

Never Stop Learning

EMS ISD working to 'grow our own' through diverse leadership development opportunities

Leadership development is a critical component in preparing students to be successful in college, career and the life that awaits them after graduation. That's why history teacher Brian Munk strives to grow his students into leaders, and considers himself fortunate to be part of a district that offers professional development opportunities that are helping him build his own leadership capacity.

Munk, who teaches eighth grade at Prairie Vista Middle School, is participating in the EMS ISD Aspiring Leadership Institute (ALI) during 2019-2020. In its sixth year, the program is open to educators with a minimum of two years teaching experience who have an interest in growing their opportunities in a campus or district leadership role.

"The ALI program helps retain the best possible educators because it provides a supportive framework for all EMS educators who want to strengthen their leadership skills while continuing to be an integral part of their school community," Munk said. "It is important that educators continue to grow and learn so they can provide the best possible educational opportunities for all students ... and have more of an impact on the educational setting and the community."

ALI is one of several leadership development programs offered to educators in EMS ISD. Others include the Aspiring Administrators Institute (AAI), Teacher Leaders Institute (TLI), New Principal Academy, and a TCU Principal Fellowship Program. Led by the district Educational Services team, the programs have evolved over the years but their purpose has remained the same.

"Offering in-house programs that allow us to grow our own leaders is our greatest recruiting, onboarding, and retention opportunity for the district," said Dr. Dana Barnes, executive director of Educational Services. "Through these programs, we are building our own internal network of future leaders who understand our systems, support our mission, and exemplify the pillars of educational excellence that we desire every single day."

To date, more than 435 EMS ISD educators have graduated from one or more of these programs, with most going on to earn campus or leadership roles in the district. One of those leaders is Ebony Love, who is now serving as Ed Willkie Middle School assistant principal. Love is a graduate of ALI, AAI and the TCU Principal Fellowship Program.

"Throughout the programs, I had the opportunity to shadow district leaders, create a personal mission statement and revise my resume after having it reviewed by several of the district leaders," she said. "These experiences were an opportunity for me to grow as an educator and gave me better tools and resources to support my campus principal, faculty and staff, the community, and most importantly, the students."

In addition to specialized leadership programs, EMS ISD offers a robust variety of professional development programs for teachers and staff to advance their knowledge and abilities in their chosen area(s) of specialty. From district-wide trainings and online offerings to weekly teaching team collaborations and in-class modeled lessons, EMS ISD works to equip educators with the training and support they need to be the best teachers and leaders for our students.

For more information about these programs or the application process and requirements, please contact Educational Services at 817-847-7793.