

The CONNECTOR

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for the HCDE Board of Trustees



Harris County
Department of
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FROM THE

OFFICE OF JAMES COLBERT, JR.—SUPERINTENDENT

Of Note...

As you know, some of our districts are back in session while others are gearing up for a start next week. We are already supporting our client school districts and we are off to a great year.

I began this week with a meeting of the Executive Leadership Team. During that meeting, Center for Safe and Secure Schools director Ecomet Burley provided HCDE Incident Command Structure and Protocol discussion and training.

Later Monday, I traveled to Austin to fulfill my responsibility to the UIL. I returned late Tuesday, in preparation for Wednesday's Board Meeting. To that end, thanks to each of you for your commitment to HCDE and for your attendance at the preceding committee meeting, and at the regularly-scheduled August Board Meeting.

Yesterday, I met with Dr. Gerald Napoles, President of Lone Star College (North Harris County), in my ongoing efforts to network with other leaders in education for the benefit of advancing public education in Harris County.

Prior to that meeting, I sat down for an in-depth interview with Fox 26 News reporter Greg Groogan to discuss the previously-aided stories related to our Academic and Behavior campuses. Mr. Groogan and I connected on a human level as it relates to special education and our personal connections to that area of public education.

In addition to my interview, Mr. Groogan also met with one of our parents- a psychiatric nurse with over 40 years in the juvenile clinical setting who overwhelmingly supports our program. The parent, who has a student who has been involved with our program for over 4 years, spoke truthfully and from the heart about the successes her son has experienced, how he has flourished, and how HCDE's Academic and

Behavior campuses are a benefit to the community.

The story aired yesterday evening on Fox 26. While opponents of our program and critics of TEA were critical, I am pleased that I had the opportunity to represent the brand of HCDE and articulate our expectations of excellence and compassion through our delivery of instructional service to this unique population. The story can be found at the following URL: <http://www.fox26houston.com/news/exclusive-disabled-students-allege-physical-abuse-at-hced-campus>

Today, my calendar is filled with internal meetings with staff and other duties in preparation for the next week's Annual Convocation and the start of the school year.

Looking ahead into next week, please be reminded of our Annual Staff Meeting which serves as our back to school convocation. Again, I encourage all Board Members to attend. You will be recognized. The event takes place, as mentioned in previous issues of the newsletter, next Thursday at 10:00 a.m., at the Kingdom Builders Center in Houston, just off of Beltway 8.

As always, I will begin next week with a meeting of the ELT, followed by Tuesday, when I will provide a welcome to the Therapy Services staff, as they facilitate Returning Staff Orientation. We will be in full gear supporting our client districts as they reconvene next week so our campuses, centers, and programs will be back to academic business, as usual.

I hope to see you next Thursday and I hope you enjoy this issue of The Connector. Have a relaxing weekend.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

September Board Meeting

Wednesday, September 18, 2018

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

About Annual Staff 2018-2019: Who, What, When, Where and You!



HCDE staff gathers for Annual Staff 2018-2019 on Thursday, Aug. 23 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Kingdom Builder's Center, 6011 W. Orem, Houston, Texas, 77085.

A continental breakfast and coffee will be served at 9:30 a.m. before employees hear from Superintendent James Colbert.

Included in the Annual Staff lineup will be years of service awards, games and prizes, along with opportunities for photos with co-workers. Bingo is back

by popular demand, so get your card as you sign in and start mingling with other co-workers to fill your card. Completed cards will be eligible for prizes.

Please remember to use the hashtag #HCDEReserves as you post your favorite photos from the event.

Annual Staff 2018-2019 will be an inspiring, team-building event guaranteed to kick-start the school year! See you there.



ADVANCED TEACHING AND LEARNING BY TRAINING THE TRAINER

AUGUST 16, 2018

HCDE Staff Safety
Orientation

AUGUST 17, 2018

HCDE Staff Safety
Orientation



Bus Safety Segment Airs on 4 Univision Market Stations

Client Engagement Director Stephanie de los Santos represented the Center for Safe and Secure Schools Monday at Univision 45 with a bus safety segment which aired in Houston, Dallas, Austin and San Antonio on the 6 a.m. news. The three-minute segment focused on bus safety issues and included cautionary warnings about school zones and how students should be respectful to fellow students and the bus driver. View the segment: <http://bit.ly/2BhxJB9>



Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

6 Tips to Keep Children Safe in Digital World



With the increase in cyberbullying, parents worry about the safety of their children in the digital world. Technology and digital devices are ingrained in our children's daily lives from an early age. David McGeary, curriculum director for Digital Education and Innovation at Harris County Department of Education, provides safety tips to help keep children from harm and be good digital citizens.

1. Talk to kids about digital safety at a young age and do it often.

Have parents talk to kids about what to do if something happens online. If students are at school, tell a trusted teacher. If something happens at home, tell a parent or other trusted adult.

Talk to children about their district's code of conduct and safety plans. If the district has an anonymous tip line, how do you access it? What kind of information should be shared? If the district maintains an account for routine safety updates or communications during an event, where is that social media channel located? How can parents engage that channel to stay informed or share information?

The Department of Homeland Security publicizes its "See Something, Say Something" initiative. Not only is it a good practice to follow this advice for personal safety, a student's report could save lives of others through conscientious sharing of information.

2. Be a part of your children's online experiences. Know the sites they visit and games they play.

Research shows that kids ages 12-17 are increasingly aware of the disparity between the "perfect life" that they see others share online and the "real life" they experience every day. Parents should work to remind their kids that social media is often a reflection of a person's best experiences, but it does not represent the whole person. Kids should learn to cherish themselves, flaws and all. All this while also keeping an open mind about what is happening on social media.

3. Don't allow young children to spend unsupervised time online.

Keep the family computer in a common area in the home. Keep charging devices out of private areas like bedrooms.

4. Enforce this rule: If you won't do something face-to-face, don't do it online. (Discuss social interactions.)

Research shows that victims of cyberbullying have often bullied someone online themselves. By humanizing the online space and developing empathy for others, parents can help their children break the cycle of victim-and-victimization.

5. Humanize online social interactions. Remind them that behind every pixelated avatar is a human being.

When kids begin to get more active on social media, help them to use social media in a healthy way. Encourage them to share snaps of things that they are interested in or Instagram posts of cool experiences they have. Social media is becoming increasingly important in the world after high school. Help kids to share the best versions of themselves online so they may be better positioned for a life outside of school once they graduate.

6. Parents and students: Be fierce guardians of your personal information.

If a student is being asked to use a third-party tool that requires the student to give out personal information, it's okay to ask if the district has a policy in place to protect the information that is being given away. Parents can further help their kids by reading the "terms of service and privacy policy." (This policy is usually found at the very bottom of a web page or in the settings of an application on any website that a student uses outside of their district's network.)

McGeary suggests that while children may be getting information about safe online behavior from their school, students who have regular discussions with their parents about digital safety are more likely to be vigilant, self-advocates when something goes wrong online. He also suggests parents become partners in their child's online experiences.

"Take interest in the sites your children visit and the games they play," said McGeary. "If kids are engaged in constant discussion about the digital realm, they are much more likely to approach a parent or guardian if something out of the ordinary occurs."

For more resources on cyberbullying and digital safety, visit <http://www.cyberwise.org/digital-citizenship-resources>.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Lowell Ballard Named Technology Director at Harris County Department of Education



Technology leader Lowell Ballard has been named the new director of Technology Support Services at Harris County Department of Education.

Texas of the Permian Basin, where he coordinated university-wide IT initiatives in a high-growth environment.

Ballard holds a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Virginia Tech and a master's degree in information systems from George Mason University. He is also a certified Information Systems Security Professional and holds a number of additional leadership and management certifications.

With more than 25 years of technology experience, Ballard's strengths include information technology (IT) strategy, IT security/disaster recovery and business intelligence. He most recently served as the chief information officer at the University of

CASE for Kids VISTA Member Featured by OneStar Foundation



Congratulations to CASE for Kids VISTA member Javier Lopez as he is featured for his commitment to service by OneStar Foundation which oversees the federally funded AmeriCorps program. Last year, he

helped clear debris from roadways after Hurricane Harvey. He continues to amaze us with his passion for helping teens through a program called CASE Debates with the Houston Urban Debate League. <https://bit.ly/2KSmnms>



CASE for Kids Hosts Science of Sports

CASE for Kids hosted the Science of Sports workshop on Aug. 7. The goal of the training was to enhance the skills of education professions by showing them the connection between soccer, science and mathematics. The curriculum geared for elementary and middle school students was demonstrated to attendees through a variety of soccer-related activities led by field experts.

Service

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Back to School Resources 25 Harris County School Districts



Communications and Creative Services compiled a list of back-to-school website resources for each of the 25 school districts in Harris County. The sites provide valuable information unique to each district. Topics include dress codes, calendars, school supplies and more.

Aldine ISD: <https://bit.ly/2Mei6ym>

Alief ISD: <https://bit.ly/2M4fDaz>

Channelview ISD: <https://bit.ly/2AVshDG>

Clear Creek ISD: <https://bit.ly/2KEMmhj>

Crosby ISD: <https://bit.ly/2nsMUO9>

Cypress-Fairbanks ISD: <https://bit.ly/2M4EtqW>

Dayton ISD: <https://bit.ly/2OSuAtW>

Deer Park ISD: <https://bit.ly/2nopJ7A>

Galena Park ISD: <https://bit.ly/2vP4bVs>

Goose Creek CISD: <https://bit.ly/2rRgePw>

Houston ISD: <https://bit.ly/2uJJdr8>

Huffman ISD: <https://bit.ly/2vtSgNt>

Humble ISD: <https://bit.ly/2Ma9fxL>

Katy ISD: <https://bit.ly/2mMW0qE>

Klein ISD: <https://bit.ly/2KITQ2Q>

La Porte ISD: <https://bit.ly/2npFcUB>

New Caney ISD: <https://bit.ly/2vRA6od>

Pasadena ISD: <https://bit.ly/2kmOakl>

Pearland ISD: <https://bit.ly/2vqLuYQ>

Sheldon ISD: <https://bit.ly/2B4omEP>

Spring ISD: <https://bit.ly/2MdSZvF>

Spring Branch ISD: <https://bit.ly/2AUQk5L>

Stafford MSD: <https://bit.ly/2noqHk8>

Tomball ISD: <https://bit.ly/2OSKiW9>

Waller ISD: <https://bit.ly/2OpOLR1>

(Compiled by Harris County Department of Education Communications and Creative Services, www.hcde-texas.org)

Systemic Achievement

...with purposeful intent

Community Relations

In an effort to meet the elements associated with this expectation of performance 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**

Yesterday, I sat down with Greg Groogan from Fox 26 News to discuss the misconceptions surrounding our Academic and Behavior campuses. The meeting went well and was informative on both sides of the discussion. My primary goal was to squash the misinformation and deliberate mischaracterization of our program, but in the interim, Groogan and I established a good rapport that I believe will take us far. I was proud to represent the true brand of HCDE.



In addition to meeting with me, he also interviewed one of our parents who is extremely involved at her son's campus. This mother shared with him her very positive experiences with the staff on our Academic and Behavior West campus, as well as her son's

experiences. She explained how much her son has flourished and how much of a benefit HCDE is to the community. Moreover, as a psychiatric nurse with over 40 years of clinical experience in the juvenile setting, she spoke very



highly of the skillset of our staff at the Academic and Behavior West campus. Admittedly, she pays nearly scrutinizing attention to all methods of restraint, the protocols in place, how they are followed, and her ongoing checks and balances that her son's individual education plan is adhered to strictly. She expressed great satisfaction with absolutely no complaints. In summary, she voiced overwhelming advocacy for our program.

By participating in this interview and ensuring that another ambassador of the Department advocated for our program, I am working to achieve the Board's goal of me to function as the primary ambassador of the Department; present a positive, professional image of both the Department and myself; maintain visibility in the community; be open to the ideas and needs of the community; and communicate the needs and accomplishments of the Department.

HCDE BOARD

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

September Board Meeting
Wednesday, September 19, 2018

