



## What's Inside

Lets Set a Goal, ASPIRE and

Responses from YOU!

## A MESSAGE FROM DR. CAVAZOS

What's your favorite memory of 2022?

That's one of the questions we wanted you to answer in this issue of *MyArlington ISD*. I know one of my favorite memories of the year has been the response our district has had to whatever the year has thrown our way.

Whether it's been a pandemic, winter weather, testing, staffing, you name it, you have had the correct response. That will be one of my biggest takeaways from this year. The Arlington ISD is full of resilient workers who always keep the best interests of students as their priority.

My hope for 2023 is that you keep that same spirit going. We have great momentum as a district, and it has everything to do with your hard work and dedication.

I hope you have a safe break and get some rest. I can't wait to see what next year has in store for us.



Dr. Marcelo Cavazos,  
Arlington ISD Superintendent

## THAT'S A WRAP

As we put a bow on 2022 for *MyArlingtonISD*, we wanted to hear from you. This has been a big year for the district, and we wanted your thoughts on 2022 and what you're looking forward to in 2023. Here's what you had to say.

## WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE MEMORY OF 2022?

"A summer road-trip to Biloxi with my sisters."  
**-LaTonya Aidoo, Berry Elementary counselor**

"My favorite memory of 2022 has been watching my freshman from 2020, now seniors, begin to achieve the goals they set for themselves almost four years ago. Some are getting to play the sport they love at the next level next year, some have gotten into their dream university, and some of them have finally figured out what they are passionate about."  
**-Kiersten Aguinaga, Arlington High English teacher**

continued on page 3

# LET'S SET A GOAL!

By: Dr. Steven Wurtz, Chief Academic Officer

Can you believe that we are already halfway through the school year? It always amazes me how quickly time flies and how much a group of committed individuals can collectively accomplish in a relatively short amount of time. It is easy in education to become distracted by the rhetoric and the happenings of the world. As teachers and educators, we have a front row seat to each of those things. But, the moment a young person walks into our classroom, we are gifted with the opportunity to refocus ourselves on their service and support to ensure they have the skills needed to contribute back to society in the way they desire. Kids and their learning come first.

Acquiring new skills takes time and focus. Each time a learner is introduced to something new, it builds on prior knowledge and has a compound effect generating new levels of mastery and proficiency. Slowly, the student increases her capacity to make new connections, ask more informed questions, generate new opinions and ideas, and apply new knowledge to more effectively react to and solve real challenges that impact her life. This happens when the student acts with intentionality and purpose. So how do you help students increase their personal drive and ownership to achieve new growth? One important way is through goal setting.

Chase Nordengren, a researcher with NWEA, shared, "Goal setting... gets students involved in reviewing their assessment results, working with their teachers to set reasonable but aspirational goals for improvement, and continuing to drive their learning with frequent reference to those goals." In fact, according to research published by Robert Marzano in 2009, the

act of goal setting can produce an increase in student gains by 18 to 41 percentile points! The simple fact is that when we have an awareness of where we are, where we are trying to go and have a plan to get there, it makes a real difference in our achievement. Goal setting motivates students and moves learning from a *mandate to ownership*.

As you think about introducing goal setting to your learners, here are a few things Nordengren asks us to consider:

- 1. Start early.** *Students can begin setting goals as early as kindergarten! You'd be surprised how quickly students begin to see the relationship between setting goals and the learning outcomes they experience.*
- 2. Do it routinely.** *Students should be setting goals connected to skills that they will continue to work on and develop. Tracking progress is motivating! Things you could consider are goals and progress monitoring on reading levels, performance on classroom or curriculum assessments, growth on technology-based applications such as Imagine Math or Istation, etc. The key to goal setting is that students set a target and come back routinely to check against*

*that target, celebrate and/or adjust.*

- 3. Make is visible.** *Goals that are visible and seen are worked on. What is out of sight is out of mind. Teachers can use a variety of ways to make goal setting visible including using anchor charts, graphs, student data-tracking folders and goal-setting worksheets.*
- 4. Keep it relevant.** *Allow students to have ownership in the goals they set. Goals should be connected to areas where they are individually striving to improve. This increases a student's sense of agency and autonomy. Nordengren states that when "goal-setting teachers serve as directors of learning: breaking larger goals down into skill areas, suggesting goals based on skills students are missing, and outlining the steps necessary to get to a particular goal, but ultimately leaving selection of the goal itself in the hands of students."*

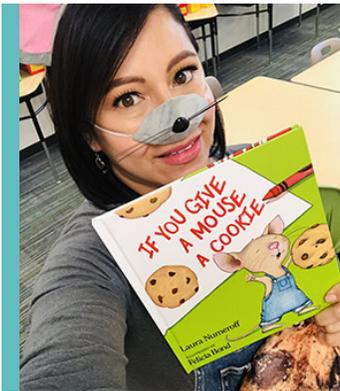
In January, we start a new year. We are provided with the opportunity to reflect on our practice and try something new. I invite you to consider goal-setting with your students. Pick one area. Give it a try. You'll be pleasantly surprised to see the difference it will make!





“My favorite memory is watching the James Martin Warrior Band program perform at the Bands of America DFW regional where they advanced to the finals competition for the first time since 2016.” **-Brad McCann, Martin High School director of bands**

“My family went on their first cruise, and I had the pleasure of witnessing their expressions of happiness; playing in the ocean, zip lining through the jungle and seeing a different culture. Loved every minute of it.” **-Maryanne Leaea, SPED bus driver**



“My favorite memory from 2022 is our school’s Book Character Parade. I was the mouse from the book ‘If You Give a Mouse a Cookie’ and all-day students excitedly shouted out, “I know who you are!!!” **-Laura Cardenas, McNutt Elementary dyslexia teacher**

“My favorite memory from this year was a trip I took to Galveston beach.” **-Fritz Jean-Baptiste, bus driver**

“Getting the job at Patrick Elementary. Also becoming Lead ESSER Teachers Assistant. Also working with all the students of different ages and grade levels.” **-LeGena Medlock, Patrick Elementary teachers assistant**

“My favorite memory was taking my two boys to Disney World. A fellow teacher on my campus

showed me the importance of financially planning the trip, planning meals, walking paths, etc. and I am thankful for her advice. As a divorced single mom, that brought me so much pride to see their joy for a trip they had no idea they were going on until arrival.” **-Elaine Royal, Carter Junior High teacher**

“My favorite memory from 2022 was meeting amazing co-workers that I now call friends. Working in education can be exhausting and lonely, having a support group is everything! I am very grateful for their jokes, love for children and helping hearts. They have made an impact on my life and heart.” **-Rachel Ibarra, Pope Elementary GT teacher**

“Our favorite memory of 2022 is welcoming our first baby into the world! She is now four months old and the biggest blessing!” **-Alyssa Dewitt-Davis, Farrell Elementary third-grade teacher and Ajaé Dewitt-Davis, Dunn Elementary P.E. teacher**



“Medieval Feast - on the heels of Beowulf and Canterbury Tales, we had a Medieval-style feast in which students could come dressed in costume (I did!) and share in a feast of chicken, ham, breads, cheeses, fruits and “Cookies of Joy”, which I made from the original recipe of St. Hildegard c. 1165. My 8th-period boys really “hammed” it up!” **-Beth Klopping, Arlington High English teacher**



“My niece graduating from kindergarten.” **-Amber Jarden, Barnett Junior High assistant principal**

continued from page 3

“My favorite memory of 2022 is my niece receiving her bachelor’s degree after putting her daughter and son through college while holding down a job and a personal business.”

**-Linda Bush-Means, bus driver**



“First and foremost, I would like to give thanks and praise to the Lord Almighty for allowing me to get to this point in time of this year. So many memorable days but one in particular that stands out will be the most recent. I have

been given an opportunity at

work to fill the night lead mechanic position, though it will pose a welcoming challenge in the day-to-day and at the same time it will also help me share my knowledge and help support and contribute to the garage’s daily operations alongside with my co-worker family.” **-Juan Nunez, lead vehicle mechanic**

“My favorite memories of 2022 are the adoption of our three sweet babies that were added to our family of five to now eight. Seeing the queen of England just by being in the right place at the right time. Summer vacation to Scotland & London 2022.”

**-Apryl Meyer-Smith, Farrell Elementary SEAS teacher**



“My favorite memory was getting to attend my son’s Air Force EOD Tech School Graduation in Florida (Lucas Hamner, Arlington High School Class of 2021)!” **-Lilly Hamner, coordinator of operations for department of early childhood learning**

“The 2022 school year has been a wonderful year. You see, I have been battling breast cancer for the last nine months. I am finally well enough to come to work. I never knew how much I missed the classroom, the wonderful children and the important work with my fellow teachers until I could not

come. Having a purpose has helped my spirits.” **-Sheila Cook, Berry Elementary kindergarten teacher**



“The most memorable part of the 2022 school year is when students and staff dressed up in storybook costumes, which strengthens unity and provides more bonding and interaction opportunities among students and staff.”

**-Mohammedi Fatima Ali Khan, Patrick Elementary ESSER teaching assistant**

“My favorite memory is when I was at Holdsworth with my team, and we received news that our overall campus accountability rating was an 88 with a 91 in the student progress domain. There were a lot of cheers, tears and dancing!” **-Katuska Herrador, Jones Fine Arts and Dual Language Academy principal**

“My favorite thing so far this year was an activity vice principal Mrs. Jarden had us do when it was just teachers in the building. It was very quick, where we competed against our fellow staff members, to pick the cup up first.” **-Carrie Todd, Barnett Junior High English teacher**



“One of my favorite memories for my family this year is learning that our dog Bailey loves to watch TV. It really is so cute to see her take interest in different shows. She’s good for about 15 minutes then it’s time for a nap. Last night she was very interested in Kelly Clarkson. She is a rescue from DFW lab rescue.” **-Melinda Skarbek, instructional Specialist**

continued on page 5

continued from page 4



“My favorite memory has to be having the opportunity to become a part of this amazing Leadership Development team! I have a passion for developing others as leaders and now I not only get to do that but alongside a team who shares that same passion.” **-Courtnei Boyd, leadership development specialist in Office of School Leadership**

“A blessing bell from my parents.” **-Richelle Halcom, SPED bus driver**

## WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED ABOUT YOURSELF THIS YEAR?

“I function optimally when I offer myself grace.” **-LaTonya Aidoo, Berry Elementary counselor**

“I love my family and friends, but it is okay to pause and focus on me, and I have to do that to maintain a balanced life.” **-Amber Jarden, Barnett Junior High assistant principal**

“Being isolated during Covid was a challenge for all of us. I’ve learned that now more than ever, our students want a place they belong and feel loved.” **-Brad McCann, Martin High School director of bands**

“That I can do anything I set my mind to and that I have set the tone and it is making a very positive change at Patrick Elementary.” **-LeGena Medlock, Patrick Elementary teachers assistant**

“I learned to never give up.” **-Fritz Jean-Baptiste, bus driver**

“A person really does receive the most joy from bringing joy to others.” **-Beth Kloeping, Arlington High English teacher**

“The main thing I have learned about myself this year is that I can do anything I set my mind to! I can do hard things! In 2023 I am looking forward to celebrating many ‘firsts’ with our daughter and learning to love my students better by making them feel seen!” **-Alyssa Dewitt-Davis, Farrell Elementary third-grade teacher**

“My patience and discipline that I have with my own children, my experience as a substitute teacher, and substitute classroom assistant has helped me become better at my profession. My experience as an ESSER teacher’s assistant has allowed me to use a variety of my skills and better help teachers and students.” **-Mohammedi Fatima Alikhan, Patrick Elementary ESSER teaching assistant**

“This is my second year in a new job as a testing facilitator. It is a job that I love so much and feel very grateful to have but at times it can be very busy, and I needed to work a little bit on self-care. Reading is my favorite hobby, so I set a goal to read 30 books this year, and I accomplished it! Reading books brings me so much joy, and I was happy I made it a priority this year!”

**-Karrie Hermance, Farrell Elementary testing facilitator**

“I’ve learned that you don’t have to have a title to be a leader. You can really lead by example like the awesome people on our 7th grade ELA team.”

**-Elaine Royal, Carter Junior High teacher**



“Keep a smile and inspire others.” **-Richelle Halcom, SPED bus driver**

“I have learned that sometimes, you must put yourself first.” **-Linda Bush-Means, bus driver**

“I’m more patient and helpful.” **-Jesse Mitchell, SPED bus monitor**

continued on page 6

## ASPIRE ARLINGTON ISD READY TO HELP DEVELOP LEADERS

ASPIRE Arlington ISD is a network of programs, led by the leadership development department, designed to grow central office leaders, school leaders and teacher leaders.

The **Central Office Pathway** supports Central Office staff who want to grow in their current role and prepare for next steps. Additionally, this pathway provides learning opportunities for campus leaders and teachers who would like to transition to central office. This pathway consists of optional opportunities through the Leadership Definition Professional Learning Series and a Microbadging program launching in Spring 2023.

The **School Leadership Pathway** is a principal pipeline. There are currently two programs to assist teachers leaders in becoming assistant principals and deans: Leadership Academy and Principal Residency. There are three programs to support Assistant Principals and Deans in their journey to principalship: Microbadging, Administrators in Mentorship (AIM) and AIM+. Learning in these programs is designed to ensure that potential new principals have developed key skills and behaviors outlined in the AISD Leadership Definition and T-PESS.

Unlike the School Leadership Pathway that is a linear progression, the **Teacher Leadership Pathway** gives teachers a choice of seven different roles that provide opportunities to refine leadership skills while serving as a teacher. These roles include: Department Lead, Level Lead, District Lead Teacher, Instructional Coach, Model Teacher, National Board Certified Teacher Mentor (in development) and New Teacher Mentor (in development). Teacher Leaders are supported by role-specific professional learning curriculum designed to develop skills that are essential for their responsibilities. Arlington ISD is looking forward to honoring all Teacher Leaders at the Puttin' on the Glitz celebration on Jan. 19, 2023!

For more information about ASPIRE Arlington ISD programs, visit the ASPIRE Arlington ISD Intranet site at <https://staff.arlingtonisd.org/aspire-leadership-program/>.



continued from page 5



"I have learned that taking risks can yield many benefits such as growing in ways you would never imagine. Also, that as a mother, my twins are watching my actions and learning from each move I make." **-Courtni Boyd, leadership development specialist in Office of School Leadership**

"I have learned that time with loved ones is never enough. I always choose time with them over things that won't be important later and that's okay." **-Katuska Herrador, Jones Fine Arts and Dual Language Academy principal**

"My patience can be really tested, and no matter what I never lose patience." **-Apryl Meyer-Smith, Farrell Elementary SEAS teacher**

"I am more resilient that I realize, and I can accomplish anything I set my mind to." **-Maryanne Leaea, SPED bus driver**

"This year what I have learned about myself is that really it's no different from others' past. I have always tried to put my best foot forward and view the glass half full because there is always room for growth and educating oneself in all aspects of life whether it be professional, personal or spiritually. I also have a great support team at work and at home to be grateful for specially my wife who's one of my best teachers." **-Juan Nunez, lead vehicle mechanic**

### WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO IN 2023?

"I am looking forward to the growth that our principal is implementing on our campus." **-Elaine Royal, Carter Junior High teacher**

"Traveling more!!!" **-Amber Jarden, Barnett Junior High assistant principal**

continued on page 7



## JANUARY HOLIDAYS AND OBSERVANCES

School Board Appreciation Month

National Mentoring Month

New Year's Day .....	Jan. 1
Teacher Prep Day .....	Jan. 3
Start of Fourth Six weeks .....	Jan. 4
Elvis Presley Birthday .....	Jan. 8
Law Enforcement Appreciation Day .....	Jan. 9
School Board Recognition at Board Meeting .....	Jan. 12
World Religion Day .....	Jan. 15
Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday .....	Jan. 16
Deadline to Apply for Specialized Programs .....	Jan. 18
Chocolate Cake Day .....	Jan. 27

continued from page 6

“In 2023, I am looking forward to students that have strengthened their skills, have a better understanding of ways to handle different situations cooperatively, and have strengthened their student teacher relationships.” **-Mohammedi Fatima Alikhan, Patrick Elementary ESSER teaching assistant**

“I’m looking forward to building up the Martin Band program to its largest size in its 40-year history.” **-Brad McCann, Martin High School director of bands**

“Helping students to grow and become awesome and amazing human beings!” **- LaTonya Aidoo, Berry Elementary counselor**

“Making one year at Patrick Elementary and to keep changing lives for the better. With God first all things are possible.” **-LeGena Medlock, Patrick Elementary teachers assistant**

“Making more special memories with my seniors. I have a very special group this year and it will be hard to see them leave at the end of the year.” **-Beth Kloepping, Arlington High English teacher**

“I am looking forward to 2023 to enjoying our new babies and three older children each day and enjoy the ride as time flies by with all their accomplishments and joys.” **-Apryl Meyer-Smith, Farrell Elementary SEAS teacher**

“I have a senior at Martin High School this year. I am looking forward to her graduation this year. I have four children who all graduated from Martin, and it is the youngest one’s turn this year! My final HS graduation ceremony!” **-Sherry Burgdorf, McNutt Elementary first-grade teacher**



continued on page 9

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



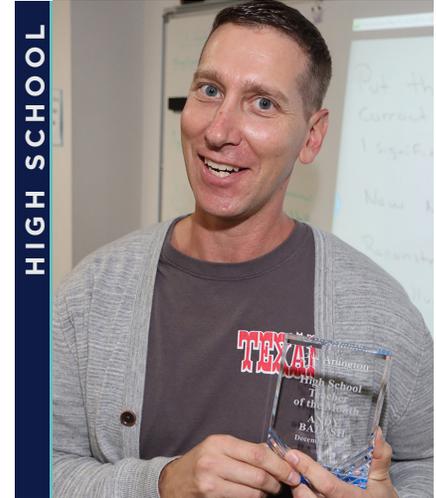
**Makayla Myers,**  
**Larson Elementary**  
*SEAS teacher*

Myers exhibits true dedication to students' academic growth and social-emotional learning. She is patient, compassionate and has a relentless drive to support her students in learning life skills that will help them be successful now and in the future. We are grateful for her dedication to the Larson family and all she does to help students become the best version of themselves.



**Hortensia Smith,**  
**Turning Point Secondary**  
*Special education teacher*

Smith has been a special education teacher in the Arlington ISD for 19 years. She has been a special education teacher at Turning Point since 2003 and serves as the special education department lead. Smith has a bachelor's degree from Georgia Southern University in special education and a master's degree from Cambridge University in educational administration. Smith knew she wanted to be a special education teacher in the 10th grade when she volunteered to serve the students in Special Olympics.



**Andy Balash,**  
**Sam Houston High School**  
*History teacher*

Balash has been at SHHS for 19 years, and he serves as the department chair and does an outstanding job retaining history teachers. Because of his positive attitude and passion for student success, students have nominated Andy to attend the STAR luncheon and recognized him on various occasions as their favorite teacher. He is devoted to his job and students. He also is a co-sponsor of the Sam Houston High School National Honor Society. He is valued and respected by our staff, and we are blessed to have him help guide the students at SHHS.



**Georgia Floyd, Transportation**

Floyd brings a lot of positives to the department which are reflective of her exceptional character. She rarely is absent from work and has a great rapport with her co-workers, students and district employees on the campuses she serves. To ensure that the needs of the district are met, she volunteers and works above/beyond putting our students first. We are very fortunate to have her on our team!

continued from page 7

"In 2023, I am looking forward to more quality time with family and friends. I am also looking forward to what the future has in store for our Leadership Development department!"

**-Courtney Boyd, leadership development specialist in Office of School Leadership**

"I look forward to still learning and gaining knowledge in order to help others. I know there are still lessons to learn over and over. Also, I look forward to making memories with my two daughters."

**-Katuska Herrador, Jones Fine Arts and Dual Language Academy principal**

"Blessing from my family and a good school year."

**-Richelle Halcom, SPED bus driver**

"I look forward to staying healthy."

**-Fritz Jean-Baptiste, bus driver**

"Meeting my new grandson and family gatherings. I love being together as a family. Listening to their excitement of seeing each other."

**-Maryanne Leaea, SPED bus driver**

"I am looking forward to continuing to connect with family and friends more and taking a family cruise."

**-Linda Bush-Means, bus driver**

"Be better as a person, achieve my goals and hope to be very happy in 2023."

**-Elizabeth Frias, SPED bus monitor**



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**HAPPY  
NEW YEAR**  
 **2023**



## 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

## SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

Every Arlington ISD employee is responsible for keeping his/her workplace safe from tripping and slipping hazards. Slips, trips and falls are among the most common workplace accidents and causes of injuries, some of which are serious enough to result in lost workdays and high medical costs. Many workplace fall injuries occur on level ground when employees trip over unexpected objects in their path. Injuries from trips and falls include strains or sprains, torn ligaments, broken bones or even back or spine damage. Major head injuries are also possible if an employee trips and falls head-first down the stairs or into a wall.

### BEST PRACTICES FOR ELIMINATING WORKPLACE TRIP HAZARDS

Common workplace trip hazards include:

- Poor housekeeping
- Cords in walkways
- Improperly stored materials
- Running in the hallways
- Cluttered or poorly designed work areas
- Poor visibility
- Carelessness
- Open drawers
- Uneven and defective flooring

Try some of these simple strategies to eliminate these workplace hazards:

- Make sure lighting inside and outside your work area or office is adequate. If you see a burned-out bulb or other lighting problems, please report it.
- Keep flooring and stair treads in good condition.
- Conduct regular inspections to check for trip hazards.
- Train employees to recognize and eliminate trip hazards.
- Use ladders when needed.
- If you see something, report it right away.

We need help from all employees. The best way to do that is through training sessions and safety meetings where supervisors can teach employees about workplace trip hazards and precautions. Emphasize training points, such as:

- Keeping work areas neat and tidy and putting tools and materials away after use
- Picking up items from the floor even if you didn't put them there
- Stepping around obstructions, not on or over them
- Walking slowly and making sure you can see where you're going, especially when carrying lot of "stuff"
- Watching for changes in floor level, such as a few steps or a ramp up or down
- Watching your step before entering and leaving elevators
- Immediately reporting lighting problems to maintenance
- Not leaving boxes, bags, tools or other materials on the floor
- Not laying cords or power cables across walkways
- Not leaving any items on stairs
- Not leaving drawers open

If you have any ideas on how to prevent injuries in your work site, please contact your supervisor. You can also send your ideas and suggestions to [riskmanagement@aisd.net](mailto:riskmanagement@aisd.net).