



Of Note...

First off, congratulations to the newly-elected members of the HCDE Board of Trustees as a result of this week's mid-term election. I look forward to meeting with them individually to better familiarize them with the Department and its inner-workings.

I began the week, as usual, with a meeting of my Executive Leadership Team, followed by an IMPACT Meeting which was held at Fortis Academy. Having that group of leaders in public education visit Fortis was a strategic move, as it afforded them the opportunity to see all that the unique environment of this campus has to offer. I am confident that information related to this innovative program will trickle down to the decision-making levels within the districts represented at this week's meeting.

I departed Houston Monday afternoon for Austin to fulfill my board responsibilities related to the UIL. I spent all of Tuesday attending the UIL Board Meeting and I returned to the office Wednesday.

Upon my return to the office, I conducted Leadership Team Meeting. I also attended the PFC Meeting at Fortis Academy. I am pleased to report that both meetings were productive.

I hosted a Superintendents' Tour of Fortis Academy yesterday and I also met with the superintendent of Humble ISD. The tour was informative to the superintendents and offered specificities related to how the Fortis Academy curriculum is executed. The meeting with the Humble ISD superintendent also went well, and I am pleased that all is going well between HCDE's programs and services and that client district.

I also began my independent meetings with each member of the Board Trustees in preparation for my annual appraisal process. I look forward to continuing these individual meetings and I am hopeful to have the opportunity to meet with each of you and review the successes and accomplishments of the Department over the last year.

Today, of course, I attended the special committee on the RFP for legal services.

This week in the area of teaching and learning, HCDE hosted the following trainings and workshops: It Takes Planning to Save the World; NIMS (ICS 100, 200, 700, 800- a two-day training); Computation Without the Algorithm for Grades 3-5; Alternative Certification Program for Teachers-Information Session; Reaching Rigor: Creating Success for Special Education Students; Integers and Algebraic Reasoning for Grades 6-8; Improve Problem-Solving in Operations and Algebraic Reasoning for Grade 2 Computation Without the Algorithm and Model Drawing.

Looking ahead into next week, I will begin the week with a meeting of the ELT, and I will also be attending an event at Klein ISD in observation of Veteran's Day, followed by an individual meeting with a trustee related to my annual appraisal. I will deliver the welcome at the Rise Against Human Trafficking Summit on Tuesday, and Wednesday, I will continue my SuperMENTor Reading volunteerism with our Head Start division prior to Wednesday's Board Meeting. I will fulfill my Board responsibilities with Northwest Assistance Ministries next Thursday and I will attend the Good Reason Leadership Council Meeting next Friday. Also, next Friday is another special committee on the legal services RFQ. I look forward to attending Fortis Academy's First Fall Festival Celebration next Friday.

In closing, thanks to each of you for your continued service to HCDE. I hope you enjoy this issue of **The Connector** and I look forward to seeing you at the regularly-scheduled Board Meeting next Wednesday. Have a relaxing weekend.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

November Board Meeting—Wednesday, November 14, 2018

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 5, 2018

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Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

**HCDE's Popular Annual Financial Report FY 2017
Commended by Government Finance Officers
Association in Washington, D.C.**



Harris County Department of Education received an award for outstanding achievement from the Government Finance Officers Association in Washington, D.C. for its HCDE Popular Annual Financial Report for fiscal year ending Aug. 31, 2017.

The GFOA Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting considers creativity, presentation, understandability and reader appeal in its evaluation. According to GFOA, the award is a prestigious national award recognizing conformance with the highest standards for preparation of state and local government popular reports.

Each honoree receives a plaque with a seal of commendation from the GFOA. The GFOA's purpose is to promote and enhance the professional management of governments for the public benefit by identifying and developing financial policies and best practices through education, training, facilitation of member networking and leadership.



Government Finance Officers Association
303 North LaSalle Street, Suite 1700
Chicago, Illinois 60601-1210
312.377.3700 fax: 312.377.4806

October 17, 2018

Jesus J. Amezcua, Ph.D.
Assistant Superintendent for Business Services
Harris County Department of Education
6300 Irvington Boulevard
Houston, TX 77022

Dear Mr. Amezcua:

A panel of independent reviewers has completed its examination of your Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) submitted to Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). We are pleased to notify you that your PAFR for the fiscal year ended August 31, 2017, has substantially met the requirements of the PAFR Program. In the absence of authoritative standards governing the presentation, these requirements are based on an evaluation of information presented, reader appeal, understandability, distribution, and other elements (such as whether the PAFR is a notable achievement for the government given the government's type and size, and the PAFR's creativity and usefulness). The report received a weighted average score of 75.00 percent or above from three of the four highest individual reviews.

Each entity submitting a report to the PAFR Program is provided with confidential comments and suggestions for possible improvements in the subsequent year's presentation. Your comments and suggestions, as well as a "Summary of Grading" form, are enclosed. We urge you to carefully consider the suggestions offered by our reviewers as you prepare your next PAFR.

Continuing participants will find a Certificate and brass medallion enclosed with these results. The brass medallion may be mounted on your ten-year plaque. First-time recipients will find a Certificate enclosed with these results and will receive a plaque in approximately 10 weeks. The Award commemorates your achievement and may be used for formal presentations.

A current holder of a PAFR Award may include a reproduction of the Certificate in its immediately subsequent PAFR. A camera-ready copy of your Certificate is enclosed for that purpose. If you reproduce your Certificate in your next report, please refer to the enclosed instructions.

Washington, DC Office
Federal Liaison Center, 660 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 410 • Washington, DC 20001 • 202.393.8020
www.gfoa.org

ADVANCED TEACHING AND LEARNING BY TRAINING THE TRAINER

NOVEMBER 5, 2018

It Takes Planning to Save the World

NOVEMBER 6, 2018

(NIMS) ICS 100,200,700,800
(2 Day Training)

Computation without the
Algorithm for Grades 3-5

NOVEMBER 7, 2018

Alternative Certification Program
for Teachers - Information
Session

Reaching Rigor: Creating
Success for Special Education
Students

NOVEMBER 8, 2018

Integers and Algebraic
Reasoning for Grades 6-8

Improve Problem Solving in
Operations and Algebraic
Reasoning for Grade 2
Computation without the
Algorithm and Model Drawing



New HCDE Leaders Featured in Texas School Business

Several HCDE leaders are featured in the November-December 2018 issue of Texas School Business on pages 22-23 of the publication. The new leaders are Technology Director Lowell Ballard, Chief Communications Officer Danielle Clark and AB East Principal Keith Oliphant. View the issue: <https://issuu.com/tasanet/docs/nov18/22>

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Human Trafficking Summit Gathers Educators to Design Solutions Nov. 13



Human trafficking seems like a foreign concept to many families, but veteran teacher Linette Caroselli provides a cautionary tale of how it happened to her own 19-year-old daughter.

prevention education and serves on several state anti-trafficking taskforces. Restorative practices expert Eloise Sepeda talks about helping to heal survivors of violence and exploitation. Christopher Greeley of Texas Children's Hospital speaks about child abuse and neglect. HCDE speakers David McGeary and Lynnice Hockaday talk about digital bullying.

Children at Risk attorney Caroline Roberts shares the following statistics about human trafficking:

- 35,000 Texas children attend school within 1,000 feet of a suspected illegal massage business.
- 900,000 children attend school within a mile of a suspected front for human trafficking.
- 78,996 minor and youth sex trafficking victims were reported in Texas.
- 1 in 5 endangered runaways reported to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children in 2015 were likely sex trafficking victims.
- 75 percent of likely victims were in the care of social services or foster care when they ran.
- Abuse, neglect, interaction with Foster Care or the Juvenile Justice System and substance abuse are risk factors for human trafficking.

The Arizona mother shares her daughter's story of physical abuse, psychological terror, manipulation, rape and sex trafficking at the Human Trafficking Summit on Nov. 13, from 8:30 a.m.-2:45 p.m. at Harris County Department of Education, 6300 Irvington, Houston, Texas.

The event hosted by Children at Risk and HCDE's Center for Safe and Secure Schools (CSSS) is \$20 for adults and \$5 for students. Breakfast and lunch are included, and parking is free. Register at <https://t.co/lwh9XOXv91>.

"The purpose of the Human Trafficking Summit is to focus on the problem of human trafficking together and find multi-pronged solutions to end it," said Ecomet Burley, director for the CSSS.

Presenters include Christina Crenshaw, professor from Baylor University who researches human trafficking

Balint Charities Donates Books to Head Start



Steve Balint, of Balint Charities, and his family donated over 2,800 books to the children at the Early Head Start and Head Start. This marks the third year the organization has donated to HCDE's Head Start program.

"We're happy to do this because books tie us to our culture and are able to enjoy," he said.

Balint Charities Founder and President Kathleen Christesen hopes by working together it will make a difference in the life of a child.

"A recent study has shown that growing up in an environment with easy access to books is beneficial to children for lifelong skills," she said. "Balint Charities is happy to assist Harris County Head Start programs in expanding home libraries for their young students."

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

REI Employee Yi Ren to Present Paper at Toronto Meeting of Researchers



Research and Evaluation Institute employee Yi Ren will present her research paper entitled “Institutional Factors Affecting the Success of Restorative Circles in Building Student-Teacher Relationship: A Critical Perspective” at the 2019 American Educational Research

Association Meeting in April 2019 in Toronto, Canada.

The paper reflects the collaborative and cumulative efforts of both REI and the Center for Safe and Secure Schools (CSSS). The CSSS contracted with Spring ISD to provide Restorative Practices at the school. REI Director Darlene Breaux led the research project and helped facilitate the paper.

Restorative Practices is an emerging social science that studies how to strengthen relationships between individuals, as well as social connections within school communities,” Breaux explained. “In this instance, it was used in the Spring middle school, and the positive findings were included in the paper.”

Ren’s paper was chosen from 12,000 submissions to be presented at the meeting. She received a letter from AERA stating: “The AERA meeting offers a number of session formats to feature high-quality research and scholarly work. To ensure the highest quality papers presented at the Annual Meeting, your submission was reviewed by highly qualified reviewers serving on a review panel constituted by the SIG-Peace Education.”

The American Educational Research Association (AERA), a national research society, was founded in 1916 and is concerned with improving the educational process by encouraging scholarly inquiry related to education and evaluation and by promoting the dissemination and practical application of research results.

“The opportunity provides a national platform for showcasing the quality research produced by our Research and Evaluation Institute,” said Dr. Kimberly McLeod, assistant superintendent for Education and Enrichment.

Choice Partners Customer Named Texas Charter School Leader of the Year



Choice Partners co-op customer Kathleen Zimmermann, founder of the NYOS Charter School in Austin, Texas, was named Texas Charter School Leader of the Year.

Janet Wachs, Client Engagement manager, said she frequently provides Choice website trainings at the charter school so that the staff may utilize Choice legally bid contracts.

“They utilize Choice Partners’ contracts often to help with the financial responsibilities of managing funds at the school through cooperative contracts,” said Wachs.

Systemic Achievement

...with purposeful intent

Professional Growth and Development

In accordance with the Board's expectations of me to:

- **Oversee a performance appraisal process for instructional staff that reinforces standards of excellence and assesses deficiencies; ensure that results are used in planning for improvement**
- **Ensure that appropriate staff development is available and monitor staff development for effectiveness; and**
- **Stay abreast of developments in educational leadership and administration.**



Last Friday, I attended a gathering for former fellows



of the American Leadership Forum (ALF) at The Dunlavy. This mini-retreat, of sorts, offered an opportunity of reflection for those of us who participated.

The ALF joins and strengthens diverse leaders to serve the common good.

This occurs through a year-long Fellows Program in each chapter's community in which leaders can engage in dialogue, differ, and build relationships. ALF strengthens fellows' capacity to address public issues collaboratively, and builds a strong leadership network to work for positive change in the communities we serve.

My participation in this worthwhile program, along with my continued connection to it, allows me to strive to meet one of the Board's expectations of me as it relates to this goal—ultimately to assess any new and effective development tools available and determine their applicability to HCDE staff.

HCDE BOARD

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Position 5, At Large

UPCOMING EVENTS:

November Board Meeting

Wednesday, November 14, 2018

