



BAY DISTRICT SCHOOLS TO ESTABLISH PRE-ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

(July 2007) The Gulf Coast Workforce Board (GCWB) and Haney Technical High School recently announced they will receive WIRED (Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development) Initiative awards to fund new pre-engineering and construction training programs.

“We are excited about this opportunity for our kids,” said James McCalister, Superintendent of Bay District Schools. “These programs will emphasize applied learning, which is so important to today’s students. These courses will help them realize the importance of math and science and how those academic areas translate into the world of work.”

The GCWB, in partnership with Bay District Schools, will receive \$200,000 to implement Project Lead the Way (PLTW) at two area schools. Haney will receive \$100,000 to establish a Construction Technology Academy.

“We are so pleased to be a part of this,” said Kim Bodine, Executive Director of the GCWB. “It is right on target with delivering the types of training requested by parents and the business community.”

PLTW will be implemented at Merritt Brown Middle School and Arnold High School over the next three years. It is a national program borne out of the idea of bringing pre-engineering curricula and concepts to students through practical application while their opinions about careers and interests are still forming. Area businesses have pledged to make engineering staff available to assist with curriculum development, lab

work, classroom projects and internships for teachers working with the program.

At Haney, the WIRED funds will be used to establish a Construction Technology Academy designed to equip students with the knowledge they need to enter the workforce following graduation or continue their education. Programs to be offered under the academy include Building Construction, Carpentry/Cabinetmaking, Electricity, Drafting and Welding. Students graduating from these programs will receive a nationally recognized certification from the National Center for Construction Education and Research together with their high school diploma. Haney anticipates offering the Construction Technology Academy beginning in August 2007.

According to Haney Principal Sandra Davis, the decision to launch the academy is part of the school’s strategy to support the area’s growing, high demand occupations. “We are looking at our offerings and comparing them to the careers we believe will be in demand in the next 5-10 years,” she said. “We want to provide high school students with training and work experience in these fields of work, in addition to giving them a top notch academic experience.” Davis hopes to add additional programs over the next three years.

For more information about PLTW, contact Kim Bodine, Executive Director of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board, at 913-3285. For information regarding the Construction Technology Academy at Haney Technical High School, contact Sandra Davis at (850) 747-5500.