

My AISD

Volume 3, Issue 3, October 2017

Cancer doesn't stop Laswell

It's been a rough 13 months for Shackelford Junior High teacher Jade Laswell, but the Dallas Cowboys and the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation were recently able to bring a little fun into her life.

Laswell, who is an AISD product and has taught for six years in the district, was diagnosed with breast cancer last September. She underwent the first of seven surgeries on Oct. 11, 2016, and has since endured four months of chemotherapy and still has two more surgeries to go.

Laswell saw that the foundation and the Cowboys had an essay contest for breast cancer survivors and wanted to know about their cancer experience and what they've done for the cancer community.

Laswell's moving essay that hit on her experience and the work she's done



While she was at The Star in Frisco, Jade Laswell got to meet Dallas Cowboys quarterback Dak Prescott.

for cancer patients through her nonprofit Craft Hope made her one of five Dallas Cowboys Star Survivors

selected from the contest.

That led to a whirlwind week for Laswell, who went to the team's practice

facility in Frisco on the team's charter bus, met the likes of head coach Jason

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A message from Dr. Cavazos

We may be a little ahead of ourselves on the calendar, but we should really be thankful for the educators we have in the AISD.

We are blessed to have teachers like Jade Laswell at Shackelford Junior High. As we conclude Breast Cancer Awareness Month, she's a reminder of how strong our teachers are. She was recently honored by the Susan G. Komen Foundation and the Dallas Cowboys for her work with her nonprofit and was tabbed one of their Star Survivors. She has continued to keep her students first despite her ongoing surgeries.

And then there's Jennifer Fuller at

Arlington Collegiate High School, who received \$25,000 for winning the Milken Educator Award.

That's a reflection of her teaching as well as an example of the type of teachers we have in the district. No more than 45 teachers annually receive the Milken Award, and I'm not surprised that one came from the AISD.

We are getting closer to debuting our revamped intranet. The site will make it easier for our employees to access necessary documents and savings discounts that are available just for being an AISD employee.

Focus on quality assignments

Have you ever walked into a classroom or visited with your kids at home about their day at school and asked them about the most exciting thing they were working on in class? It would be interesting to see what their responses would be. What words do you think they would use to describe the work that they are assigned on a routine basis? Would they say that it is interesting? What would they say about the relationship between their assignments and their personal interests or life experience? Would they articulate that their assignments are typically challenging, collaborative, meaningful or maybe even fun? I suspect that if we interviewed learners about the best assignment they ever engaged in, we would hear many, if not all, of these descriptors.

So why a conversation with students about assignments? The reason is because we know that tasks predict performance. In other words, students will achieve at the practice levels of their work. Eleanor Dougherty, a nationally-renowned educator, has said that when we “present students with low-rigor tasks, they create low achievement even when students do well on these tasks.” Just as an athlete can only improve to the quality level of his or her routine practice, students too will typically achieve to the level of academic rigor that they are exposed to on a daily basis. Dougherty goes on to say that “[low-rigor] tasks... such as filling in worksheets, coloring maps, underlining textbook chapters... [also] contribute to the boredom students



so often complain about.” The great thing is that the opposite is also true! Rigorous and meaningful tasks not only hook kids into the learning process, but they also promote their commitment to the assignment, even in the face of challenge, resulting in improved achievement.

If the quality of assignments and tasks is key to a student's achievement, what are some ideas to consider moving forward? Here are a few to think about...

1. Create tasks that include multiple ways for students to demonstrate their thinking. Learning tasks that allow students to self-select options to best reflect their thinking not only tap into their interests but also increase their commitment to the work.

2. Build in time for students to talk. In fact, the more student-to-student dialogue we facilitate around the learning, the better! One way

to accomplish this is to find ways to routinely provide our learners with opportunities to support their own ideas with concrete explanations including the chance to build on or challenge the ideas of others.

3. Start with a question! Lessons that are structured around an essential question provide a purpose for learning, especially if that question is connected to a real-world problem that kids are interested in. Try to offer students the opportunity to use multiple sources of information to complete real-world tasks where they are asked to research, compare, analyze, or even argue for or against something with supporting rationale.

4. Encourage risk-taking. A growth mindset is an essential life skill, and we want to praise students for demonstrating a commitment to their own learning. Developing tasks that invite students to take risks and persevere through productive struggle encourages them to raise their own expectations on what they can accomplish. Kids who believe they can achieve, do!

There are lots of ways we can design engaging work that purposefully provides the necessary practice to foster high levels of achievement. By so doing, not only will our students enjoy the learning process, but they will also be excited enough to tell their family and friends about it!

Dr. Steven Wurtz is the chief academic officer for the AISD

Animals move in at the new Ag Science Center

AISD students moved goats into the new AISD Agricultural Science Center on Oct. 23. Heifers moved in the following day and classes will begin by the end of the month.

The 23,000 square-foot, net-zero center, under construction since the spring, will provide a state-of-the-art facility for agriculture education for students throughout the district.



Fuller wins ‘Oscars of Teaching’

ACHS teacher receives \$25,000 by winning the Milken Educator Award

Arlington Collegiate High School English teacher Jennifer Fuller was undecided if she was going to curl her hair when she went to school Oct. 18.

It’s a good thing Fuller decided to go the extra step.

Fuller was surprised that morning at an assembly to find out she was the recipient of the Milken Educator Award, an honor that’s been dubbed the “Oscars of Teaching.” Fuller, who had never heard of the award before an assembly that included guests like Superintendent Dr. Marcelo Cavazos and Texas Education Commissioner Mike Morath, received a \$25,000 unrestricted cash prize.

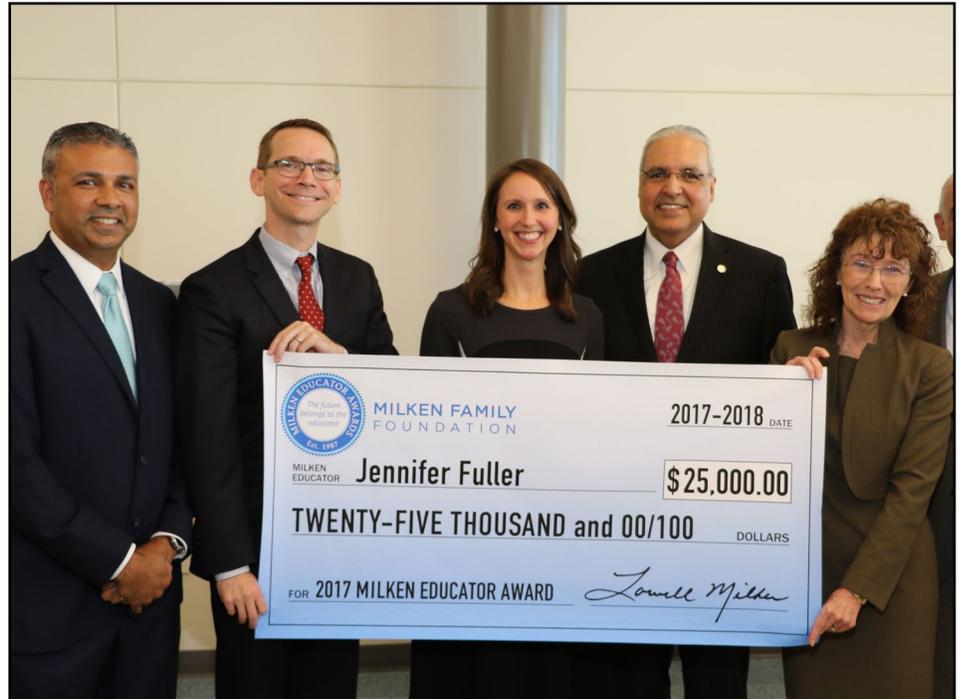
The Milken Educator Award goes to educators across the country with the purpose of celebrating, elevating and activating innovators and to inspire students to consider

a career as a teacher. As many as 45 teachers can receive the award annually.

Fuller has been teaching in the AISD for 15 years and ACHS Principal Dr. Ben Bholan believes she was deserving of the honor.

Bholan and a select few in attendance at the assembly knew Fuller was going to receive the award. Fuller had no clue. As Milken Awards senior vice president Dr. Jane Foley talked about what it takes to win the award, co-worker Veronica Haggerty kept leaning over to Fuller and saying she was going to win the award.

While Haggerty didn’t know that to be a fact, she was right as minutes later Foley was calling Fuller’s name and television cameras and still



photographers began following her every move.

At least that’s what Fuller was told. Her recollection of winning was a little sketchy because of the shock.

“This was a complete surprise,” Fuller said. “We had just heard there was an assembly and we knew that Dr. Cavazos and the commissioner [Morath] were going to be here. We didn’t know what it was going to be like. It was all really a blur.”

Fuller has spent her entire teaching career in the AISD and has been at ACHS since the school opened three years ago.

After winning the award, Fuller was asked to speak to the assembly and she talked about how special it is to be a teacher and how the students at ACHS have changed her life.

“We have a really great time and work really hard,” Fuller said. “I love the students. I love teaching. I love getting to have a piece of their life. Every day it’s fun. They make me a better person, and I love spending time with them.”

That was evident after the assembly as after Fuller talked with media outlets about what winning the award meant, her students were waiting to

congratulate her.

Fuller being honored should come as no surprise. She’s the English department level leader at ACHS. She does local and national staff development training as an AVID teacher and presenter. She helped establish an African American male initiative at Bowie High School and helped with a student scholarship program.

The cash prize isn’t the only thing Fuller gets for winning the award. In March, she’ll go to Washington D.C. and attend a Milken Educator Forum. She’s also now a member of the Milken Educator Network, which is a group of teachers, principals and specialists nationally dedicated to strengthening educator effectiveness.

Of course, Fuller didn’t know anything about that either until she found out after the assembly. She was too busy trying to track down her dad to let him know about her life-changing morning.

As for what Fuller is going to do with her new-found wealth, she has no idea about that either.

It’s a good problem to have. “Oh my gosh no,” she said of having plans for the money. “Oh no.”

Operation Graduation a big success

The dropout prevention department supports many AISD students in graduating from high school. One of the support strategies provided by the department is the annual Operation Graduation walk. Operation Graduation is a collaborative effort between the school district and the community with the goal of increasing the graduation rate of AISD students.

More than 160 volunteers visited 218 students' homes in September.

Volunteers visited the homes of students who were enrolled in school last spring but did not return to school this fall. They encouraged students to come back to school. Many families of the students visited were moved by the fact that volunteers were willing to take the time to visit their homes to help their students.

Several students returned to school that day,



and others have enrolled since the event.

Dropout prevention also offers a variety of additional support programs to help students that are currently off track to graduate. One of the support programs is the After School Academy offered on Mondays and Thursdays for students who are behind on credits.

The Students Obtaining Academic Results (SOAR) mentoring program is offered at junior high and high school campuses. Students participating in this program not only receive mentoring services, but also participate in activities such as college visits, educational field trips and service learning.

Dropout prevention also supports students who have dropped out of school and desire to return and complete their high school diploma. The center provides a flexible schedule within a small environment with supportive staff to help these students attain their academic goals. More than 200 students completed requirements at the center during the 2016-2017 school year.

Earning a high school diploma is critical to a successful life and lifelong health.

Many of the programs in the dropout prevention department run year-round, giving students additional opportunities to successfully achieve their goals. The dropout prevention department believes that with the right support and encouragement, all students can improve their futures by graduating from high school.

Find your shine.

**Opportunity AISD
November 14, 2017**

Discover the special programs available – from fine arts to college prep to technical training – to help students identify their unique dreams and realize their potential.

OPPOR- TUNITY

Risk Management Review October 2017

Tina Baze, Specialist
Risk Management
Arlington ISD
1203 W. Pioneer
Arlington, TX 76013
Office: 682-867-7649
Fax: 682-867-4682

Accident

What to Do Next?

- Contact supervisor. If an emergency response professional is needed, call 911.
- Contact the risk management office at 682-867-7649
- [Complete workers' comp packet](#)
- Completed packet should be sent to risk management office at the administration building.

There are no secrets to success.

It is the result of preparation, hard work and learning from failure.

Colin Powell

When am I required to report an injury?

If you are injured at work, even if you think it is something minor, report it to your supervisor immediately and complete a workers' compensation packet. All injuries should be reported to the risk management office within 24 hours of the injury. Packets are located on the intranet under forms & docs. All documents in the packet must be completed in full including the FMLA forms. Failure to report your injury to a supervisor in a timely manner may result in your claim being denied.



Fire Prevention Month

This year's theme focuses on smoke alarm replacement. Smoke alarms play a vital role as an advance warning to help prevent fire-related deaths and injuries. Make it a priority to maintain smoke alarms and discuss a fire escape plan with family members. Install alarms in every bedroom and outside every sleeping area and on every level of the home including the basement. Test all alarms at least once per month and replace batteries as necessary.

Fall Safety Tips

As the air turns cooler and leaves drop from the trees, it's important to keep a few important fall safety tips in mind. Service your furnace, use caution with space heaters, be aware of poor visibility if driving and watch for pedestrians.



Flu Season

The CDC suggest the best way to avoid catching the flu is getting the flu vaccination. Everyone six months and older should get a flu vaccination. Some people who have experienced a severe allergic reaction to the flu vaccine should not get the flu vaccine again.



Be Alert and Stay Safe!

UPCOMING DATES

American Indian Heritage Month
Family Literacy Month
Lung Cancer Awareness

All Saints' Day	Nov. 1
Lamar HS Homecoming	Nov. 3
Father of Texas Day	Nov. 3
End of Second Six Weeks	Nov. 3
Texas Arbor Day	Nov. 3
End Daylight Saving Time	Nov. 5
Start of Third Six Weeks	Nov. 6
Election Day	Nov. 7
Veterans Day	Nov. 11
American Education Week	Nov. 13-17
Education Support Professional Day	Nov. 15
Clean Out Your Refrigerator Day	Nov. 15
National Parental Involvement Day	Nov. 16
Substitute Educators Day	Nov. 17
National Adoption Day	Nov. 19
National Family Week	Nov. 19-25
Staff Development (No School)	Nov. 20-21
Thanksgiving Holiday	Nov. 22-24
Thanksgiving	Nov. 23
Black Friday	Nov. 24

Revamped intranet coming soon

A newly redesigned Arlington ISD intranet is expected to go live in November.

The intranet, which will have the same look as the AISD website that was revamped earlier this year, will provide AISD employees with easier access to everything from documents to discounts.

There will be a list of the most commonly used employee links in an effort to streamline the process of finding everything from a mileage form to an employee e-mail search.

In an effort to make discounts more accessible, the intranet is going away

from the classifieds section and putting everything on the new perks page. That will give you the chance to find restaurant and service discounts in the same spot you'll also be able to find ticket packages that are only for AISD employees.

One of the new discounts being offered is from the Fort Worth Zoo. We also have discounts available from two different 24 Hour Fitness locations.

If you have questions or suggestions about what you'd like to see on the intranet, please contact Anthony Andro at 682-867-7222 or email him at aandro@aisd.net.

LASWELL FROM PAGE 1

Garrett and quarterback Dak Prescott, and participated in an on-field ceremony at the Oct. 8 Cowboys' game against the Green Bay Packers. There were also trips to the gift shop and gift cards from Kendra Scott, not to mention other perks.

It certainly made for a memorable first-ever Cowboys game for Laswell at AT&T Stadium.

"It was just nuts," said Laswell, who teaches CTHEI and Gateway to Technology. "We felt really special the whole time we were there. It's probably one of the greatest moments of my life. It was just unbelievable."

The moment was made extra special because Laswell was able to bring her husband Dustin along with her to the game. He's a football coach at Arlington High and she's been to the stadium for his games. He's been with her through her



Jade Laswell (second from left) was one of five women honored at the Cowboys' game against Green Bay.

fight with cancer, and she wanted him there at the game, too.

As bad as the cancer diagnosis was, Laswell has been able to turn it into a positive. During

her chemotherapy appointments, she delivered 400 chemo care totes to other cancer patients - through her nonprofit - that were filled with beanies, scarves, socks, coloring

books, tissues, lotion and other items chemo patients need.

Her nonprofit work recently won her a \$1,000 grant that she'll receive at an event in November.

Her work spread to Shackelford, too. With October being Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Laswell pitched a fundraising idea to Principal Jerod Zahn. Students are now bringing in their coins to advisory teachers through the end of October. All the money goes to the Komen Foundation and the winning class gets an ice cream party.

"It's awesome to be in an environment like that because it gets the kids thinking about things other than themselves," Laswell said. "I don't necessarily run it. We put two students in charge so it gives them leadership opportunities and an idea of community service."

OCTOBER EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH



Leslie Powell
Wimbish Elementary
Elementary Teacher of the Month



Ian Powell
Transportation
Department Employee of the Month



Tyler Smith
Nichols Junior High
Junior High Teacher of the Month



Maria Mondragon
Bowie High School
High School Teacher of the Month

ACCESSIBILITY
TANGIBLES
RELIABILITY
RESPONSIVENESS
EMPATHY



Accessibility
Ericka Johnson
Payroll

What they said: When I needed help with my payroll issue even though she does not handle my payroll, she was very pleasant, helpful and professional in making sure that I was sent to the correct person so that I could resolve the issue that I had.



Tangibles
Elias Sanchez
Hale Elementary

What they said: No job is too much nor does he put them off till a later date. His customer service is top-notch and Lynn Hale Elementary is lucky to have him at our campus.



Reliability
Kenny Shook
Maintenance

What they said: He came to my campus to fulfill work orders for doors that needed to be rekeyed. He was friendly, prompt and extremely helpful. He showed great customer service. A big thanks to Mr. Shook!



Responsiveness
Rosa Talamantes
Parent & Community Engagement

What they said: Rosa processes hundreds of volunteer applications each week. In the midst of this work load, Rosa provides excellent customer service to our AISD volunteer stakeholders by addressing and troubleshooting volunteer questions, issues and concerns presented.



Empathy
Arnita Ware
Technology

What they said: Arnita was so patient and kind when having to resolve sign-in problems I was having on my system, even though it meant she had to skip lunch to do it. I am new to the AISD as an employee, but she treated me as an equal and helped me gain confidence in the process.

A customer forms an impression of service received over time depending on a range of experiences. Have you recently experienced exemplary service from anyone in the AISD? If so, affirm their practice by sending a shout out to bit.ly/AISDSERVE, and we'll recognize them! Be sure to let us know which component of the framework was exemplified (accessibility, tangibles, reliability, responsiveness or empathy).