

Of Note...

Throughout my 25 plus years in education, I have learned that it's rarely an academic course that will hook a kid on learning. Usually, it's an extracurricular activity, a sport or a hobby that draws out a students' passion and commitment.

This week we saw this mindset in action at Kids' Day at Hobby, sponsored by CASE. In this program students who participate in afterschool activities with a fine arts provider culminate their month-long learning with an interactive exhibit, showcasing their talent and knowledge in new areas of interest ranging from singing to dancing to drumming.

We also revisited the impact of our successful Scholastic Art and Writing Awards program, seeing how a student from Cy-Fair was able to turn her passion for photography into a once-in-a-lifetime experience in New York City. This student marveled that she was rubbing elbows with famous artists from around the country even as she showcased her scholarship photography portfolio and actively planned for her future in the arts.

I am proud of HCDE's programs like CASE and Scholastic Awards, which introduce students to opportunities that change their lives and help shape their futures.

I started the week off with my Executive Leadership Team meeting on Monday, followed by internal staff meetings and a visit with a colleague I mentor. Wednesday was filled with a PFC meeting and another budget meeting followed by the regularly scheduled board meeting. Thank you for your input and discussion during these meetings, especially the dialogue involving replacement of the Coolwood Head Start facility. I agree with Mr. Sumners that this facility is woefully inadequate, and I look forward to continued discussions regarding how we pay for this needed new building.

I ended the week with internal meetings and continued planning for the new school year including our annual staff convocation, often considered a symbolic event that marks the official beginning of the school year for HCDE employees.

As I mentioned in the board meeting, I am heading to the University of Texas/ Texas Association of School Administrators summer conference this weekend. I look forward to engaging in conversations with other Superintendents and how we work collectively to influence the future of the education profession and mentor the next generation of educational leaders.

Have a restful weekend.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

HCDE Board Meeting—Wednesday, July 17, 2019



WEEK OF JUNE 17, 2019

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Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

AB School West Construction Update June: Piers, Beams, Conduit and Finally, Foundation



Probably the most exciting part of our construction progress at ABS West is the form-and-pouring of our building's 47,970-square-foot school. It's beginning to take shape as the "Home of the Knights."

Since our last update in May, rain has slowed our construction at Academic and Behavior School West, but we've still made considerable progress to be reported since we broke ground on March 26.

Select fill for the building pad is complete. To date, 140 piers have been drilled and poured, and about 50 percent of the grade beams have been poured. In addition, the underground conduit for the site's electrical flow has been initiated.

In our four-week, upcoming schedule, the following items will be accomplished, pending amenable weather conditions:

- Lime stabilization for paving
- Form and pour the paving
- Install domestic water line vault
- Install fire water line vault
- Form and pour the building's foundation
- Masonry for gym interior after the foundation is poured, dried
- Monument sign design and approval

View our gallery of time-lapse photos chronicling our progress:

[https://hcdetx.](https://hcdetx.smugmug.com/)

[smugmug.com/](https://hcdetx.smugmug.com/)

[CASE/Academic-](https://hcdetx.smugmug.com/CASE/Academic-)

[and-Behavior-Center-West-Construction-2018-19](https://hcdetx.smugmug.com/CASE/Academic-)

(password is hcde1889)



Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Cy-Fair Graduate ISD Grabs NYC Dream at Carnegie Hall with Celebrities, \$10,000 Art Scholarship



Tina Fox and Taylor Powers

Within a whirlwind of 24 hours, Cy-Fair ISD graduate Taylor Powers met actors Tina Fey, Rose Byrn and designer Zac Posen. The young photographer was treated like a celebrity herself at Carnegie Hall as one of eight, \$10,000 art portfolio recipients awarded by the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards.

The Cypress Woods High School student traveled to New York this June with her family and photography teacher Tina Fox for the prestigious national awards ceremony. This year Scholastic recognized 800 teen Gold Medalists out of more than 340,000 national entries from young artists and writers in grades 7-12. Locally, Taylor's portfolio was chosen last winter by a panel of art professionals from Harris County Department of Education, the regional affiliate of Scholastic Art & Writing Awards.

"New York City was like a fairytale to me," said the 18-year-old. From visiting the "Today Show" and seeing the Jonas Brothers to getting lost on the subway and experiencing Times Square, the trip mimicked a movie, a dream come true, she said.

Backstage at Carnegie Hall, visiting celebrities greeted the top-award students. Tina Fey posed for a personal photo with Powers, and the Saturday Night Live star even complimented the teen on her dress.

"I was smiling so hard that could barely get out the words 'thank you,'" she said.



Taylor Powers and Tina Fey

Photography teacher Fox has been an art teacher for almost 30 years and has been involved with HCDE's regional Scholastic Art & Writing Awards for 27 years. Through the validation and recognition students gain from Scholastic, she sees student confidence rise. As Powers began working on her senior photography portfolio this year, her teacher knew it was unique and powerful.

"This is the first time I've had a student receive this type of award," she said. "I know this award has opened opportunities for her that she otherwise might not have had."

HCDE Scholastic Art & Writing Coordinator Andrea Segraves sees the power of expression that the Awards lend to young student artists and writers as they gain notoriety for their artistic talents.

"The Awards have identified and honored so many talented writers and artists over the years like Andy Warhol, Truman Capote, Robert Redford, Lena Dunham and Ken Burns," said Segraves. "To join in those ranks is such an empowerment for these teens."

Powers' future career plans include attending community college until she hears back from the esteemed Savannah College of Art and Design, her dream college.

"I hope to be able to commission art pieces for clients one day and do photo shoots for anybody seeking a photographer with a keen eye," she said.

She is quick to credit her teacher for encouraging and pushing her artistic endeavors while thanking Mom Letitia for influencing her creativity and buying the digital camera to help her forge her artistic pathway.

(For information about entering, judging or sponsoring the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards through Regional Affiliate Harris County Department of Education, go to <https://hcde-texas.org/scholastic-awards> or_email asegreaves@hcde-texas.org.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

HCDE Offering Cybersecurity Camp to High School Students



High school students are invited to attend a week-long camp designed to increase interest in cybersecurity careers and network design. The Harris County Department of Education Teaching and Learning Center is offering a free *iLearn GenCyber Student Camp* July 22-26 at Houston Community College-Fraga Campus, 301 N. Drennan St.

Students will gain hands-on practical experience with hardware and software. Attendees do not need any previous experience or knowledge in cybersecurity.

The camp is limited to 40 high school students from around the Houston-area. Breakfast and lunch will be served each day to students. A Metro bus card is also available to students who will need to take a bus to the campus.

For more information, email gencyber@hcde-texas.org.

NEXT WEEK'S EVENTS

JUNE 25, 2019

TExES ESL Supplemental Exam (#154) 2-Day Test Prep

HCDE Superintendent Certification Institute Information Webinar

JUNE 27, 2019

HCDE Principal Certification Academy Information Seminar



Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

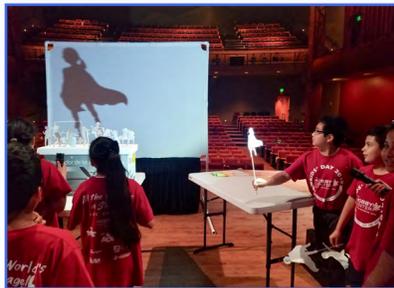
Kids' Day at Hobby Center Provides Venue for Exploring Fine Arts with Dancing, Acting, Music, Puppetry, Film



More than 100 novice young artists, actors, dancers and writers from 12 Houston-area summer

programs supported by Harris County Department of Education performed at famed Zilkha Hall during Kids' Day at Hobby Center for the Performing Arts June 20.

Participating students are involved with fine arts projects through afterschool providers selected through the Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids, or CASE for Kids, a division of HCDE. During the culminating event, the students show off their skills in hip-hop, puppetry, photography, writing, dance, theatre, Brazilian arts and drumming.



The kids worked with local artists at their schools this summer in programs provided by Harris County Department of Education's CASE.

CASE Kids' Day Projects are career-based projects that connect afterschool students to real-world experiences.

"Kids' Day at Hobby is important because it allows students to explore hobbies and interests they might not get to pursue during the regular



school day, especially fine arts curriculum," said Lisa Thompson-Caruthers, director for CASE for Kids.

Districts and charters participating in Kids' Day at Hobby Center include Alief, Spring, Clear Creek, Galena Park, Sheldon, Baker Ripley, Academy of Accelerated Learning Center and Southwest Schools.

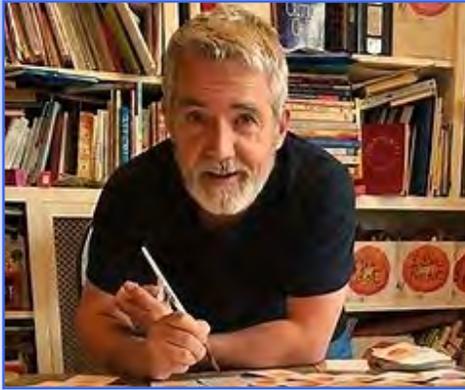
Afterschool providers, preselected for services through CASE for Kids, participate in Kids' Day at Hobby include:

- Multicultural Education and Counseling through the Arts (MECA)
- Dance Houston
- The Ensemble Theatre
- Dinky Drum
- Houston Healthy Hip Hop
- Brazilian Arts
- Puppet Pizzazz
- FotoFest
- Writers in the School

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Early Childhood Winter Conference 2020 to Feature Storyteller, Illustrator Peter H. Reynolds



Famed storyteller, illustrator and humanitarian Peter H. Reynolds is the keynote speaker

for the upcoming 34th Annual R.T. Garcia Early Childhood Winter Conference on Feb. 1, 2020 in Houston. Hosted by Harris County Department of Education, the value-priced, daylong conference attracts approximately 1,000 early educators yearly and is one of the largest early childhood conferences in Texas. (The event location is currently being finalized.)

Breakout sessions provide attendees with innovative ideas in subjects like bilingual education, reading, math, social-emotional learning, fine arts and more. Vendors provide educational materials and novel educator products.

“The beauty of this conference is that many of our presenters are accomplished educators themselves, and they make it easy to take these lessons and materials back into the classroom

to use the next day,” said Andrea Segraves, coordinator for the conference and director for the HCDE Teaching and Learning Center.

Reynolds is known for uplifting messages about nurturing creativity in young

learners. He wrote and illustrated a trilogy or “Creatrilogy” based on developing the creative spirit called “The Dot,” “Ish” and “Sky Color.” The Massachusetts native also illustrated “Plant a Kiss,” written by Amy Krouse Rosenthal, a children’s book which topped the New York Times bestseller list. He owns a homespun bookstore in Dedham, Massachusetts called Blue Bunny Bookstore.



Cost for the conference is \$100 before Dec. 1 and \$115 afterwards. Registration on the day of event is \$140. Register at <https://bit.ly/2KmT6V5>.

Systemic Achievement

...with purposeful intent

Management of Administrative, Fiscal and Facilities Function

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

- **Oversee a budget development process that results in recommendations based on Department priorities and available resources;**
- **Oversee budget implementation in a way that ensures appropriate expenditure of budgeted funds and provides for clear and timely budget reports;**
- **Implement and oversees a planning process that results in goals, targets, or priorities for major areas of operations; and**
- **Monitor effectiveness of operations against appropriate benchmarks.**



before the June Board meeting and worked to provide a fiscally conservative 2019-2020 budget which will effectively serve our public and employees as we thoughtfully prepare for the future.

We also discussed options for a step ahead to further a new Coolwood Head Start facility, which will provide stability for a community that depends on our services for their youngest residents.

By successfully communicating these plans, I meet the Board's expectations of me as a conservative financial leader to

- **Look for ways to improve programs and services without greater expenditures and with concern for cutting expenses and costs to public schools for service without sacrifice to high-quality services ; and**
- **Recommend the annual budget to maximize resources and manage the budget while exercising prudent judgment.**



Our construction update for ABS West provides proof of progress as we begin to lay the foundation for our new school. Despite a rainy month, inroads have been made and our building continues.

This week we also met for an additional HCDE Budget Workshop

HCDE BOARD

Board President

Josh Flynn

Vice President

George Moore

Richard Cantu

Eric Dick

Danny Norris

Don Sumners

Michael Wolfe

UPCOMING EVENTS:

July Board Meeting

Wednesday, July 17, 2019

