



## A MESSAGE FROM DR. CAVAZOS

This is a busy time of year for everyone, and if you look through this issue of *MyArlingtonISD* you can see that's the case.

It was great to be able to see Suzanne Dangelmaier and Micah Green literally be able to see the construction of our Center for Visual and Performing Arts and Athletics Center from start to finish. When they started on the Capital Needs Steering Committee in 2014 neither knew they'd end up working at the locations but it's great to see them be able to see the project all the way through.

We are also debuting a new feature that will run monthly from our curriculum and instruction department. This month's newsletter has some great teacher tips to use in the classroom.

I'd also like to congratulate our four employees of the month. It was great to be able to visit with them earlier this month. I know I say it in this space every month, but it really is one of the highlights for me each month.

Please continue to visit our [AISD Rewards page](#). We've recently added a new discount from the [Dallas Mavericks](#).



## CAPITAL NEEDS STEERING COMMITTEE LEAVES INCREDIBLE LEGACY

*Two district employees helped develop Arts and Athletics Complex and now work there*

Back in 2014, the Capital Needs Steering Committee (CNSC) worked to develop the program that would become the 2014 Bond. With about 40 members, including school district employees and volunteers from the community, the committee evaluated Arlington ISD's capital needs and worked to come up with solutions. Two of the district's volunteer staff members on the committee could not have imagined at the time how much their work would impact not only the district's long-term future, but theirs, as well.

Suzanne Dangelmaier was the head swimming coach at Arlington High School in 2014, and Micah Green was an Arlington High School teacher. Both joined the committee because of their passions, one for swimming and one for theater. And both shared a passion for giving students the best possible opportunities and education.

Fast forward seven years. The 2014 Bond program is complete, and two of its signature projects - the Athletics Center and Center for Visual and Performing Arts (CVPA), collectively known as the Arts and Athletics Complex - are open and impacting students. The district's first-ever natatorium, housed in the Athletics Center, is now



## DO WE REALLY NEED TO ASSESS?

By Dr. Steven Wurtz, Arlington ISD chief academic officer

**B**oy, if there was ever a bad word in education, assessment has become that word. Politicized across various platforms, families have rightfully been frustrated with the volume of time their children are engaged in taking assessments all in the name of accountability. School has turned into more than a place where our children go to learn new concepts, explore innovative ideas, ask genuine questions and interact with diverse people. It also has become a place where the stakes are high, and consequences are statutorily imposed based on scores gleaned from a state test administered on a single day. Unfortunately, all of this has created the misperception that tests are bad or not needed. But they are in fact a critical part of the teaching and learning process.

Imagine for a moment that you want to go on a road trip. To plan the best route to travel, you must first decide where you want to go and where you are in relation to that destination. Your route will be different if you are trying to get to New York City as opposed to Houston. It also depends on where you currently are. If you live in Ohio, your route to either destination will be very different from a person who lives in Dallas.

So, what does this have to do with assessment and teaching? It's simple. Before I can know what to teach my students, I must first define what it is they need to know. I need to understand what mastery of the concept I am about to teach looks like and assess where my students are in relation to that level of mastery. I need to understand what my students already know (we don't want to waste their time teaching them something they already understand). And I need to assess where each of my students' starting points are and decide how to customize their learning pathway to get them to the correct destination - the place of mastery.

Assessment is critical. Only by pre-assessing students before we begin teaching can we know how to differentiate their learning. Only by formatively assessing students while they are in the learning process can we know if they are on track for mastery or if teaching adjustments need to be made to ensure they arrive at the intended learning target.

This best practice - assessment and formative feedback - is one of the most important skills we as educators must master. Here are some steps you can take as an educator to leverage this best practice in your instructional design:

1. Decide what your students should know and be able to do to demonstrate mastery of the concept being taught.
2. Design and administer a standards-aligned pre-assessment prior to teaching to see where your students are in the mastery continuum.
3. Customize learning pathways for your students to master the learning objectives.
4. Locate or create formative assessments to track students' progress (and to allow students to track their own progress) as they are learning.
5. Adjust along the way using the information that formative assessments provide.

Learning is fun! It is especially fun when we are productively challenged and have some ownership in the process. Assessments and formative feedback make that possible. Let's get back to our roots and use them well for how they are intended!

# TEACHER TIPS

## *The must haves for planning instruction*

Jamie MacDougall, the new director of curriculum and instruction, met up with two fifth-grade teachers from McNutt Elementary to hear more about how they are using curriculum documents to make planning for instruction a little bit easier.

Nicole Lowery, who teaches math, and Alondra Cerda, who teaches fifth- and sixth-grade bilingual math and science, reflected on how curriculum documents have helped them save time this past year.



Alondra Cerda (left) and Nicole Lowery (right)

Lowery shared, “I use the [Unit Summative Assessments](#) (USAs) and the YAG to plan backwards and keep my pacing. The [companion documents](#) are also a huge help. The [pre-assessments](#) are already made and ready to go, several units even have a built in Kahoot or quiz. It keeps me from having to go to Teachers Pay Teachers; I know that the resources are quality and built for that TEKS objective. I also use the Instructional Focus Document (IFD) in TEKS Resource System. In the past, I used Lead Forward, but I have found the IFD has even more vocabulary to support students. Being a newer teacher, it gives me knowledge about what I should be teaching, not only the TEKS objective, but also how to teach it [the skill]. Especially with math, there are examples of different ways to teach it [the skill]. not just the algorithm, but there are pictorial models in th Enhanced TEKS Clarification Document. Some of these examples I had never seen, but having all of these examples really supports my students.”

Cerda said, “These have become my go-to, they are my holy grail. The IFD is such a great help. I love the section on misconceptions. It really helps me scaffold for my students. I can see the

outline of what I am supposed to do. As kids, they sometimes have a hard time telling us when they don’t understand. I like to be proactive instead of reactive. The section on misconceptions [and underdeveloped concepts] of the IFD helps me anticipate where they will need more help.” Cerda shared that she hadn’t always gone to the

*“I just think about how much time I wasted trying to find resources on the web. If I can help other teachers know where to go, then that makes it all worth it.”*

documents on Curriculum Central. “I had been Googling things and just trying to find things here and there. I had no idea that all that stuff was in the curriculum documents. I think about all the time I wasted. Now I just go to the learning progressions and it helps me plan. We might think they should already know it, but sometimes they don’t. The learning progressions help me figure out how best to help my students.”

MacDougall asked both teachers what they would want to see even more of. Lowery would love review questions that are tied to the summative assessments and more exit tickets.

Cerda would love to include more resources like the [interactive journal](#) for the fifth-grade Financial Literacy Unit. Both teachers were grateful to share their knowledge with other Arlington ISD teachers. Cerda said, “I just think about how much time I wasted trying to find resources on the web. If I can help other teachers know where to go, then that makes it all worth it.”

Want to share what you love about the curriculum documents? Want to give feedback about where we can improve to serve you even better? Your opportunity is coming soon. Check out the C&I Survey in the December edition of *MyArlingtonISD*. Your input matters!

For support using any of the curriculum documents or logging into TEKS Resource System, contact the [Arlington ISD Curriculum and Instruction Team](#).

# DESIGN FOR NEW CARTER JUNIOR HIGH UNDERWAY

*Carter teachers meet with architects to help with design*

Carter Junior High is going to be rebuilt, and the design of the new building is officially underway.

After meeting last week with senior district administrators to hear their desires for the new Carter, Corgan, the architect hired to design the new school, hosted the first of three design charettes. In the first charette, the architect team met with Carter teachers in the current Carter library to get their input and hear their hopes and vision for the new building.

“This really works when you get involved,” Kelly Horn, Arlington ISD assistant superintendent of facility services, told the teachers at the beginning of the meeting. “Don’t be afraid to speak up and give your ideas. There will be things that we take from today that will be in the new school.”

“Tell us what you envision, even if it’s George Jetson-like.”

The new school is a [2019 Bond](#) project needed because of Carter’s age. Opened in 1958, the school wasn’t built for modern technology, HVAC, lighting or today’s education models. In addition, the site is undersized, and erosion in the adjacent creek impedes site use. There is no room for a track around the football field or ample parking.

That will all change with the new building. The school will be relocated to the site of the former Knox Elementary (and now the temporary Thornton



Elementary), a site that is more centrally located to the Carter student population and large enough to accommodate all program offerings.

But first, the new school needs to be carefully and purposefully designed to match Carter’s needs and enhance the educational experience for seventh and eighth graders.

“We know there is a rich culture at Carter and we want to make sure that is supported as we move into the new building,” said Chloe Hosid, an education researcher with the Corgan design team.

The meeting’s intent was to tap into the teachers’ expertise, experience and insight, and they delivered. With lively conversation, they shared their ideas and hopes for everything from collaboration spaces, libraries, classroom and lab

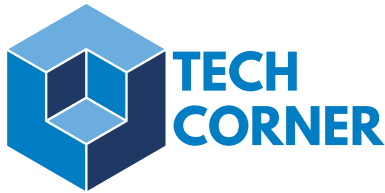
designs to furniture, colors, access to technology, floorplans, site layout and more.

[See photos.](#)

Next, it will be Carter students’ turn. Student representatives will meet in the second design charrette with Corgan architects to share their input and desires followed by a third charrette with Carter parents.

Corgan will use all the input from teachers, students, parents and district administrators to finalize plans for the new building’s design. The Corgan team will then present the design to the Arlington ISD Board of Trustees in the spring of 2022.

To keep up with other bond diggity projects, visit [aisd.net/bond2019/](https://aisd.net/bond2019/).



## TEACHER RELIES ON SEESAW TO TRACK STUDENT PROGRESS

Pre-K - second grade students use photos, videos, drawings and text in Seesaw to demonstrate their learning. With the new progress button in Seesaw, teachers have additional ways to track student progress. This new feature empowers teachers' use of data to make informed decisions for providing students with targeted learning interventions.

Teachers can assign skills (district loaded pre-K guidelines or TEKS) to the assigned Seesaw activities. The Skills View helps teachers understand student mastery of key skills or standards. This new view allows teachers to filter by date range, student name, folder or skill. As teachers review student submissions, they use skills to assess student work based on an internal three-star rating to identify a student's level for that standard.

Brianna Perez, a first-grade teacher at Short Elementary, uses the Skills View to help with her grading by using the district grading guidelines. She has aligned Seesaw's three-star rating with the district's standards-based report cards where one star indicates that the student has demonstrated beginning progress toward the standard (B), two stars indicate that the student has demonstrated that they are approaching mastery of the standard (A), and three stars indicate that the student has demonstrated mastery of the standard (M).



Brianna Perez,  
Short Elementary School

According to Ms. Perez this feature “allows me to quickly see who got what grade for which activity. I also love that they [Seesaw] have added the stars at the bottom of each activity even if I didn't tag a skill to it, I can still grade the submission.”

Teachers also have a birds-eye view of how students are progressing on activities

assigned within their Seesaw classes via Activity View. There, they can filter by date range, student name, folder or assigned skills. Colored circles help easily identify for teachers which activities have not yet been started, are currently in draft mode, are waiting for teacher approval or have already been completed by students.

Ms. Perez is using this new feature to keep track of the work her students complete in Seesaw. She shared, “I love the Activities View because it provides a small image of what the activity was, so I'm able to quickly locate the activity to see how many stars I gave it. Not only that, but I can easily see who did the activity and who didn't!”

If you are a PK-2 teacher interested in learning more about the new Progress feature, visit the Seesaw Help Center for more information and to watch a video tutorial.

### DYNAMIC DIGITAL RESOURCES FROM LIBRARY MEDIA SERVICES

Bloom's Literature is a robust digital resource that contains content on notable authors and works of literature. The resource contains a wide range of reference essays and scholarly criticism examining great authors and their works. Bloom's Literature features more than 1,000 classic works of literature and 800 full-length videos of great literary works, guidance on how to write good essays and a Shakespeare center.

To access Bloom's Literature, click on the icon and enter the following username and password:

**Username:** aisdsec  
**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  
690 E. Lamar Blvd.  
Arlington, TX 76011  
Office: 682-867-7649  
Fax: 682-867-4682

## KEEP THE KIDS AND YOURSELF SAFE

*Workplace precautionary tips provided by Frost Insurance.*

As an educator, ensuring the safety of all children in your classroom is your primary responsibility. You must also take the necessary steps to keep yourself out of danger in order to best care for the children at your facility.

Consider the following safety recommendations when working with students.

### PREVENT BACK INJURIES

- To reduce your risk of back injuries, find ways to avoid excessive lifting and bending.
- To talk with children at eye level, kneel down instead of bending over at the waist or lifting them up. This will help prevent back injuries as well.
- Bend your knees or sit down when working at low tables.



### SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

- Watch out for toys, small furniture and other objects when walking through the facility.
- Walk cautiously and avoid rushing when carrying supplies or children.
- Wear rubber-soled shoes that have good traction for potentially slippery floors.
- To prevent falls, clean up spills immediately after they occur. Make sure that area rugs are properly secured to the floor.

### PREVENT THE SPREAD OF GERMS

- Wash your hands frequently, especially when handling sick children, changing diapers, helping children use the washroom, before and after preparing meals, and before leaving the facility for the day.
- Sanitize working surfaces and tables to reduce the risk of spreading germs.
- Wear latex gloves when changing diapers, helping children use the washroom, when wiping noses and nosebleeds, and when providing first aid care. Gloves protect against blood-borne pathogens, disease and infection. If you or a child is allergic to latex, use a non-latex glove alternative.
- Lice infestation is extremely contagious and very common. If you notice these tiny insects on your skin and/or hair, or on the body of a child, take the proper precautions to protect against spreading lice.

Maintaining safe behavior for the children in your classroom helps ensure safety for all.

NOVEMBER  
*Employees*  
OF THE MONTH



- 1. Tryniti Johnson**  
*Burgin Elementary  
Elementary Teacher of the Month*
- 2. Jourdan Hendricks**  
*Shackelford Junior High  
Junior High Teacher of the Month*
- 3. Linda Helgren**  
*Martin High School  
High School Teacher of the Month*
- 4. Christine Rodriguez**  
*Food and Nutrition Services  
Department Employee of the Month*

Have something good you want to share? Submit your story to Anthony Andro at [aandro@aisd.net](mailto:aandro@aisd.net) and you may see your highlights on the Arlington ISD's online blog, LOOPED IN.

**LOOPED IN**  
The official blog of the Arlington ISD

## DECEMBER HOLIDAYS AND OBSERVANCES

World AIDS Day	Dec. 1
Special Education Day	Dec. 1
National Cookie Day	Dec. 4
Inclusive Schools Week	Dec. 6 - 12
Human Rights Day	Dec. 10
Bill of Rights Day	Dec. 15
End of First Semester	Dec. 16
Winter Break	Dec. 17 - Jan. 3
First Day of Winter	Dec. 21
National Egg Nog Day	Dec. 24
Christmas Day	Dec. 25
Kwanzaa begins	Dec. 26
New Year's Eve	Dec. 31

Congratulations to Lamar teacher Dean Wou who led the way for the Arlington ISD team during its 2021 National Step Challenge.

In less than a month Wou totaled more than 760,000 steps, averaging 26,397 a day. Out of more than 10,000 people who competed in the challenge as part of our Go365 program with Humana, Wou finished 26th nationally. For his fleet feet, Wou received a bunch of Go365 swag.

Wou wasn't our only big-time stepper, either. More than 500 Arlington ISD employees participated. Spence finished second. Atherton Elementary librarian Luther Cobbey was third. Dunn Elementary librarian Susan Grom was fourth, and dyslexia instructional specialist Laurie Lewis rounded out the top five

Congrats again to everyone who competed.





home to all district swim teams, the district's new swim club and the district's new elementary water safety program. And who is leading all of this? Suzanne Dangelmaier, now the Arlington ISD's natatorium director and aquatics coordinator.

Right next door, the CVPA is providing students a state-of-the-art fine arts education unavailable anywhere else. Among the professional-level spaces in the facility are a concert hall and theater. If you walked into the theater this month, you would have witnessed the first annual Junior High One-Act Festival. And who would you have seen running the show? Micah Green, now Arlington ISD's fine arts coordinator of theater and dance.

Now that the Athletics Complex and CVPA are open, serving students and winning awards, it's a good time to look back to 2014 and remember and recognize the efforts of Dangelmaier, Green and all of their fellow committee members. Their legacy actually extends well beyond these two new buildings, from the Career and Technical Center to new school buses, technology, musical instruments and so much more.

We asked Dangelmaier and Green to share some of their memories and thoughts:

***Why did you serve on the CNSC back in 2013-2014 and what was your role in the district at the time?***

**Dangelmaier:** I started with the school district in 2002 as Seguin's head swim coach, and all the high school swim coaches desired to have our own natatorium. Therefore, when the district was looking for people to serve on the bond committee, I wanted to help Arlington ISD build the best natatorium that would support our students and athletes. I applied to be on the bond committee and was so excited when I was selected to serve on this committee. At the time, I was the Arlington High head swim coach and teaching science.

**Green:** At the time, I was actually the communications application teacher at Arlington High School. However, I knew that the following year I would be transitioning to the director of theater role at AHS. I served on the CNSC because I thought it was a fantastic opportunity to create an exciting vision for something the district or community has never seen before.

***Do you recall discussions about a natatorium and fine arts center at your CNSC meetings?***

**Dangelmaier:** There were several discussions about the natatorium at these meetings and I was able to provide a unique perspective as a long-time high school and USA swimming coach and a former assistant manager at another natatorium.

**Green:** I absolutely remember discussing the creation of a professional space for the students to experience, which ended up becoming the Center of Visual & Performing Arts. I was inspired by the amount of energy in the room toward the importance of fine arts within the district.

***Did you have any idea that your and your committee's work would lead to the Arts and Athletics Complex and to your current positions and office locations?***

**Dangelmaier:** When I applied and was selected to serve on the committee, I was eager to provide information and support needed to see such a project through to fruition, but I had a hard time imagining the actual magnitude of this project. Then when I was selected to serve as the natatorium director/aquatics coordinator, I was even more excited to be able to continue the hard work of the committee by implementing the programs envisioned for the natatorium.

**Green:** Zero! But boy am I glad to have seen that come to fruition!

***What's the best thing that came out of the CNSC and what is the impact on students?***

**Dangelmaier:** The best thing that came out the CNSC was twofold: (1) each high school swim team has a place to call "home," and (2) the ability to provide the elementary water safety day where each third grader comes to the natatorium and learns about being safe in and around bodies of water.

**Green:** Quite honestly, the best thing that came out of the CNSC is the look on a child's face as they enter the CVPA for the first time. Or hearing student voices inside the professional Robert G. Copeland Concert Hall. To try to put it into words would do the experience disservice.

