

A MESSAGE FROM DR. CAVAZOS

With more than 8,000 employees in the Arlington ISD, each one of them comes from a different background. Ken Foster's story from growing up in Ohio to finding his home in the Arlington ISD is a unique one for sure, but we're glad he made the journey.

He found his passion for students with us, and our district is better for having dedicated workers like Ken.

Like Dr. Wurtz wrote in his column in this edition of *MyArlingtonISD*, Ken is continually working on his craft to become better at what he does.

It was also great to read about the progress being made on the construction of the new Webb Elementary School. It's amazing how much progress has been made since we broke ground in the spring.

Congratulations to our September employees of the month. Like I say every month in this space, visiting with them is one of the highlights of my month and that hasn't changed. It's great to be able to honor them.

I also want to encourage you to take advantage of our new employee perks. We have more discounts and offers than ever, and you can access them on the intranet, through our new Arlington ISD app or visiting aisdrewards.com.



FAITH, LEARNING AND RELATIONSHIPS: THE STORY OF KEN FOSTER

Akron, Ohio, is a city commonly known as the hometown of professional basketball player LeBron James. The Los Angeles Lakers star may have put the city on the map, but other living legends like Arlington ISD early childhood instructional specialist Ken Foster hail from there, too.

Foster had a more unconventional childhood in the suburb than most of his peers. Being raised by two deaf parents allowed him to see the world from a different perspective from an early age. With the help of his grandparents and older sister, Foster was taught to speak English, but American Sign Language was the dominant form of communication in their home.

His upbringing led him to Kent State to pursue a teaching degree. Halfway into his freshman year of college, he transferred to the University of Akron where he began working part-time for a payroll company to gain income. Ultimately, Foster decided to leave college and work for the company full-time.

His work ethic allowed him to move up the corporate ladder as far as he could without having a bachelor's degree, and he eventually asked for a transfer to Nashville, Tennessee, so he could work while



NOW IS THE TIME!

By Dr. Steven Wurtz, Arlington ISD chief academic officer

It has been said that to become an expert, a person must practice their craft for approximately 10,000 hours. While some may learn a bit faster and some may take a bit longer, this number seems to be the average and equated to about 90 minutes a day for 20 years.

Consider how routine this practice must become to acquire the volume of hours needed to reach such a high standard of proficiency. What other things in life consume that much time? You may be surprised! Huffpost World News reports that over a lifetime, the average person spends...

- 281,952 hours in bed
- 59,808 hours of that time just tossing and turning trying to fall asleep
- 72,720 hours watching television
- 25,632 hours on social media
- 37,992 hours eating - 66% of which is eaten at our desk at work
- 5,640 hours just standing in lines
- 18,000 hours in school from pre-K to our senior year in high school

If we were to fill up a jar with marbles and each of the marbles represented one year of our life, just the hours above would consume approximately 52 of them. Time is our most precious gift and we have relatively very little of it.

You may be asking yourself why I would be writing about this. The reason is I have been thinking about how to best use the time we have with the students we serve and have reflected on how we can continually improve our craft to become expert educators. Research has clearly articulated which practices, when implemented with fidelity in the classroom, yield the greatest positive impact on learners. This year we are focusing on four of them. They are:

- Standards Alignment
- Assessment and Formative Feedback
- Small Group Instruction
- Differentiation/Scaffolding

How do we, as educators, maximize the 18,000 hours we have with our students and ensure they are getting our very best? We do so by perfecting our practice through coaching. There is clear evidence demonstrating a 95% transfer rate of newly learned skills into daily practice when coached. In other words, the chances of me implementing the new things I learn are high if I have a coach to help me do it.

So, who takes advantage of this and gets coached in the world? The best CEOs, gold medal Olympians and professionals in almost every field get coached. In essence, those who want to be the best at what they do are coached. According to the Harvard Business Review, one of the top reasons for coaches is to engage an organization's high potentials. You, the teachers and leaders of our learners, are our high potentials!

This year, we are focusing on providing one-on-one coaching for every literacy and mathematics teacher in Arlington ISD. I want to invite you to take advantage of this opportunity to grow and learn. Lean into your coach as a sounding board. Challenge yourself to embrace new practices. Support one another as you try. There is a reason it takes 10,000 hours of practice to become an expert in something. Practice makes perfect, but that practice takes time and effort.

Thank you for your commitment to the students of the Arlington ISD! Now more than ever they need our very best as they seek to recover from unfinished learning that has accumulated over the last 18 months. Your expertise and skills will bless their lives and help them make the most of the 18,000 hours they are in our care.

STUDENTS HAVE FRONT-ROW SEAT TO CONSTRUCTION OF NEW SCHOOL

Future Webb Elementary being built next to current school

Ask Webb Elementary students are getting a new school right next door to their current building, and they have a front-row seat to watch the construction!

“The students are very observant of the daily changes and progress as the days go by,” said Webb Principal Evelyn Navarro-Gaspar.

And they’re excited, she said. But while the new school building will be a tremendous upgrade over the current facility that opened in 1960, the first graders are mostly excited about new playgrounds.

Webb is the first of four school replacements funded by the 2019 Bond, an effort to modernize the district’s schools and revitalize their neighborhoods. Webb’s current site is large enough that the new building is being built on the property while the current building remains open.

“Webb already has outstanding students and teachers,” said Arlington ISD Superintendent Dr. Marcelo Cavazos. “They are known for their generosity and involvement in the community, from singing at nursing homes to raising money for the Arlington Life Shelter. This new school building is designed to match that spirit and give these students every opportunity to succeed and excel.”

Construction kicked off back in April with a [groundbreaking ceremony](#) where Webb students in hard hats helped turn the ceremonial dirt. But their involvement in the new school actually started a year earlier when they assisted architects with the design. At a [design charrette](#) hosted by the architect, students and parents offered their input on how the new site should lay out and how they envision their “dream classroom.” They also discussed and gave feedback on outdoor spaces, the media center (library) and dining area.

Now, that dream school is under construction. It’s still early in the process with foundations, underground utilities and subsurface retention ponds underway.

[See construction photos.](#)

“Upcoming activities for the next two weeks include placement of grade beams at Area D,



installation of the raised floor deck at the kitchen, and further work on the storm shelter (gym) foundations,” said Jim Evans, Arlington ISD’s project manager over the construction.

Though many months of construction remain, district staff and the architects are also planning for and procuring the FFE (furniture, fixtures and equipment) for the library, fine arts and special education.

The end result will be a beautiful new school, but it’s never easy to go through construction. However, the process has been as smooth as possible so far.

“As the principal, I am grateful the north drive was finished in time to use it the first day of school for dismissal,” Navarro-Gaspar said. “I am grateful for everyone’s patience (staff, parents, visitors) during our arrival and dismissal processes. Our focus is the end result next year, so as we encounter challenges, we always remind ourselves they are just temporary! Jim Evans and his crew have been amazing in putting the Webb staff and students’ safety first.”

Once the new facility is finished in the fall of 2022, the Webb students and teachers will just move in from next door. Then, starting in the summer of 2022, the current Webb building will be demolished.

To keep up with other bond diggity projects, visit aisd.net/bond2019/.

pursuing his dreams of becoming a contemporary worship singer and songwriter. The self-taught guitar player always loved music and remained involved in church by singing and playing on the worship team. His visions began to align as he was granted a transfer to “Music City,” and it was there that he met the love of his life, Amy, at church, and they exchanged vows nearly two years later.

After the couple became pregnant with their first child, they received news early in the second trimester that would change their lives forever. Doctors said their son, Logan, had a condition called spina bifida, a birth defect that occurs when a developing baby’s spinal cord fails to develop properly while in the womb.

“When we found out, we just didn’t know what to expect,” said Foster. “The whole pregnancy was very traumatic for us.”

Moments that were filled with sadness and confusion turned to joy and relief as doctors offered the couple a transformative surgery that would lessen their son’s complications and allow him to thrive even after a premature birth. The Fosters were the 81st couple to receive the breakthrough surgery which was successfully performed while their son was still in the womb. Twelve months later, the family expanded again as they welcomed another baby boy, Trevor.

“The experience of having our son taught me to have patience and hope and wait expectantly even in unforeseen circumstances,” said Foster. “Not knowing what to expect made us trust in God in a new way. You think have your whole life planned out.

“Then all of a sudden, when things happen so unexpectedly, it shakes you to your core.”

Change became a constant in their family as they quickly learned how to navigate life with two young children, one with special needs. Another job transfer took the family to Dallas, his wife’s hometown. The move helped reignite a fire in Ken that had been dimmed nearly two decades prior.

“Once I was here, I realized how unhappy I was in my job,” said Foster. “There was a sense of emptiness and I felt like I could do more, so I quit working at the company after 18 years.”

Foster decided to return to school in 2006 to pursue his teaching degree. He received an

associate’s degree from Tarrant County College, where he made the Dean’s List. The University of Texas at Arlington became his home for the next few years as he first earned a bachelor’s degree with magna cum laude honors and then a master’s degree.

During his senior year of college, he was placed in an early childhood internship at West Elementary in Arlington ISD. Foster originally thought he would teach older kids and possibly even coach athletics, but working with kindergarten students at West motivated him to become an early childhood teacher. After graduating from UTA, he became a

“Being exposed to my parents and my son with special needs was very instrumental in shaping me for education,”

pre-K4 teacher at Kookan Educational Center and taught there for nine years. In 2017, he began working as an adjunct professor teaching early childhood-based courses at TCC, including classes on children with special needs; family, school and community; emergent literacy; and learning frameworks.

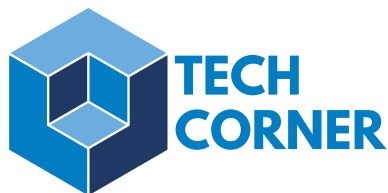
When the early childhood learning department started in the district, the department needed specialists, and Foster thought it was the perfect opportunity to utilize his skillset and experience.

“Being exposed to my parents and my son with special needs was very instrumental in shaping me for education,” said Foster. “Having a son with special needs helps you learn how to give your child the same kind of experiences as everyone else by making accommodations.”

Considering those things has not only influenced my outlook on education as a whole, but it’s allowed me to be able to connect with those in education in a different way.”

His current role as an early childhood instructional specialist allows him to create and support curriculum instruction for pre-K teachers and provide resources to set them up for success in the classroom.

While he continues to teach courses part-time at TCC, he encourages men to hop in the female-dominated field of early childhood learning. He



YOUNG JHS TEACHER FOCUSES ON STUDENTS' DIGITAL LITERACY SKILLS

Learning.com is the state-adopted resource for digital literacy and is available for use in grades K-8 via Rapid ID. It includes hundreds of ready lessons that focus on essential digital literacy skills including Tech Fundamentals, Keyboarding, Computational Thinking & Coding and Online Safety & Digital Citizenship.

The grade-appropriate curriculum bundles have already been assigned for access this school year, meaning that all K-8 students need to do to develop these critical skills for their college, career and life readiness is to log into Learning.com. Teachers can access the curriculum sequence and lesson topics at <http://bit.ly/curriculumsequence>.

This summer, a series of webinars were held that focused on Learning.com's unique Core Content Packs available for grades 3-8. One Arlington ISD teacher, Kimi Corp, attended all of the summer webinars and earned the Easy Tech Integrator badge!

Corp, a math teacher at Young Junior High, shared, "I first discovered Learning.com when I was helping prepare technology lessons for junior high summer school. I was impressed with the projects they had available that taught the necessary technology skills and then let students use their own brain power to complete the project requirements. I like that many of the assignments were self-graded and only required the teacher to monitor student progress. So, this summer I signed up for any course that Learning.com offered in the district. All of the training this summer was online which made it easy to attend from anywhere and each was only an hour long."



*Kimi Corp,
Young Junior High School*

"I'm hoping that this year I might be able to incorporate some math content specific lessons or a project in my eight-grade math classes. There are over 300 Tech Quest lessons for my grade level alone and all qualify as teaching future ready skills that my students will need in high school, higher education and when working in a career. I have started using the Online Safety & Digital Citizenship lessons with my Advisory class 1-2 times a week. So far, my students have been surprised at all the things they were not aware of when they are online."

Learning.com is an ideal option for teachers wanting to offer TEKS-aligned extensions during I&E time, via station rotation, or to early finishers. It provides student-paced online lessons ideal for just-in-time classroom coverage emergencies. All lessons include Spanish-language audio and closed-caption options. Most importantly, it provides students with engaging and gamified opportunities to develop essential digital literacy skills.

Teachers can learn more about how to implement Learning.com in the classroom by visiting the system's Online Training Center at <https://bit.ly/login2learning>.

THE DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP BUZZ FROM LIBRARY MEDIA SERVICES

Every student in Arlington ISD receives lessons in digital citizenship from their school librarian throughout the year. Lessons for all grade levels are centered around topics such as cyberbullying, online safety, giving credit when using the work of others, the importance of balancing technology and media use, and understanding that what is said and done online has an impact on all areas of our lives. Junior high and high school students learn about these topics through their librarian and other classes, such as CTHEI.

In the library during the second six weeks, second-grade students will learn to be better critical thinkers and creators by giving credit for using images, videos, or text created by someone else. Students in third and fourth grade will learn and discuss cyberbullying and how to handle it if it occurs.

To find more information on how to help students fight cyberbullying, see the [Common Sense Media tip sheet](#) for families.



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

SAFETY MATTERS

PREVENTING SLIPS AND FALLS AT SCHOOL

Wet weather can be a nuisance, meaning being trapped inside and dealing with wet messes tracked in by students and faculty. Moreover, the wet walking surfaces this nuisance creates present a serious slipping hazard for you, your students and fellow faculty.

In fact, surfaces that are wet for any reason — weather-related or not — are a workplace hazard. Water can come from rain, cleaning and accident spills, wet winter conditions or activities that require the use of water. Slipping on a wet surface can result in bruises, strains and sprains, lacerations, fractures, head trauma and even fatality. And those incidents can stack up to lost wages or a lawsuit. Fortunately, there are several steps you can take to keep your team and our customers safe.



BE AWARE OF HAZARDS

Each educational institution is different, so the ways you deal with wet surfaces may vary. However, following these general guidelines is a good start:

- Clean up spills immediately.
- Use caution signs to clearly identify when a surface is wet or likely to become wet and remove the signs as soon as the surface is dry.
- Barricade affected areas where possible.
- Check for equipment and electrical currents that may not be grounded and wires that are not insulated near wet areas. Never use electrical equipment while standing on a wet surface.
- Place floor mats at all entrances to reduce tracking in water from outside.
- Be sure to wear shoes with slip-resistant soles and encourage your students to do the same.
- Report any spills or wet areas that you notice to your supervisor.

ANTI-SLIP TIPS

If you or your students do walk through a wet area, follow these tips to avoid slipping and falling:

- Slow down! Rushing is not worth a serious injury and lost wages.
- Take small steps to keep your balance centered.
- Walk with your feet pointed slightly outward to form a stable base.
- Make wide turns at corners.
- Use handrails if present.

- Concentrate on the surface you are walking on.
- Be prepared for slippery patches.
- Keep your hands out for balance. Communicate the danger of wet surfaces to your students and encourage them to use the same caution you do when the floors are wet for any reason. This simple lesson could save them a good deal of pain and maybe even their lives!

COOPERATE AND STAY ALERT

We care about your safety at Arlington Independent School District. If you have any doubt about the safety of your workspace, whether it concerns a wet surface or another hazard, talk to your supervisor. It takes the cooperation of our entire team to keep everyone safe!



- 1. Geonny Samon**
Thornton Elementary
Elementary Teacher of the Month
- 2. William McAlister**
Carter Junior High
Junior High Teacher of the Month
- 3. Elizabeth Fieler**
Bowie High School
High School Teacher of the Month
- 4. Dr. Hildelisa Diaz**
Early Childhood Learning
Department Employee of the Month

OCTOBER HOLIDAYS AND OBSERVANCES

National Bullying Prevention Month

National Principal Month

International Walk to School Month

National Physical Therapy Month

Persons with Disabilities History and Awareness Month

Computer Learning Month

National Custodial Worker's Recognition Day	Oct. 2
Fire Prevention Week	Oct. 3-9
National Taco Day (Or Any Day in Texas)	Oct. 4
Walk to School Day	Oct. 5
National Instructional Coach's Day	Oct. 6
Student Holiday Staff Development Days	Oct. 8-11
National School Lunch Week	Oct. 11-15
International Skeptics Day (Or Is It?)	Oct. 13
World Food Day	Oct. 16
Boss' Day	Oct. 16
National Character Counts Week	Oct. 18-24
National School Bus Safety Week	Oct. 18-24
Red Ribbon Week	Oct. 23-31
Mother-In-Law-Day	Oct. 24
National Cat Day	Oct. 29
End of Second Six Weeks	Oct. 29
Halloween	Oct. 31

believes men provide a different perspective in the development of a young child, and children need to see a good balance of male and female role models as they grow, especially in the classroom.

Ultimately, Foster desires to continue connecting with people and bridging gaps in early childhood education.

“I love sharing learning and building relationships with people,” said Foster. “When I can connect with people and be able to share what I know with them and learn from them, I feel most accomplished, and that’s what motivates me to keep doing this every day.”

Although he spends his days visiting classrooms and teaching people the most effective ways to teach young learners, connecting with his family remains a priority. With a wife who is a flight attendant, a son requiring extra care, and a son halfway through college, the Foster family’s schedule can get pretty hectic. To balance it, Foster ensures his family is intentional about the time they get to spend together by simply eating together as a family, playing games and participating in other activities that strengthen their bond while having fun.

Faith. Learning. Relationships. Those are the three most important values that come to Foster’s mind when reflecting on his time spent on earth and the principles he wants to instill in those around him.

Whether he’s at an elementary school assisting a teacher or at church leading worship, his heart to serve others in the community is evident. His dedication to living a purpose-driven life each day and his impact on countless pre-K students and teachers are what makes him a living legend.





Arlington

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Auto Detailing	Computer Software	Home Builder	Restaurants
Auto Repair	Computers	Hotels	School Supplies
Beauty Salon	Educational Supplies	Insurance	Shipping & Printing
Bicycles	Emergency Preparedness	Jewelry	Specialty Foods
Bridal Apparel	Forestry	Mental Health Care	Tax Preparation
Candy Store	Formal Apparel	Mortgage	Vision Care
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Cellular Phone Services	Golf Course	Pest Control	

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