

Facilities and vocational contracts awarded

New contracts for digital archiving, disaster mitigation, pest control and vocational products were recently awarded and other contracts were renewed at recent board meetings of Harris County Department of Education. Governmental entities that have signed an interlocal contract with HCDE may access these legally procured contracts through HCDE Choice Partners cooperative.



Newly awarded contracts

Digital Archiving and Imaging: Databank IMX LLC; Delta-T Digital Archiving Ltd.; and The Windward Group LLC.

Disaster Mitigation Services: AKS Holdings Inc. dba ServPro of Spring/Tomball; Blackmon Mooring Services/BMS CAT; Dura Pier Facilities Services Ltd. dba Facilities Sources; Gerloff Company Inc.; Mooring Recovery Services; Polygon U.S. Corporation; PowerVac America Inc.; Rapid Recovery; S&R Operations Inc. dba ServPro of The Woodlands/Conroe and Texas General Contractors.

Pest Control and Pool Services: Copesan Services Inc. dba Holder's Pest Control Solutions.

Vocational Products/Services: Arbor Scientific; Burmax Co. Inc. (The); Cengage Learning Inc.; Certification Partners LLC; Digital Quest Inc.; Education Associates Inc.; Henry Schein Inc.; Matters of Health; MIAT Institute of Technology;

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Vendors roll out healthy options

When you hear "healthier school lunches," you probably don't think pizza and ice cream, but Blue Bell Creameries and Smart Mouth Pizza want you to think again. These innovative companies, who along with about 65 other vendors exhibited at the Choice Partners Child Nutrition Food Spectacular in October, have products that meet the new USDA regulations that have been rolling out since the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids' Act was passed in 2010. Child nutrition staff from about 30 school districts and more than 150 students got to taste-test and grade the new, healthier options at the event, which was designed to help nutrition directors plan for the 2015-'16 school year.

When the new USDA guidelines were announced, Blue Bell added to their line

"...there have been a lot of changes this year with new guidelines for children." -David Bienvenu, nutrition services director, Channelview ISD



of products designed specifically for schools. These included frozen juice bars, low-fat ice cream that satisfies dietary fiber and sugar requirements, and other items portioned into the correct serving sizes.

"Blue Bell has a long history of providing healthy ice cream and frozen snacks as part of our school program," said Rob Hungate, Blue Bell Creameries, "so it was no surprise that many products in our current lineup already met the new Smart Snack guidelines."

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Contracts coming soon

Choice Partners expects to have new contracts awarded in November for telemedicine; career/technology labs; and food contracts for Cash Counting Systems, Digital Signage, Nutrient Analysis Software and Point of Service Systems.

RFPs should be posted soon for janitorial cleaning services; technology products, services and training; uniforms (rental and sales); travel services; IDIQ trades; facility management services; and supply catalog (art, office, janitorial, technology, food service, medical, athletics and classroom supplies).

Members are encouraged to share information with quality vendors in these categories and invite them to register as a supplier so they will be notified of the opportunity to respond. Go to www.choicepartners.org/become-a-vendor.

MEMBERS: TELL YOUR FAVORITE VENDORS TO REGISTER

Members are encouraged to invite quality vendors to register, so they will be notified of the opportunity to respond to a Request for Proposal. Proposals will be evaluated; then the governing board of HCDE awards the contracts.

Meet new Choice Partners staff

Karen Chesky, new Choice Partners contract manager, has more than 18 years experience in school district purchasing at Boerne and Kerrville ISDs. A graduate from Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Karen holds certification as a Registered Texas School Business Administrator (RTSBA), with a specialty in purchasing. Prior to her school business career, she was a travel agent and traveled extensively worldwide, even living for a summer in Lucerne, Switzerland, studying International Marketing.

She has two grown children: a son, Morgan, who is a TV news anchor in Oklahoma City and a daughter, Caitlin, who works as a buyer for a women's clothing brand in Beverly Hills, Calif. Karen loves to travel, read, dance, cook and decorate cakes. She enjoys baking tasty treats for friends and family.

Jan Arnold, client services manager, is a certified public accountant with 10 years experience in public accounting. She graduated from Lamar University and spent 20 years in the treasury department of Cooper Industries Ltd.

Jan loves horses: she has a horse named Refund, who was born on April 15. Jan



(Left to right) Jan Arnold and Karen Chesky work the Child Nutrition Food Spectacular.

likes to travel, enjoys sports and reading mystery ("who done it") books. ♦



The Right Resources. Right Now.

- Derek Gillard, Director
- Joann Nichols, Assistant Director
- Trisha Jensen, Assistant Director
- Greg Lookabaugh, Sr. Manager of Facilities Planning
- Karen Chesky, Contract Manager
- Carol Greb, Contract Manager
- Melinda Perales, Contract Manager
- Jan Arnold, Client Services Manager
- Arlita Kyles, Contract Specialist
- Fred Calhoun, Field Representative
- Don Elder, Jr., Marketing Consultant
- Jim Owens, Contract Auditor/Consultant
- Janet Wachs, Field Representative

Les Hooper
Executive Director

Celes Harris
HCDE Acting County School Superintendent

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Find us on:



New members join

Organizations and governmental entities that recently became members when contracts were approved by the HCDE board of trustees include **Abiding Word Lutheran School**, Houston; **Argyle ISD**; **Ascension Episcopal School**, Houston; **Bastrop Christian Outreach Center**, Bastrop; **Briarwood School**, Houston; **Brushy Creek Municipal Utility District**, Round Rock; **city of Burleson**; **Burkburnett ISD**; **Camp County**, Pittsburg; **Camp County Ambulance Service Corporation**, Pittsburg; **Christ Church Learning Center**, Bellaire; **Crims Chapel Volunteer Fire Department Inc.**, Henderson; **Ennis ISD**; **Epiphany Lutheran School**, Houston; **Evergreen Underground Water Conservation District**, Pleasanton; **city of Freeport**; **Frenship ISD**; **Grayson County**, Sherman; **Harris County Housing Authority**, Houston; **city of Jacksboro**; **Kenmont School**, Brownsville; **Kirbyville CISD**; **Lamar University**, Beaumont; **city of Liberty Hill**; **city of Linden**; **Los Fresnos CISD**; **Lumberton ISD**; **McDade ISD**; **Memorial Lutheran School**, Houston; **Mesquite ISD**; **city of Princeton**; **Round Rock ISD**; **St. Thomas Episcopal School**, Houston; **The Village School**, Houston; **University of Texas**, Austin; **West University Church of Christ**, Houston; **Westside Montessori School**, Houston; **Willacy County Drainage District**, Lyford; **YES Prep Public Schools**, Houston; and **Zoe Learning Academy**, Houston.

Sunny Isles Beach, FL also joined as a new out of state member. ♦



Vendors roll out healthy options *(continued from page 1)*

Blue Bell is not the only company working to make popular foods fit under the new guidelines. Exhibitors at the event included other Choice Partners vendors, Borden Dairy, Kurz & Co. (The “Good Bread” Company), Smart Mouth Pizza, and grocery suppliers Labatt Food Service and Glazier Foods Company.

Smart Mouth Pizza has developed a fresh-baked, personal pan pizzeria style pizza, which uses whole-grain in their rising dough, low-sodium cheese and premium toppings. The pizza meets the nutrition requirements so it is a USDA reimbursable item.

“Our program promotes brand appeal that the kids talk about. Smart Mouth Pizza has pioneered a program that helps create a food court feel for today’s kids, who are more accustomed to eating at a mall food court than the cafeterias of old. This in turn is an effective way to increase participation and profits in any school cafeteria,” said Jamie Cerutti, Smart Mouth Pizza’s profit and participation consultant.

Smart Mouth Foods uses a simple “satisfaction guaranteed” approach with no upfront cost.

“There is absolutely no risk starting this program in a school,” said Cerutti. “Training and marketing support is provided every step of the way at no cost to the operator.”



A Gordon Food Service Company

New packaging and new ingredients are a few of the challenges facing schools under the USDA’s changes. Choice Partners members and vendors are taking them in stride.

David Bienvenu, nutrition services director at Channelview ISD, said they order all their groceries through Glazier Foods Company, which has been quick to resolve issues for them. From products that did not meet the guidelines to items that the children did not like Glazier Foods Company has helped find substitutes, according to Bienvenu.

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Channelview ISD orders all the regular staples from Glazier Foods Company, such as pre-cooked foods like chicken fried steaks, canned fruits and vegetables, as well as supplies such as trays and cutlery.

“Dependability is so important,” said Bienvenu. “They are like clockwork. We never have to track a Glazier truck.”

Channelview ISD uses many other Choice Partners cooperative contracts, such as Brothers Produce for fresh produce, Borden Dairy for dairy products, Kurz for bread, Blue Bell for ice cream, Auto Chlor for chemicals and others.

“We always want fresh products, quality and good prices,” said Bienvenu, “as we try to get the best for our students.”

Bienvenu said they have worked with Glazier Foods staff for more than 10 years and have developed a great working relationship.

“We do love Glazier,” he said. “They are part of our family. ... The people we deal with answer their phones and return their calls,” said Bienvenu. “It’s a relationship ... Sometimes I feel like I spend more time with them than I do at home.”



“We have a lot of needs,” said Bienvenu, “and there have been a lot of changes this year with new guidelines for children. They have been real quick to respond to our needs.”

Bienvenu characterized the Glazier Foods Company delivery

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Vendors roll out healthy options *(continued from page 3)*

Glazier Foods Company is a broad-line food service distributor with two distribution centers, located in Houston and Dallas. Geographic coverage extends into seven states, with Glazier serving a broad customer base including restaurants, both local independent operators and regional chains. Service to the education segment is primarily focused within the Texas border. Glazier distributes a wide variety of products including meat, dairy, fresh produce and grocery items, plus disposable items such as cutlery, packaging and small wares.

“We are able to serve our customers by offering a wide variety of choices from each of the product categories,” said Marc Mosley, education sales manager at Glazier.

The company was recently purchased by Gordon Food Service. Integration was postponed until June 2015 to ensure there are no disruptions during the 2014-15 school year.

Food contracts are one of Choice Partners specialties. The cooperative



Trisha Jensen, Choice Partners assistant director – food contracts, visits with a reporter about the show and the challenges nutrition directors face.

provides contracts for commodity-processed food products, such as USDA-approved meat, poultry, egg, cheese, peanut butter and fruit. In addition, the co-op procures contracts for food items such as bread, grocery products, produce, frozen and chilled beverages, plus food equipment and supplies.

“Just like a good vendor, [Choice Partners] anticipates our needs,” said Joe Rosso, food service director, Huffman ISD. “They provide information before you know you need it and they help you solve problems.”

For more information, go to www.choicepartners.org/food. ♦

Office Depot contract still valid

Office Max products are now included in Office Depot contract #14/010DG-03, available through Choice Partners. Office Depot and Office Max merged earlier this fall.

Members may take advantage of the special hard bid prices for quality items available from Office Depot after logging in and selecting Supply Catalog. Select “shop by vendor” and select Office Depot for such items as Purell hand sanitizer, Gas

Duster compressed air, clip boards, erasers, Fellowes file storage boxes, Elmers washable glue, Avery labels and pencils, Pilot and Sanford pens, Sanford highlighters, 3M Post It products, and Bostitch and Swingline staples.

For more information, go to www.ChoicePartners.org/vendors/office-depot-2. ♦

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NOV. 5-7

Texas Public Purchasing Assn, Ft. Worth

NOV. 19-20

Texas Assn. of School Business Officials Facility Masters Conference, Frisco

NOV. 18-20

Clean Air Through Energy Efficiency, Dallas

DEC. 10-12

Texas Charter School Conference, Houston

See all upcoming events at www.choicepartners.org/events.php

Contracts awarded

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New Horizons Houston; Odysseyware; Penn State Industries; Teaching Systems Inc.; Technical Laboratory Systems Inc.; and Texas Pride Marketing.

See all the new and renewed contracts at www.choicepartners.org/news. ♦