

December Board FYIs

Van Alstyne High School

What a wonderful fall semester we have had at VAHS with tremendous community and school support throughout!

Basketball season has begun with VAHS hosting the Highway 5 Tournament. The girls' tournament was December 4-6 and the boys' tournament was December 11-13. Our teams begin district play later this month.

VAHS Theater students attended the Texas State Thespian Festival on November 20-22 at the Gaylord Texan Resort. Our student thespians participated in musicals, dramas, watched other schools perform and learned much by attending workshops. Six students competed at the festival and have qualified to compete at the National Thespian Festival next June. Congratulations to Riley Duckworth, Adam Turk, Jett Jackson, Nuwani Walpola, Lauren Morales and Gabe Derrick!

The Van Alstyne FFA is excited to report on two major upcoming Career & Technical Education events hosted at Van Alstyne High School: the 2nd annual Grant Harris Memorial Welding Rodeo and the inaugural "A Very Merry Floral Cup." Both events highlight the growth of our Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources pathway and the strong support we are receiving from industry and post-secondary partners.

More than 20 welding teams from across Texas and Oklahoma are registered to compete. Students will work collaboratively to fabricate a patio-style cooker, testing their welding skills, blueprint reading, time management, and problem-solving skills.

Colleges, trade schools, and industry leaders strongly support this event. Partners attending or donating items include:

Grayson College, Collin College, Tulsa Welding School, Stratus Systems, Vector Systems, Fastenal, Cyrious Metal Works, Lincoln Electric, Pearl Abrasives, ESAB, Mitchel Welding Supply, Amtec Welding, Miller Electric, Van Alstyne Ag Booster Club, and the American Welding Society.

These partners have generously contributed thousands of dollars in tools, consumables, and professional-grade welding equipment that will be awarded to top competitors. Many will also be on campus to interact with students, discuss workforce needs, and support career exploration.

This year also marks the launch of our first floral design competition, which continues to expand opportunities within our agricultural science program. Nearly 100 floral design students from North Texas high schools will be participating.

Professional florists have volunteered their expertise and donated their time to support the event. Students will have one hour to create a Christmas-themed floral arrangement using fresh flowers and materials purchased from Pikes Peak of Texas.

Awards for top arrangements are being provided by the Van Alstyne Ag Boosters, in partnership with Midway Floral, here in Van Alstyne.

We are very thankful for the continued support of the VAISD school board, administrators, and parents in this fantastic event and invite everyone to attend.

Thursday, December 11, VAHS CTE building

Welding Rodeo: 9:30 am - 3 pm

Floral Cup: 10:30 am - 11:30 am and 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Awards follow the conclusion of contests.

You are invited to join us in celebrating our talented students at one of our wonderful Christmas concerts.

Choir – Monday, Dec 15, 6:00 p.m., VAHS Arena

Band & Color Guard – Monday, Dec 15, 7:00 p.m., VAHS Arena

Thank you for your continued support of our students and staff.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Krista Beal

Van Alstyne Junior High School

We can't believe the end of the first semester is quickly approaching! Teachers and students are preparing for 2nd quarter testing. This is a great opportunity to assess where each student is and provide interventions. It is also an opportunity for teachers to assess which concepts they need to spiral into their lessons to review and reteach. In early January, each teacher will look at their data and meet with Mrs. Timpanaro or Ms. Cholette to review data.

We are doing several things to let our staff members know how much we appreciate them in addition to the family portraits taken by Mrs. Jamie Blackerby. We are planning some fun Christmas activities on campus, for example, we have an ugly Christmas sweater day, secret Santa day, a staff hot chocolate/coffee and dessert bar (provided by parent volunteers), and we will be having our annual VAJH Staff Christmas Party! We have a lot of staff appreciation activities planned for the 2nd semester.

Here are some upcoming events on our campus:

- Our Student Council went shopping for Christmas Angels on Tuesday, December 2. They enjoyed taking the time to give to others.
- 7th/8th Grade Band/Color Guard Concert in the VAJH main gym on Tuesday, December 9 at 6:00 PM
- Choir Winter/Holiday Concert on Monday, December 1 at 6:00 at VAHS
- VAJH Spelling Bee on Friday, December 12 at 2:00 PM

Van Alstyne Middle School

We are wrapping up Quarter 2 at VAMS and heading into the holiday break with a great mix of learning, growth, and festive fun. Students will complete their end-of-quarter assessments this month, which will give teachers valuable data to guide instruction as we launch into Quarter 3.

Our campus is also enjoying our “Twelve Days Before Winter Break” celebrations, complete with themed dress-up days and special staff treats provided by our admin team and PTO. In addition, our PTO is offering a unique and much-appreciated service this year—staff members can have their holiday gifts wrapped during the school day. It’s truly the gift of time!

We’re especially excited to celebrate the hard work and positive leadership of our students at our Quarter 2 Premier Panther Awards Assembly. There may be a small surprise from VAMS’s new principal, Dr. Fair... but we’ll keep that part under wraps for now! Shhh...

Sanford Elementary School

This month has been bustling with excitement as our students dive into ARC Unit 2 science research. Across all grade levels, students have expanded their life science knowledge and showcased their learning through a wide variety of creative projects. It’s been so fun to see their curiosity and enthusiasm in action as they explore the wonders of science while learning reading skills!

Our instructional coaches have been instrumental in supporting our teachers with planning and lesson design this month. Their guidance and expertise help ensure that lessons are engaging, rigorous, and tailored to meet the diverse needs of our students. By collaborating closely with teachers, our coaches foster practical teaching strategies, strengthen classroom instruction, and empower our educators to bring out the best in every learner.

To keep the holiday spirit rocking, we are celebrating our Sanford staff with a “Rockin’ Around the Christmas Tree” theme! From Thanksgiving through the Christmas break, staff have been treated to daily gestures of appreciation, including casual jeans days extending into January, catered lunches, and other thoughtful surprises. These festive moments are our way of showing gratitude for the dedication, creativity, and hard work our staff demonstrate every day.

Partin Elementary School

As we approach the holiday season, there are exciting events this December. Mr. Vadala and the Honor Choir will kick off the festivities with a choir concert at the Central Social District this Tuesday the 9th, December 6th. We also have Annual Cookies with Santa on December 10th,

where students and parents can spend time with Santa(Shannon Jackson) and capture a memorable photo. Our dedicated staff is committed to creating cherished Christmas memories for our families. We will be closing the holiday season and celebrating our students' achievements at our Panther Pride Assembly, Dec. 18th. Again, Santa (Shannon Jackson will make an appearance.

Curriculum Director

This month we've spent most of our time interpreting the data from our first quarter assessments, writing/updating the second quarter assessments and working with campuses on any instructional needs that they are noticing.

December EOC testing occurs this month—our first state assessment round for the year.

We've continued our weekly planning sessions with teachers and added even more support in our extended planning sessions; these have proved to be beneficial in many ways. We do extended planning sessions for all core subject areas per quarter and the addition of these sessions last year was a good one!

The weekly planning sessions have allowed teachers, principals, and instructional coaches to really focus on instructional best practices, student needs, and teacher supports on a regular basis which has helped incredibly with the bluebonnet math implementation and our new teachers who are learning multiple curriculum pieces.

Athletic Director:

Our fall sports have all wrapped up and we are on to our winter sports. Both our basketball teams are in their pre-season games and tournaments. These last 2 full weeks of the semester we are hosting the Highway 5 basketball tournament for both boys and girls from freshman-varsity teams. The tournament is played using facilities in Melissa, Anna and VA. The first week is the girls followed by the boys the next week. It's always a great opportunity to show off our facilities as well as our hospitality. A huge thanks to our VAHS administration for all their flexibility and support for these events.

Our girls will field 2 basketball teams (jv/varsity) and our boys will field 3 teams (freshman, jv and varsity).

Our powerlifting teams both have really strong participation numbers once again.

We are excited to see all these Panthers compete in their upcoming season.

The UIL is expected to release the conference cutoff numbers very soon. That won't impact us but that's when everyone starts their scheduling for non-district games (if they haven't already done so). Once again we will be shopping around for another league for our JH athletics. This

has proven to be very difficult the last few realignments so hopefully we can find a close, competitive district for our younger Panthers to compete in.

Thanks for all that you do.

Chief Financial Officer

During the 2025 Texas Legislative Session, HB 103 was passed. This law was passed to increase transparency and accountability as far as bonds and taxes. Each district is being required to maintain a database of all current and prior data related to bonds at each taxing school district. The following information must be shown on the database:

For each bond proposed or issued by a taxing unit:

- The projected interest and sinking fund (I&S) tax rate or projected tax rate for debt service
- The result of any election held for the purpose of approving the issuance of bonds.
- A list of projects to be funded using the bond.
- An accounting of the use of the proceeds of any issued bond, along with a description of the project paid for with the bond.
- A description of any increase in the I&S tax rate or any related debt service tax increase for this bond.
- An estimate of the minimum dollar amount required to be spent on debt service annually from this bond.
- The date of each bond election and the debt type.

The language of the ballot proposition and the result of any tax rate election will include:

- The taxing unit's adopted tax rate;
- The taxing unit's voter-approval tax rate;
- The difference between the adopted tax rate and the voter-approval tax rate for the taxing unit;
- The taxing unit's tax rate for the preceding tax year; and
- The number of votes cast in the election in favor of the proposition and against the proposition; and

- If the proposition is not approved by the voters of the taxing unit, the taxing unit's tax rate for the tax year.

For maintenance taxes levied or proposed by a school district:

- The school district's proposed or approved tax rate.
- The ballot proposition language under Education Code Section 45.003(d).

(Taken from the Transparency Webpage at Comptroller.Texas.Gov)