

A new UNT – Denton ISD Partnership Announced!

Graduate Studies in Literacy Leadership at UNT

We are excited to announce the offering of a collaborative program of graduate studies in literacy leadership between the University of North Texas and Denton ISD. The program is designed specifically for EC6 classroom teachers (general ed or bilingual) working in Denton ISD. This is a new and unique program open to teachers who can pursue one of the following three pathways:

- (1) toward a Master's degree from UNT that includes coursework and experiences required for a Texas Reading Specialist Certificate.
- (2) toward the coursework and experiences required for a Texas Reading Specialist Certificate (for teachers who already have a Master's degree from UNT or any other higher education institution).
- (3) toward a Doctoral Degree (for teachers who have already earned a Master's degree from UNT or any other higher education institution).

The program is entitled: **Practicing Activism in Literacy Leadership (PALs).** The program name reflects our core values around creating classrooms and schools that are working to support all students to success with a focus on working in schools serving minoritized and low-income communities.

This program will follow a cohort model – where all the admitted Denton teachers will move through the program together as a group. Our goal is to enroll up to 20 teachers in the first cohort. You can complete this program while continuing to work as a classroom teacher. All courses will be offered in schools in Denton ISD.

The deadline for application for the program is **April 24**th. We will be announcing the times and locations of upcoming orientation sessions. Some scholarship support may be available for this program. If you have questions, please contact Dr. James Hoffman (james.hoffman@unt.edu), Meadows Chair for Excellence in Literacy.

Getting to know C & I paraprofessionals...



Gladys St. John is purchasing secretary for SPED and secretary to Cynthia Bershell, speech therapy supervisor. Past District positions include district translator and admin assistant. She graduated from high school in the

Dominican Republic and holds an associate's degree in business administration. Hometown for Gladys is Santo Domingo. Gladys' family includes husband, Judd, four children (two boys & two girls), four beautiful granddaughters and an 18-year-old dog named Toto. A favorite past-time is cruising around in her travel trailer and she collects orchids. Musical picks include classical and opera, especially Andrea Bocelli. You can reach Gladys at **ext. 4076.** **Melissa Boulden** serves as secretary to special education supervisors, Kristi Roberts and Angela Fox. She also has held DISD positions of records clerk, receptionist and receiving secretary. Her hometown is Houston, TX and she



graduated from Fred Moore High School. Melissa's family includes a son and a daughter. Her hobby is visiting luxury hotels. She does not collect anything, but instead, likes to get rid of things. Melissa takes a reflective approach and finds deeper meaning in everything. Instead of reading books or watching movies, she would rather create them. She likes all kinds of music, and especially, artistic expression in instruments. You can reach Melissa at **ext. 0480**.

Bilingual/ESL



The Bridge: Metalinguistic Awareness

K-5 dual language and general education teachers have strengthened their understanding of teaching the similarities and differences between English and Spanish in reading, writing, math, science, and social studies content areas. Teachers used a collaborative approach with elements of metalinguistic development and strategies to develop a plan for their own classrooms.

Think Up! Bilingual Resource Professional Development February 12 - February 13

Mentoring Minds has been revamped! Sign up for after-school professional development. Participants will receive a copy of a new resource along with best practice strategies to make it an interactive experience for your students. Seating is limited. More details will be shared later as to location.

Pre-K and Kinder Summer School Announcement

The Bilingual/ESL Department is gearing up for the 2020 Pre-K and Kindergarten Summer School Program! We are so excited to provide our young learners with a safe space to gain independence and early literacy skills for transition into kindergarten. This year the program will run from Tuesday, May 26 through Tuesday, June 23. Information about enrollment for new and returning students will be shared with campus LPAC Chairs. We cannot wait to open our doors to our future students!

Secondary ESL February Professional Development

February 5 – 7	Strategies for Working with
	English Learners
February 11	Newcomer Curriculum Writing
	(ESL ELAR)
Feb 19, 26, & 28	SIOP courses to CTE teachers



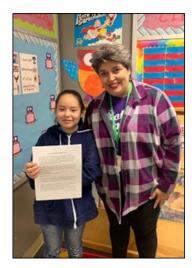


January 6

The secondary ESL/Dual Language team worked with Strickland Middle School staff during their PLC to look at English learner data, TELPAS testing, and ways to help the English learners at Strickland self-assess where they are now in their English proficiency and set goals for advancing on TELPAS and eventually meeting EXIT criteria.

Dual language students at Evers Elementary win Adopt-A-School essay contest

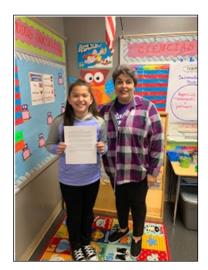
Dual language student writing talent at Evers elementary was recognized in a major way when district representatives awarded three students for their participation in the Adopt-A-School essay contest. The winners are students of 4th and 5th grade dual language classes, led by two amazing writing teachers: **Alice Vázquez,** 4th grade and **Mónica Coto,** 5th grade.



Mia Paravicini & Teacher Mónica Coto 1st Place District Winner 5th Grade Spanish Essay



Carlos Ruiz Teacher **Alice Vázquez** 2nd Place District Winner 4th Grade Spanish Essay



Miranda Olguin & Teacher Mónica Coto 2nd Place District Winner 5th Grade English Essay

Data and Assessment

Lyneille Meza, Director Shanna Mikolajchak, PEIMS Coordinator Becky Lloyd & Maranda Matheson District Testing Coordinators https://www.smore.com/73jcm-all-things-assessment



Lyneille Meza, Becky Lloyd, and Maranda Matheson attended the January TSNAP-MATS meeting held in DeSoto.

Theme: Rock & Roll into Testing!

2019-2020 Student Assessment Testing Calendar				
Test Dates		Assessment		
February 24 – April 3 (window)		TELPAS & TELPAS Alternate		
March 30 – April 21 (window)		STAAR Alternate 2		
Paper Admin	Online Admin		STAAR	
April 7 – 10	April 7 – 17	Writing, grades: 4, 7 English I, II	Reading, grades: 5, 8 Mathematics, grades: 5, 8	
May 5 – 8	May 5 - 22	Algebra Biology US History	Science, grade: 8 Social Studies, grade: 8	
May 12 - 15	May 12 - 22	Mathematics, grades: 3-4 Reading, grades: 3-4, 6-7; Science, grade: 5		



Maranda Matheson and Becky Lloyd presented "Trials and Triumphs of Interim Assessments" at Assessment Con 2020 held at the Hurst Convention Center on January 22. Also attending were high school and middle school campus testing coordinators, **Rebecca Falola** (BHS), **Karen Guenther** (RHS), **Mandy McCollum** (RHS), **Pam Tutt** (Sparks), and **Megan Wright** (BMMS) Assessment Con.

Mark your calendars to attend next year on January 20, 2021!



The Digital Learning department is hard at work moving toward our goal of helping create safe and innovative learning environments for students across the District. Depending on what part of the department you serve in, that can look very different.

The library department supported by **Donna Kearley** is making sure our students are prepared to navigate the coming election cycle with skills to discern the credibility of news sources and social media posts. An example of advice given from the department: *If the story or post elicits strong emotion by using loaded words to influence you through an appeal to emotion or stereotypes such as anger, irritation, or strong agreement, it's likely not credible. Additionally, if something seems off or out of date, check it out. We call this reading horizontally. Most articles are read vertically from top to bottom, but if you need to check accuracy, go outside that article to other articles to see if they corroborate what was said.*

For more information on vetting news sources, check out mediabiasfactcheck.com, which is an organization that checks the fact-checkers. Their website is a bias rating resource with multiple news checking apps and extensions integrated into their system.

Tim Huynh and your digital learning specialists have been sharing different ways to use Seesaw with teachers to pump up their pedagogy in the classroom. We love Seesaw because it's a platform that safely connects student learning to parents and teachers. Keep an eye out for a district Seesaw contest for elementary campuses to promote social-emotional learning, reading, and thinking out loud. The team is also canvassing the District to provide **Promethean interactive panel training** at each campus receiving the new displays. We're thrilled about the impact these panels will have in the classroom as they enable deeper levels of interactivity and visible learning among students. If that doesn't wow you, just imagine what you can do with a huge tablet in the middle of your classroom. *Check out some of these action shots from Hawk, the first campus on the installation list*!

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Finally, the newest arm of the digital learning department, our **Blended and Online Learning (BOLD)** team, rarely comes up for air. It's no secret that personalized learning options will feature prominently in the future of education, especially in Denton ISD. The team, led by **Tammy Dwight-Ministero**, is focused on building a quality foundation that includes solidifying what effective teaching and learning looks like in an online or blended environment and collecting resources and tools that support teachers as they move in that direction. Tammy and her team are working on big things and we can't wait to share them with the District as they continue to come together. Feel free to visit the <u>BOLD newsletter</u> or <u>request more information</u> to be kept in the loop as this effort continues to grow.

Elementary Curriculum



Science teachers designed a nest that sits on a branch and holds at least one egg. This was one of the hands-on STEM challenges that teachers tackled at the STEM Cohort in the Fall. #STEMinDenton



5th graders at Borman Elementary completed the challenge of using only Keva planks to build a structure to make a ball go into a cup 6 inches away. The students collaborated to design and revise their plans. #STEMinDenton





Elementary Curriculum



Elementary literacy teachers gathered to celebrate their work and share ideas about Units of Study.

The next collaboration will be on February 11th, 2020.

2nd grade teachers in the Denton High Zone work together to learn about and practice shared reading.







The Denton Public School Foundation selected **Amanda Payne** from Bell Elementary as the 2019-2020 District Hawkeye Literacy Teacher.

7 th /8 th grade	February 5 March 24
lath Data Days	
8 th grade	February 19
6 th grade	March 31
7 th grade	April 1
ocial Studies Curriculum Wi AP Human Geography	TBD
ocial Studies Pinpointing Tr	ainings (AK campuses)
6 th /7 th /8 th grade	February 5

Erika Lowery named president-elect of national organization

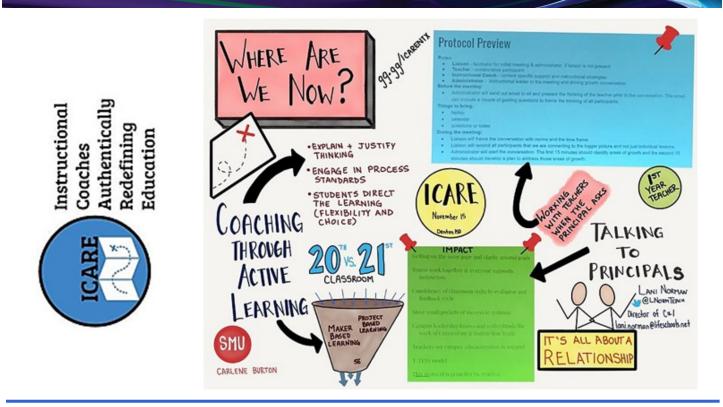
Congratulations! to **Erika Lowery** who has been elected to the role of president for the National Social Studies Supervisors Association (NSSSA). The NSSSA is active in the development of social studies instruction in leading social studies supervisors across the nation as they come together to advance research in instruction, curriculum, resources, materials, professional learning, and social action.

Erika is beginning her fifth year as the secondary social studies coordinator for Denton ISD. During her 22 years in education, she has taught middle school and high school geography courses for students in ESL Sheltered, Inclusion, On-Level, Pre AP, and AP Human Geography. She was awarded the National Council for Geographic Education Distinguished Teaching Achievement award in 2013.

Erika's dedication to social studies extends beyond the classroom to statewide and national leadership roles. She was president of Texas Council for the Social Studies in 2018 and past president in 2019. She previously held the office of secretary for the NSSSA, and in 2018-2019, she was a member of the Texas Advisory Committee for the National Geographic Society. She has held other leadership and membership roles for the city of Lewisville, PTA, and Delta Kappa Gamma.

Erika received her Bachelor of Science in social studies education from Florida State University and a Master of Education from National Louis University.

Secondary Curriculum



ICARE

On November 15th, more than 200 instructional coaches from 25 school districts across North Texas gathered for a day of learning and reflecting at ICARE. The focus of the day was centered around the question of *Where am I now as an instructional coach*? Sessions focused on employing effective communication strategies, gathering data, using an effective coaching cycle, and many other topics.





Special Education



It was our pleasure to acknowledge **Raquel Orozco** as the fall semester special education Teacher of the Semester. Raquel has taught in Denton ISD for over 12 years. She taught third through fifth graders in the Positive Academic and Behavior Support Program, both at McNair Elementary and at Blanton Elementary.

The following is an excerpt of what her campus team had to say about her:

This teacher (Raquel) is regularly placing herself on the front lines of addressing challenges. She is willing to bend and flex to cultivate solutions to challenges that meaningfully and uniquely enhance student capacity for improved success at school. This absolutely extends beyond her classroom and impacts not only students and campus peers but also reaches into the community and student homes.

She seeks ways to promote growth for students by helping

connect parents with available resources that serve to beneficially impact families beyond the classroom and schoolhouse. In addition, she partners with families in ways that help to extend the student's school learning into an improved home life.

Upcoming Training Dates:

CPI – Full Course at the PDC – Feb 21^{st} and March 20^{th} .

CPI – Refresher Course at the PDC – Each session is a half day, AM or PM – Feb 28th and March 21.

If your CPI certification expires Spring 2020 or early Fall 2020, please sign up for a refresher course before the expiration date. Additional dates for April and May will be posted later or check Eduphoria.

The Special Education Department has selected **Mrs. Shilah Lyman** as the Support Staff Member of the Semester for fall 2019. She is completing her 11th year as a LSSP this year, and all of those years have been in Denton. Mrs. Lyman is a skilled, dedicated LSSP, and we are pleased to announce her as the recipient of this award.

The following is an excerpt of what her campus team had to say about her: Some of Shilah's greatest strengths are her flexibility in adapting to often-changing circumstances, patience and understanding when working with others who may be challenging, and her drive to continually learn and do her best. Shilah is also kind and welcoming to all she meets. She is intuitive and passionate about helping others. Her people skills, ethics, organization and professionalism make her one of the most integral members of our staff.



Secondary Curriculum



October, 2019 Exceptional Student of the Month for October was Isai Acuna Vazquez who attends Kristiey Rodriguez's 11th grade class at Ryan High School.

Exceptional Student of the Month

Each month the Denton Rotary Club, in partnership with the DISD Special Education Department, honors a special education student from a secondary school. Featured left and right are the students honored in October & November, 2019.



November, 2019 Exceptional Student of the Month for November was Lucio Espinoza Jr. who attends Kristen Tutt's 6th grade class at McMath Middle School.



The SLPs enjoyed regrouping and collaborating on our PLC day at the Thai Ocha restaurant during lunchtime.

In December, **Debbie Roybal, Laura Davis, Darby Ahlfinger, Kristi Roberts** and **Angie Fox** attended *Using Toolkits to Provide Access for Students with IEPs and to Support Individual Reading Goals* at Teacher's College. The information learned will be used in professional development for special education teachers to assist them in connecting individualized instruction and IEPs within Units of Study. Stay tuned for more information and PD opportunities.

