

MyArlingtonISD

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NEW CENTER FOR VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS OPENS FOR STUDENTS



CVPA Exterior & Concert Hall

The Arlington ISD's new Center for Visual and Performing Arts (CVPA) welcomed students for the first time in early January.

"It has been a long time coming, but the day is finally here," said Dr. Christopher Anderson, Arlington ISD director of fine arts. "Students entered the facility, wide-eyed and speechless, for the first time."

After years of dreaming, planning and construction, the Arlington ISD's Center for Visual and Performing Arts, the final project of the 2014 Bond, is officially open. Part of the district's new Arts and Athletics Complex located next to AT&T Stadium, the CVPA is a state-of-the-art arts facility that is catapulting the district's fine arts program – already nationally recognized – to an even higher level.

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A MESSAGE FROM DR. CAVAZOS

We've hit 2021 running in a big way in the Arlington ISD, and all you have to do is head over to the new Center for Visual and Performing Arts to see that's the case.

The CVPA opened for students in January and is truly breathtaking. All you have to do is go inside to see what's in store for our students and the community. I can't wait to take in the first event at the state-of-the-art facility that was the final project of the 2014 Bond. It truly is amazing and will provide our students with memories that will last a lifetime.

It was great to be able to spend part of the day honoring our January employees of the month. Our three teachers and department employee are outstanding representatives for the district.

While we're wrapping up January, February is also a big month for us. Of course, there's Valentine's Day and our CTC students have you covered if you're looking for something sweet for someone. It's also time for you to [sign up](#) for our annual Go Red Day, which has been moved to April 16 this year. This is a great opportunity to support the American Heart Association.

And, in case you didn't see it in your email, you have until Feb. 21 to verify your Arlington ISD service years for the 2020-21 school year. I've attached the link [here](#). This is the data we use to recognize our employees so they can receive the pins for their time in the district. Those will be distributed later in the spring.

Thank you again for getting 2021 off to such a great start for the district.



MAKING VIRTUAL LEARNING FUN

While transitioning to a virtual learning environment was unexpected and the timing of it a bit accelerated, the reality is that so many teachers and students around the world have long begun leveraging the benefits of technology to enhance the learning process. This modern integration of technological tools has created a whole new learning experience that has supported increased student autonomy and purpose in their learning. Real-world problems can now easily be infused into teachers' lessons and opportunities to explore powerful questions to solve those problems at the learners' fingertips are everywhere.

As with any transition, learning to be an autonomous and engaged learner in a new environment can be challenging. For so long, students have waited on their teachers to give them step-by-step instructions as they have progressed through the learning process. For students who have relied on this type of direction, moving into a virtual environment can feel a bit daunting and lead to a lack of engagement. Emelina Minero recently authored an article in [Edutopia.org](https://www.edutopia.org) providing specific strategies to improve student participation in the virtual classroom. Let's consider a few of these in both synchronous and asynchronous environments.

Synchronous

- 1. Use the chat feature to check for understanding.** During lessons, posing questions that students can immediately respond to using the chat tool can encourage real-time participation and give teachers a sense if their remote learners are following the lesson. It can be as simple as a thumbs up. You could even use Pear Deck to make the feedback timely and fun!
- 2. Flip the classroom.** Before the lesson, give students the opportunity to engage with the content through recorded videos and brief activities. Then, at the start of the lesson, begin with a discussion about what they learned. You can host a whole-class discussion or use breakout rooms to summarize concepts, solve problems together, clarify topics, or provide small group targeted instruction.
- 3. Adapt Think-Pair-Share to Zoom or Teams.** You can do this by simply giving students a prompt and then breaking them into small breakout groups where they each can discuss and record their answers on a google doc. This allows students to share their ideas while still being accountable for their participation.

Asynchronous

- 1. Create a virtual gallery walk for students to see and provide feedback on each others' work.** Students can create a short screencast sharing their work and then provide feedback to at least two of their peers. Teachers can structure this by posing specific questions to answer on a google doc such as, "What is something that surprised you?" "What is something that you thought was done well?" "What is one thing the student can consider to improve their work?"
- 2. Give students the chance to virtually walk around the room and engage with content.** Students can be divided into groups online and have access to a google slidedeck or document. Students can rotate through the slides and leave comments or insights about the content. They can then go back and comment on what their peers wrote, generating an online conversation.
- 3. Leverage tools to create real-time collaboration among students.** There are so many tools available to encourage real-time collaboration among students. Check out [teachthought.com](https://www.teachthought.com) for an article listing of 30 of the best digital collaboration tools for students.

There are so many ways we can make learning fun and engaging online. The possibilities are endless. Just ask the students! When it's all said and done, it simply comes down to this: The more we can increase student interaction with the content and each other, the better!

Dr. Steven Wurtz is the Arlington ISD Chief Academic Officer



IN REMEMBRANCE



Melvin Smith, who was an Arlington ISD principal at Kooken Elementary and Crow Elementary, died on January 19.

Smith had deep ties to the Arlington ISD as his wife Regena worked in the administration building and his daughter Renee also taught in the district.

“He was one of my favorite bosses,” Arlington ISD Board of Trustees member Polly Walton said. “He was the only principal brave enough to personally cover my kindergarten class so I could attend a district calendar committee meeting. It was reported that he told my students all about fishing.”

Fishing was one of Smith’s favorite hobbies as he spent many weekends with workers from the Plant Services building on the water.

Smith, 92, is survived by his wife of 70 years. He’s also survived by his daughter and her husband as well as two grandchildren, a great grandson and his sister. His funeral was January 27.

VALENTINE’S DAY TREATS

Brought to you by the Dan Dipert Career and Technical Center Floral Studio & Bistro Treats



FLORAL MENU

(colors will vary)

1 dozen roses in a vase	\$45
1 dozen carnations in a vase	\$25
Rose Bud vase (3 flowers)	\$15
Carnation Bud vase (3 flowers)	\$10
Single carnation with ribbon	\$1
Single rose with ribbon	\$3

BISTRO MENU

Heart Sugar Cookies, Red Velvet Brownies, Chocolate Chip Cookies, Cake Pops

Snack Box (1 sugar, 2 choc chip, 1 brownie)	\$5
Share Box (2 sugar, 4 choc chip, 2 brownie)	\$10
Family Box (3 of each treat)	\$15
King Cake	small 4” \$5
King Cake	large 8” \$10

Dollar Days at the Bistro

Open for students on Thursday, February 11, and Friday, February 12 for Grab and Go treats and carnations for \$1

Order at <http://bit.ly/vday21CTC>

Pre-order required - Pre-payment appreciated
Payment methods – cash, check (made out to CTC)
and credit cards (NEW, service fee applied)

Curbside Pick Up for Valentine’s Day at CTC on Friday, February 12, 2021, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

King Cake Pick Up at CTC on Tuesday February 16, from 1 p.m.– 4 p.m.



The Arlington ISD will celebrate Go Red Day on Friday, April 16.

The deadline to order T-shirts is March 23 to receive them in time for Arlington Wear Red Day. To make your \$20 donation, text DHCARLINGTON to 41444. You will immediately receive a link to a quick donation form or [CLICK HERE](#) to order online!

Don’t forget to mark that you’ve had your blood pressure checked. High blood pressure is a largely symptomless ‘silent killer.’ Get yours checked today!

As many Arlington ISD teachers know, Pear Deck is a district-licensed and endorsed web app that allows teachers to engage students in formative checks for understanding to inform instruction and to promote students' critical thinking and reflection. Simply put, Pear Deck helps increase student engagement and better ensures that all students have equitable opportunities to engage in new learning.

In Arlington ISD, Pear Deck usage has dramatically increased during the 2020-21 school year! As compared to previous years, the total number of student engagements in Pear Deck this school year has nearly quadrupled (nearly 2 million engagements by February 2021)! Similarly, the total number of students experiencing Pear Deck this year has grown to more than 40,000!

So, who are a couple of teachers to thank for their consistent efforts to leverage Pear Deck with their students this year?



Jennifer Brandenburg, social studies teacher at Martin High School

Ms. Brandenburg's students have had more Pear Deck engagements this school year than any other Arlington ISD teacher. Her use of Pear Deck is also in the top-5 users ranking for the use of the quick checks feature, critical thinking templates, student takeaways and teacher dashboard. According to Ms. Brandenburg, she uses Pear Deck to, "know in real-time

if students need clarification and/or help with a topic or skill. It's been easier to get kids open to discussing topics because more are willing to respond to prompts than unmute themselves and share their voice."



Emma Klee, ELAR teacher at Ousley Junior High School

A first-year teacher, Ms. Klee uses Pear Deck as a way to introduce new information to her students, stating, "I like that it allows me to see the participation levels of both my in-person and virtual students and to easily check if they are understanding the material. The drawing tool allows students to type responses, draw imagery, and annotate texts very easily, which is great in English class!"

The technology integration & innovation department thanks all the teachers who make frequent use of Pear Deck to engage their students and inform their instructional decision making!

If you haven't used Pear Deck in a while, now is a great time to revisit the tool, which has been enhanced with recent features, including the ability to add recorded audio, to set a countdown timer, to provide Microsoft's Immersive Reader, to give feedback and to leverage just-in-time, "Pop Up" activities. Teachers are encouraged to learn more about Pear Deck and to explore the many ready-made templates at <http://bit.ly/peardeckrulez>

DYNAMIC DIGITAL RESOURCES FROM LIBRARY MEDIA SERVICES

World Book Dramatic Learning pairs content with dramatic readings of plays to engage K-12 learners, help them become more fluent readers, and better understand the content. This resource includes reader's theater scripts, original play scripts, skits, monologues and adaptations of classics along with lesson plans, cross-curricular inquiry projects and play starter writing prompts. Dramatic Learning includes a variety of plays, including plays from Aesop's Fables and Shakespeare.

To access this resource, click on the icon and use the following credentials:

Username: **aisd**
Password: **student**





REPORTING AN ACCIDENT

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.

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

ERGONOMICS

Ergonomics is about more than having good posture. It's the science of fitting you to your workspace to maximize efficiency while preventing physical strain. Prioritizing ergonomics means that you should rethink everything from the way you sit at your desk to how you use your devices.

DON'T NEGLECT THE BASICS

Ergonomics might sound simple in theory, but it takes care and attention to practice. Something as simple as slouching in your chair or crossing your feet can cut off the flow of blood and oxygen throughout the body, causing pain in areas like your neck, shoulders, wrists, hands and back.

Ultimately, effective ergonomics all comes down to developing healthy behaviors. Consistently following the basics, such as practicing a neutral posture and staying active, can keep you healthy while enabling you to complete your work effectively.

REWORK YOUR SPACE

Setting up your office furniture and work equipment correctly is critical to maximizing safety and efficiency in your workspace.

While the following tips focus on staff who work in an office setting, understand that ergonomic principles can be practiced by employees doing any type of work. Any employee should maintain good posture, sit or stand properly, and use their work tools without straining.

DEVICES

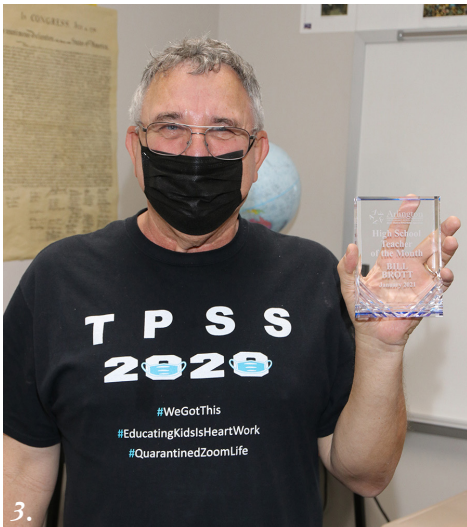
Whether you're using a desktop computer, laptop or a smart device, you should use your tech safely and ergonomically. You should never have to crane your neck or bend your upper back as you're looking at your screen; keep track of your posture and ensure that you remain in an upright position wherever possible.

Technology makes it easy to develop bad posture habits, so keep this advice in mind for each device you might use:

- **Mobile devices:** Hold your phone or tablet in front of you so you don't have to bend down to see the screen. If that's not possible, try to look down at your screen with your eyes without tilting your head and your neck too much. If you must lean down, try not to stay in that position for long.
- **Laptops:** The screen should be directly in front of you and as close to eye level as possible. Aim to keep your laptop on a level surface like a desk or table so it can be stable. You should consider using a separate keyboard or mouse to avoid straining your wrists when using your laptop for long periods of time.
- **Desktops:** As with a laptop, your desktop computer's monitor should be about eye level. When you're using your keyboard, keep your wrists flat and your elbows at a roughly 90-degree angle. Avoid bending your wrist as you use your mouse; instead, propel it through your shoulder and keep your wrist level with the desk. Keep the mouse within easy reach right beside your keyboard.

SEE ERGONOMICS, PAGE 7

EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH



1. **Audrey Orr,**
Hill Elementary
Elementary Teacher of the Month
2. **Kathleen Reimer**
Carter Junior High
Junior High Teacher of the Month
3. **Bill Brott**
Turning Point Secondary
High School Teacher of the Month
4. **Terri Cheek**
Department Employee of the Month

MONTHLY MENTIONABLES FOR FEBRUARY 2021

National Children's Dental Health Month (ada.org)

Black History Month (asah.org)

Career & Technology Education Month

National Freedom Day	Feb. 1	Start of Fifth Six Weeks	Feb. 16
National School Counseling Week	Feb. 1-5	Ash Wednesday	Feb. 17
Groundhog Day	Feb. 2	National PTA Founder's Day	Feb. 17
National Signing Day	Feb. 3	National FFA Week	Feb. 20-27
National FCCLA Week	Feb. 8-12	National School Bus Driver Appreciation Day	Feb. 22
End of Fourth Six Weeks	Feb. 12	National Tortilla Chip Day	Feb. 24
Valentine's Day	Feb. 14		
President's Day (Staff/Student Holiday)	Feb. 15		



CVPA FROM PAGE 1

Fine arts administrators and teachers have been in the building since the fall, unpacking supplies, setting up furniture, learning the new technology and doing everything they could to get the facility ready for students.

“We have all been anticipating the day when students would finally have the opportunity to walk through the doors of the CVPA for the first time,” said Christopher Bryant, director of the CVPA. “To actually see that day arrive has been well worth the wait! This amazing venue was created first and foremost for our students, and our hope is that they realize this fact everyday they are here.”

The CVPA was designed to serve students from the entire district, grades Pre-K-through-12, with world-class performance and demonstration venues. It includes a 1,250-seat concert hall, 425-seat theater, classroom space, art and dance studios, instrument repair center and art gallery.

“Having students on campus brings an energy that truly makes the space light up,” said Cathy Isaacks, dean of instruction for the CVPA.

That energy among the students and staff is starting to build. The week after the building opened it had its first recording session, which Anderson said gave them a chance to put the new concert hall through its paces.

Despite the energy, COVID-19 is necessitating a slower opening for the CVPA than originally planned.

“Because of the pandemic, this will be a very deliberate opening process for the building, and we won’t begin to host public events for some time yet, but the day is coming,” Anderson said. “I am really looking forward to that day when we can begin inviting the public into the space—it will be a glorious experience for all.”

ERGONOMICS FROM PAGE 5**OFFICE CHAIR**

You might not think about your chair all that often, but it can have a big impact on your health. Even the little things like adjusting its height can make a major difference:

- Your office chair should be raised just high enough to allow you to plant your feet comfortably yet firmly on the ground, while keeping your knees bent at a roughly 90-degree angle. A footrest might be useful if your feet have trouble reaching the floor.
- Your chair’s backrest should support the natural curvature of your spine.
- When seated, your arms should be parallel to your sides and your elbows should rest at a natural 90-degree angle.
- Your hands and forearms should be aligned with each other in a straight line.

DESK

Like your chair, your desk might seem like an innocuous piece of furniture, but it can play a substantial part in your occupational health. Set it up to maximize efficiency and safety:

- Give your body room to breathe – your legs shouldn’t be cramped underneath the desk.
- Ensure that all your frequently used items are within easy reach. Even something as simple as stretching a little too far to use your mouse can put strain on your elbow and shoulder.

REFRESH YOUR MIND, BODY, AND PRODUCTIVITY WITH REGULAR BREAKS.

Hectic schedules or company culture might make it difficult to take even a few minutes away from work. However, if you’re in a position to do so, you should try to take regular breaks throughout the day. Periodically stepping away from your desk is beneficial for your own wellbeing.

You might assume that taking your eyes off your computer or stepping away from your desk would make you less productive, but in fact, the opposite is true. Taking microbreaks (5-10 minutes) or even micropauses (5-10 seconds) can reduce stress buildup in your tendons and tissues, prevent fatigue, refresh your focus, increase blood flow, and allow you to correct your posture. These brief respites are also a great time to do simple exercises like wrist rotations and forearm self-massages.

While your break schedule should comply with your employer’s policies, you should generally avoid sitting in a sedentary position for more than an hour at a time. Even a few seconds of movement can prevent muscle injuries from occurring and give you a renewed focus on the tasks at hand.