

ALAMO HEIGHTS ISD
SCHOOL
VIEWS Summer/
Back to
School
2023

BOND 2023


ALAMO HEIGHTS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Thank you voters


Alamo Heights ISD voters approved all three Bond 2023 propositions, totaling \$371 million, on Saturday, May 6.

Bond 2023 will provide updated learning spaces at all campuses, continue to address safety and security, and allow the district to be better community partners with additional parking, improved traffic flow, and outdoor and meeting spaces for community use.

Official Results:

 Proposition A - 68.9% FOR (3,746 votes)

 Proposition B - 58.46% FOR (3,165 votes)

 Proposition C - 67.2% FOR (3,652 votes)

It is the largest bond election in the District's history and the first since 2017.

"We are so grateful for the overwhelming support of the Alamo Heights ISD community," said AHISD Superintendent, **Dr. Dana Bashara**. "We appreciate everyone who provided input about our district needs and also who took the time to learn about the bond proposal and then went to vote. Bond 2023 is phase two of the work of Bond 2017 and allows us to continue our commitment to provide the highest-quality learning environment for our students and our staff."

The next phase of bond work - design and planning - will start later this year and include opportunities for the community to be involved in the process and offer input. Visit the Bond 2023 website for more information- www.ahisd.net/Bond2023.



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HOME

AHISD IS HOME

We continue to embrace the theme *There's No Place Like AHISD* and all that makes our school district a unique place to live, work, and grow.

As we start another school year, we also celebrate all that makes Alamo Heights ISD a home for students, staff, and families.

A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

This past May marked the five year anniversary of my service as Superintendent of AHISD and I can't help but look back with so much gratitude for all that our school community has accomplished!

We have faced unprecedented challenges as a result of a worldwide pandemic, planned for future generations of AHISD learners thanks to overwhelming community support for our bond programs, and through it all, remained dedicated to high standards of achievement for all students.

We weathered storms brought on by budget challenges and the lack of funding for public education in our state, the uncertainties during the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges of remote learning; and the tragedies across the state and nation that motivate us to make the school environment safer for our children.

We launched a comprehensive Community Based Accountability System that is responsive to high expectations for so much more than one test on one day (STAAR test results) and instead measures student growth, student readiness and engagement, high performing staff, and fiscal responsibility. There are many districts across the state looking to our work as an exemplar for what they want for their communities as well.

We have seen a transformation of learning spaces that began with the start of construction of Bond 2017, my first year as Superintendent, and will continue with the passage of Bond 2023. We celebrate state-of-the-art facilities like our new Muledome, our elementary Fine Arts complexes, beautiful new STEM spaces at AHJS and AHHS, and a new Natatorium just to name a few.

We have witnessed the clear support of our community in support of the work of our district through the overwhelming passage of our Tax Rate Election in 2021 and our Bond Election in 2023.

And finally, we celebrated so many student accomplishments, state and national championships, and our award-winning educators. We celebrate the highest SAT/ACT scores and

the highest number of AP scholars to date. We celebrate that our student achievement in reading and math has surpassed pre-pandemic outcomes. We have applauded our Fine Arts performers at concerts and recitals, cheered on our athletes from the stands, and designed new and innovative ways to engage our community as partners in our schools through programs like Partners for the Profile and our Grand/Senior Mules program.

As I shared in my very first message to you in the Summer 2018 edition of School Views, I can't imagine a greater privilege than the opportunity to serve our students, parents, and our outstanding staff in this role as Superintendent. Back then, I shared my dedication to working to ensure that AHISD is the best district for our students to learn and grow and I continue to stand by those words today.

I cherish the partnership of our families and our community and your unwavering support for our incredible teachers and staff who dedicate themselves every day to our students and their success. There truly is no place like Alamo Heights ISD!

MULES UP!





Mules Up for the Class of 2023

With pomp and circumstance, Alamo Heights High School celebrated the graduation of the Class of 2023 on May 24 at Freeman Coliseum. This year's class of 399 graduates was honored for their outstanding academic and extracurricular achievements.

"In the coming days and weeks, you will embark on an exciting new chapter in your journey of life," said Alamo Heights High School Principal **Cory Smith**. "As individuals and as a class you've faced your own challenges and triumphs and you've learned the value of grace, courage, resilience, and perseverance. Continue to choose courage knowing that sometimes your greatest success will come after your greatest failure. Every step along the way, I encourage you to keep our core values at the forefront- live honorably, act humbly, model dignity. The

world will definitely be a better place for all I know you will accomplish."

The Class of 2023 earned over \$6.4 million in college scholarships. Thirty-nine students graduated Summa Cum Laude with grade point averages above 103. Our newest graduates will next attend prestigious universities across the state and nation including Brown University, Columbia University, the United States Air Force Academy, Rice University, Georgetown University, the University of Texas at Austin, UCLA, and Tulane University.

During the ceremony, Principal Smith announced the Outstanding Senior Girl and Boy, as voted on by the faculty and staff. **Kieran Norris** was honored





as Outstanding Senior Girl and **Manny Harris** was named Outstanding Senior Boy. Both were lauded as exemplifying character, integrity, and the characteristics of the district's Profile of a Learner.

Emphasizing connection and community, Principal Smith recognized all Alamo Heights ISD teachers who played a role in the graduates' education from Howard Early Childhood Center through high school.

Leading up to the graduation ceremony, seniors were able to take part in many traditions. They attended Senior Sendoffs at Cambridge and Woodridge elementary schools, reuniting with former teachers and walking down memory lane with pictures and yearbooks. The graduates also donned their caps and gowns for Senior Walks and paraded through both elementary schools among cheering teachers and students.



Seniors whose parents work in Alamo Heights ISD were honored at a reception highlighting the connections of AHISD families. Employees were also invited to award diplomas to their children on stage at the graduation ceremony.



#ExtraordinaryAHISD Staff

Teacher Recruitment and Retention: Building a Strong Foundation for Education

Recruiting and retaining quality teachers is vital for the success of Alamo Heights ISD. Our faculty shapes the minds of future generations and plays a crucial role in the development of society. However, teacher shortages and high turnover rates have become prevalent issues statewide, creating significant challenges for schools and students alike. In order to address this pressing matter, it is essential to implement effective strategies for teacher recruiting and retention.

To attract qualified candidates, Alamo Heights ISD has adopted proactive recruitment practices. Collaborating with universities and educator preparation programs helps to establish a pipeline of potential teachers. Job fairs, recruitment events, and online platforms dedicated to education careers also serve as valuable resources for connecting with aspiring educators. Offering competitive salaries and benefits is crucial to enticing talented individuals into the profession. Additionally, providing financial incentives, such as stipends for Special Education and bilingual assignments, can further attract top candidates.

Once teachers are recruited, it is essential to focus on retention strategies to create a supportive and conducive work environment. Alamo Heights ISD offers relevant professional development opportunities, such as Design Teams and Teacher Leadership Academies, that are key to enhancing teacher skills and job satisfaction. Their district also encourages collaboration and mentorship which fosters a sense of community and provides ongoing support for educators. Implementing policies that promote work-life balance and reduce administrative burdens help alleviate stress and burnout, ultimately improving teacher retention rates.

AHISD campus and district leaders prioritize recognizing and appreciating the hard work and dedication of our teachers. Celebrating achievements, acknowledging milestones, and providing regular feedback boosts morale and job satisfaction. Creating a culture of respect and open communication is crucial for fostering positive relationships between teachers and administrators.

Teacher recruiting and retention are essential for building a strong educational foundation. By adopting proactive recruitment strategies, providing competitive compensation, and creating a supportive work environment, Alamo Heights will attract and retain talented educators. Recognizing and addressing the unique needs of teachers in different subject areas or assignments is also crucial. Supporting our teachers is an investment in the future, as their passion and dedication shape the minds of generations to come.



DISTRICT TEACHER OF THE YEAR BEN KEENAN!

Alamo Heights High School teacher **Ben Keenan** has a Car-4-All-Seasons! The English Language Arts teacher and department coordinator will be driving in style thanks to Principle Auto Group.



He was surprised with four vehicles by the local auto dealer which believes in the importance of celebrating teachers. Annually they elevate the driving experience for our district Teacher of the Year, providing them a vehicle to use each season.

Keenan is the AHISD 2023 District Teacher of the Year and the AHISD nominee for the Region 20 ESC Secondary Educator of the Year.

In May, he was also recognized in a ceremony at Trinity University as the District's honoree for the Trinity Prize for Excellence in Teaching.

He received a Tiffany Crystal Apple and gifts from Whataburger and Amazon.

Keenan was supported at the ceremony by **Dr. Bashara** and AHHS Principal **Cory Smith**.



BEST IN TEXAS

Woodridge Elementary fifth grade teacher **Lisa Barry** is a state winner in the 2023 H-E-B Excellence in Education Awards.



She was honored in the Lifetime Achievement- Elementary category which recognizes teachers with more than 20 years of experience. She



received \$25,000 for herself and a \$25,000 grant for her school.

State winners were announced this spring. The program has awarded more than \$13 million in cash and grants to Texas teachers and schools since 2002.

Barry has previously been honored as the AHISD District Teacher of the Year, and was one of three finalists for Texas Teacher of the Year in 2021. In 2022 she was honored by Humanities Texas with the Julius Glickman Educational Leadership Award.

Pictured at the awards ceremony are Charlotte Dolat, AHHS Academic Dean and former state winner; Dr. Dana Bashara, superintendent, Barry; and Dr. Jimmie Walker, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction and former state winner.



Powering the Profile

KIM STANAGE

Alamo Heights High School

Seek Knowledge and Understanding

Kim Stanage, chemistry teacher at Alamo Heights HS was recognized for Powering the Profile and embodying the AHISD Profile of a Learner. She empowers students to “seek knowledge and understanding.”

The Profile of a Learner is a guide that articulates the knowledge, skills, and attributes students will need to pursue individual dreams and positively impact the world upon graduation. The video series Powering the Profile, available on the Alamo Heights Mules YouTube channel, highlights Extraordinary AHISD staff as they bring the district’s Profile of a Learner to life for students.



Pictured with Cambridge Principal Jana Hawkins (second from left) are staff members recognized at the 2023 Celebration of Excellence.

Celebration of Excellence

The annual Alamo Heights ISD Celebration of Excellence honors award-winning teachers and staff and the members of the AHISD family who are retiring.



This year marked the 10th annual event, generously hosted at Paloma Blanca by Richard and Brooke Peacock.

Pictured from AHHS are Angela Lopez Garcia, recognized for Powering the Profile, and retiring teachers Jan Takac, Ann Carter, and Nicole Lehmann.

IN THE COMMUNITY

New trustee joins AHISD Board



Ty Edwards was sworn in as a member of the Alamo Heights ISD Board of Trustees at the May Board Meeting.

He replaces Trustee Ryan Anderson who had served on the Board since 2017.

“I believe strong communities are based on a strong education system,” Edwards said. “As a new trustee, I will work to continue improving the quality of education in our district and make sure

we have the best school district in the state of Texas! I am very honored to serve as a new AHISD trustee.”

Edwards graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and has been in the investment business for over 30 years. He and his wife Colette have been married for 25 years and have two boys: Payton and Bentley.

Edwards has served numerous community organizations in leadership capacities including the Alamo Heights School Foundation Board, Alamo Heights District Education Advisory Committee (DEAC), the DoSeum Board, St. Luke’s Episcopal School Board, and Texas Lyceum. He also served as president of the Friends of the McNay and president of Christian Assistance Ministry.

He is currently on the boards of Los Compadres de San Antonio Missions, the San Antonio Public Library Foundation, and the Alamo Heights Little League. He also serves on the City of San Antonio Transportation Advisory Board and the grants committee for the San Antonio Area Foundation.

CONNECTING PARTNERS WITH AHISD SCHOOLS

Whether it’s baking cupcakes, playing the ukulele, or running football plays - school partners can provide students with unique learning opportunities when they choose to get involved in Alamo Heights ISD schools.

At Cambridge Elementary, monthly Third Thursday enrichment activities this past school year brought volunteers from Bird Bakery, the University of the Incarnate Word football team, and Guitar Dojo onto the campus to work with students after school.

Partnerships look different at each campus because the needs are different as are the partners willing to provide support.

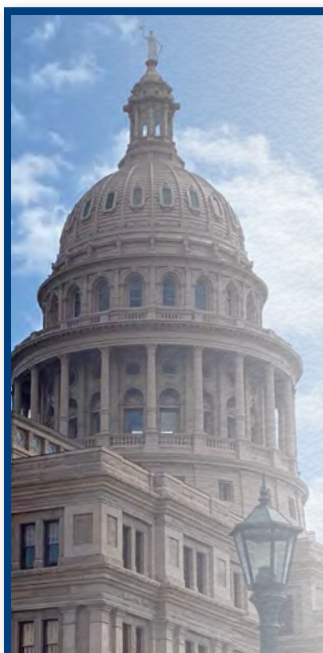
The Junior School hosted Mulch Mania earlier in the Spring which brought several school and community organizations together for a campus beautification day.

Alamo Heights ISD also works with School Connect to host CAFE events which stands for Community and Family Engagement. These are meetings of school and community leaders to discuss common goals and discover opportunities to work together to impact students. **Margaret Judson**, former AHISD Trustee, is the School Connect Director in San Antonio.

“Service is a foundation in our community, and our partners help us model that for our students,” said **Lauren Boyher**, counselor at Cambridge Elementary. “We always try to make connections to provide opportunities for students. Even if you don’t know exactly how you can help, don’t worry. We’ll figure it out together.”

Contact the campus principal if you’re interested in becoming an AHISD partner.

Visit SchoolConnectSA.org to learn more about the School Connect organization.



Legislative Update by Dr. Dana Bashara

The 88th Texas Legislative Session has come and gone without meaningful investments in our public schools, students, and teachers.

Despite a historic surplus of more than \$32 billion dollars, we are disappointed that our state legislature did not prioritize the needs of millions of public school children. Texas continues to lag at the bottom of the nation in per student funding. The Basic Allotment for each student has not been raised even to counter the effects of inflation since 2019. AHISD has seen increased inflationary and operational costs that far exceed the current per pupil allotment.

We recognize the efforts of many of our local legislators, like Representative Steve Allison, who support public education and put forth legislation that would have helped address these critical needs and who share our belief that vouchers or “education savings accounts” would be detrimental to public education.

Please continue to let our state legislators know the needs of our public schools. Contact them and ask them to increase the Basic Allotment, reject vouchers, and vote to increase teacher compensation.

We will continue to push our elected officials to do what’s right for students in Alamo Heights ISD and across the state of Texas.

ALAMO HEIGHTS SCHOOL FOUNDATION



THE ALAMO HEIGHTS SCHOOL FOUNDATION is proud to announce that as a result of your AH-mazing support, you gave a record-breaking \$1.5 MILLION to AHISD this 2022-2023 school year! THANK YOU to our parents, grandparents, alumni, students, teachers, and friends for making this possible.

Save the Date!

Alamo Heights School Foundation's
GREATER HEIGHTS NIGHT

Presented By


THE
GREEHEY FAMILY
FOUNDATION

The Witte Museum | November 8, 2023 | 6:00 PM

The Alamo Heights School Foundation's mission is to enhance academic excellence for every student with a focus on funding teachers and staff. For ways to support our children, back our teachers, and fund our schools, visit www.ahschoolfoundation.org.

Alamo Heights School Foundation

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For available Sponsorship and Underwriting Opportunities, please contact The Alamo Heights School Foundation office at (210) 832-5957 or ahfoundation@ahisd.net



TRUSTEES AT WORK

David Hornberger, Board President

As I pass the wall of photos and memorabilia in Central Office before Board Meetings, I sometimes wonder about the thoughts of the teachers and students captured in those images. Did **Miss Mary Peel** realize that her inaugural class in the one-room schoolhouse on Abiso Avenue would give rise to the Alamo Heights Independent School District of today? Did **Mr. Henry Alves**, our first superintendent, or **Miss Ernestine Edmunds**, another of our first (and one of our longest-tenured) teachers, expect to be laying the foundation of excellence for generations to come? Moving down the line, I pass by numerous photos of former students and teachers, memorializing long-gone moments in time such as the 1963 presidential motorcade passing by Cambridge and pictures of the old Mule Stall. Then I pass the photo of **Mr. Paul Foerster** with all his published math books and I pause, walking back to review the photos once more. Finally, the theme appears, like one of those hidden 3-D images in abstract artwork, visible only from a certain perspective - these are photos of a community continuously setting high expectations for our children and inspiring them to learn and to grow. We have differences in opinion, we grow from our struggles, and we continuously improve all because we are united in our belief for our kids. We maintain steadfast hope that our children will do greater things than we ever can do, and that their children will surpass them.

Undoubtedly, it is in this spirit that our community rallied together during our recent local elections to convincingly pass our three bond propositions. These bonds, among other things, will finance campus replacement and renovations, will provide for significant improvements to security and to logistical issues (such as parking), and will empower our district to maintain our culture of excellence and propel our students to success for generations to come. It is as though we continue to heed the call of Principal **Paul A. Rode**, who once wrote to parents that “[t]here is no sounder investment on earth than in the future of a child.” We are grateful for your partnership and for your support of your children, our students.

We also recognize the incredible accomplishments of our students and our educators with the close of the 2022-23 school year, as detailed in these pages. These successes and accolades are impossible without our community partnership,



and to that end we continue to invite all of you to join us on our path forward. Please consider touring our campuses, joining our Grand Mules programs, volunteering as a campus guardian or WatchDOG, or serving on a campus PTO. If you're not sure of the right fit for you, call Central Office or a campus principal to ask for the best way to contribute. Never have there been more options for all members of our community to become involved in school activities and to help us become better each day.

And, never have we needed you more. The Texas Legislature, charged with funding Texas schools, would rather engage in partisan politics than adequately fund public schools. Our students have become pawns in a larger political dispute that has less to do with solutions and more to do with entrenched

political positions and worsening relationships among elected officials. With inflation soaring, with the pool of well-qualified teachers dramatically shrinking, and with student needs accelerating, it is vital for the Texas Legislature to materially increase the basic allotment (the state funding per student). Yet, they refuse - despite a record budget surplus - and so the Legislature continues to draw on local property taxes for funding. (As a reminder, the state takes away from

us nearly half of our tax revenues related to our operational budget.) We remain indebted to all of you who called your elected officials on behalf of our community. We are especially grateful to Representative **Steve Allison**, a former president of the AHISD Board of Trustees, for his dogged support for increased funding for public school students particularly during a Legislative session distracted by the political ambition of diverting public tax dollars to pay for private schools. In the months ahead, we will need your unrelenting help as the political process continues.

As I walk out of the office submitting this letter for publication, I again pass by the photo of that one-room schoolhouse on Abiso Avenue. I think about the culture, the legacy, and the spirit all those students, parents, and teachers helped establish, and I wonder what they would say if they saw us now. “This is incredible,” they might exclaim as they saw our students’ rockets reach the sky, heard about their world-influencing achievements after graduation, or witnessed the accomplishments of our staff. I feel like they would add a coda, too: “but there is still more we can do for our kids if we just keep improving. This is not the time to rest.”



The AHISD Board of Trustees joined Dr. Bashara on stage at the 2023 Alamo Heights High School Graduation Ceremony. Pictured left to right are Brian Hamilton; Dr. Bashara; Carey Hildebrand, Assistant Secretary; Clay Page, Secretary; Stacy Sharp, Vice President; David Hornberger, Board President; Ty Edwards; and Lisa Krenger.

SCHOOL LIFE

50 years of beautiful music!

A milestone in music was celebrated at the annual Strings Festival in April. Almost 700 musicians from 4th through 12th grade came together for a performance commemorating 50 years of the strings program in Alamo Heights ISD.

It was the first time the concert was held in the MuleDome.

The concert traditionally ends with a joint rendition of “Ode to Joy.” This year, the combined orchestras also collaborated on a performance of “Somewhere Over the Rainbow” which honored the district’s theme, “No Place Like AHISD.”

The school year also ended on a high note for the Alamo Heights High School Orchestra.

The group is one of 10 orchestras invited to perform at the National Orchestra Cup at Lincoln Center in March 2024.

“I am so proud of our orchestra students’ achievement in both their academic and music activities,” said Alamo Heights HS Orchestra Director **Carlos Quiroz**. “We see that many of our top AHHS graduates are from the Orchestra. This is a true testament that music creates well-rounded students, provides discipline, self expression, and collaboration.”

This year, 20 students made the High School Region Orchestra and 35 students made the Middle School Region Orchestra. Eight students qualified for the UIL State Solo and Ensemble competition and two students earned gold medals. All three High School competing orchestras and both Junior School competing orchestras earned Sweepstakes awards at UIL.

“Thank you parents, students, administrators and community members for being ambassadors of the Fine Arts here in AHISD,” said Quiroz.



PROMISING PRACTICES

This year, 178 schools and organizations from across the United States were recognized as 2023 Promising Practices by the organization Character.org, including 21 in the state of Texas and 5 initiatives from Alamo Heights ISD.

The District was honored for the **Senior and Grand Mules program**, a new initiative this past school year to engage grandparents and senior citizens in the community by inviting them to learn about AHISD schools directly from students and staff.

Alamo Heights High School was recognized for their **Heights Clothes Closet**.

Alamo Heights Junior School was recognized for their **Junior School Ambassador program**.

Cambridge Elementary was honored for their **Hooah Huddle**, a student group consisting of all military-connected students and led by military-connected staff and parent volunteers.

Woodridge Elementary was recognized for **Dream Week**, a week of activities for students to learn about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., explore colleges and careers, and dream big. All were tied to the school’s “Be the WE” character connections.



Mental health support

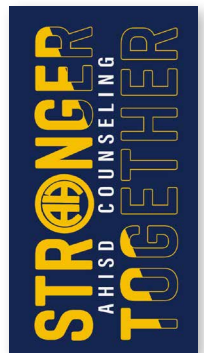
The campus counselors are the first stop for counseling support. However, the district is partnering with three different organizations when situations require more intensive counseling, long-term therapy, or other mental health/behavioral support.

Family Service: made possible by Bexar County/ARPA funding, Family Service provides in-person counseling and behavioral health support to students at Howard, Cambridge, and Woodridge. A Family Service counselor travels to each of these campuses throughout the week to provide counseling and/or behavioral health services during the school day.

Texas Child Health Access Through Telemedicine (T-CHATT): made possible by a state grant and facilitated by the UT Health San Antonio Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences. Designed to connect older students (who do not currently have a mental or behavioral healthcare provider) with mental and behavioral healthcare services through telemedicine.

Care Solace: made possible by federal Title IV funds. A confidential service provided to students, staff, and their families and is available 24/7. Care Solace can help find in-person, online, or teletherapy options. To use Care Solace to help find a provider, call 888-515-0595 anytime for personalized help or visit Caresolace.com/AlamoHeights and either search OR click “Book Appointment” for assistance by video chat, email, or phone.

All of these supports are provided at no cost to students and referral information can be obtained through campus counselors or campus administration.



Understanding the Proposed Changes to the A-F Texas School Accountability System

AHISD Community Based Accountability

Alamo Heights ISD is a school system that places a priority on high standards of achievement for all students, and we dedicate ourselves to promoting a relentless culture of continuous improvement. In AHISD we embrace community-based accountability because it is the catalyst for the outcomes we desire for each of our students.

Our AHISD Community Based Accountability System (CBAS) uses a multiple measures approach to educational outcomes developed at the local level. This means the inclusion of data sources traditionally overlooked in statewide accountability systems, like surveys, open-ended responses, classroom assessments, budgets, and attendance rates. Our CBAS also includes data reflective of our entire student population, rather than the limited scope of the Texas A-F accountability system. Additional CBAS information will be published on our AHISD website before school begins. While our community prioritizes our AHISD CBAS, we want to inform you about significant changes to the state's A-F system that you will be hearing about this fall.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) oversees the state's accountability ratings and assigns A-F letter grades for schools and districts based on student performance based on STAAR scores, College, Career, and Military Readiness (CCMR) scores, which consists of SAT/ACT scores, industry certifications earned by students, Dual Credit Courses, numbers of students enrolling in the military upon graduation and graduation rates. There are substantial changes coming to how TEA assigns A-F letter grades, especially CCMR scores. In addition, TEA is changing the way that individual campus scores are combined for the district rating. Both changes are expected to result in lower A-F letter grades statewide for the same student performance as in past years. Like a majority of districts across the state, Alamo Heights is anticipating its district A-F letter grade may decline by one letter under these new TEA rules for how scores are calculated and how letter grades are assigned.

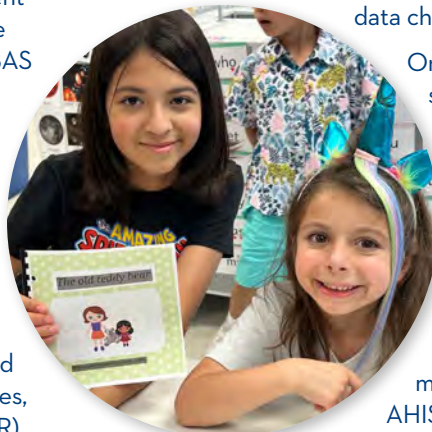
Changes to CCMR Scores

The TEA proposes to raise the overall score necessary for a high school to receive an A in the CCMR domain from a 60 to an 88, a nearly 47% increase in one year. In addition, TEA will apply this substantially increased cut score to students who graduated back in 2022 because many of the CCMR measures in the A-F system are based on lagging indicators from past cohorts of students. Of course, districts no longer have any influence over



the performance of those students after they graduate, and it is unreasonable to apply new standards retroactively. TEA, nevertheless, is proceeding with these changes.

For example, from 2017-2022, if 60% of high school graduates were rated as college, career, and military ready, the school earned an A in CCMR. Under the new rules, the exact same CCMR achievement of students will result in a D rating. No data changed. Instead, the goal posts moved.



On March 6, AHISD joined a group of 250 school districts and education organizations to ask Texas Governor Greg Abbott and the Education Commissioner Mike Morath to pause the new CCMR grading system. A preferred, and fairer, approach would be to set cut score targets applicable only to students still enrolled in our schools. Increasing the cut score for an A for CCMR by almost 47% in a single year will create the misconception that high performing schools, like AHISD, are declining, even if CCMR performance actually improved.

Updated Timeline

Added to the major changes in the A-F system, the State Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR), the state's standardized achievement test, was substantially redesigned too. Because of changes to the STAAR test and the A-F system, TEA is delaying the release of student individual scores. STAAR scores will not be available in the state's Parent Portal until mid-August. There will be additional information provided later about how parents can access these scores through AHISD's Home Access Center (HAC). A-F ratings for schools and districts are expected in late September.

As members of the Alamo Heights community, it is essential that we stay informed and engaged in the discussions surrounding the changes. We encourage you to visit the Texas Education Agency website at tea.texas.gov for additional information to gain a deeper understanding of the proposed changes and their implications. By understanding the potential impact on our district and participating in the feedback process, we can contribute to the ongoing improvement of the A-F Texas School Accountability System.

PITCH NIGHT 2023

In early May, six Alamo Heights HS Business Incubator teams pitched their business concepts to a panel of judges who awarded more than \$20,000 in seed money at the annual Pitch Night.

The 2023 Grand Prize winner, Refilament, earned \$10,000 with members **Cadence Keller, Seth Girdley, Daniel Peavy, Asher Singleton, and Jackson Deleon.**

2nd Place (\$8,000)- WarBands

3rd Place (\$5,000)- Rising Chef

People's Choice (\$1,000) - Bandy

Refilament is described as an affordable, effective 3D print recycler that is assembled with an at home kit.



Five finalists were selected to pitch their ideas on stage and a sixth Wild Card team, Light Right, was invited to join them based on votes from attendees.

Year in Science

It was a year of achievements and numerous awards for young scientists from Alamo Heights High School and Alamo Heights Junior School.



Both schools had teams qualify for the State Science Olympiad competition in April at Texas A&M University. At the high school level, a team competed in 23 test, design, lab, and build events and came home with medals in Solar Power, Chem Lab, and Green Generation.

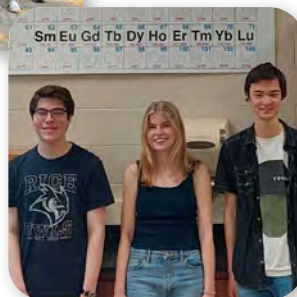
Two now-graduates, **Aidan Myles** and **Ellis Wren**, earned several awards and prizes this spring. They both placed at the Alamo Regional Science and Engineering Fair in February and were eligible to go on to the Texas Science and Engineering Fair at Texas A&M University.

Myles earned a First Place Chemistry Award as well as awards from The American Chemical Society, Stockholm Junior Water Prize, and the NOAA's Planet Award. His research was titled "Comparing Photocatalytic Degradation of Petroleum Contaminants Using Fe-TiO₂ Nanoparticles In Fresh Water and Ocean Water."

Wren earned a Third Grand Prize award as well as the Stockholm Junior Water Prize, National Geographic Earth



Award, and the Ricoh Sustainability Award. His research project was titled "Monitoring Rate of Bioremediation: Developing a pH-based Assay for Microbial Kinetics."



Wren also competed in the American Chemical Society regional Chemistry Olympiad in March and placed first among all of the competitors. This qualified him for the National Chemistry Olympiad in April.

Petra Poenitzsch competed at the Alamo Regional Science and Engineering Fair and earned Second Place Health and Medicine Award.

In June, rocketry students unveiled their 2023 rocket in advance of the annual trip to White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico for launch.



MULE NEWS BITS & BRIEFS



Signing Day

Fourteen student athletes signed letters of intent to play their sports at the next level at Signing Day in May at the Muledome.

Basketball	Chico Strash	St. Mary's University
Golf	Elizabeth Whalen	Middlebury College
Baseball	Philip New	Wisconsin Lutheran College
Volleyball	Kyhleen Price	McHenry County College
Track/XC	Nolan Keenan	Baylor University
Soccer	Abby Fernandez	Texas Lutheran University
Softball	Isabel Haspil	Clarkson University
Fencing	Isaac Oden	Wagner College
Track	Victoria Baker	Trinity University
Gymnastics	Emmalee Brown	Emmanuel College
Tennis	Noah Sutin	Lewis and Clark
Football	Rett Andersen	University of Texas
Football	Brooks Kieschnick	University of Texas
Football	Tommy Colligan	Texas A&M University

Congratulations to these AH-mazing student athletes, their families, and coaches. We look forward to continuing to watch our Mules compete at the collegiate level.



Photo credit: Mary Candee



NATIONAL CHAMPIONS!

Mules Up for the AHHS Army JROTC physical fitness team! They're the 2023 JROTC Fitness National Champions in the Mixed Division! The team competed in Daytona, Florida in May.

They also earned the following awards:



First Place in Standing Broad Jump & Flex Arm Hang/
Pull Ups

Fifth Place in Seated Power Throw & Ultimate Obstacle Course

Emma Heusinger placed 5th in the Flex Arm Hang among 91 competitors.

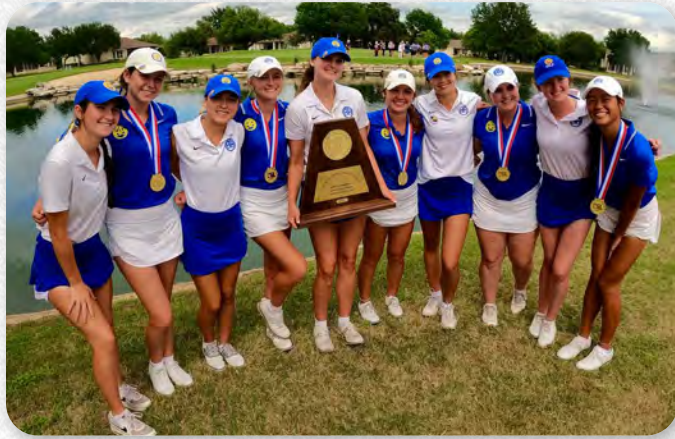
Cole Butler placed 4th in the Standing Broad Jump among 101 competitors.

Mules on the Run!

Two athletes represented AHISD at the UIL State Track and Field Meet in Austin in May.

Leo Bowen earned the silver medal in Pole Vault. **Joe White** won 5th place in the 1600 meter run.

Their coaches are **Jonathan Holliday, Seth Grubb, Brian Ricketts, Randy McIver, Rudy Nerio, Lindsey Williams,** and **Michael McElrath.**



MULES UP – FOR THE STATE CHAMPIONS!

The Alamo Heights Blue team won the 5A UIL Girls Golf State Championship in May.

It's the second championship in program history. The team finished 12 strokes ahead of the second place team.

For the second consecutive year, two teams represented AHISD at the state tournament. The Gold team finished in fifth place.

Members of the Blue Team are **Julia Vollmer, Lindsay Lee, Elizabeth Whalen, Kat Salisbury,** and **Charlotte Gnam.**

Members of the Gold Team are **Chelsea Simpson, Jordan Sandoval, Jorie Losack, Jules Mahan,** and **Kate Kelso.**

Online Spirit Store for AHISD



The AHISD Athletics Department has launched an online store for the purchase of Alamo Heights spirit wear.

The store is open the first week of every month for purchases. Items are available in men's, women's, and children's sizes.

A link to the store is located on the AHISD Athletics website at alamoheightssports.rankonesport.com.

Orders will be shipped directly to customers.

Contact the AHISD Athletics Department at (210) 820-8850 with any questions.

VARSITY FOOTBALL SCHEDULE 2023

Friday, Aug. 25	7 p.m.	Seguin (HOME)
Friday, Sept. 1	7 p.m.	Brackenridge (AWAY)
Friday, Sept. 8	7 p.m.	Highlands (HOME)
Friday, Sept. 15	7 p.m.	McCollum (AWAY)
Friday, Sept. 22	7 p.m.	Burbank (AWAY)
Friday, Oct. 6	7 p.m.	Jefferson (HOMECOMING)
Friday, Oct. 13	7 p.m.	Harlandale (AWAY)
Friday, Oct. 20	7 p.m.	Edison (HOME)
Saturday, Oct. 28	2 p.m.	Lanier (AWAY)
Friday, Nov. 3	7 p.m.	Sam Houston (HOME)

ALAMO HEIGHTS ISD

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San Antonio, Texas 78209

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HOW TO REACH US

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Independent School District**

**7101 Broadway
San Antonio, Texas 78209**

CALL: 210-824-2483

FAX: 210-822-2221

EMAIL: ahisdcommunications@ahisd.net

SURF: www.ahisd.net

WATCH: YouTube: Alamo Heights Mules

2023 BACK TO SCHOOL CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

ATHLETIC KICK OFF EVENTS:

Alamo Heights High School Athletics Kick Off

Aug. 23, 2023 6 to 8 p.m.

Alamo Heights Junior School Athletics Kick Off

Aug. 24, 2023 4:30 to 7:30 p.m.

BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHTS:

Howard Early Childhood Center

Aug. 31, 2023 4:15 to 4:45 p.m. PreK/ECSE

Aug. 31, 2023 6 to 6:30 p.m. Kinder

Cambridge Elementary School

Sept. 6, 2023 6 to 7:15 p.m. 1st and 2nd Grades

Sept. 7, 2023 6 to 7:15 p.m. 3rd- 5th Grades

Woodridge Elementary School

Sept. 6, 2023 6 to 7:15 p.m. 1st and 2nd Grades

Sept. 7, 2023 6 to 7:15 p.m. 3rd- 5th Grades

Alamo Heights Junior School

Aug. 22, 2023 6 to 8 p.m. 6th Grade

Aug. 29, 2023 6 to 8 p.m. 7th and 8th Grades

Alamo Heights High School

Sept. 20, 2023 6 to 7:30 p.m. 9th-12th Grades

HOWDY NIGHT & HOMECOMING:

Oct. 4, 2023 4:30 p.m. Howdy Parade

Oct. 4, 2023 5 to 7 p.m. Howdy Night

Oct. 6, 2023 Homecoming