center is hosting a Learning Forward Coaches Academy series during the 2018-2019 school year to develop coaching skills necessary in leaders to improve student learning. The series will focus on developing coaches' skills in building relationships, leading professional learning, and individual and team coaching.



The curriculum and learning design of the Coaches Academy reflects best practices in adult learning theory and is grounded in the Standards for Professional Learning, which outlines the characteristics of professional learning.

Coaches Academy sessions are:

Sept. 11, 2018
Sept. 12, 2018
Dec. 4, 2018
Dec. 5, 2018
Feb. 12, 2019
Feb. 13, 2019

Human Resources Hosts Refreshing Summer Social

HCDE Human Resources division hosted a watermelon social last week for staff in the lobby of the Irvington Building. Employees were invited for a refreshing afternoon break while networking between divisions. The social has become a tradition for HCDE employees, many of whom participate in the 10-hour stretch summer flex schedule.



ADVANCED TEACHING AND LEARNING BY TRAINING THE TRAINER

JULY 30, 2018

Social Emotional Learning Leadership Institute

Lamar CISD – Secondary ELAR Training Day 1

JULY 31, 2018

Project WET Educator Workshop

Workstation Make and Take in Comparing Numbers for Pre-K and Kindergarten

Lamar CISD – Secondary ELAR Training Day 2

AUGUST 1, 2018

New Caney ISD – Secondary ELAR Training Day 1

HCDE Staff CPR, First Aid, and AED Training

AUGUST 2, 2018

New Caney ISD – Secondary ELAR Training Day 2

Service

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

CASE Debates Students Attend Houston Urban Debate League Summer Institute



Thirty-four CASE Debates students joined the more than 100 total at the Houston Urban Debate League (HUDL) Summer Institute last week. The students represented seven schools, three districts and two charter schools.

In their first year at the institute, CASE Debates students chose between three different types of debate: the General Lab, where students learned about research and the fundamentals of debate, or the more advanced World Schools and Policy Debate labs which teach students how to construct arguments and counter plans.

CASE Debates is a program which pairs a successful, established debate model created by HUDL with the Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids, or CASE for Kids, HCDE's afterschool intermediary.

"Debate provides students with critical thinking skills," says CASE for Kids Project Coordinator Toni

Candis. "They also learn how to collaborate well with others and engage in civil discourse."

Among this year's attendees was promising young debater Queen Eche. The Kerr High School junior has been participating in debate since her freshman year and can speak at an impressive 220 words per minute, a debate technique that takes skill and many hours of practice.



Eche and her partner participate in Policy Debate and joined the CASE Debates program in 2017 to gain more opportunities to attend tournaments in the area. Eche plans on carrying her debate skills to college and eventually use them as a criminal justice attorney.

For more information about CASE Debates, call 713-696-1331 or visit www.afterschoolzone.org.

Service

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

HCDE Hosts E-Colors in Education Social Emotional Learning Institute



E-Colors in Education held their 15th annual Social and Emotional Learning Leadership Institute at HCDE this week, led by Dr. Rosalinda Mercado.

Attended by educators, members of the corporate and nonprofit sectors and Santa Fe ISD shooting first responders, the institute began with self-awareness and personal intervention. Throughout the day, participants learned to use their emotions intelligently to gain the performance they wish to see in themselves and

others. Participants also learned their personality diversity indicators to improve communication skills, build better relationships and work more efficiently.



E-Colors in Education Inc. is a public charity dedicated to delivering valuable, authentic and mindful coaching, as well as personal and professional development to every school in every nation.

2019 Early Childhood Winter Conference Becomes ‘Best Day Ever’ with Celebrity Speaker Steve Spangler

HCDE’s Teaching and Learning Center hosts the 33rd annual R.T. Garcia Early Childhood Winter Conference on January 26, 2019 at the Kingdom Builder’s Center. This year’s keynote speaker is television celebrity Steve Spangler with “The Science of Creating Amazing Experiences aka Best Day Ever.” This best-selling author, Emmy Award-winning speaker and Ellen DeGeneres Show regular creates experiments that get everybody excited about science.



The day-long conference will also be filled with more than 80 creative and practical breakout sessions for active students including research-based strategies for students in PK-2nd grades. For more information, visit www.hcde-texas.org/ECWC.

Systemic Achievement

...with purposeful intent

Employee Morale

In keeping with the elements of performance associated with this goal for me to

- Create an open and positive environment for sharing resources and exchanging ideas to improve organizational climate;
- Seek to systemically 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 acknowledging excellence;
- Ensure fair and equitable management practices;
- Demonstrate skill in anticipating, managing, and resolving conflict; and
- Demonstrate quality management through delegation of authority, team building, consensus development, leadership development, and self-management

HCDE's Human Resources division recently held a watermelon summer social



for staff at the Irvington Building. It was a refreshing afternoon break that offered the opportunity for staff to network, thereby enhancing employee morale. The event was enjoyed by those who attended, many of whom are participating in the 10-hour summer flex schedule.



As a result of the Human Resources division continuing to host year-round events such as these for employees, I am working to ensure high organizational morale among the staff at HCDE.

HCDE BOARD

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Position 5, At Large

UPCOMING EVENTS:

August Board Meeting

Wednesday, August 15, 2018

