

Of Note...

First off, I am pleased to announce that we're unveiling and launching a new website for HCDE! The site will go live on Halloween, next Wednesday, October 31. This new site will be more intuitive, easy to navigate, and chock-full of relevant information for our client districts, stakeholders, and the community-at-large. Expect an official preview of the site at the next HCDE Board of Trustees Meeting. **"We're weaving a new web!"** (See page 5.)

I returned to the office this past Monday after having visited equine therapy farms in Virginia. As previously mentioned, the purpose of these visits was to ascertain as much information as possible as we explore the addition of this option to our curriculum on our campuses for our unique populations.

Upon my return to the office, I began the week with the usual meeting of the Executive Leadership Team; however, we met at Fortis Academy. This gave ELT the opportunity to tour the completed campus. The tour was enlightening and the venue was an ideal change for our weekly meeting.

This past Tuesday, the Research and Evaluation Institute hosted an event, Restoring School Culture. I provided the welcome to the very well-attended crowd of attendees. The event was successful and should help inform educators as they work to revamp the culture on their respective campuses.

I met with the superintendent of Crosby ISD on Wednesday. The meeting was productive and was part of my ongoing tour of meetings with Harris County superintendents. I will continue to make site visits to our client school districts. I conducted various internal meetings with staff yesterday.

Today, I served as a panelist at the University of Houston Downtown's 2nd Annual Men of Color, Greater Houston Area Collegiate Symposium. The theme of the event was Overcoming Hurricanes: Men of Color Rising Above the Storm. The event supports collegiate success and career development of the students in the UHD community and beyond.

Looking ahead into next week, I will begin the week with the meeting of my ELT, followed by a meeting with one of my mentees. I will be meeting with the superintendent of Fort Bend ISD next week, followed by internal meetings. I will conduct Agenda Review next Thursday in preparation for the upcoming Board Meeting. I am tentatively scheduled to attend an event for the American Leadership Forum next Friday.

Please be reminded that the regularly-scheduled November Board Meeting will be held Wednesday, November 14, 2018.

I hope you enjoy this issue of **The Connector** and I hope you have a relaxing weekend. Thanks again for your service to HCDE.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

November Board Meeting—Wednesday, November 14, 2018



WEEK OF OCTOBER 22, 2018

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Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

HCDE Secures Federal Grant for \$480,233 to Support School Violence Prevention, Student Mental Health

A \$480,233 federal grant will propel a three-year, layered approach to school violence prevention and mental health training in Harris County schools through Harris County Department of Education's Center for Safe and Secure Schools. The two strands of training empower both students and school staff to help them prevent or prepare for school violence like the shooting in Santa Fe, Texas.



The U.S. Department of Justice grant award, called Student, Teacher and Officers Prevention (STOP) School Violence Prevention and Mental Health Training program enables adult trainings in active shooter scenarios, threat assessment, the Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate (ALICE) programs and Youth Mental Health First Aid. The program provides training for two staff members from each of the 25 Harris County school districts, twice a year.

A second strand of the grant trains 9,500 students during its first year of implementation in Harris County school districts. In 2018-2019, 13 intermediate and middle school campuses are included: 10 from Pasadena and three from La Porte independent school districts. During school years 2019-2020 and 2020-2021, an additional 17 schools are added.

"Students gain training in crisis intervention, restorative discipline, bullying prevention and Rachel's Challenge, a program focused on anti-bullying," said Ecomet Burley, director for the Center for Safe and Secure Schools. "We also incorporated information gleaned from Gov. Greg Abbott's School and Firearm Safety Plan."

Burley said this past summer, center officials invited teachers and school personnel and officials from the 25 districts to learn about the grant opportunity. Pasadena and La Porte signed up for year one of the grant.

HCDE's Center for Grants Development secured the three-year grant. Within the application, research showed that of 1.8 million youth in Houston/Harris County, 32 percent of local middle and high school students feel unsafe going to and leaving from school. According to Texas Education Agency databases, 1,168 assaults were reported on campuses across Houston/Harris County during the 2016-2017 school year, along with 136 weapons found.

The Center for Safe and Secure Schools plans a menu of school safety workshops for the public throughout the year, including the Human Trafficking Summit on Nov. 13 with Children at Risk. For more information, go to www.hcde-texas.org/register.

ADVANCED TEACHING AND LEARNING BY TRAINING THE TRAINER

OCTOBER 22, 2018

Online Instructor's Training - Part III

Workstation Make and Take for Grade 3

Workstation Make and Take for Algebra I

OCTOBER 23, 2018

Restorative Discipline Coordinator Training (3-Day)

Restoring School Culture - Lessons Learned: A Case Study on Restorative Practices

Making Mathematics Learning Visible

OCTOBER 24, 2018

STAAR Academy Biology EOC: Essential Tools for RTI

FREE Textbook Showcase ELAR and SLAR

Quest for Grants Training Series: The Collaborative Grant

OCTOBER 25, 2018

Capturing Kids Hearts

Workstation Make and Take for Grade 4

Workstation Make and Take for Grade 6

Science of Sport-Soccer Workshop



IT'S COMING!

The new HCDE website will launch on Halloween!

Be sure take a tour on Wednesday, October 31, 2018!
Visit www.hcde-texas.org

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Lights On Afterschool! Celebrations Planned Downtown Houston Oct. 25 Spotlight Critical Need for Afterschool



Afterschool organizations throughout greater Harris County align to put afterschool in the spotlight

with a morning rally at Houston City Hall on Oct. 25. In the evening, Harris County Department of Education's Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids, or CASE for Kids, hosts a folk concert with the Hobby Center for the Performing Arts and nonprofit Musiqa.

The Greater Houston Lights On Alliance Rally is planned from 10-11 a.m. at the Houston City Hall Legacy Room, 901 Bagby, Houston, Texas 77002 with afterschool organizations throughout Houston. Council Member Robert Gallegos, District I, presents a proclamation. Youth presentations include speeches from seniors from Heights High School, messages from a college freshman who benefitted from afterschool, youth choruses, and more.

In the evening from 6-8 p.m., Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, 800 Bagby, Houston, Texas 77002, co-hosts a folk music concert with nonprofit Musiqa as musicians perform for about 300 students, complete with glow sticks and sing-along moments for the entire family. The Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids, or CASE for Kids, invites children from afterschool programs from **Sheldon ISD** (Carroll Elementary), **Houston ISD** (Benbrook, Briscoe, Lyons,

Park Place, Whidby elementary schools) and charter school Academy of Accelerated Learning.

Facts about afterschool:

- Most juvenile crimes occur between the hours of 3-6 p.m. when children are left home alone after school.
- Afterschool provides opportunity for students to improve academic skills, explore new hobbies, engage with positive role models and exercise creativity.
- In Texas, 880,636 children are enrolled in afterschool; 1.5 million are waiting for available programs; and 935,057 are alone and unsupervised after school.
- Texas parents strongly support afterschool. Eighty percent of parents support public funding for afterschool; 69 percent say afterschool helps them keep their jobs; 62 percent say afterschool excites kids about learning; and 68 percent say afterschool reduces the likelihood that kids will engage in risky behavior.

Greater Houston Lights On Alliance Members:

Harris County Department of Education's Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids (CASE for Kids), Houston Endowment, the City of Houston, the YMCA of Greater Houston, Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Houston, Houston Independent School District, the South East Texas After-School Association; the Education Foundation of Harris County, Harris County Precinct 1, Harris County Precinct 2, Out2Learn, United Way, and Houston Parks & Recreation Department's Mayor's After-School Achievement Program.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Restorative Practices CASE Study Results Provided at REI Workshop



The Research and Evaluation Institute hosted Restoring School Culture on Oct. 23 to share research from a Restorative

Practices case study at Bammel Middle School in Spring Independent School District. The Center for Safe and Secure Schools contracted with the school to provide Restorative Practices training and consulting with students and staff last year.

After sharing the results with attendees, a panel of experts discussed the findings. Panelists included Chauncy Glover of KTRK and the Chauncy Project; Dr. Jim Christensen, superintendent of Arrow Charter School;



La'Quesha Grigsby, principal at Bammel Middle; Julia Andrews, school culture and climate specialists from the CSSS; and Charles Rotramel, Houston ReVision.



Director Darlene Breaux provided announcements and commentary and Dr. Andres Garcia and Dr. Yi Ren from REI discussed elements of the study.



Resolving conflict and improving adult/student communications as part of the restorative training yielded a decrease from year one to two of the study from 670 student office referrals to 445. More of the study's results may be obtained by contact Breaux at dbreaux@hcde-texas.org.

HCDE Participates in Autism Walk



Thirty staff members from HCDE Schools division and their families participated in the 2018 Autism Speaks Walk on

Saturday, Oct. 20, at the University of Houston. To date, these participants raised over \$1,000. The money raised from the walk helps fuel innovative research and make connections to critical lifelong supports and services.

The Teaching and Learning Center also had three representatives on the Educators Stepping Up team. This team raised over \$500 for the cause.

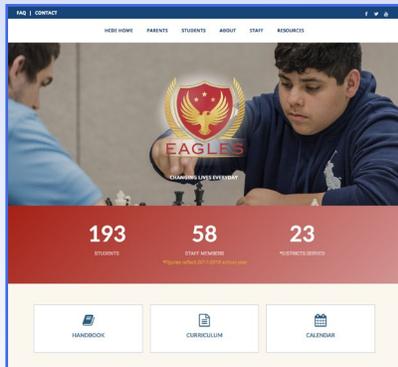


Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

What's in it for You? Harris County Department of Education's New Website Launches Oct. 31

Harris County Department of Education launches its new website and engages you with a vibrant and responsive design, informational graphics and maps, custom photos, engaging videos, timely news features and upcoming events. The website was designed with the user in mind, helping you find information about HCDE services and programs easily through color-coded blocks labeling.



“Our new website is based on user experience, designed for the public so visitors can easily find out about HCDE whether you’re a parent, student, teacher, school district, teacher or taxpayer,” said County School Superintendent James Colbert Jr. “We are about what’s in it for you.”



Other features of our site include the following:

- A vibrant color palette matched with HCDE programs and individual logos
- Mobile-friendly navigation
- Word Press platform for dependability
- Search-engine optimized and friendly
- Information-rich pages with facts at your fingertips

View our YouTube video for snapshots of our new site: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9YEL42xqLdM>

See you at our live launch on Oct. 31. See what’s in it for you.

Making Mathematics Learning Visible



National presenter Connie Hamilton shared the concept of surface, deep and transference phases of math learning with 60 teachers and administrators from throughout Harris County on Oct. 23. Hamilton showed teachers how to apply visible learning in the math

classroom through practical applications.

“If students don’t own their deep learning, they will not be able to transfer,” said Hamilton of the process. More Leadership Series workshops are planned this year with nationally acclaimed presenters.



Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

CASE Debates Tournament No. 1 Held at UH



CASE Debates held at the University of Houston this month provided World and Policy Debate opportunities for several hundred students from multiple school districts, including

Alief, Spring, Galena Park and YES Prep and Harmony charter schools. Houston Urban Debate League and the University of Houston

Speech and Debate Team provided support.

“Debate changes the way you look at the world by giving you a voice,” said Heather Hatfield, HUDL

chairperson. She said she has seen steady growth and interest in the high school debate program which has now expanded to include multiple school districts in Harris County.



Schools Celebrate Red Ribbon Week

HCDE schools participated in Red Ribbon Week activities Oct. 22-26. Red Ribbon Week is an alcohol, tobacco, and other drug and violence prevention awareness campaign



observed annually in the United States. Some themes staff and students took part in to pledge to be drug-free included: wearing colorful colors, cool ties and dressing up as superheroes.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Scenes from Principals' Training



In the book Culture Wins, author William Vanderbloemen shares methods for building a culture that makes the workplace

irresistible. As the principals within the Schools division concentrate more on the development and retention of strong team members, building a strong culture on their respective campuses is critical. In an effort to be reflective leaders, we are asking ourselves essential questions:

1. Do our teachers/staff know what they need to accomplish?
2. Are teachers/staff supported with the tools they need to do what they need to get the job done?

3. Are the best people working here and do they like it enough to refer their friends?



In our efforts to connect theory with action in a concrete way, we held our last Principals' Meeting at the corporate headquarters of the Vanderbloemen Search Group. During our visit, principals were able to participate in a tour and ask questions of the Vice President of Marketing, Holly Tate and Chief Operating Officer, Sutton Turner about their intentional efforts with workspace, culture calendars, and a culture whip to be known as one of the top company's for culture in both Houston and in the United States.



Robert Kaplinsky: Be Inspired! Authentic Math Problems-Solving for Teens

National presenter and mathematics expert Robert Kaplinsky worked with students in middle and high school on Oct. 19 to create real-world, problem-based lessons using student-driven curiosity to drive learning. In addition to learning techniques for implementation, teachers left with over 100 free problems that are ready for student use the next day in the classroom.

Systemic Achievement

...with purposeful intent

Community Relations

In an effort to meet the expectations of me related to this element of performance 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; and
- Work with other governmental entities and community organizations to meet the needs of students and the community in a coordinated way

The moderator of this event was selected from the UHD Men of L.E.G.A.C.I. students and Men of Honor – Houston Community College students.

By participating in this symposium event, I am striving to meet the Board's goal of me to

- Function as the primary ambassador of the Department;
- Present a positive and professional image of both myself and of HCDE, in all venues: community, political, educational, business, and Board;
- Maintain visibility and involvement in the community with ISD superintendents, elected officials, community leaders, and the HCDE board;
- Be open to the ideas and needs of the aforementioned, and listen to and accept criticism;
- Communicate the needs and accomplishments of the Department in a variety of formats; through written reports, communication with the media, community, school districts, political arenas, and public meetings;
- Represent HCDE by attendance at events and speak professionally; and
- Make professional presentations to all audiences in all arenas.



Today, I served on a symposium, hosted by the University of Houston Downtown, in conjunction with Houston Community College.

I served on the Men of Distinction Panel from 11:40 a.m.–12:25 p.m. in the Robertson Auditorium. The audience was 400 plus male students of color ranging from high school to college.

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

November Board Meeting

Wednesday, November 14, 2018

