

Engaging Children

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Alex Doan with Nick Patarroyo '31

Alex Doan

1st Grade Teacher

Alex's journey to St. Mark's was a bit longer and more convoluted than most because she took about 15 years off of teaching before coming to St. Mark's. She has two master's degrees, one a Master of Arts in Teaching with a specialization in both gifted and special education. She later added another master's degree when she realized that so much of good teaching involved development and counseling. Alex went back to school and earned her Master of Education degree in Educational Counseling. She started out teaching 2nd and 5th grade in Spring Branch ISD for a few years, then was privileged enough to be the Pediatric School Teacher at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center for 4 years. After that she taught 1st grade and served as the Learning Specialist at Presbyterian School. Because both of Alex's children have learning and medical conditions, she chose to stay home for the majority of the time that they were in school. But those years were not wasted professionally. She got to learn about the importance of parent partnerships with schools, the amazing work that parent volunteers contribute to a school community, and the village it takes to support children as they grow.

After being a parent and a volunteer in the St. Mark's community, when both of Alex's children had moved on to high school, she was asked to join the Board of Trustees. That was a really interesting time for her to learn about the general governance of the school. In the 2023-2024 school year, Alex began substitute teaching and took several longer-term sub positions. When the

1st grade lead position came open, Alex knew that she wanted to officially become a part of the team she had long admired.

"St. Mark's is my happy place," Alex says. She loves the conversations that people have about children, families, and educators. The St. Mark's community speaks of others with integrity and a real sense of humanity and compassion. There is an abiding sense of trust and love in each decision made. "I most love the connections that I make with each child and do not take lightly the privilege that families have given me to be such a big part of their child's life," she adds. She admires her coworkers and sees the care and effort that she wants to put into the job reflected back at her.



Alex Doan with her class at the 1st & 2nd Grade Concert