

Larson quartet has seen it all

Music teacher Vivian Roberts doesn't remember everything that happened when Larson Elementary opened 20 years ago.

But she does remember one thing that stuck out. The school, which recently celebrated its 20th anniversary, had a hard time getting everything it needed when it opened in August of 1997.

"The first year we opened UPS was on strike and we didn't even have all of our materials," said Roberts. "They couldn't get them here. It was all shiny and new but we didn't have everything we needed. Luckily we had enough experience to get us through."

Larson has been lucky over all 20 of its years to have the experience of Roberts on campus. And she's not alone. Roberts is one of four teachers who



Mary Leddy, Melissa Shimanek, Vivian Roberts and Lisa Wilson have seen everything that's happened at Larson Elementary in the last 20 years.

have been at the school since it opened, including physical education teacher

Lisa Wilson, third-grade teacher Melissa Shimanek and special education

teacher Mary Leddy. They each came to the

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A message from Dr. Cavazos

If you ever need proof of how dedicated the teachers in the AISD are, all you have to do is head to Larson Elementary.

Congratulations to the four teachers who are featured in this edition of *My AISD* for their dedication to Larson since it opened and to the district. They have impacted the lives of students in our district for decades and continue to do so today. Well done.

I hope everyone in the district is taking advantage of the wellness program that the district has in partnership with Vivarae. Every campus has a wellness champion who is there to answer your

questions about the program and give you guidance if needed.

The 2014 Bond continues to make a huge impact in the district with district-wide security being a top priority. The new cameras that were part of the bond further that cause.

I'd like to thank you all for everything you have done this semester to help our students and stakeholders. It's been a great, fast-moving first half of the school year.

I hope you all enjoy your break and have a safe and happy time with friends and family. I look forward to seeing you all when we return in 2018.

Teachers provide gifts all year

This is a special time of year. It is a time when we lean into our best human qualities and use those to bless the lives of others. We often hear of random acts of kindness. We witness moments of selfless service to others and small (even sometimes large) gestures of gratitude that not only impact the person on the receiving end, but also enlarge the lives of those doing the giving.

As I reflect upon our role as educators, I can't help but quickly recognize that these are the very behaviors that we as teachers seek to exemplify each day. And although during the holiday season it may be more prominently on our minds, each of you makes small (and sometimes large) sacrifices every day to give the gift of time and expend your unique



talents on the development and building up of the life of another. This is a gift that only you can give.

No one else has what you have to share. Only you have the ability to offer and make the contribution that is unique to you, and that is special.

So during this holiday season, I want to invite you to bask in the difference you are making. You are impacting individuals' lives in ways that only you can. And one day, when those you have served reflect on their life experience and the positive things that have come from it, they will reach back into the depths of their memories and remember the incredible gift you once gave and thank you.

Happy holidays and blessings to you and yours.

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

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school when it opened as The Academy at Larson Elementary, attracting students from all over the district as a school of choice with an emphasis on math and science. A few years later the school changed from an academy to a traditional elementary. There have been several more changes since then, as the school has had four principals in its first 20 years and thousands of students have entered and left the school.

All of those students have had four constants in their time at Larson, and that doesn't appear to be changing anytime soon as the original Larson four still love their jobs and have formed friendships that have now lasted more than two decades.

"This is my community," Shimanek said. "These are the children of the people I go to the grocery store with, I go to church with, I live down the street from.

For me personally there is a buy in because these are my kids, the parents I live around. I think that sense of community, the commitment that these are my neighbors, that's why we're here."

All four teachers took different routes to Larson. Shimanek taught at Swift Elementary for 11 years and lives on the north side of Arlington. The chance to teach close to home and have her daughters Amanda and Claire go through Larson helped make the decision for her. Roberts and Leddy were picked by then-Roquemore Elementary principal Jeanne Paull-Turner to come to Larson when Turner was selected as the first principal at Larson because both had worked with Paull-Turner at Roquemore. Wilson, who is in her 26th year in the AISD, was the P.E. teacher when Williams Elementary opened and then came to Larson to start that program.

"Larson just stuck," Wilson said. "It's been good. I've been able to build a program. I've been fortunate because I've seen every kid who has come through this school. When I have old students come up to me to say 'Hi,' I tell them to help me because I've seen a lot of kids come through here."

Wilson's gym has been right next to Roberts' music room for the last 20 years as the duo has been the only specials' teachers the school has ever had. And the Roberts-Shimanek duo gets together every year before the Christmas break for the annual sing along, with Roberts and Shimanek playing dueling pianos.

Leddy, who taught at Roquemore for seven years before coming to Larson, has been the special-education team leader at the campus since it opened.

"You blink and it's gone," Leddy said. "I've been fortunate that I've had wonderful administrators.

People have a very good sense of perspective here. For me, being here 20 years when the students come back and they're going to different colleges, to watch them grow and evolve and prosper and become really dedicated individuals to the community, that's really important."

The campus isn't the only thing that's changed over the last 20 years. Each of the four uses different tactics to reach students than they did when the school opened, which is part of the profession.

"You have to be like Gumby," Wilson said.

The name has changed. The students have changed. The principal has changed. But the original Larson four are still there and remember it all from the early days of The Academy at Larson Elementary.

And in case they forgot where they came from?

"I've still got the original Larson shirt," Leddy said.

Security gets big bond boost

Improving security on the AISD's campuses is an important piece of the 2014 Bond program. To date, the AISD security department has installed new bond-funded security cameras and network video recorders (NVRs) at 55 campuses. By the end of the five-year bond program, all campuses will receive new cameras.

The new cameras will ultimately allow the AISD security department to increase video surveillance from 35 to 80 percent of all AISD buildings. The increase in coverage includes entry-exit points, stairwells, cafeterias, gyms, libraries, hallways, loading docks and playgrounds.

More than 1,800 new cameras and more than 100 new NVRs have been installed so far. The new digital cameras are replacing old analog



cameras and provide a better, clearer picture. Digital video taken by the new cameras is saved to a network video recorder, which offers significantly more storage than the old analog recorders. If a principal or assistant principal needs some surveillance video saved, he or she can simply submit a request online and the security department

will archive that video indefinitely.

"Our dispatchers are able to monitor any camera 24/7/365, plus campus staff can monitor them throughout the day," said James Smith Jr., AISD security manager. "The upgrades help reduce the number of burglary offenses within our district because we're able to quickly direct law enforcement to the

suspects in or around our buildings to make an arrest."

The 55 completed campuses represent all but five of the planned locations for the first three phases of the bond program. The locations for phase four are currently being planned in conjunction with the network services department.

Installation of the cameras is done after the AISD's network services department first wires each school. To be efficient and only take down the ceiling once, network services runs the wire for the cameras while also running wire for network upgrades, upgrading switches and installing additional wireless drops (technology improvements also funded by the 2014 Bond package). Once the wiring is in place, the security department installs the cameras.



We are saddened by the passing of Eddy Peach, former Lamar High School coach and Peach Elementary namesake. Our condolences to the Peach family.

Eddy worked in the AISD for 45 years, including 40 years as the Lamar High School head football coach. On Aug. 29, 2008, Eddy became

the first head coach to win 300 games at the Class 5A level (current Class 6A level), and he retired in 2010 with 310 wins. Eddy began his teaching and coaching career in 1965 at Carter Junior High. He spent four years at Arlington High School as a PE teacher, JV football coach and head baseball coach.



We are saddened by the death of former Arlington ISD Trustee Ann Morris. Morris died Monday, Dec. 18. She was 73. Our condolences to the Morris family.

Morris was a lifelong advocate for public education and a long-time public servant. She was an AISD Board of Trustee member from 1985 to 1991

and additionally served three appointed terms on the AISD board. Morris was a founding member and on the Board of Directors for the Arlington ISD Education Foundation.

She was an Arlington ISD teacher and also worked in the Texas Legislature for former State Representative Diane Patrick.

Partnership boosts social studies

Teachers able to use new practices in classrooms

There is plenty of excitement going on in social studies classrooms throughout the district. As a part of the social studies department partnership with the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, fifth-, eighth- and 11th-grade social studies teachers are provided a professional learning opportunity that takes their practice to another level.

This professional learning series promotes historical inquiry by teaching literacy through a range of topics in American history.

Teachers are learning a series of integrated literacy strategies that directly impact student understanding and performance in United States history. As a result, teachers are engaging students in examining and explaining the impact of historical primary source documents such as the Federalist Papers and the Declaration of Independence, political cartoons and other images from the Great Depression era, as well as historical speeches from presidents Washington, Hoover, Roosevelt and others.

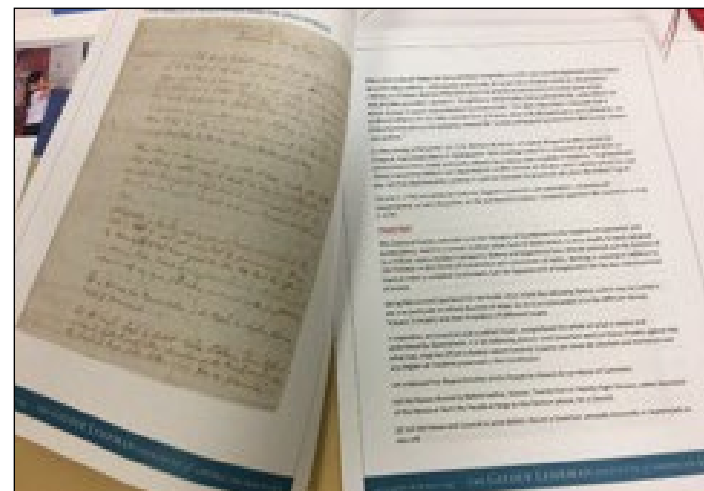
Jason Rizey, who teaches at Berry Elementary, led his fifth-grade students through the Declaration of Independence, where students engaged in shared reading. Students identified key words from the document in order to write summaries of the



Shackelford teacher Jon Hoffner uses Tea Party literacy strategy in his classroom.



Tin Bailey, the director of education for the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, talks with teachers.



Teachers are engaging their students by examining historical primary source documents.

main ideas found in the document.

Other literacy learning opportunities the department has offered to teachers include: the Bow Tie, Tea Party, and Talk, Read, Talk, Write literacy strategies.

Curriculum and instruction cadre member Keela Bearden, who also teaches Texas history at Young Junior High, is featured in the department's monthly online newsletter, "The Bulletin," implementing the Tea Party literacy strategy that involves students making inferences and predictions about a text before reading it. Students are given various key words and phrases from the text and mingle around the room, connecting clues and ideas.

Check out Bearden's students in action at <https://www.smore.com/gn8au> as well as stories about Webb Elementary teacher Abigail Burton, Shackelford Junior High teacher Jon Hoffner and Lamar High School teacher Stacey Williams. Burton utilized the Bow-Tie strategy while Hoffner used the Tea Party literacy strategy and Williams used the Building Blocks strategy to help with the vocabulary instruction.

There is plenty that teachers can do in their classrooms to support literacy all while teaching the social studies content and building a stronger foundation of literacy skills.

Wellness takes center stage

Wellness champions from across the district met at the Professional Development Center as part of a pep rally and information session to get a better idea of what's expected in the district's wellness program.

The AISD has partnered with Vivarae for the program in an effort to keep stakeholders motivated to reach personal health goals along with the education and support to make wellness a lifestyle.

Each campus has a wellness champion who is charged with being the point person for the campaign.

"It's important for us as a district to put an emphasis on a healthy lifestyle," said Scott Kahl, the assistant superintendent of human resources. "We want the wellness champions to be your go-to source for our program at each campus. Hopefully this conference has inspired them, and they take back what they've learned and spread the word."

As a reminder, all AISD employees who receive a premium incentive (\$240, health plan enrolled only)



must complete a member health assessment by Aug. 31, 2018. The MHA is a 30-question survey that

takes about 10 minutes. You must also complete a biometric screening on site or by visiting your physician

or a LabCorp facility.

For more information, go to www.aisdwellnessprogram.com.



Arlington
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Texas School Board Appreciation Month National Mentoring Month

New Year's Day	Jan. 1
Teacher Prep Day	Jan. 8
Elvis Presley's Birthday	Jan. 8
Start of Fourth Six Weeks	Jan. 9
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Jan. 15
World Religion Day	Jan. 21

New intranet running

The revamped intranet is now up and running.

The highlights of the new site include the staff favorites section, which will quickly guide you to the most commonly used links, and the employee perks and discounts.

If you click on the perks link, you'll be taken to a page that has PDF links to the most up-to-date discounts for AISD employees.

The newest discounts include one good at the Fort

Worth Zoo, which now has an account with the district. You can also get a discount at the new OrangeTheory Fitness that is slated to open in north Arlington. The discount is good for this location only and will give employees prices that won't be available when the facility is scheduled to open in January.

If you have any suggestions about links or discounts you want to see, send an email to aandro@aisd.net.

Risk Management Review December 2017

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Risk Management
Arlington ISD 1203
W. Pioneer Parkway
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.

Ability is what you're capable of doing.

Motivation determines what you do.

Attitude determines how well you do it.

Lou Holtz

Can I Schedule My Doctor's Appointment During the Work Day?

Every effort should be made to schedule your workers' comp appointments after working hours. If you are unable to do so, you will need to contact the risk management office for instructions on how to be paid for time missed. Hourly employees must clock in and out for appointments and contact risk management as well. Failure to contact risk management could result in the loss of your personal time for these appointments.



Reduce Stress and Improve Your Life

Stress isn't always a negative thing. Sometimes a little added stress gives you an adrenaline boost. But when demands from work and life seem like more than you can handle, stress can feel overpowering. Learn to manage your stress by taking breaks or walking away from the problem for a little while. Exercise can also shift your focus from stress and help your body and mind relax. Other methods include pursuing a hobby, meditation, or talking and laughing with friends.



Five-Second Rule for Safety

It is a challenge to stay focused on work during this busy time of the year. When you find your thoughts running wild with all the holiday festivities, stop, take five seconds to look around and return to the present moment. Look at where you are, on a ladder, in an awkward position, about to trip over something, or maybe, about to slip on a wet floor. Safety hazards do not go away, only our awareness seems to disappear. Following the five-second rule may seem unimportant to you, but it might be the one action you take that keeps you safe. Think of it as a Christmas present to yourself.

Happy Holidays!

ACCESSIBILITY TANGIBLES RELIABILITY RESPONSIVENESS EMPATHY



Accessibility

Allison Gilmore
Starrett Elementary

What they said: Mrs. Gilmore makes herself accessible, not only to staff, but to students. She is an assistant principal and sponsors an after-school student leadership club which gives kids the opportunities to develop leadership skills.



Tangibles

Anthony Hargrove
Network Services

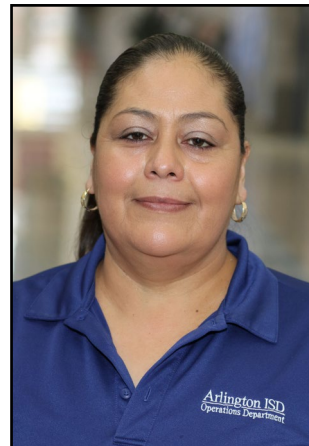
What they said: We had been having issues with our Chromebooks and after several tickets sent to other departments, Anthony took the time to come out here several times to troubleshoot the issues and fixed our Chromebooks. He was so helpful, and we appreciate his hard work.



Reliability

Rebecca Burton
Knox Elementary

What they said: Not only is she serving her own resource students, but she has also been serving the other resource teacher students.



Responsiveness

Maria Mendoza
Burgin Elementary

What they said: Maria does it all with a smile on her face. She drops whatever she's doing to meet the school's needs. Our 18-year old school always looks its best because of her incredible hard work.



Empathy

Shelley Medrano
Short Elementary

What they said: She is always able to find that deeply buried good quality in every student and co-worker. She works hard to understand and empathize in each situation to help others problem solve and find a good solution.

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).

DECEMBER EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH



Clairessa Cruz
Pearcy Elementary
Elementary Teacher of the Month



Jeannene Young
Health Services
Department Employee of the Month



Kenisha Mullen
Carter Junior High
Junior High Teacher of the Month



Jessica Wilson
Arlington High School
High School Teacher of the Month