

# SCHOOL VIEWS

ALAMO HEIGHTS ISD



## FAREWELL FRIEND!

As the final bell rang to mark the close of the 2018 school year and the final graduate crossed the stage to receive their diploma, Dr. Kevin Brown took a deep breath as he prepared to say goodbye to a school district he loved and lead for the last 10 years. Raising his family in the Alamo Heights community and serving the district as the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Public Information and then Superintendent, Dr. Kevin Brown worked to build upon the tradition of excellence that is the Alamo Heights Independent School District. Leading AHISD through a major, collaborative strategic planning initiative, and most recently through another visionary process that resulted in a community – developed AHISD Profile of a Learner, these collaborative efforts have helped transform the district into a learner-centered environment focused on designing engaging experiences for students.



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Set to take the helm of the state-wide Texas Association of School Administrators Association (TASA) on July 1, all that was left was to say a final farewell. On June 1, AHISD family and community gathered to share some final words of thanks and appreciation that included messages from Joe Strauss, Speaker of the House; Lynda Billa Burke, City Councilwoman, City of Alamo Heights; J. Mark Browne, City Manager, City of Alamo Heights; Brian Gottardy, Superintendent of North East ISD and fellow founding members of Go Public; Angus McLeod, Rachel Holliday and Josh Younke with a musical presentation featuring Eleanor Anderson and Sarah Hernandez; John Tippet and fellow AHISD current and past Board Members; and, Carrie Worthen, President of the Board for the Alamo Heights School Foundation.

Dr. Brown was further honored with a Commemorative Fiesta Medal, a video presentation and numerous guests in attendance.

Although his leadership will be missed in Alamo Heights ISD, his influence and service will be widespread to school leaders and school children all across the state in his new role. As a district and community, we are sending him on his way, wishing him the best, hoping that he knows that our hearts are full and grateful.



Photo Credit: Robert Amador / Mark Humphries

## FROM OUR SUPERINTENDENT

I hope you all have enjoyed a wonderful summer with your children! We missed their faces on our campuses, but while they were away, we were certainly busy preparing for another incredible school year. Our priorities included: hiring high-quality staff to fill vacancies in our classrooms, monitoring construction projects on each campus to keep us on target with our bond time-line, and preparing a new budget despite the increasing challenges we continue to face from the lack of state support for school funding.

I am incredibly excited to be named the new Superintendent for this amazing school district! Having served my entire career in this special place, I can't imagine a greater privilege than the opportunity to serve our students, parents, and our outstanding staff in this role.

In May, I was able to visit each of our campuses and tell a little about my story that began 22 years ago in a fifth-grade classroom at Woodridge Elementary, and I shared about decisions I made along the way to move into various new roles to serve in different capacities from Assistant Principal at both Cambridge and Alamo Heights Junior School, to Principal at Cambridge. After serving ten years at the campus level, I moved to Central Office and served there for an additional ten years in various roles that included Director of Personnel and Public Information and most recently, Assistant Superintendent. Each of those roles has given me a unique perspective from which to see and learn and appreciate our district more whole – heartedly.

It is from those various perspectives that I will share **my gratitude for this wonderful district** with you -

**I love Alamo Heights ISD because I am an AHISD Teacher-** Starting my career here as a teacher was a daunting task because I was a first-year teacher, right out of college, hired to teach with some of the best of the best teachers in the field! Teaching in Alamo Heights is an incredible privilege because resources abound through the support of our PTO, AHSF and support group organizations, and because parent support and involvement is incredible. Committing to the expectations of teaching in this district is a call to the highest expectations for building quality relationships with families and the highest outcomes for all students.

Serving as a teacher in Alamo Heights, I saw first-hand the way teachers answer this call daily through a willingness to give of themselves and their talents to our children, our families and to each other. I continue to be amazed by the talent and the commitment of our teachers - *There are no teachers like the ones in AHISD!*

**I love Alamo Heights because I am an AHISD Administrator-** Serving as an administrator has given me insight into the unique role of support that administrators play for all – teachers, parents, support staff, and community members. Administrators have a mission of service to support teachers in their important work. They help teachers develop and hone their craft, and they commit to allocating necessary resources for teachers to follow through with implementation of their plans. Our administrators are dedicated to supporting parents in times of need through acts of support and service, and they partner with the community to promote amazing opportunities for students in our schools. As an administrator, I've come to appreciate the intricacies of every single role in the school and the importance of those roles from the custodian, to the cafeteria worker and bus drivers. I've also come to understand the way that each one of those important roles helps us accomplish our mission for our schools. Administrators support every one of those roles. In Alamo Heights ISD, leadership is about service and support. We are fortunate to be in a place where our administrators dedicate themselves to servant leadership that benefits our community members, our parents, our staff, and ultimately, each one of our students.

**I love Alamo Heights because I am an AHISD Parent-** Many of you know that I also wear the "parent hat" with four of my own children attending our schools. What I know from this perspective is that being a parent is the most humbling (and most rewarding) experience one can imagine. Each one of us sends our children to school each day with our hopes and dreams attached to them, and we are vulnerable to the choices they make and their own authorship that dictates new outcomes to that picture we envisioned and crafted. Parenting in this district is amazing! We surround ourselves with grade level parent groups where we get guidance and information we need, and we can participate in the most engaged PTO groups in the state. We sit in the stands with each other and cheer on our teams and we encourage each other and help each other navigate through unknowns that we face over the years. What I know, is that like each one of you, I try each day to do my best to be the parent each of my children need- and that is no small undertaking. Sometimes it seems overwhelming to keep up with it all: the papers that need signing, the uniforms that need to go to school on the right day, pick up and drop-offs on time, and the online passwords. That's when I rely on my "tribe" of parent friends who willingly pitch in and give me advice, share a car-pool pick up, or even just a word of encouragement. What sets us apart is that Alamo Heights parents are connected and invested in the lives of our own children, but we also understand the importance of connecting as a community and supporting each other's children as well. I am so thankful for the incredible village of Alamo Heights parents!

Each one of these perspectives contributes to the overwhelming sense of pride and ownership I have for the Alamo Heights Independent School District! This is an exciting time for us, and I am looking forward to leading the continuation of our important work this upcoming school year. Know that your children, and their experiences in our schools, are of the utmost importance to me, and I dedicate myself and my work to ensuring that AHISD is the best district for our students to learn and grow!

From my heart to yours-

**Dr. Dana Bashara**



## PANORAMIC VIEW

### FEEDBACK PROVIDES DIRECTION, PATH FOR FUTURE

By Dr. Jimmie Walker, Executive Director of Curriculum & Instruction

This year, AHISD launched a redesigned structure for parent, teacher, and student feedback surveys. With the Profile of a Learner driving our district goals, it makes sense to align the feedback surveys to the Profile of a Learner. Thanks to a generous grant from the Alamo Heights School Foundation, Alamo Heights was able to partner with Panorama Education, an expert in the field of educational survey research, to redesign our surveys. To gather the most feedback from all district stakeholders, surveys went out to all parents, teachers, and also to students in grades 3-12. This new survey system took place in February and was branded Feedback February.

The response rate was fantastic with 54% of parents, 60% of students, and 91% of teachers participating for a total of 4,269 surveys completed during this inaugural year of Feedback February. The results affirm and confirm the direction and work of the district and also shine a light on some areas of needed growth.

### PARENT HIGHLIGHTS & KEY FINDINGS

- 96% of parents would highly recommend Alamo Heights ISD to a friend or colleague looking for a school district.
- 90% of parents believe that AHISD is doing extremely or quite well in the area of student achievement.
- The quality of the faculty and staff was the most frequently cited positive aspect of the district.

*"Most positive... STAFF! The teachers still enjoy being teachers! In our experience, each teacher continues to learn, develop their own teaching tool kit, and provide the most current and research-based instruction. We have such caring teachers."*

### FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS & KEY FINDINGS

- 94% of teachers found it easy to work with students who are from different cultural backgrounds.
- 89% of teachers felt trusted to teach the way they think is best.

*"Most positive... The freedom to be a TRUE teacher. Each teacher has their own unique styles and to me that is the most valuable aspect in order to teach our unique students."*

### STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS & KEY FINDINGS

- 91% of students agreed it is important they do well in their classes.
- 94% of students indicated they care quite a bit and care a tremendous amount about helping others.
- 90% of students indicated their teachers encourage them to do their best.

We appreciate your thoughtful participation and look forward to putting your feedback into action in the coming school year. Campus leadership teams worked over the summer to prioritize action items in response to this robust feedback. A few of the initial action items are listed below.

- **Technology:** Parents expressed questions about the role of technology in early childhood classrooms. Campus leadership teams are researching best practices and developing a clear set of beliefs and expectations for technology that can be shared with parents.
- **Discipline:** Although 77% of parents felt like the district's overall approach to discipline was effective, counselors and administrators are going to conduct an informal needs assessment to identify areas in which systems and communication can be strengthened to address behavior and discipline concerns.
- **Feedback:** Both teachers and students value the feedback they received and expressed a desire for more frequent feedback. Teachers and administrators will seek out methods to ensure that feedback is specific, actionable, and timely.

Thank you to all who responded to the 2018 school surveys last February. Your input helped to hone priorities and advance our district goal to actualize the Profile of a Learner. We are paying close attention to Feedback February results and will use the data and comments as we make decisions about the best ways to serve your students. Please look for updates throughout the year about progress toward various priorities and programs highlighted in the survey results.



**94%** of students indicated they care quite a bit and care a tremendous amount about helping others.

# POWERED BY THE PROFILE

ENGAGING SOCIALLY & GLOBALLY, EMBRACING SERVICE AND CITIZENSHIP



## WALK TO WATER

### SERVICE LEARNING IN ACTION

What began as a global read aloud soon evolved into a service learning initiative for Cambridge 5th graders at Alamo Heights ISD.

Students began reading "A Long Walk to Water" in October, the story of Salva Dut, an 11 year-old boy who in 1985 fled Sudan's southern region during

the country's two-decade civil war. Known then as one of 17,000 "Lost Boys of Sudan," Dut survived numerous challenges to escape and lead about 1,500 of the Lost Boys to relative safety in a United Nations-controlled Kakuma refugee camp. Sharing Salva's story one morning during breakfast with the family, one 5th grader recounted the stories of struggle with his grandfather. This conversation launched a school-wide service learning effort that gained great momentum.

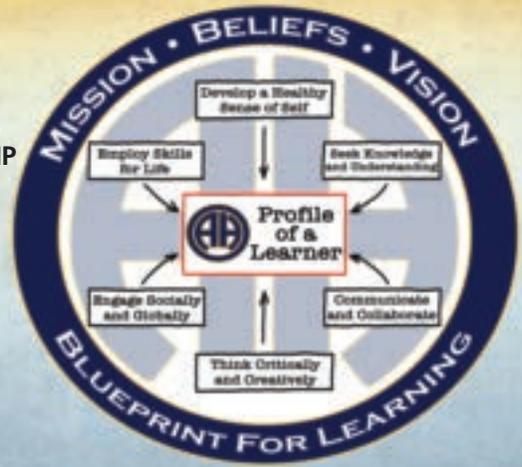
In South Sudan, millions of women and children trek up to eight hours a day to collect water from marshes, ditches, or hand-dug wells. Water is often contaminated with parasites and bacteria and the results of drinking this contaminated water is sickness, even death.



### CITIZENSHIP FOR MULES

Debbie Dixon of Woodridge Elementary shares her view from the Naturalization Ceremony, held in the dome of the Texas Institute of Culture Building. She shared, "The ceremony was very moving, with over 270 people granted citizenship from countries all over the world. What an amazing opportunity for our students to witness!"

Want to see our AHISD stories in action?  
Tune in to our district YouTube Channel:  
Alamo Heights Mules



Led by 5th grade teachers, Alejandra Martinez and Carol Herrejon, students took Salva's story and created a service-learning project in which they literally walked to raise funds to bring clean water to Sudan. The "Walk to Water" campaign inspired campus collaboration and raised an amazing \$15,000. The students were excited to be able to fund the full cost of drilling a well!

As the students gathered in the Cambridge Auditorium in late April to celebrate their accomplishments, they were shocked to find Salva Dut joining them! The students, in awe of his story and all that he overcame, were honored to be a small part of the work that Dut continues to embrace, lead and encourage for his country.



LEARN MORE:  
[www.waterforsouthsudan.org](http://www.waterforsouthsudan.org)

### AHHS UNIFIED CLUB GAINS NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Special Olympics North America or SONA hosted and celebrated their national conference in July in Seattle, Washington. Attended by organizations from across the nation, the Alamo Heights High School Unified Club was represented in a big way with students Carrie Mullins and Dominic Cavazos who earned the trip and grand experience after hosting SONA at AHHS in February and showcasing the amazing programs for students.

See the video: [www.generationunified.org](http://www.generationunified.org)



# Graduation 2018



## CELEBRATING THE CLASS OF 2018

On May 31, 385 graduates crossed the stage at Laurie Auditorium on the Trinity University campus. Taking those final steps as an Alamo Heights High School Mule, students embraced the transition from high school senior to graduate, carrying more than \$3,970,628 in scholarships with them to begin the next chapter of their educational story. The high school staff honored two students with Top Senior Girl and Boy, awards selected annually to recognize two students who exemplify great character, academic excellence and a heart for service. The 2018 Top Senior Girl was Carrie Mullins and Top Senior Boy was Reed Sechler. Congrats Class of 2018!

#MulesUp



## SUMMER CAMPS, SCHOOL, SPORTS

You might think that when the last bell rings for the school year, that the classrooms are empty and quiet. Not the case for Alamo Heights schools! Students get a jump start on the year ahead and summer fun by participating in a variety of learning opportunities via

Summer Camp, Summer School and Summer Sports!

Summer School provides enrichment opportunities for students! Packed with extended learning through field trips and customized experiences, the short terms are packed with big learning!

Summer Sports Camps provide athletes of all sizes to test their skill, learning more about a favorite sport, or enhance and improve upon their skill set in the sport they love!

Summer at Heights kicked off its 23rd year of summer fun June 4-29th. With exciting offerings like Extreme Dissection 101, Woodworking, Chinese, STEM classes, Yoga and Meditation, Sports, Arts and Crafts, Coding...and much more, there was something for everyone!



## SUMMER @ HEIGHTS

AHISD's Summer at Heights enrichment camp provides creative courses, in a full or half-day setting for incoming K - 8th graders. Providing a summer's worth of activities and fun, featuring certified teachers and area professionals who continue to bring life to learning, this AH summer camp tradition is a Heights favorite!



# ALAMO HEIGHTS SCHOOL FOUNDATION

## BACKING TEACHERS

The Alamo Heights School Foundation believes Teachers are essential to making the Alamo Heights School District exemplary.

Their mission? To enhance academic excellence for every student with a focus on funding teachers and staff.

The goal for 2018-2019? To provide the district with **\$968,000** for 12 Teachers and innovative programming!

Want to be a part of this movement? Donate!

[www.ahschoolfoundation.org](http://www.ahschoolfoundation.org) | 210.832.5957

## #WeBackTeachers

**\$800,000** That is the amount that the Alamo Heights School Foundation presented Superintendent Dr. Dana Bashara in preparation for the 2018-2019 academic year!



### AHSF WELCOMES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

The Alamo Heights School Foundation welcomes Heather McFarland as the new Executive Director. Heather comes to the Foundation from the Down Syndrome Association of South Texas and has fifteen years of

nonprofit fundraising experience. Prior to moving to the San Antonio area, she served as the Executive Director of a public school foundation for nine years in the Kansas City area. Heather holds a Bachelor's degree from Creighton University and a MBA from the University of Nebraska - Lincoln. Despite graduating from the University of Nebraska, Heather is an avid Michigan Wolverines fan! Heather is married to Greg McFarland, a professional mechanical engineer who oversees hospital facility improvement projects for the Air Force. They have three children, Elijah, Makenzie, and Abigale. Heather is excited to return to a role that supports public education. She looks forward to working with the community to provide new opportunities and support teachers to help students reach their full potential. Heather can be reached at [hmcfarland@ahisd.net](mailto:hmcfarland@ahisd.net) or 210.832.5957.



# ALAMO HEIGHTS SCHOOL FOUNDATION

Funding teachers.  
Achieving excellence.

**SUMMER IS FOR SPOOR WRITING:** Thanks to the generous support of the Alamo Heights School Foundation, 7th grade students with a love for writing can fuel their passion by attending the Martha Spoor Young Writers Workshop! The fund, established in 2008 in memory of Martha Spoor, a 1987 graduate of Alamo Heights High School and English teacher at Alamo Heights Junior School, encourages Martha's hope, to inspire students to express themselves in their writing through the use of critical thinking and creativity.



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS



## Rocketry Students Seek White Sands in Summer

Students seeking white sands sounds pretty normal for a summer break option! It's not the walk on the beach that one might expect, but rather, it is an opportunity to launch a student-built rocket from a Missile Range located in White Sands, New Mexico.

Students have been working on the 20-foot long rocket since late August 2017, unveiling the finished product 10-months later in June, just prior to their departure for White Sands Missile Range!

The students were tasked with launching a 35-pound payload, this year a human blood sample, up to 100,000 feet. The students hope to gather the effects of extreme acceleration on their payload during their launch.

## AUGUST 2018

### August 1

**ONLINE MULE MARKETS OPEN:** Howard, Cambridge & Woodridge, AHJS, AHHS (See Campus Websites for Back-to-School News & Information.)

### August 9

**HOWARD MINI MULE ORIENTATION:** Howard, 4 pm

### August 13-18

#### CONVOCATION/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

AHHS Auditorium, 6900 Broadway, 8 a.m.

All staff attend annual Convocation ceremonies on Monday, August 13, and continue with professional development throughout the week at respective campuses.

### August 15

**AHJS 6TH GRADE MULE CAMP:** AHJS, 8:30 - 11 a.m.

Orientation for all 6th graders. 6th Grade Schedule Distribution will take place during Mule Camp.

**AHJS MULE MARKET:** AHJS, 1 - 3 p.m. 7th - 8th Graders Pick Up Schedules

### August 16

**AHHS FRESHMAN PREP DAY/LINK CREW:** AHHS, Freshmen - 8 a.m. - 12 p.m., Sophomores, Juniors, & Seniors, 1 p.m.

**MEET THE TEACHER:** Howard, Cambridge & Woodridge

### August 20

**FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL:** All Campuses

### August 28

**BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT:** AHJS, 6th Grade, 6-8 p.m.



**ART GALLERY ON WHEELS:** Powered by Go Public, Via Bus, and the Texas Cavaliers, art students from across San Antonio are now part of the city's first-ever art gallery on wheels!

Thanks to the collaboration, three city buses feature collaged artwork that wraps the entire bus on all sides, showcasing 31 high school student artists from the San Antonio area. Alamo Heights High School artist Kalle Duncan (pictured above left) was thrilled to share her work in a unique new way.

Additionally, 11 elementary student artists whose work was selected through the Texas Cavaliers River Art Parade contest were featured! Woodridge Elementary student Piper Smith (pictured above right) was thrilled to see her art in the larger-than-life mobile gallery!

Follow Go Public on Twitter and Facebook @WeGoPublic. Check out the *Cool Schools* segment on KSAT 12's *SA LIVE* or look for the Go Public Billboards as you drive around the city.



## SEPTEMBER

### September 3

**LABOR DAY:** No school for students. Schools and offices closed.

### September 4

**BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT:** AHJS, 7th-8th Grades, 6 - 8 p.m.

### September 5

**BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT:** Cambridge, 1st - 2nd Grades, 5:45 - 7 p.m.; Woodridge, 1st - 2nd Grades, 6 - 7:15 p.m.

### September 6

**BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT:** Cambridge, 3rd - 5th Grades, 5:45 - 7 p.m.; Woodridge, 3rd - 5th Grades, 6-7:15 p.m.

### September 10

**BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT:** AHHS, 9th - 12th Grades, 6 - 8 p.m.

### September 13

**BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT:** Howard, Pre-K/PPCD/ABC/BELLS, 4 - 5 p.m.; Kinder, 6 - 7 p.m.

### September 20

**AHISD BOARD MEETING:** AHISD Board Room, 7101 Broadway, 6 p.m.

### September 26

**HOWDY PARADE:** Broadway, 4:30 p.m.

**HOWDY NIGHT:** AHHS, 5 p.m.

### September 28

**HOMECOMING:** Harry B. Orem Stadium at AHHS, 7:30 p.m.

**AHISD PARTNER IN NATIONAL PROGRAMS:** Alamo Heights ISD is pleased to be a part of the National School Breakfast & Lunch Programs once again. As a part of the programs, we are able to offer nutritious and delicious meals to all enrolled students of Alamo Heights. All students are entitled to eat breakfast and lunch every school day in their school café. Pricing information is available on the AHISD Child Nutrition webpage at <http://www.ahisd.net/departments/nutrition/nutrition.html>. You will also be able to link to our online Free and Reduced application process which may provide your student with a free or reduced price meal program depending on income qualifications. Paper applications are also available in Spanish and English for download, or can be picked up in the front office of your school.



#### STAY CONNECTED

Follow *AHISD* on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and YouTube! All our schools and our athletics department have social media accounts! Follow your child's teacher or classroom, too!

**HOWDY! IT'S HOMECOMING 2018!** AHISD is set to host a huge "Howdy!" An annual tradition at Alamo Heights ISD, it symbolizes the start of a new school year and kicks-off the much loved Homecoming celebration. From the first "Howdy" of the Howdy Parade, Howdy Night Carnival, Pep-Rally and Bonfire, the celebration continues with the Football game and Homecoming Dance. Current and former Mules love the tradition of a Mule Homecoming. Get your blue and gold on and throw your #MulesUp!



## OCTOBER

### October 18

**AHISD BOARD MEETING:** *AHISD Board Room, 7101 Broadway, 6 p.m.*

### October 23-24

**ELEMENTARY PARENT CONFERENCES:** *Howard, Cambridge & Woodridge*

### October 25

**DISTRICT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:**

*Early Release - All Campuses*

### October 31

**FAMILY NIGHT/NO HOMEWORK NIGHT:**

## NOVEMBER

### November 1

**20TH ANNIVERSARY SPANISH IMMERSION PROGRAM:**

*AHHS Auditorium Foyer, 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.*

### November 14

**AHSF GREATER HEIGHTS NIGHT:** *Witte Museum, Mays Family Center, 6 - 10 p.m.*

### November 15

**AHISD BOARD MEETING:**

*AHISD Board Room, 7101 Broadway, 6 p.m.*

### November 19-23

**THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY/BREAK:** *No school for students.*

*Schools and offices closed.*

**Got Summer Camps?**  
Give the gift of Summer at Heights during the 2018 holiday season! Online registration opens March 1 for Summer 2019!  
[www.ahisd.net](http://www.ahisd.net)

## DECEMBER

### December 1-31

**CLOSING OUT THE YEAR:** AHISD's students showcase their talents throughout the season-of-giving by sharing a variety of musical performances! Their gift to you, as most are free for all who would like to attend! One show you will not want to miss - AHHS's Madrigal Dinner! Tickets take you back in time to a traditional holiday celebration! Get tickets early, these sell out early!

# TEARING IT DOWN TO BUILD IT UP



## Under Construction

Construction continues at Alamo Heights High School as the relocation of the new Central Plant is completed. There is much preparatory work in and around the south end of

the campus as crews complete the demolition of the art building to prepare for the new collaborative spaces.

The old turf has been removed from Harry B. Orem Stadium in preparation for the new Hellas Matrix Turf with Helix Technology, the new Ecotherm™ infill, and Cushdrain® pad. (See story on page 13.)

Just down Broadway at Cambridge Elementary, demolition is complete on the Fine Arts Building, making way for an updated, creative space.

See the latest updates by visiting the Bond 2017 Updates page, found under the About the District tab at [www.ahisd.net](http://www.ahisd.net), click on Bond 2017, to learn more.



Installation of Hellas Matrix Turf at Harry B. Orem Stadium



Demolition of Cambridge Fine Arts Building is Complete

## LOOKING AHEAD: CONSTRUCTION HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2018-2019

### Alamo Heights High School

- Central Plant up and running August 1
- Replacement of turf at Harry Orem Stadium complete in July
- Roofing to be complete in August
- Remodel of SST Classrooms to be complete August 15
- Two portables will be moved on site in July and will remain for 2 years
- Demo of the Oaks building and old Central Plant began in June and completed in July
- The Oaks area, the practice field, and walkways behind the central and south wings will be closed the entire school year
- The Commons building will be complete by August 1, 2019
- Bids will be requested and accepted for the new athletic complex and STEM building in the spring of 2019
- During the Summer of 2019, demolition of the Dance Studio, Muledome, cafeteria, and the north annex is set to begin

### Alamo Heights Junior School

- STEM building went out for bid on June 28th with contractor moving on site in August
- Re-roofing of the fine arts building, 6th grade building, boys' gym, and locker room area began in July, expected to be complete in November
- Remodel of SST and old science classrooms set to begin in summer of 2019

### Cambridge Elementary

- Re-roofing this summer to be complete by August
- Portables are scheduled for July, 2018 and be there for the year
- New Fine Arts building to be complete by May, 2019
- Front ADA entrance completed by August, 2018
- Inside plumbing and AC work completed by August 2018
- Front walks and plantings to be complete by May, 2019
- New parking lot, turf field, and playground scheduled for summer of 2019

### Howard Early Childhood Center

- Bids will be taken in the spring to remodel the teacher lounge and workroom, rework the kitchen and fix drainage on the playground

### Woodridge Elementary

- Re-roofing completed the first part of July, 2018
- Bids were taken for the new gym metal building on June 19, 2018 so that it can be produced and shipped in time for Joeris to erect the structure this fall
- Bids for the fine arts and the rest of the gym will be this September with construction to start in October
- Completion of the gym is scheduled for May, 2019
- Summer of 2019 the South gym will be taken down and the fine arts started.

### Robbins

- Bidding will be in the early spring of 2019 with completion summer of 2020

### Additional Projects

- Interior cameras to start this summer. High School will be the first then the Jr School. All other schools will then follow.
- High School new incubator rooms remodeled by staff.
- Engaged classrooms at all campuses are being painted as staff can get to them. 2 at each campus to start
- Woodridge engaged classrooms old shelves are being removed.
- AHJS engaged classrooms are having new walls built for sound reduction (4)
- New flooring in all classrooms will be scheduled starting the summer of 2019

# CLEANING OUT?

## AH CLOTHES CLOSET IS STOCKING UP!

New to Alamo Heights ISD this year, the Heights Clothes Closet is stocked from floor to ceiling with gently used clothing for kids. The Clothes Closet supports district families who are struggling financially by providing year-round clothing to their children in grades Pre-K to 5th and their siblings. The Heights Clothes Closet was designed so that all three schools (Howard, Cambridge and Woodridge) work collaboratively by sharing resources, even fundraising, to support the needs of children. Children are referred by teachers, school counselors or parents. When children leave Howard, they are referred to their respective elementary schools. The goal is to support the child for as long as the family needs it.

Although the idea for the Clothes Closet didn't fully evolve until last year, project initiator, Libby Perez, Howard Early Childhood Center teacher, started collecting clothes from friends and the community for a student in her class over the last five years. "I found it really made an impact on the way it made a child feel when they came to school wearing something they were proud of. It gave them self-confidence and lifted their spirits," shared Perez. "It was a pretty easy thing to do that had a big impact!" Those small deeds lead to the Heights Clothes Closet idea and the collaboration by a group of dedicated women who made up the founding team. They include; Libby Perez, Howard ECC teacher; Jennifer DeLeon, Cambridge Elementary teacher; Mary Labatt, Cambridge Elementary PTO Representative; Anne Ivy, Cambridge Elementary teacher; K'Lee Skaug and Amanda McWilliams, Woodridge Elementary PTO Representatives.

The Heights Clothes Closet is actually a beautiful collaboration that involves the entire community. It's about relationship building that starts in the classroom with teachers, students and their families.



From there it goes out to our PTO leaders like Brooke Meabon at Howard who gets the word out to families. Our campus and district administrators support our cause and the community generously donates the clothing, coming in to meet the needs of these children and their families. When the Clothes Closet puts out a request on various social media sites, the Alamo Heights community is always ready to support us with immediate donations. It's amazing!

So, what's it like for a child receiving clothing? Our goal is to make each child feel special. The clothing that is accepted for the Heights Clothes Closet must be in excellent condition, like new, and much of it is often donated new. We try to personalize as much as possible taking into account favorite colors, characters special occasions and holidays, etc. Every child receives new underwear and socks, pajama's, toiletries, and spirit wear, so those items are always donated new. Children have the option to pick out their own clothing or have a Clothes Closet representative select outfits for them. Children go home with anywhere from 7-12 seasonal outfits, plus the new items. Our hearts are bursting when our team gathers for meetings and we share our stories. We love to talk about how the kids react to receiving the new clothes. A teacher at Howard shared how her student walked into class the morning after getting her new bag of clothing and exclaimed "Look at my new clothes! I actually have socks that fit me!" Jennifer DeLeon tells the story of a boy from Cambridge who was so happy to be picking out a hoodie because he always wanted a hoodie and never had one. DeLeon shared, "I let him pick out three hoodie's that day!"

Recently, the Heights Clothes Closet was awarded a check for \$13,000.

100 Women of SA, a new charity organization made up entirely of women, came together to start a movement and ignite change in the community. During their inaugural meeting, three organizations were spotlighted. Jennifer DeLeon spoke about the Closet, providing examples of how this organization has impacted families in Alamo Heights schools. Each member voted for the charity of their choice and at the end of the night, they each wrote a \$100 check to AH. It was a magical night for children! The money will be used to purchase clothing, shoes, toiletries and other essential items to help the Closet run smoothly. Currently the Closet is at Howard, Cambridge and Woodridge, with the hope of extending it to Alamo Heights Junior School and Alamo Heights High School next year.

The Heights Clothes Closet is just the right fit for the Alamo Heights school district. We are so proud of how the community and district have embraced this service for its families and we are thrilled to bring happiness to many more children through the years.

Learn more:

Twitter—@AHClothesCloset

Instagram—HeightsClothesCloset

Facebook—HeightsClothesCloset

Email—HeightsClothesCloset@gmail.com



# CHASING STORMS, COLLECTING DATA, BUILDING FUTURES

## Jeff Wheatcraft, Alamo Heights Junior School

The Alamo Heights Junior School science department was in a planning meeting when there was a knock at the door. Before the team had the chance to respond, the door opened and in came an entourage of AHISD team members carrying balloons, clapping and cheering, as they singled out one person in the room, Jeff Wheatcraft. The reason for the excitement? To officially share the news that Wheatcraft had been selected as the district Teacher of the Year and Trinity Prize nominee. Wheatcraft was beyond thrilled, sharing how honored he was to be selected, acknowledging the great support he receives from his AHJS team and district.

Wheatcraft was selected by a committee of his peers who were thoroughly impressed with his methods and engagement. As Coordinator of the STEM program at AHJS, Wheatcraft is responsible for inspiring students to a greater understanding of science through the lens of exploration and discovery.



“Three words are posted on his classroom door: Autonomy, Mastery, and Purpose, and they guide his goal to teach students not what to think, but how to think while helping them find purpose in the educational setting.” ~ Alamo Heights Junior School Principal, Laura Ancira

Students in the program are given real world problems in which they must design a solution for and then build and test their ideas. Perhaps one of his most recognized problem-solving opportunities arises during his Storm Prediction program every spring. In this unit, students work to predict where severe weather will occur and then direct Wheatcraft to the location, where he deploys the student developed, built and programmed weather pods that record temperature, barometric pressure and wind speed.

“Although my wife believes I am crazy, I find that I am at my most peaceful when out on the plains chasing thunderstorms for my students,” shares Wheatcraft. Originally from Phoenix, AZ, Wheatcraft calls himself a Texan at Heart, thanks to his wonderful wife Aimee. The two have three children: two sons, Mason and Camden and daughter Molly.

# PROFILES



## PRESTIGIOUS TRINITY PRIZE AWARDED TO WHEATCRAFT

Jeff Wheatcraft was one of nineteen educators honored by Trinity University recognizing truly outstanding public-school teachers. Wheatcraft was named the Trinity Prize Recipient for Secondary Education, earning the coveted Tiffany Crystal Apple Award and a check for \$2,500.

In August, Wheatcraft was named the regional Teacher of the Year by the Region 20 Educational Service Center. Soon after, he learned that he had been named a finalist for the state Teacher of the Year honor.

#MulesUp

## A VEHICLE-4-ALL-SEASONS

Wheatcraft was named Principle Auto's Car-4-All-Seasons Teacher of the Year. Earning the privilege to drive a new car for each of the four seasons, was a huge treat for Wheatcraft, as he currently uses his personal vehicle to storm chase. It has been hit with hail during a few chases, so riding to school each day in a beautiful Principle Auto vehicle is a privilege he is grateful to enjoy! He shares that the Car-4-All-Seasons will not be going on any of his storm-chasing field trips!



## NEW FACES

### MEET THE NEWEST MULES



#### **DR. FRANK ALFARO, ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**

Dr. Frank Alfaro is moving into a new role as the Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services. In this new role, Alfaro will oversee the Technology, Human Resources, and Communications Departments, and lead the districts Improvement Planning, Policy Review,

School Safety Planning, Foundation Relations and more.

Alfaro has been with the district since 2001, serving most recently as the Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education.

Alfaro attended Trinity University on a Murchison Scholarship, graduating cum laude. He earned his Master's degree from UTSA and his doctorate at Texas A&M in educational administration.

#### **DAVID STEPHENSON, FINE ARTS COORDINATOR**

Stephenson is currently the Director of Bands at Alamo Heights High School. In his additional role, he will work to meet the need for greater coordination and alignment of the quality fine arts programs across the district, working collaboratively to provide even greater learning for students and opportunities to share and showcase talents.

#### **AMY LAGUEUX, ACADEMIC DEAN**

Amy Lagueux will serve as the Academic Dean for Elementary Instruction. Amy taught 3rd grade and worked as an interventionist at Cambridge before moving into the role of instructional coach at Howard. She also has a background in special education and was one of the original architects of our instructional coaching model. As a leader, Amy is a positive influencer who remains focused on our AH vision while also understanding that small details matter. Amy will support all three elementary campuses in this new role.

#### **HEATHER SMITH, INSTRUCTIONAL COACH**

Heather Smith has accepted the position of instructional coach for Cambridge. Heather served as a teacher and team leader at Cambridge for several years. She was a member of the very first cohort of Engaged Classroom teachers and offered her talents to help plan the Summer Writing Academy. Heather is described by her peers as supportive, highly creative, and always student-focused.

#### **MEGAN MASSEY, INSTRUCTIONAL COACH**

Megan Massey will support Howard ECC as the instructional coach. Megan served Howard as an interventionist and Title 1 Coordinator. Prior to coming to Alamo Heights, Megan was a reading coach. Megan's authenticity, humor, and deep understanding of all things early childhood are a few of the outstanding traits that will help her transition into this new role.



#### **DR. JIMMIE WALKER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION**

Moving from the position of Elementary Academic Dean into the role of Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Dr. Walker will oversee all aspects of the diverse and engaging curriculum at AHISD. A classroom teacher for 16 years working with students ages 5-14, her experience includes working with public schools in Texas and a

private international school in Caracas, Venezuela. In 2011, she was honored as the HEB Excellence in Education Teacher of the Year.

Jimmie's B.A. is in history, and her M.Ed. is in educational leadership. In 2013, she completed the Johns Hopkins University (JHU) Graduate Certificate Program in Mind, Brain and Teaching. In May 2016, she successfully completed the JHU Ed.D. Program with a specialization in Mind, Brain, and Teaching. Her dissertation research took her to Gurgaon, India to complete a case study identifying core factors that contributed to the integration of research from the learning sciences into an early childhood school system. In 2017, Dr. Walker's research was recognized by the Carnegie Project as the Dissertation of the Year. Jimmie was the first scholar at Johns Hopkins to be recognized with this high honor.



#### **JAMIE LOCKLIN, DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY**

Jamie is a Google Certified Trainer with a Masters in Education Technology from Azusa Pacific University. Jamie hopes to walk beside administrators and leaders to help create engaging classrooms where technology is the catalyst to promote innovative pedagogy in order to impact student achievement and college readiness! Education technology is his interest, hobby, passion and joy.

#### **SALENA VALDES, INSTRUCTIONAL COACH**

Salena Valdes will be joining the Woodridge team as the new instructional coach. She comes to AHISD from Somerset ISD where she worked as an assistant principal. Salena brings a strong knowledge base about high-quality curriculum and instruction and is known for building and maintaining supportive and trusting relationships.

#### **PAUL GUSTOWSKI, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL**

Paul Gustowski is excited to be a part of the administrative team at Alamo Heights Junior School in the role of Assistant Principal. Paul is an avid learner who seeks to share his enthusiasm by building relationships and engaging students in the diverse areas of study offered at AHIS.

## MULE SPORTS AT THE TOP OF THEIR GAME

### Mules Boys Basketball Makes the State Final Four

The Alamo Heights High School Boys Basketball team had an amazing season, reaching the state Final Four, played right here in San Antonio!

Congratulations to Evan Carcanagues for being named to the 5A – All-State Team. Evan was also named the District 26-5A MVP.

District 1st team awards were awarded to Brandon Johnson and Tyler Glover. 2nd team awards were presented to Matthew Pisano and Andrew Reichert, with Honorable Mention going to Reed Sechler.



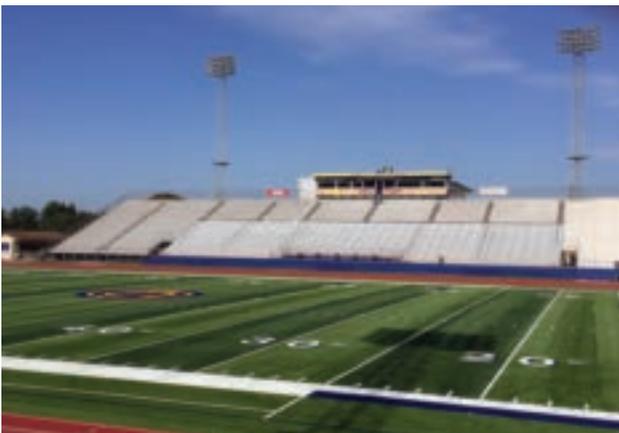
### Girls Soccer Makes Playoff Run

The Lady Mules, led by Head Coach Chris Sharp, finished the district season with an 11-2-1 record. The girls rolled through the playoffs, earning a trip to the 5-A state semifinal contest in Georgetown. The girls fought hard with the support of their classmates and community cheering in the stands and from home. With seconds left on the clock, the team fell to Grapevine. Earning the bronze medal at the state playoffs is an amazing accomplishment for the team; one the girls are proud to say is the product of perseverance, hard work and a Mule fight to the end. (Story courtesy of AHHS Journalism.)



### Taking it to the Track

Melanie Peters takes 3rd in the 100-meter and 4th in the shot at State!



### The Turf is Greener at Alamo Heights

Alamo Heights Mules will be leading the pack with the installation of Hellas Matrix® Turf at Harry B. Orem Stadium.

The district was looking to make the field cooler and protect players from injuries.

AHISD Director of Athletics Jennifer Roland said, "We visited six different fields, looking at different companies. We especially liked that the Cushdrain pad provides extra protection for athletes and protects the integrity of the field."

Ecotherm reduces the temperature of the field up to 20 degrees cooler versus a synthetic turf field with black crumb rubber, and no irrigation is required.

"Keeping our kids safe is the priority," Roland said.

The turf was completely installed and ready for use in July, just in time for the new season of Mule sports, band, cheer, drill team and dance!

(Article courtesy of Hellas Construction.)

### Tennis Triumphs

Congrats to Campbell Erwin, who earned 2nd Place at the State Tennis Singles Championships in May. Campbell was the Region IV-5A and District 26-5A singles champion, and just one-win shy of capturing back-to-back state titles.

Fiona Crawley and Brianna Wilbur took the gold medal at the State Tennis Girls Doubles Championships in May! This was Brianna Wilbur's first UIL Class 5A state title in doubles and Fiona's second crown in the event in as many years. Teamed with Brittney Wilbur, Brianna's older sister, to win doubles in 2017, Fiona and Brianna also captured championships in doubles at District 26-5A and Region IV-5A tournaments. The duo was 19-0 in doubles with Fiona 8-0 in singles. Fiona was selected to the San Antonio Express-News Super Team selection last year.

Alamo Heights tennis players Campbell Erwin and Fiona Crawley also earned the title of 2018 Express-News boy and girl.

### No Golf Amateurs

The final results of Texas Amateur provided more than just the top finishers, it was a literal Mule Reunion on the award podium with Mitchell Meissner earning 1st Place; Levi Valdez earning 2nd Place and Mac Meissner earning 3rd Place! Mules Rule!

### Mule Alum Dives to the Top

Congrats to Princeton freshman, Sine Scribbick (Class of 2017), who qualified for the NCAA Swimming and Diving Championship. Sine was one of two female swimmers or divers from eight Ivy League schools to qualify. Great job, Sine!



### JROTC EARNS 3 BIDS TO NATIONALS

The AHHS JROTC team qualified for the National Leadership Bowl in Washington, DC, this summer. With three invitations to the National stage and competition, the AHHS JROTC will be showcasing their Colorguard/Drill, Cyber Patriot, and Leadership teams. This is a huge accomplishment for the teams and the first time JROTC has qualified for the Leadership Bowl. Team Captain: C/CPT Jana V. Hendricks, along with team members: C/1LT John P. Harrell, C/SFC Gabrielle E. Woodward, and C/SGT Francesca G. Van Der Merwe, will be representing our AHHS Mules. #MulesUp

### Mule Tees Up with Tiger

Shahbaz Hashmi earned the chance to choose who he would play a round of golf with during the PGA Tour's Wells Fargo Championship after winning the grand prize in the "Succeeding Together" essay contest created by The First Tee and Wells Fargo. Hashmi's choice? Tiger Woods! And, the pair took the tournament!

Hashmi served as the president of The First Tee of Greater San Antonio Junior Advisory Board. He has a +0.9 handicap and was a member of the AHHS varsity golf team, holding a 4.0 GPA throughout high school.

### All Sports Pass Offers Mule Fans Seats for Season

As our Mules showcase their talents on the field, our fans will have an opportunity to secure seats for a season of support! AHISD will be offering an all sports pass for adults and students.

The all sports pass is good for all AHISD home games at both the High School and Junior School, with the exception of tournaments, playoff games, and varsity football games. We are partnering with the Alamo Heights Junior School PTO to sell these passes on their online stores during our inaugural season. The all-sports passes will also be available for purchase in the athletic office during regular office hours.

The all-sports passes offer an option for our fans to attend multiple sporting events at an annual cost savings. These passes will be available for \$75/adults and \$40/students. With our new district alignments, and in coordination with UIL regulations, all patrons and students will need to pay admission to attend all games, home and away. Individual tickets will still be sold at each game – district admission prices for each of our UIL districts are posted on the district athletic website.

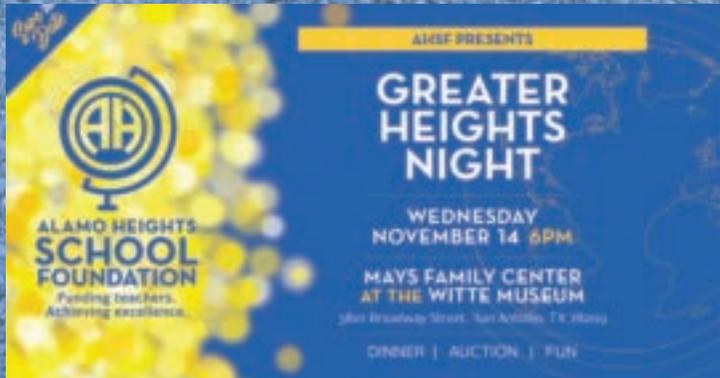


**Get connected! AHISD uses social media to share news and information, as a tool for learning, to reach out to other learners and to share the accomplishments of our students! Find and follow us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube.**



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**APP:** iTunes: AHISD

**video:** YouTube: Alamo Heights Mules

**learn more:** www.WeGoPublic.com



### AHJS TRANSFORMING LEARNING

The Alamo Heights Junior School has been selected as a 2018 Schools Transforming Learning (STL) designated campus! The school was honored during the Principals' Institute (PI) Summer Conference in early June.

STL was thrilled to share AHJS campus' story of transformation and innovation! The campus was recognized for making exceptional strides in providing an engaging learning environment for all students. The Junior School has transformed learning for both students and staff, creating a culture of engagement, communication and innovation. See the virtual tour at: [www.theprincipalsinstitute.org](http://www.theprincipalsinstitute.org)