

My AISD

Volume 4, Issue 4, November 2018

Miller the king of Canvas

If West Elementary fifth-grade teacher Todd Miller can ever figure out how to use Canvas and Fortnite together he'll have found lightning in a bottle.

Since that doesn't look like it's going to happen anytime soon, Miller will have to settle for being the national Canvas Elementary Teacher of the Year.

That's certainly a nice consolation prize.

Miller, who is in his 22nd year teaching in the district, was named the winner of the inaugural national award over the summer. It was a huge honor and a big surprise to Miller, who knew nothing about the award.

"I had no idea about it until I got an email," said Miller, who has been



West Elementary teacher Todd Miller was the first winner of the national Canvas Teacher of the Year award for elementary school teachers.

SEE MILLER, PAGE 3



A message from Dr. Cavazos

Technology plays a huge part in everything we do in our district and it's great to see teachers like West Elementary's Todd Miller getting honored for his work with Canvas.

I had the opportunity to speak with him briefly after he won the national award. It's wonderful as a district to have educators like him so passionate about teaching and integrating technology in the classroom.

And while I'm on the subject of technology, our technology integration and innovation department is doing an outstanding job of helping teachers like Miller further their cause in developing future-ready learners. The department is a valuable resource for

our educators to go to as the use of technology in the classroom continues to grow.

It's great to see the 2014 Bond continue to pay dividends throughout the district. Our focus on being as energy-efficient as possible with our resources was recently recognized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

It's not easy to get ENERGY STAR certified and more than 50 of our buildings should have that certification by 2020.

I'd also like to congratulate all our employee of the month winners for November as well as those who excelled in customer service.

Leadership is a relationship

When someone mentions the word relationship, what comes to mind? Do you find yourself thinking about a loved one or a spouse? Do you naturally think about



THE LEARNER'S EXPERIENCE

the friendships you have cultivated over the years? I think our human tendency is to lean into the personal aspects of our lives. But what about the relationships we have within our professional environment? What role do those play in the effectiveness of our work? What implications do they have on our day-to-day happiness and how well we serve on a team?

In his leadership blog, Michael Ray Hopkin reflects on the book "The Leadership Challenge" where authors James Kouzes and Barry Posner identified leadership as a

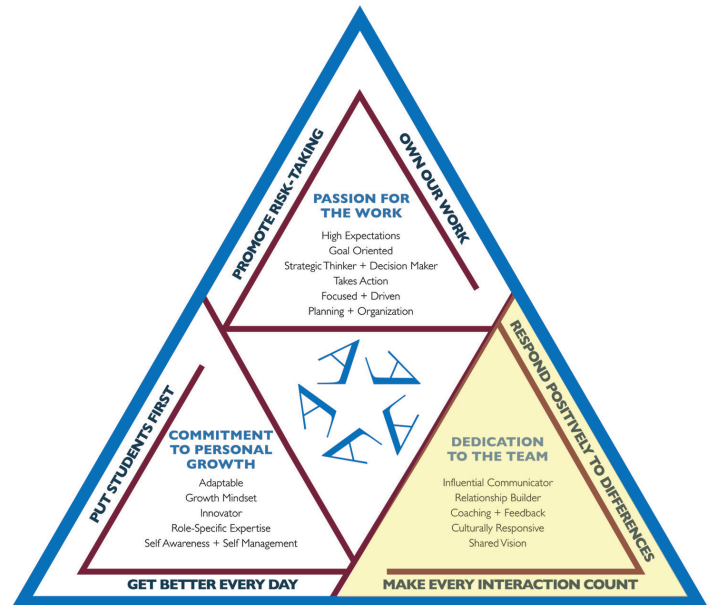
relationship. To me, this is a powerful idea. Leadership is about our interactions with others. And not just how we interact, but how those interactions influence what people do and say, what those interactions articulate about the team's work and purpose and most importantly how those interactions make people feel as they strive to be their best self. If you want to lead, it's truly all about people.

In education, we have the blessing of working in an industry where the sole objective is to help others reach their potential. Whether you are a teacher, principal, parent or student, the whole reason we come together each day in schools is to build each other's capacity and to help one another reach our aspirations and dreams. That makes us all leaders.

In the Arlington ISD, we recognize the importance of building relationships as one of the foundational pieces of leadership development and have included it prominently within the **dedication to the team** category. So, how can we build quality relationships at work? Hopkin provides three easy strategies.

Listen. Allow others to talk and pay close attention

LEADERSHIP DEFINITION



to what they are saying. Rather than thinking about how you are going to respond, reflect on the speaker's words and seek to comprehend and appreciate the message or feelings he or she is trying to convey.

Understand. Take the time to value and appreciate others and their contributions. Each one of us has unique talents and experiences. Try to understand where others are coming from and tap into the gifts they have to offer.

Acknowledge. Give credit to others and celebrate their wins. Giving

kudos and recognizing others' accomplishments is not only motivating but also good for the soul.

During this season of gratitude, I want to say thank you to all of you for the dedication you have to the AISD team and for the leadership you provide to each other and our students. You have impacted me personally. You have helped me to grow as a person and leader, and I know that I am only one of many who have been encouraged by your positive influence.

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

AISD earns nearly \$100,000 in rebates

Representatives from Chase Bank presented the AISD finance department with a \$99,863 rebate check last month.

The district has partnered with Chase Bank to pay vendors electronically and earn rebates on those electronic payments. This year's check was the largest the district has received since it started in the program.

Executive Director of Finance Tony Drollinger said the payment is another way the district is trying to be proactive and prudent fiscally.

"We are always looking for opportunities to improve efficiency within the business office," Drollinger said. "We partnered with Chase Bank to improve efficiencies and to get paid

for it. This program allows vendors to receive payments electronically in an expedited manner. For every electronic payment sent through the system the district gets a rebate from Chase Bank. The accounts payable team led by Felice Moore works very hard to maximize the benefit of the program, which is evident by this rebate."



Arlington
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
More Than a Remarkable Education

DECEMBER DATES

World AIDS Day	Dec. 1
Hanukkah	Dec. 2-10
Inclusive Schools Week	Dec. 3-7
Pearl Harbor Day of Remembrance	Dec. 7
Human Rights Day	Dec. 10
Bill of Rights Day	Dec. 15
National Cupcake Day	Dec. 15
Cat Herders Day	Dec. 15
End of First Semester	Dec. 19
Winter Break	Dec. 20-Jan. 4
First Day of Winter	Dec. 21
Festivus	Dec. 23
National Egg Nog Day	Dec. 24
Christmas Day	Dec. 25
Kwanzaa begins	Dec. 26
New Year's Eve	Dec. 31

Discounts available for AISD employees

If you're looking to go to a Dallas Mavericks game over the holiday break make sure to go to the intranet first to get [discounted tickets](#).

Those discounted Mavericks tickets are just one of the latest additions to the [perks page](#). You can also go there to load up on snack options for yourself as well as holiday gifts thanks to a discount at [GNS Foods](#), an Arlington-based company. You can save 10 percent as an AISD employee.

If you know how to navigate the intranet and get to the employee perks and discounts page, you

can find those discounts and much more, including everything from rental cars to ways to save money on a home purchase.

Make sure and check the page frequently as it's updated throughout the year. If you know of other discounts please email Anthony Andro at aandro@aisd.net.

Remember we are also always looking for great stories about employees in the district like Todd Miller.

If you know of someone who has an interesting story outside the classroom or office, please let us know by sending an email to aandro@aisd.net.

MILLER FROM PAGE 1

teaching at West for 14 years. "I thought they were trying to sell me something. I contacted [interim director of technology integration and innovation] Steve Simpson, and he told me it was real. He must have written something really good about it."

Simpson didn't have to write much about Miller. His work with Canvas does a lot of the talking for him. West was an early adopter of Canvas – a learning management system – and has used it as a way to bring technology into the classroom. Miller sees it as a blank slate that can deliver information to students and their families.

And while he's only been using Canvas about five years in the classroom, it's a huge part of what he does with his students.

"It's part of me," he said. "If they ever took it away

from me I'd immediately panic. For me it's just another tool, but I have found it to be an extremely useful tool. It's not just for the students but at home the parents can see and find out about my new math so that they can understand what I'm doing. It's been very helpful."

Miller mainly uses Canvas for math and said it's been huge in finding a way to engage students. They are so used to having technology it seemed like a logical step for Miller, who considers himself tech savvy.

"I've always taught math and that's been the subject they tend to want to check out in," Miller said. "So many of them get frustrated, that's when I came up with technology projects. I started using MineCraft a long time ago - tricking them into math so

they'd have fun."

While Miller is big into Canvas, he's also careful not to forget the value of pen and paper, too. He picks and chooses when technology will best work.

"For me it's important simply because of the engagement piece. It's important to differentiate between technology use and integration," he said. "Am I using it in such a way that's unique? Can I do the same thing with pencil and paper? If I can integrate technology in a unique way that really helps those lessons sink it then that's when we use it."

It's that kind of thinking that made nominating Miller for the award a no-brainer for Simpson.

Winners were selected on three criteria – the teacher's use of Canvas redefining traditional classroom activities to

prepare students for college and careers, the improved achievement for at-risk students, and the impact on student engagement, curiosity and achievement.

"Mr. Miller's use of Canvas really pushes the envelope, as he utilizes existing functions like module settings to enhance his already-innovative instruction," Simpson said. "Canvas provides his math students with a hub to access gamified challenges that take engagement and learning to a new level."

Miller was unable to attend the national ceremony in Colorado for family reasons. He did get his award and swag mailed to him.

He was also surprised by the staff at West during a faculty meeting. Superintendent Dr. Marcelo Cavazos stopped by that meeting to talk with Miller.

Bond helps pave way for honor

The AISD recently announced that 39 district buildings have earned the ENERGY STAR certification from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and 15 more are in process to be certified in 2020. That means that 39 AISD buildings – and counting – are verified to perform in the top 25 percent of buildings nationwide, based on weather-normalized source energy performance and many other metrics, including occupancy, hours of operation and more.

Among those certified are new bond-funded facilities like McNutt and Peach elementaries.

Others, like the new AISD Dan Dipert Career and Technical Center and the Agricultural Science Center, will undoubtedly earn the certification once they have been open long enough to qualify.

The 2014 Bond program's impact on energy efficiency extends beyond the new buildings. Many of the bond's renovation projects have included measures to improve energy efficiency and reduce energy consumption.

"I think the bond is paying off," said Danny Helm, AISD energy manager, as he described the bond's impact on earning the ENERGY STAR certification for so many existing buildings.

"As we do more bond work, I think we'll get even more buildings certified," he said.

The bond-funded renovations at AISD campuses that have improved energy efficiency include new exterior LED lighting, better insulation and dual-



New high-efficiency HVAC units, like this one at South Davis, are part of the bond.

pane windows. Most impactful have been major mechanical replacements and improvements. Many new high-efficiency HVAC roof-top units and chillers have been installed. Plus, pneumatic controls have been replaced with direct digital controls, which give the district much greater control over each campus' mechanical systems.

"We save energy by managing it better," Helm said.

The district is definitely managing it better. Since 2010-2011, the AISD has reduced the amount of electricity it uses per square foot by 28 percent.

The ENERGY STAR certifications are the fruit of that better management and a well-planned and well-executed

bond program.

To earn the certification, the district first entered various utility and building metrics from each campus into an online system, Portfolio Manager, hosted by the EPA. The system provided a preliminary rating based on those metrics. Then, outside engineers walked and analyzed each building to verify the data.

The resulting 39 ENERGY STAR certified buildings – and 54 by 2020 – are a major accomplishment for the district.

"In fact," said Danny Helm, "I am being told that no other district in the state has this many buildings ENERGY STAR certified."

UPCOMING WELLNESS SCREENING DATES

<u>Site Name</u>	<u>Event Date</u>	<u>Start Time</u>	<u>End Time</u>	<u>Site Address</u>	<u>Reg Close Date</u>	<u>Wellness Champion</u>
Enterprise Center	1/12/19	7:30 a.m.	12 p.m.	690 E. Lamar Blvd.	12/29/18	Corey Robinson
Adams Elementary	1/14/19	3:30 p.m.	7:30 p.m.	2200 Sherry St.	12/31/18	Erica Reynolds
Moore Elementary	1/16/19	3:30 p.m.	8 p.m.	5500 Park Springs Blvd.	1/2/19	Tara York
Wood Elementary	1/18/19	3:30 p.m.	8 p.m.	3300 Pimlico Dr.	1/4/19	Annette Escott
Peach Elementary	2/4/19	3:30 p.m.	8 p.m.	2020 Baird Farm Rd.	1/21/19	Ashley West
Anderson Elementary	2/6/19	3:30 p.m.	8 p.m.	7001 Silo Rd.	1/23/19	Teri Acosta
Transportation	2/12/19	7:30 a.m.	12 p.m.	1124 W. Arkansas Ln.	1/29/19	Debbie Swenson
Carter Jr High	2/14/19	7:30 a.m.	11:30 a.m.	701 Tharp St.	1/31/19	Teressa Garcia
Arlington ISD Admin Building	3/5/19	7:30 a.m.	11 a.m.	1203 W. Pioneer Pkwy.	2/19/19	Anthony Andro
Adams Elementary	3/7/19	3:30 p.m.	7:30 p.m.	2200 Sherry St.	2/21/19	Erica Reynolds
AISD Security	3/20/19	2 p.m.	6:30 p.m.	2101 Highbank Dr.	3/6/19	David Stevens
Bowie High School	3/27/19	7:30 a.m.	11:30 a.m.	2101 Highbank Dr.	3/13/19	Alberta Fears



Technology integration and innovation working to develop learners of future

Even longtime AISD teachers and staff might not yet recognize one of the district's 'newest' departments - technology integration and innovation, TI² for short. However, many likely remember the instructional technology department, which began a strategic rebranding process more than a year ago.

The primary aim of the rebranding was to clarify the department's role in the school district and that first necessitated a new mission statement.

TI²'s mission is to, "Empower educators to develop future-ready learners through technology integration, technology usage and the use of relevant resources."

So how does TI² support the 4,000 plus educators across all grade levels that strive to provide rigorous, relevant and innovative learning experiences via technology integration, technology usage and the use of relevant resources?

The department, comprised of an experienced team of technology integration and blended learning specialists, as well as library and media services experts, works collaboratively with campuses to ensure that learners use technology to process information, communicate their understanding of curricular objectives and engage in innovative learning experiences that prepare them for their futures.

More specifically, TI² works to support the implementation of instructional initiatives like:

- Campus technology advisory committees;
- Technology application TEKS on the K-2 standards-based report card;
- Blended learning via tools like Canvas and Seesaw; and
- 21st-century libraries.

TI² staff members meet with teachers, teams, departments,

administrators and content specialists and offer a menu of services, such as planning for technology integration and providing targeted learning sessions that address best practices for instruction with technology and the specific tools/apps for specific learning targets.

"One of the best things about working with teachers is helping them understand that technology integration begins with a focus on their curriculum objectives and can be used as a way for students to demonstrate what they have learned in innovative ways," said Deann Thompson, a technology integration specialist.

Department staff also provide support to all district librarians who not only provide educators and learners with relevant resources (print and digital materials) but also engage learners in innovative Makerspaces in which students create and explore through

technology options (such as robotics, circuits, electronics, etc.) and non-technology components (such as button making, origami, crafts, etc.).

Library services media specialist Lesley Cano believes having technology in the library is vital for the district's learners.

"We have such amazing librarians in the AISD, and I love seeing the strong impact each has on students on their campus," Cano said.

"Our libraries are places of opportunity for students, introducing them to technology and resources that help them build critical-thinking and problem-solving skills while providing a safe, nurturing place in which students feel they belong."

Please look for future articles in *My AISD* intended to highlight the ongoing work of TI² and inspire technology integration, technology usage and the use of relevant resources for student learning.

Tina Baze, Specialist
Risk Management
Arlington ISD
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Arlington, TX 76013
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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 the
risk management office
in the administration
building.

**The holiday
season is a perfect
time to reflect on
our blessings and
seek out ways to
make life better for
those around us.**

Terri Marshall

RISK MANAGEMENT REVIEW NOVEMBER 2018

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.



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 hold 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 degrees 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.

If perishable food has been left in your office's refrigerator for more than a week, throw it out and clean up any leaks and spills immediately using hot soapy water. You should also always check expiration dates before using condiments, etc.

Make cleaning the refrigerator a shared responsibility at your location. Maintaining a clean fridge prevents possible illness.

Please remember before you leave for the holidays to turn off all electrical items as this helps to prevent possible fire hazards and saves energy dollars.



 **Wishing you all a safe and happy holiday season** 

ACCESSIBILITY
TANGIBLES
RELIABILITY
RESPONSIVENESS
EMPATHY



Accessibility

Jeff Cowman

World Languages

What they said: Jeff is always willing to come by campus whenever needed, as long as he has the time available. His willingness to sit down and talk face-to-face often makes learning and understanding much easier.



Tangibles

James Fears

Technology

What they said: He is always willing to help, maintains a pleasant demeanor and tone, and is professional and timely in every customer service interaction.



Reliability

Rufus Jenkins

Arlington Collegiate HS

What they said: He is at every ACHS event, rain or shine, and he goes above and beyond his job description to help our students. He is a consistent motivator and mentor to our students, and he is always willing to do everything in his power to help them.



Responsiveness

Lisa Weihmuller

Fitzgerald Elementary

What they said: Lisa responds to the needs of our campus in a timely and detailed manner. Whether she is submitting field trip paperwork, acquiring purchase orders or sending in work orders, Lisa completes every request quickly.



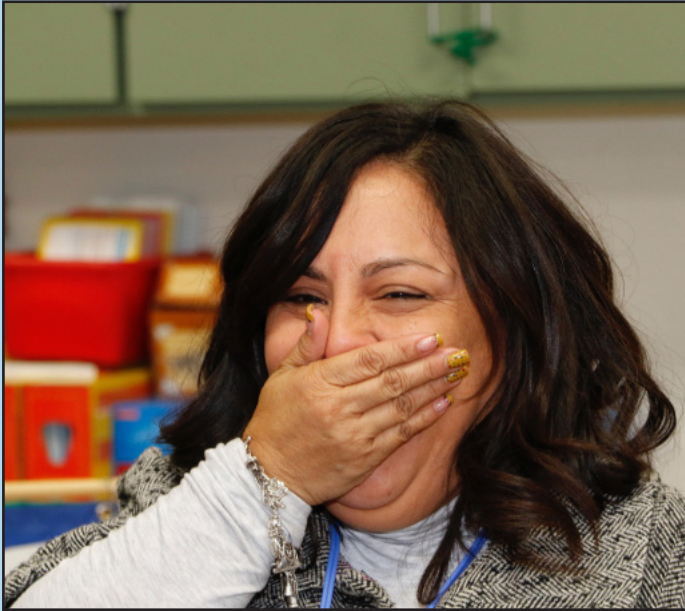
Empathy

Nora Culpepper
Communications

What they said: Nora is an amazing example of someone who gives a positive first impression to all who walk in the doors at the AISD administration building. She always has a smile on her face, shows empathy for our customers and employees, and is extremely helpful and accommodating.

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).

NOVEMBER EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH



Gabrella Ayala
Anderson Elementary
Elementary Teacher of the Month



Dr. Natalie Lopez
Academic Services
Department Employee of the Month



Araceli Lopez
Ousley Junior High
Junior High Teacher of the Month



Jennifer Nguyen
Arlington High School
High School Teacher of the Month