



What's Inside

From Subs to Star Teachers, The Gift of Diversity,

Seesaw Lessons, Arlington ISD upgrading video

surveillance system and more!

Pictured above: Tori Kennedy and Yssa Gilmore

A MESSAGE FROM DR. CAVAZOS

I hope you had a great Thanksgiving break and got to spend time with your friends and family.

And while I'm writing about family, it's great to read about sisters Yssa Gilmore and Tori Kennedy. Both are Arlington ISD products who followed the same route to teaching by starting as subs before landing full-time jobs as outstanding teachers in our district. I'm sure their mother Pamela Barnes, who teaches at Ashworth Elementary, is proud of their work.

I know we're all getting ready for our next break in December, and I want you all to be safe. Please take a minute to read the information about our holiday safety tips.

I also want to congratulate our employee of the month winners. It was great to be able to walk into classrooms at Arlington High School, Barnett Junior High and Atherton Elementary and surprise the winners. And our department winner from security - Kathryn Stewart - thought she was escorting me around Sam Houston when we surprised her. I want to thank them all for providing one of the highlights of my month.



Dr. Marcelo Cavazos,
Arlington ISD Superintendent

FROM SUBS TO STAR TEACHERS

Sisters make impact in the Arlington ISD

Duff Elementary fourth-grade teacher Tori Kennedy thought she wanted to be a teacher but subbing and student-teaching in the Arlington ISD solidified that choice.

That path sounded good enough to Yssa Gilmore, who followed the same path to becoming a teacher in the Arlington ISD. It makes sense because

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THE GIFT OF DIVERSITY

By: Dr. Steven Wurtz, Chief Academic Officer

What an incredible time and place we live in! The world is so much smaller as technology has bridged the gap between people and provided a platform for us to connect with others who were once inaccessible. This connection highlights the beauty of the world's diversity and invites us to expand our understanding and need to learn from one another.

During the month of December, we pause to celebrate the end of a year well-lived and the beginning of a new one. People gather with friends and loved ones to ring in this annual change while engaging in deep cultural traditions that are underscored by historical context. We begin reflecting on what we have accomplished, challenges we have overcome and desires for our future. The ways in which we do this are wide and varied and that is special.

As I have reflected on this, I have asked myself how we can be sure to intentionally embrace this gift and cultivate opportunities for our learners to engage in relevant learning experiences that connect them to not only the world's innovations, but also to their own cultures and unique traditions. You see, I believe it is important that learners see themselves in the things they read and write about. As human beings, we need to feel connected to our environment and see the footprints of our predecessors so that we can glean lessons from their examples and begin to envision the impact we personally want to have on our communities moving forward. As educators, we want to cultivate an environment where students can capitalize on the incredible diversity that exists within our classrooms and learn from one another as they

discuss, read and write about the contributions of citizens around the world.

So, how do we do this? What are some things we can do to understand our diversity and equitably integrate this diversity into our students' daily learning experiences? Saniyyah Khalilallah, an author for the American Montessori Society, said, "Talking with the children can be one of the best ways to understand the diversity in the classroom. Pay attention to different languages being spoken or when the child talks about celebrations at home. Listen when the child is excited to tell you something about a family gathering... Make mental notes about what the child said and ask the child questions while conversing. The child will feel proud to teach the educator something new about themselves and will be thankful that there is an interest. Inclusion starts with listening to the students without judgment." She goes on to invite us as educators to consider two questions:

1. *How can I make the intention to respect every child in my classroom?*

2. *What is a goal I can make to ensure each child feels included?*

Being an educator in Arlington ISD is wonderful! We are enriched by the incredible diversity we have within our schools. Our responsibility is to ensure that we maximize that gift by integrating meaningful opportunities for students to engage in robust learning experiences that connect them with themselves and those around them. This month, I invite you to consider the two questions Khalilallah poses and commit to doing one or two additional actions to help your learners feel even more included and seen in the things they read, write and discuss. I can't help but believe that this will not only enrich the learning experience but validate students and help them to recognize the gift they are to each of us. May we, together, have a festive holiday season and learn from each other while we do.



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Gilmore is the younger sister of Kennedy. Gilmore is now a first-year teacher at Butler Elementary.

The two have been following the same trajectory throughout their careers. Really they were just following in the family footsteps as their mother Pamela Barnes is a teacher at Ashworth Elementary.

While there's no set blueprint for success for a teacher, the sisters followed the same plan. Both are graduates of Martin High School. Both went to the University of Texas at Arlington. Both subbed and student-taught in the district, with Gilmore working at Duff as a sub and student teacher, often in the same hallway as her sister.

Getting their feet wet subbing played a big role in their success.

up her bedroom as a classroom when she was in elementary school. While Kennedy wasn't so sure at a young age, being a sub helped her cement her future career.



Arlington ISD teachers and sisters Tori Kennedy & Yssa Gilmore

“*I started subbing because I knew ever since I was in first grade that I wanted to be a teacher and I could not wait to get my foot in the door.”***”**

“I started subbing because I knew ever since I was in first grade that I wanted to be a teacher and I could not wait to get my foot in the door,” said Gilmore. “Subbing for me was the perfect experience. I got to experience so many different classrooms, different classroom settings, environments. I got to work with different age groups, different students and it was just a great learning experience for me.”

Big sister Kennedy followed a similar path by starting her teaching career where she knew someone. She subbed at her mom's school before student-teaching and subbing at Starrett Elementary. She's now in her seventh year at Duff.

“I thought it was going to be really good experience if I was going to go into this field,” Kennedy said. “As a sub you really get to experience what it's like to be on your own in the classroom and deal with any obstacles that may come your way. I felt like it was really good experience to be on my own in the classroom and being able to get that teaching experience I would use later in my career.”

Gilmore knew teaching was the path she wanted at a younger age than her sister. She would set

“My sister and I both grew up wanting to be teachers,” Kennedy said. “I kind of floundered around deciding what I wanted to do. In the end, I saw my mom in her job at Ashworth Elementary and really liked what she was doing. From my experience subbing and tutoring in her building, that really kind of solidified that I wanted to teach, too.”

The district is happy to have them both. Gilmore has made an instant impact as a second-grade teacher at Butler. Kennedy was an AWARE nominee last year at Duff.

Duff principal Cindy Harbison is glad she had a chance to have both on her campus.

“I have seen Tori grow and she is an amazing teacher who connects with her students and makes learning relevant each day,” Harbison said. “When Tori shared that her sister, Alyssa, was interested in subbing and teaching, I was super excited! Alyssa subbed at Duff and did her student teaching on our campus. I knew that she was going to be an awesome teacher just like her sister, Tori! I am blessed to have had both of them teaching on our campus as teacher and sub for a couple of years.”

While they may be entrenched as teachers now, they can look back at subbing as something that helped shape where they are now.

“Regardless of whether you choose to go into teaching as a profession, it's just awesome to work with kids and see what's going on in the school system,” Gilmore said.



PRE-K-2 TEACHERS LOVE SEESAW LESSONS

The TI² (Technology Integration and Innovation) department has worked with elementary campuses to launch the new standards-based Seesaw Lessons collection for pre-K-2nd-grade. These lessons are ready-made and address phonics, data talks, calendar math, STEM and SEL, along with other important learning priorities. Lessons can be quickly assigned to students for independent practice opportunities in stations or can be used during teacher-led whole-group and small-group instruction.

Each Seesaw Lesson includes a **lesson plan** with objectives, student-friendly “I will” statements, resources, recommended instructional formats and instructions for how to use the lesson with students.

Teachers and students love using Seesaw Lessons so far this school year. Shanna Fleck, a second-grade teacher and Seesaw trainer at Little Elementary, has been using Seesaw for several years and shared, “I love integrating Seesaw Lessons into my phonics instruction. The lessons provide students practice in listening, reading and writing while covering phonemic awareness and phonological skills. I also love that there’s an interactive family activity that students can do at home.”



Shanna Fleck from Little Elementary

According to the second-grade team at Crouch Elementary, “Seesaw lessons are such a great tool that keeps lessons and skills we are teaching organized in a single bundled unit. The Math Calendar lesson is one that fulfills all the needs for Math Talks with our students.”

New lessons are added every semester and new lessons were released just last month!

Seesaw trainers have been providing campus-based training to pre-K-2nd-grade teachers. Additionally, teachers and leaders have attended an **ongoing webinar series**. Finally, TI² and curriculum specialists have showcased the most relevant Seesaw Lessons via the **K-2 Content Roadmap resources**.

To learn more about Seesaw and Seesaw Lessons, please go to tinyurl.com/AISDprimarytech.



From left to right, Dawn Strother, Lori Calkins, Robert Speer, Angela Crowley from Crouch Elementary

DIGITAL RESOURCES FROM LIBRARY MEDIA SERVICES

Britannica ImageQuest is a new resource for Arlington ISD junior high/high school students and staff. ImageQuest contains over three million images and is continuously updated. Images are curriculum-relevant and include infographics, signs, symbols, graphic concepts and vector illustrations. All images are rights-cleared for educational, non-commercial use and citations are easy with built-in citations for each image. To access ImageQuest, click on the image below and enter the username and password shown. If you have questions about this new resource, see a campus librarian or contact Library Services.



Username: aisd **Password:** student

Seesaw Lessons By The Numbers

Total Lessons Used

3430

Total Teachers Using Lessons

279

Total # of Student Responses

9960

Top Content Areas

• Phenomenal Phonics
• Power Blocks: Math
• Numbers in Space

Top Three Campuses (by usage)

Patrick	Adams	Thornton
1	2	3

WEAR RED DAY



Deadline to order is March 8

Mark your calendars for Wednesday, April 5, 2023. That's the Arlington ISD's annual Wear Red Day for the American Heart Association.

You can get on board now by opting in to receive heart healthy texts messages. To enter, text DHCARLINGTON to 51555.

- You'll receive heart healthy tips, recipes, stress relief tools, our district's Go Red/ District Heart Challenge updates and more
- You'll automatically be entered for each month's drawing
- Each month is a new chance to win a monthly prize!

And if you're ready to order your Wear Red shirt, you can do so by texting DHCARLINGTON to 71777. You will receive a link to complete your \$25 donation.

SPACE AVAILABLE

Contact Anthony Andro at AAndro@aisd.net to fill this space with your incredibly awesome updates in future *MyArlingtonISD* newsletters!

ARLINGTON ISD UPGRADING VIDEO SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM

Bond 2019 funding new cameras and VMS

All 5,300 security cameras at the more than 90 buildings in the Arlington ISD are being replaced and hundreds more added, thanks to the 2019 Bond. The district will have around 7,000 by the end of the bond program.

BETTER CAMERAS

Just as important as the growing number of cameras is the capabilities of the new cameras.

“The difference is night and day,” said Roderick Watkins, Arlington ISD’s manager of safety and security services, about the contrast between the old cameras and the new ones.

Everything is better: the clarity of the picture, the colors, the range and analytics. Some cameras even have a mic and sound detection.

Watkin’s team visits each campus, along with Arlington ISD security and industry specialists. Together they walk the facility and site and consult with the school’s administrators. From that, they develop a map and plan for the best surveillance. Depending on the spaces and needs, they select from several types of cameras to install:

- *Multi-sensor camera with three or four cameras in one unit*
- *Fixed dome camera*
- *360-degree fisheye camera*
- *Compact dome with audio*
- *PTZ – pan and tilt camera with zoom*

VIDEO MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

It’s not just the cameras that are upgrading the district’s surveillance system. The district is also installing a new video management system (VMS) for the cameras.

A VMS is the system that all the cameras feed into. It collects and stores all the cameras’ images and provides an interface for the images to be displayed.

The new VMS is a significant upgrade over the old system. The old system was composed of proprietary network video recorders (NVRs) that were only compatible with specific cameras. The new system is vendor agnostic and is compatible with most camera manufacturers. The new system

is flexible enough to run in either a physical or virtual environment, giving the district very scalable options.

SECURITY UPGRADE

The new cameras and VMS are much more than just technology upgrades. They’re all about the district’s goal to provide a modern, robust video surveillance infrastructure environment to enhance the safety and security at every campus.

“Having a robust video surveillance platform is a very crucial part of our emergency operations,” said David Stevens, Arlington ISD’s director of security. “We need to be able to direct our first responders immediately to any incident that may occur. Our security team members assigned to the campuses, patrol and our security operations center, as well as our campus administrators, are



trained to utilize the system during an emergency in order to provide real-time, tactical intelligence to our first responders. In times of crisis, seconds count and having a quality video surveillance platform will allow us to help our first responders have a faster and more successful response.”

INSTALL STATUS

The 2019 Bond program is being implemented over five years, and the new cameras are getting installed at every campus in five phases. The first two phases, which included 41 campuses, are already complete.

Phase three, with 20 campuses, is currently in progress. The first two schools in phase three, Key and Morton elementary schools, are complete, and seven others are targeted for completion by the end of the year, including Lamar High School, Ferguson Education Center and Johns, Key, Butler, Corey and Larson elementary schools. Arlington High School is also getting their new cameras in conjunction with the Bond 2019 construction project there.





DECEMBER HOLIDAYS AND OBSERVANCES

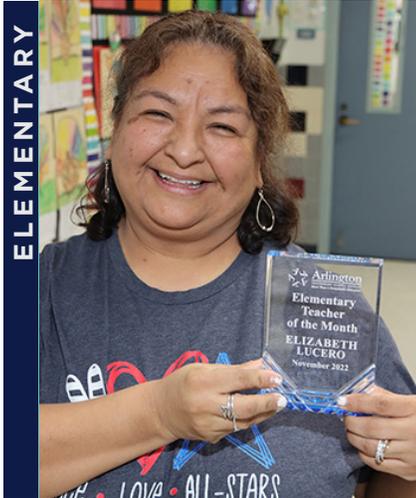
World AIDS Day	Dec. 1
Special Education Day	Dec. 2
National Cookie Day	Dec. 4
Angel Tree Pickup at Admin Building	Dec. 9
Inclusive Schools Week	Dec. 5-9
Human Rights Day	Dec. 10
Early Dismissal (secondary)	Dec. 14
Bill of Rights Day	Dec. 15
End of First Semester	Dec. 15
Early Dismissal (all students)	Dec. 15
Winter Break	Dec. 16 - Jan. 2
Hanukkah	Dec. 18 - 26
First Day of Winter	Dec. 21
National Egg Nog Day	Dec. 24
Christmas Day	Dec. 25
Kwanzaa begins	Dec. 26
New Year's Eve	Dec. 31

DO YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE UPCOMING CHANGES FOR STATE ASSESSMENTS?

Visit <https://tea.texas.gov/student-assessment/assessment-initiatives/hb-3906/staar-redesign> for important information about the STAAR Redesign.

**STAAR
REDESIGN**

EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH *We recognize your dedication and hard work!*



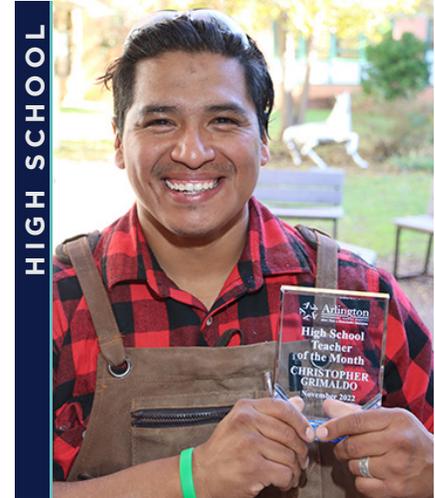
Elizabeth Lucero,
Atherton Elementary
2nd grade bilingual reading teacher

Lucero is a dynamic teacher who works hard to ensure all her students' needs are met academically as well as socially and emotionally. She is a key stakeholder in the campus by volunteering her time outside of her assigned duties. She works with all teachers to ensure they are well prepared and equipped with the tools necessary to ensure academic success. She is eager to help new teachers with classroom management strategies and adapt to their new roles. She's always open to new leadership opportunities where she can utilize her knowledge and skills to enhance the culture and learning experiences for all stakeholders.



Sandra Smith,
Barnett Junior High
Art teacher

Smith is an amazing art teacher who relentlessly shares her gift with her students. She dedicates her personal time to ensure her students enjoy the talent of art. During the partial COVID return, Smith made sure each student who could not return to campus had art supplies within their home. She takes time to explain the joy of art and show students how to be artists. She has had many students place in district art competitions. She had conducted several district professional development sessions for the district's art teachers over the years. She is a campus department leader, and her positive attitude is carried through the fine arts team.



Christopher Grimaldo,
Arlington High School
Architecture and construction teacher

Grimaldo is a new teacher to Arlington High School and has truly embraced the spirit of a Colt. From his first day of training on campus, he has made a connection with everyone he meets. He continues to build connections as much as possible through his Principles of Construction class. Mr. G creates the most amazing lesson plans from scratch by gathering input from his students and then making their ideas come to life. He does not like to keep doing the same old things - even if they are working. He loves to push his students' thinking and challenge them to take risks each day.



Kathryn Stewart, Security

Stewart is one of the campus corporals at Sam Houston High School. She has worked in security with the district since 2007 and was promoted to corporal in 2014. Stewart is a well-respected leader on the campus and in the security department. She is known as a hard working, dedicated, driven and self-motivated employee. She is a go-to person for anyone at the campus. She is an excellent leader, is great with the students and works well with the staff. She also has a wonderful personality who can interact with all the different people with whom she comes in contact. She treats people with respect and is firm but fair. She is a humble person, employee and leader.



REPORTING AN ACCIDENT

1. Contact supervisor.
2. If an emergency response professional is needed call 911.
3. Contact the risk management office at 682-867-7649.

Complete workers' comp packet.

Completed packet should be sent to the risk management office in the administration building.

Tina Baze, Specialist
Risk Management
Arlington ISD
690 E. Lamar Blvd.
Arlington, TX 76011
Office: 682-867-7649
Fax: 682-867-4682

SEASON OF SAFETY

With the holiday season underway, people are feeling festive. Whether you're decorating your classroom or your cubical, safety should always remain a top priority.

SAFE DECORATING

- Don't stand on a chair to hang decorations and always use a stepladder.
- Never hang decorations from fire sprinklers – they can prevent the sprinklers from operating properly.

Planning to string decorative lights or other electrical items? The Electrical Safety Foundation states that you should:

- Inspect all lights, decoration and extension cords for damage before using.
- Avoid overloading electrical outlets with too many decorations or electrical devices – they can overheat and cause a fire. Always use the correct tool for the job.
- Turn off all indoor and outdoor electrical decorations before leaving.

If you'll be using an extension cord, here are some additional tips:

- Refrain from placing extension cords in high-traffic areas or under rugs, carpets or furniture.
- Never attempt to extend the length of an extension cord by connecting it to another extension cord.
- Never nail or staple extension cords to walls – doing so may damage existing wire insulation.

Please follow the proper decorating protocol for your building. If you have any questions, please contact your administrator.

FOOD SAFETY

If you are hosting a potluck to celebrate the holidays, keep these safety tips in mind:

- Bringing a dish to share? Follow safe food-handling guidelines. Always wash your hands before and after handling food and serve prepared dishes on clean plates – never on dishes that held raw meat.
- If you're preparing a dish ahead of time that contains meat, ensure the meat's internal temperature reaches the proper temperature.
- Worried about that casserole? If it has been sitting out at room temperature for more than two hours, just say no.
- Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. The USDA notes that hot foods should be 140 degree or warmer. Use chafing dishes or slow cookers to help keep hot foods at safe temperatures.
- Cold foods should be 40 degrees or colder. Keep foods cold by placing dishes in bowls of ice or by serving in small batches and replenishing from the refrigerator as needed.

OFFICE REFRIGERATOR

Is your office refrigerator filled with mystery items, funky smells and who knows what else? Then it's time for you to take action.