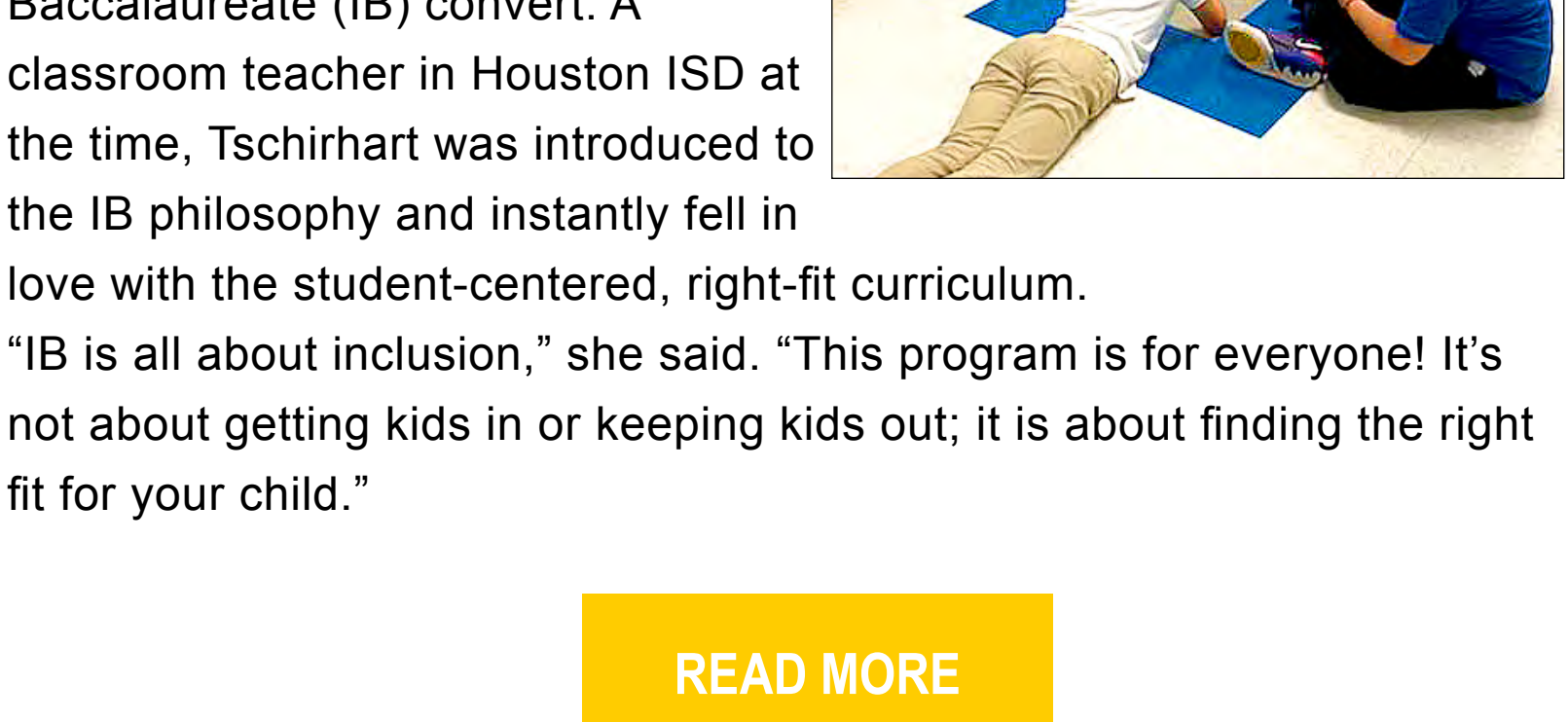
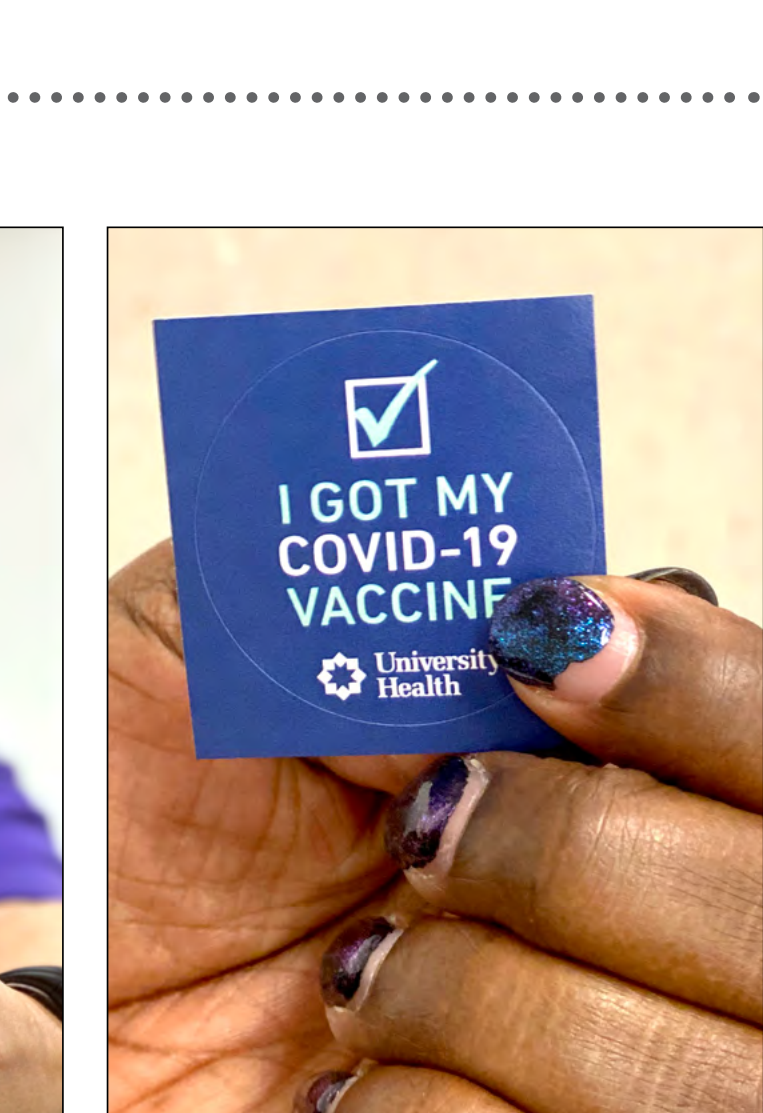


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SAISD's International Baccalaureate educators empower students

Eighteen years ago, Penny Tschirhart became an International Baccalaureate (IB) convert. A classroom teacher in Houston ISD at the time, Tschirhart was introduced to the IB philosophy and instantly fell in love with the student-centered, right-fit curriculum. "IB is all about inclusion," she said. "This program is for everyone! It's not about getting kids in or keeping kids out; it is about finding the right fit for your child."



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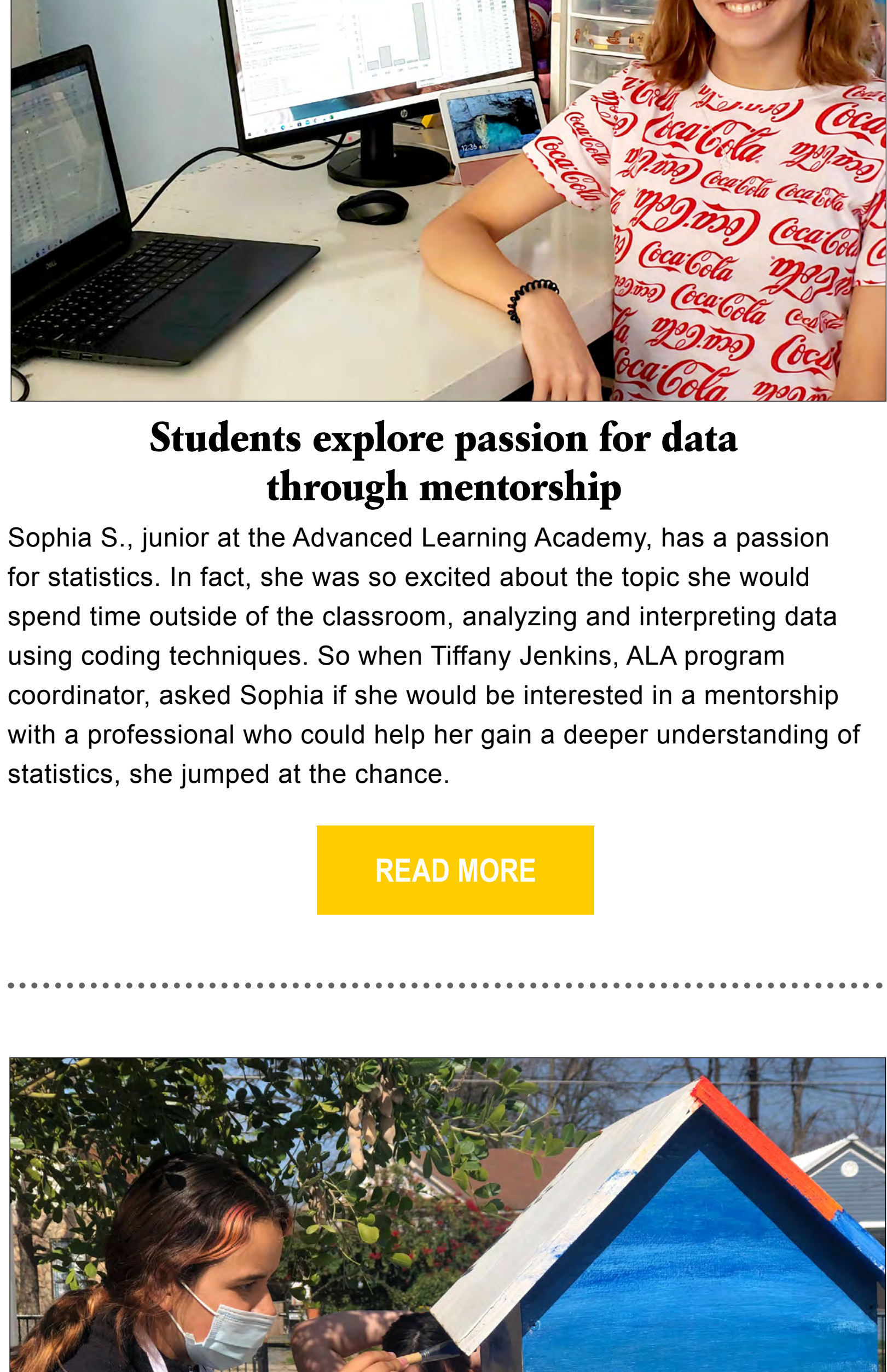


SAISD's COVID-19 vaccine initiative

Initial launch provides almost 500 first doses to employees

The process has started! San Antonio ISD has begun providing vaccines to employees 65+ and those with high-risk health conditions, which aligns with state and federal protocols. The District is working with healthcare industry partners to access vaccines for all staff as soon as possible. "I am just so very happy to be able to get this vaccine," said Charles Trevino, athletic trainer at YMLA who received his first dose of the COVID-19 Pfizer vaccine last week. "This is a relief; everyone has been on edge. I know we are all doing the safety precautions at school – I feel very comfortable when I am at work – but this is going to make it so much better. I am in charge of [COVID-19] testing on my campus and getting vaccinated is just another step to make sure employees and students are safe."

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The importance of COVID testing

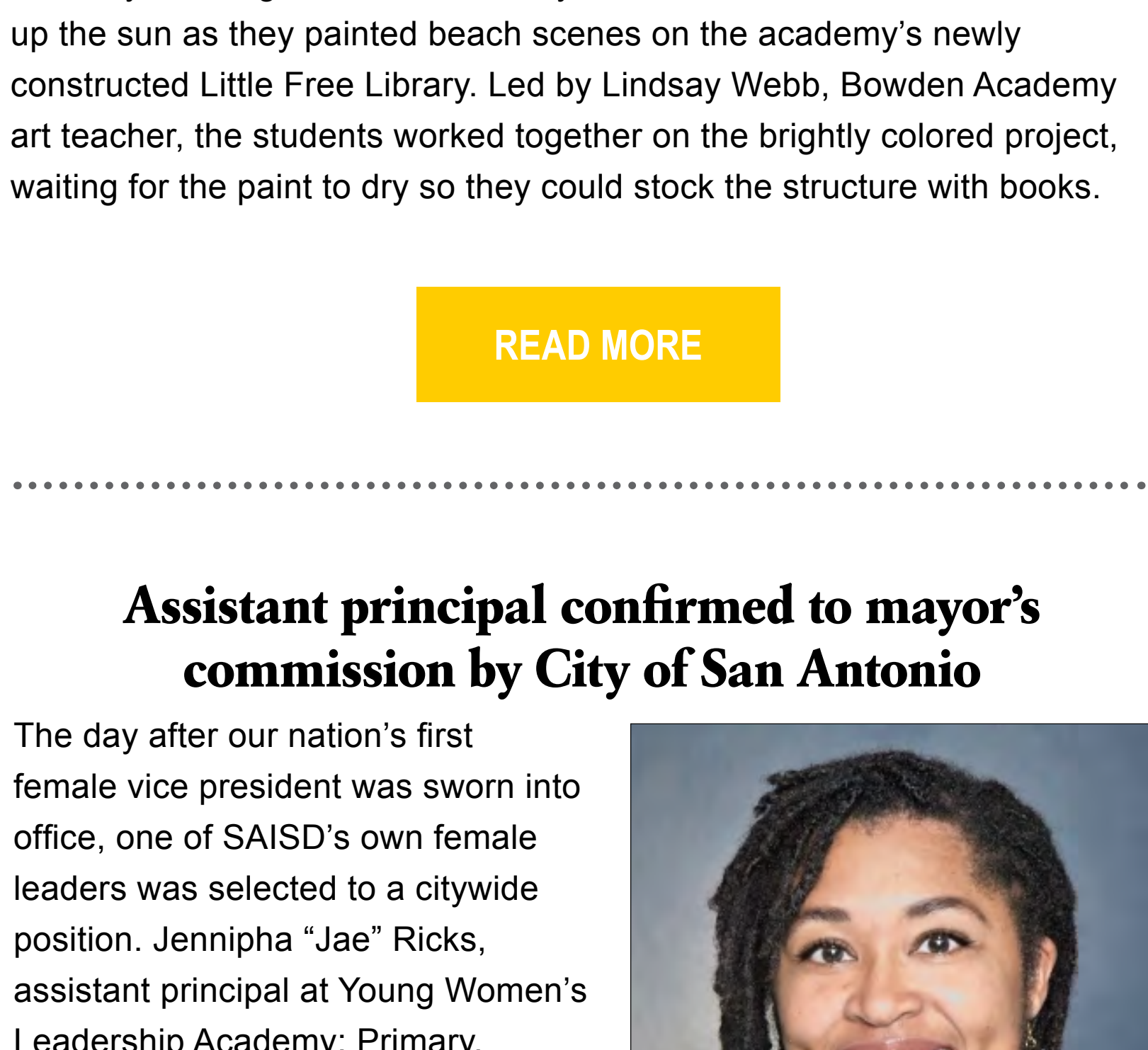
Participating in COVID testing makes our community safer

Did you know? Weekly COVID-19 testing is available to all in-person learners and staff at San Antonio ISD's more than 90 campuses and administrative offices through Community Labs. When you opt in to this free service, you help maintain the safest possible conditions for every student, teacher and other campus-based staff.

"Continuing to do it every week is a good idea to stay the course to keep consistent and making sure we are all safe," said Maverick Elementary teacher Tanya Jacobson, who has now taken several tests herself. "It's not harmful in any way."

Additionally, both in-person and remote staff and students – and household family members of positive staff or students – are eligible for free testing through a partnership with Con Corazón SA.

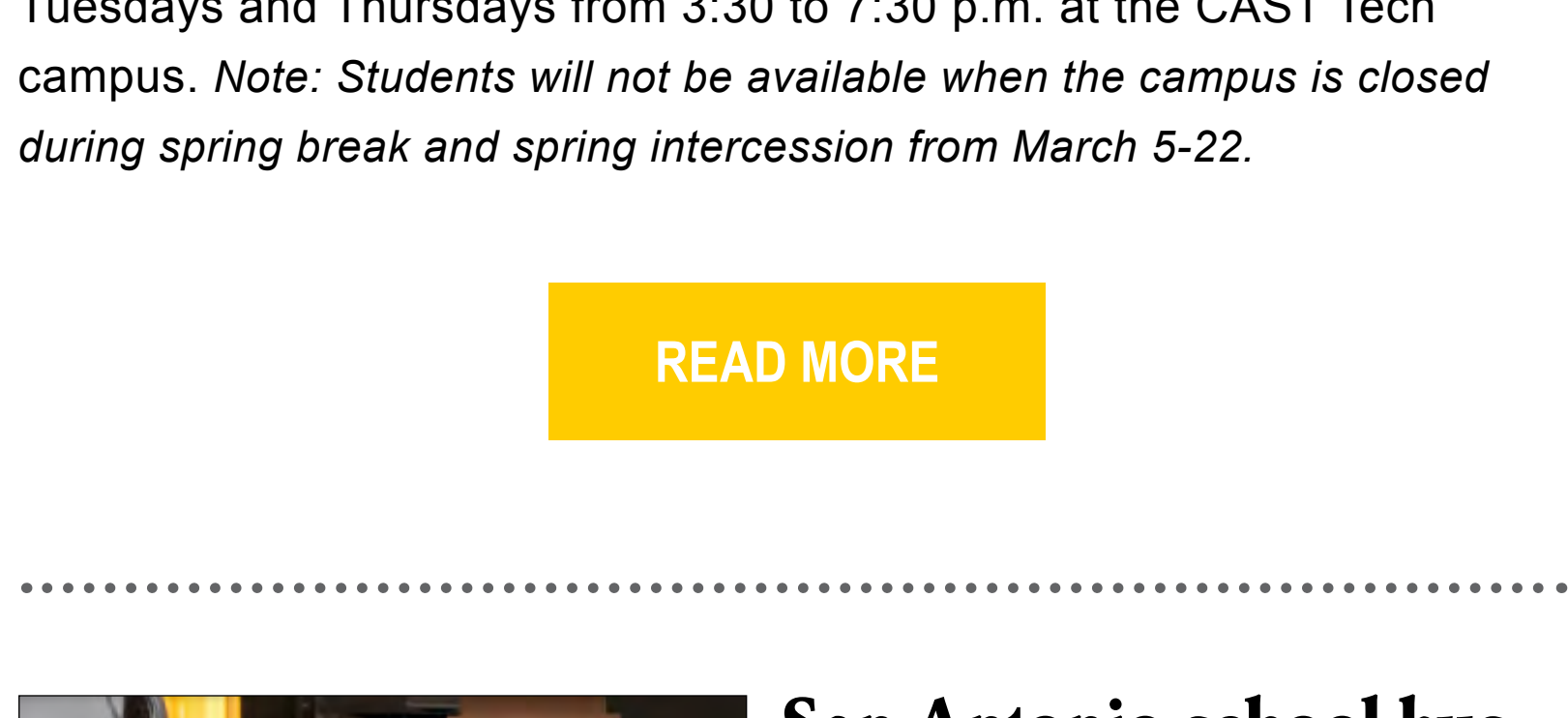
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Students explore passion for data through mentorship

Sophia S., junior at the Advanced Learning Academy, has a passion for statistics. In fact, she was so excited about the topic she would spend time outside of the classroom, analyzing and interpreting data using coding techniques. So when Tiffany Jenkins, ALA program coordinator, asked Sophia if she would be interested in a mentorship with a professional who could help her gain a deeper understanding of statistics, she jumped at the chance.

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Teamwork makes the dream work

Art teachers and librarians are just one part of this collaborative reading initiative

Tuesday morning, Bowden Academy middle school students soaked up the sun as they painted beach scenes on the academy's newly constructed Little Free Library. Led by Lindsay Webb, Bowden Academy art teacher, the students worked together on the brightly colored project, waiting for the paint to dry so they could stock the structure with books.

[READ MORE](#)

Assistant principal confirmed to mayor's commission by City of San Antonio

The day after our nation's first female vice president stepped into office, one of SAISD's own female leaders was selected to a citywide position. Jennipha "Jae" Ricks, assistant principal at Young Women's Leadership Academy: Primary, has been confirmed to the Mayor's Commission on the Status of Women by the City of San Antonio. She will bring her expertise as a leader of an all-girls elementary school to the Commission, which is comprised of 11 members – each serving a two-year term. The Commission strives to foster a closer relationship and a fuller exchange of ideas between women of respective districts and City Council members as well as work toward a number of other female-centered goals. Ricks will be representing District 2 with Councilwoman Jada Sullivan. She was recommended for the position by Xavier Toson, chairman of the African American Chamber of Commerce of San Antonio and the district governor of Rotary International.



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Free tax preparation for employees

This week, students at CAST Tech High School began helping individuals prepare and file their taxes as part of the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA), which is available to those earning up to \$60,000 annually. The CAST Tech tax season is Jan. 26 through April 15.

Students are available to taxpayers, including SAISD employees, on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the CAST Tech campus. *Note: Students will not be available when the campus is closed during spring break and spring intercession from March 5-22.*

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San Antonio school bus drivers have become relief workers

Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, Bobby Richardson pulls his school bus up to the curb in front of the little blue house on Avondale Avenue and honks his horn. On a chilly Friday morning in late October, as he waits for the Garcias to come outside, Richardson unbuckles himself from the driver's seat and gets to work in the rear of bus number 461.

[READ MORE IN TEXAS MONTHLY](#)



New year, new ways to deal with stress

Get ready for January's Self-Care Bingo! The Department of Social, Emotional and Academic Development (SEAD) is offering this fun challenge through 2021. The department is also offering virtual self-care sessions to all District employees. Topics include guided improv, meditation, laughter yoga and more!

[Play January's Staff Self-Care BINGO here](#)

[View the January Staff Self-Care Sessions here](#)



Virtual summit on bilingual education

You are invited to the 2021 Siempre Bilingüe Virtual Conference on Linguistically and Culturally Responsive Teaching! The event will take place Saturday, Jan. 30, from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and will feature two keynotes, staff and parent tracks, a presentation of awards for staff and students, and a huge offering of sessions across content areas. Click [here](#) to see the full conference catalog.

Alert for culinary arts teachers!

G PUBLIC
Connecting communities to the amazing things happening in San Antonio and Houston/Gulf Coast area ISDs

Culinary Arts Program Recipe Contest

a Career and Technical Education (CTE) spotlight

[Learn more here!](#)

A window into the future

Construction workers frame in windows at Tafolla Middle School this week. Thanks to Bond 2016, Tafolla and 12 other schools are currently undergoing transformations to renovate and restore their spaces. Some of the work features wider hallways, new windows, updated classrooms, cutting-edge science labs, and efficient heating and ventilation systems. The project scope at Tafolla also includes fine arts, music, and special education spaces, cafeteria upgrades, and library renovations. The Tafolla project is on its way to completion, with new classrooms finished, newly expanded and bright hallways, and a new canopy outside to protect students and staff from the elements.