

# My AISD

Volume 3, Issue 10, May 2018

## Lowe juggles several beats

Arlington High School assistant band director Brian Lowe got hooked on playing the drums when he was in seventh grade in Tennessee.

Thirty years later that's still the case.

Lowe, who worked with the bands at Lamar and Martin high schools before coming to Arlington in 2015, is the director of percussion studies at Arlington and in charge of the percussion cluster that feeds the school, working with junior high students at Bailey and Gunn.

While that alone would seem like enough to keep Lowe busy with his drumming, it's not even close to being the case.

Lowe was on the original drum line when the Dallas Cowboys made the move to AT&T Stadium. He's been a member of the Dallas Mavericks drum line since 2003, playing at everything from the NBA All-Star Game to the 2011 NBA Finals. He



Arlington High assistant band director Brian Lowe has also worked at Martin and Lamar.

also helps out when the FC Dallas soccer team is short a drummer for its drum line.

He also works for Dynamic Rhythm Entertainment, which does drum lines

for corporate events. And if you're looking to get

**SEE LOWE, PAGE 3**



## A message from Dr. Cavazos

I'm always impressed by how passionate our teachers are for what they do.

That's evident in the story about Arlington High assistant band director Brian Lowe. Not only does he teach students in the district about percussion, but he also practices what he preaches by continuing his love for the drums outside of his teaching work day.

And while we're on the subject of fine arts, the 2014 Bond is making a huge impact on what we are able to do with our bands. Just look at the story about the

Sam Houston marching band. The bond has helped the program more than double in size over the last several years. That's truly amazing.

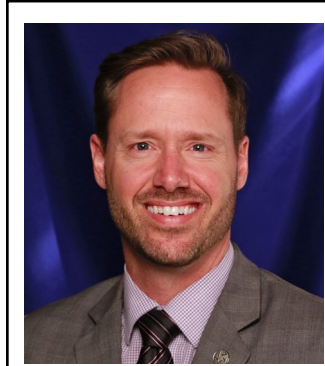
Congrats to the seven schools that were selected to be part of the Holdsworth Center's Campus Leadership Program (page 6). The program will help us toward our goal of becoming a leader in education.

With this being the final *My AISD* of the 2017-18 school year I'd like to thank you for all your efforts this school year. It's been a tremendous success and you have all played a role.

# Finding your north is key

This last year, I have spent a lot of time truly reflecting on our work with students and the relationship between what we do day to day and our overall purpose. The more I have reflected, the more I have come to know and understand the significant way that we not only teach content and skills, but also shape our learners' individual mindsets, understanding of the world and the positive impact they can have in it. I am awed by the level of responsibility we all bear and the importance of being intentional about how we leverage our time with students so they can envision their futures and align their passions and talents to that end. We are helping them to write their life stories, and we are all blessed because of it.

In 2015, bestselling author Bill George published



## THE LEARNER'S EXPERIENCE

a book titled "Discover Your True North." Much like sailors who navigate the sea once relied on the North Star to recognize their location and chart their journey toward their intended designation, George states that we too can lead authentically when we discover our personal true north. I love that notion. He shares that by cultivating

self-awareness, defining our values, leading an integrated life, empowering others and honing our skills and talents, we are best positioned to reach our goals and realize our life's purpose.

So how does one do that? How is this connected to our work with students and each other as colleagues? In the Arlington ISD, our priority is clear. It is to provide our learners with daily experiences that build self-awareness and opportunities to identify and shape their personal value systems while simultaneously developing their skills and talents to fulfill their chosen life's purpose. This takes intention. It requires positive relationships and an investment into our learners as people. It takes commitment and passion. It requires thoughtful planning. It takes collaboration as a

team and a growth mindset to keep trying when our first ideas don't work. These are all things that you have spent this last year doing. These are the things that make you and me educators. These are the things that have not only planted seeds for the future but also helped to create it.

Thank you for an incredible year. I invite you to take the time to savor the accomplishments and successes of your learners this year. Their success is your success. You have earned it together and the world is better because of it.

May you have a restful summer and feel good about your effort and the real difference you have made in the lives of those you have served.

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

**Remember to make sure your address is updated in TEAMS to receive information on enrollment**



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## LOWE FROM PAGE 1

spooked around Halloween at the Cutting Edge Haunted House, you can visit the Zombie Drum Room where you'll find Lowe.

And in his free time? Lowe has a passion for playing ice hockey.

Not that Lowe, who is married and has two children, has much of that. His love of percussion has seen to that.

"I needed an outlet for emotions when I was younger," Lowe said. "I spent a lot of time alone when I was young with a single mom working three jobs. My older brother set a terrible example of how to be a human being for me so I knew I didn't want to get in trouble like him and I had to find something. I wasn't good at basketball. I wasn't a fast runner. I wasn't into football. It became a thing I could lose myself into."

It all started when a friend of his came to his house with a pair of drumsticks. The friend was in the school band, which was working on a routine that was tricky. Lowe asked if he could try it.

That was all it took.

"He gave me the sticks and it kind of came out of my hand," Lowe said. "He said, 'Dude you need to join percussion.' The next day I went to the counselor and asked if I could join the band. That was it."

As a teen in the late 1980s and early 1990s Lowe was drawn to rock music. He spent three years as a drummer in a band called Tragic Magic. His assessment? "We were terrible." Lowe was 15 when he joined the band and everyone else was either graduating from high school or already in college. He lasted about three years, with the highlight being playing in the Battle of the Bands competition in Nashville.

But music kept Lowe going through school. Not only was it something he was good at but it also helped keep him on the right path in school.

"What I really liked about drums was it made me pass my classes," said Lowe, who was in the UTA drum line in college. "I wasn't a big studier, but I knew I would never fail because if I failed I couldn't perform. It came down to that. It kept me passing, got me into college, all that stuff."



**Brian Lowe has worked with the Dallas Mavericks drumline since 2003 and was on the first drumline the Dallas Cowboys had when AT&T Stadium opened.**

Lowe went straight from UTA to Lamar in 1999 and then to Martin in 2003. He left the district in 2007 before returning for the Arlington High job. He's been able to have some of his favorite drummers perform for his students. Greg Bissonette, who played with David Lee Roth, Carlos Santana and Toto, has played with his students. So has Journey drummer Steve Smith.

Seeing students succeed is a huge perk for Lowe, and it doesn't have to be with music.

"The biggest reward I get out of teaching kids is watching them find themselves through dedication to something, this time it's obviously

music or percussion," he said. "It's amazing. I like the fact they can find themselves or find their path even in the case where it's not music or percussion. Dedicating themselves to something they really want to work hard at, whether it's engineering or whatever they want to do."

It should come as no surprise that there's a lot of music in the Lowe household. His son Grayson, who attends Corey Academy, has shown an interest in playing piano. Lowe doesn't push music at home, but there is a playroom that includes a drum set, a piano and several other musical instruments.

# Bond makes huge impact on band

The Sam Houston High School band is growing.

Just a few years ago, the Texan band hovered around 100 members and even dipped to 80 at one point. But last year it jumped to 171 and is currently at 199. Head Band Director Arun Bhatt believes next year's band will grow even more, to at least 250 members.

A combination of factors – including the 2014 Bond program, junior high recruitment and a supportive band culture – are collaborating to take Sam Houston's band to an entirely new level.

Larger numbers mean a greater talent pool, and thus the opportunity to take the music and performance to a higher level.

But Bhatt doesn't see the growth as a means to win state marching championships.

He'd certainly be happy to win them, and he admits he's competitive. But that's not the goal. From his perspective, more students in band mean more students that he and his fellow band directors Jillian Adams and Jesus Martinez get to teach and encourage. It means more students get to learn music and reap the many benefits of a rich musical education.

The goal is to provide a place for as many students as possible to learn, grow and excel.

"Band kids learn music, but it goes so far beyond that," Bhatt said.

Bhatt and his staff are building a culture within the band program that gives students the opportunity to thrive and become lifelong appreciators of music.

"We create a family



environment for them," he said.

But the band "family" wouldn't be possible without instruments, uniforms and equipment. Just a few years ago, Sam Houston's instruments were downright bad. But thanks to the Bond 2014 program, that has changed. Sam Houston has received more than \$200,000 worth of instruments, uniforms and equipment from the bond program so far.

"Now every kid in my class has a top-notch instrument," Bhatt said.

The bond also made it possible for the AISD to eliminate instrument fees, so now any student who wants to play an instrument can. With that financial barrier removed, more students can and are participating. And with all the instruments the bond has purchased, students get to choose what they want to play; they don't have to settle for what's left.

"A lot of the growth is from the bond – being able to hand an instrument to any kid that walks in the door," Bhatt said.

The growth also stems from recruiting in junior high, where band starts in

seventh grade. With the elimination of instrument fees, junior high bands are also growing across the district, creating a larger pipeline into Sam Houston's band.

Bhatt doesn't just wait for the students to show up in ninth grade, though. He goes and meets them while they're still in junior high and starts building relationships, laying the foundation for their future involvement.

But it's still scary for brand new freshman when they first arrive on campus. The standards and size of the band program can be intimidating. To help ease the transition, each freshman is paired with an older student who helps guide and mentor that student, ensuring he or she adjusts well and finds his or her place in the program.

"Our environment here is welcoming," Bhatt said. "The kids respect each other and really help each other out."

The band hall has become a safe place, a family environment where lifelong connections are made.

"Students often stay in the band hall late at night until we have to kick them out,"

Bhatt said.

It becomes their home away from home, where they not only study music, but also hang out, work on homework or just visit with friends.

For some, it's what keeps them in school.

Bhatt has had many parents tell him, "My kid wants to come to school because of band."

Bhatt explained that unlike most teachers who may have a student for one year, he and his fellow band directors get to invest in students for six years – two in junior high and four in high school. They get to build real, strong relationships that often include Bhatt tracking the students' progress in other classes and providing encouragement, support and even tutoring if needed.

Though Sam's band has a supportive atmosphere, it's also a place where students are expected to perform and encouraged to pursue and achieve the program's high standards – and that goes for the best players to the most inexperienced.

"We all succeed as a group or fail as group," Bhatt said about the marching band. "Unlike the football team, we don't have a bench. You're going to learn how to work together."

As the band's numbers grow and the talent level improves, Bhatt is determined to let no band member fall through the cracks, particularly the less-skilled players.

"We find a way to keep kids involved," he said. "There is a place for everyone."



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

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What to do next?**

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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.

**Slow down and enjoy life.**

**It's not only the scenery you miss by going too fast,**

**You also miss the sense of where you are going and why.**

**Eddie Cantor**

## RISK MANAGEMENT REVIEW MAY 2018

### What happens to the body as a result of exposure to extreme heat?

People suffer heat-related illness when the body's temperature-control system is overloaded. The body normally cools itself by sweating. But under some conditions, sweating just isn't enough. In such cases, a person's body temperature rises rapidly. Very high body temperatures may damage the brain or other vital organs. Several factors affect the body's ability to cool itself during extremely hot weather. When the humidity is high, sweat will not evaporate as quickly, preventing the body from releasing heat quickly.



### What is heat stroke?

Heat stroke is the most serious heat-related illness. It occurs when the body becomes unable to control its temperature. The body's temperature rises rapidly, the sweating mechanism fails, and the body is unable to cool down. The body's temperature may rise to 106 degrees or higher within 10 to 15 minutes. Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not provided.

### Warning signs of heat stroke vary but may include the following:

- An extremely high body temperature (above 103)
- Red, hot and dry skin (no sweating)
- Rapid, strong pulse
- Throbbing headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Confusion



### What is heat exhaustion?

Heat exhaustion is a milder form of heat-related illness that can develop after several days of exposure to high temperatures and inadequate or unbalanced replacement of fluids. Those most prone to heat exhaustion are elderly people, those with high blood pressure, and those working or exercising in a hot environment.

### The warning signs of heat exhaustion include the following:

- Heavy sweating, paleness, muscle cramps
- Tiredness, weakness, dizziness
- Headache
- Vomiting
- Fainting

The skin may be cool and moist. The pulse rate will be fast and weak, and breathing will be fast and shallow. If heat exhaustion is untreated, it may progress to heat stroke. Seek medical attention if symptoms worsen or last longer than one hour.

### What steps can be taken to cool the body during heat exhaustion?

- Drink cool, non-alcoholic beverages
- Take a cool shower, bath or sponge bath
- Seek an air-conditioned environment
- Wear lightweight clothing

**Be Alert and Stay Safe**

# 7 schools tabbed for program

As the Arlington ISD continues its work to grow and develop people, leadership teams from Arlington and Lamar high schools, Young Junior High, and Crouch, Crow, Hale and Percy elementaries were recently selected to participate in the Holdsworth Center's Campus Leadership Program.

This group is Cohort 1 of five cohorts over the next five years that will go through the Holdsworth Center's Campus Leadership Program. The program is a rigorous two-year experience that will allow each campus to grow capacity, advance toward their goals related to a campus program of practice and learn from world class experts.

The AISD is one of seven districts in Texas involved in the program.



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## Great Outdoors Month

National Doughnut Day	June 1
Last Day of School	June 1
World Environment Day	June 5
Teacher Work Day	June 6
Sam Houston Graduation	June 8
Bowie Graduation	June 9
Seguin Graduation	June 9
Lamar Graduation	June 9
Arlington Graduation	June 10
Martin Graduation	June 10
Race Unity Day	June 10
Summer Hours Begin	June 11
Flag Day	June 14
Father's Day	June 17
Juneteenth	June 19
First Day of Summer	June 21
International Yoga Day	June 21

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**ACCESSIBILITY**  
**TANGIBLES**  
**RELIABILITY**  
**RESPONSIVENESS**  
**EMPATHY**



**Accessibility**

**Nora Valladares**

**Kooken Education Center**

**What they said:** Nora is always accessible to Kooken. She is always ready to help in any capacity that we need her, and she does it with a smile. She is always polite and caring to everyone.



**Tangibles**

**Angela Hernandez**

**Student Behavioral Support Systems**

**What they said:** She was called upon to spin several plates in order to keep the focus of our work on the end user, the kids. She is always a sounding board for administrators to problem solve best practices to meet behavioral and social emotional needs of our students.



**Reliability**

**Jenny Floyd**

**Moore Elementary**

**What they said:** Jenny is our team leader this year and has truly stepped up and organized so much for our team. She comes to work early every day to make sure her classroom is ready for her learners. She is constantly bringing in real-world objects so that her students can learn first hand.



**Responsiveness**

**Rhonda Ceasar**

**Social Studies**

**What they said:** She is wonderful at not only responding to our needs but anticipating things that we will need even before we even ask. She always goes above and beyond to provide the department with resources and materials so that we can be a resource to our teachers.



**Empathy**

**Donna Faucett**

**Corey Academy**

**What they said:** She exemplifies compassion and care. She greets every child with a positive attitude every single day. She is supportive of students and staff, and she looks for ways to solve problems rather than choosing to let them become barriers. She is humble, loving and a great example of empathy.

**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](https://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).**

# MAY EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH



**Jason Rizy**  
**Berry Elementary**  
**Elementary Teacher of the Month**



**Jo'celyn Williams**  
**Network Services**  
**Department Employee of the Month**



**Amanda Oglesby**  
**Boles Junior High**  
**Junior High Teacher of the Month**



**Jared Cole**  
**Arlington Collegiate High School**  
**High School Teacher of the Month**