

ESAC & AISD Sustainability News & Updates

March 27, 2024

Greetings, ESAC members and friends of AISD Sustainability,

We look forward to seeing you at our **virtual ESAC meeting this evening, March 27th!** In advance of our meeting, please review the latest sustainability news and info from our AISD staff and ESAC subcommittee and working group leaders.



AISD Earth Week, April 22-26 (Earth Day is on Monday, April 22)

- If your organization is planning Earth Day activities, info, or events that are geared towards AISD students and families, we would love to help cross-promote on our AISD Earth Week website. It will probably look similar to our [2023 Earth Week website](#). Please send content formatted similarly (short and sweet!) to darien.clary@austinisd.org.
- As part of AISD's commitment to serve ALL students, we are asking partners to ensure your content demonstrates cultural competence and language accessibility and serves our communities equitably in planning, programs, and the nature of information available. [View this guide](#).



AISD Staffing Updates

- **Welcome, Sydnie Levell, AISD Urban Forester!**
 - Sydnie is focusing on modernization projects and preservation of trees during development, tree maintenance, and supporting tree planting! [Click here](#) for Sydnie's bio.
- **Outdoor Learning Design and Activation Specialist.** This position reports to the Director of STEM. Links: [Application link](#) | [Job Description](#)



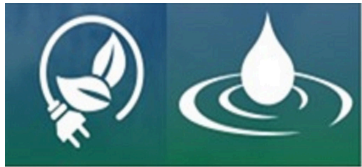
ESAC Co-chair Nominations (due May 13) & Elections (May 22) / Link: [Nomination Form](#)

- Do you want to take your ESAC membership to the next level to lead our efforts? If so, we have just the opportunity! We are accepting nominations for one ESAC chair position to serve alongside chair, Jeff Wacker. You can learn about the roles of the chairs (see ["Article V: Chairs" on p. 6](#)) as you consider nominating yourself or someone else.
- The newly-elected chair will serve June 2020 through May 2022.
- Nominees may be current ESAC members. Please [submit your nomination](#) by Monday, May 13th.
- Elections will be held May 22nd. Please plan to attend this in-person ESAC meeting. Over half of the members must participate to elect the new leadership.



(AISD Staff Update) Transportation

- Our Bus Terminal Shop Team in the Southeast Terminal continues to monitor the performance of our new electric school buses. We are learning about charging times, battery usage, and troubleshooting any issues that may arise.
- We are in the final process of the Request for Quotation for a School Bus Electrification service provider to lead the planning process for school bus electrification and charging infrastructure. The evaluation panel’s recommendations will be presented in this month’s Board Meeting.
- The Long-Range Planning Committee was an ad hoc advisory body established by the superintendent. Executive Director of Transportation and Vehicle Services, Kris Hafezizadeh, is a member of this committee. It aims to prioritize a list of recommended operation strategies related to sustainable transportation including biking to schools and carpooling options.



Energy and Water Management Department

(AISD Staff Update) Energy & Water Updates

- AISD has seen an overall reduction in utility use since 2017. Learn more about our utility conservation efforts [here](#).

	Baseline Year	Last Year	
Utility Use	Jan.-Dec. 2017	Jan.-Dec. 2023	Percent Change
Electricity	163,126,931 (KWh)	149,899,138 (KWh)	-8%
Natural Gas	146,503 (Mcf)	130,412 (Mcf)	-11%
Water	336,322,306 (Gallons)	326,444,463 (Gallons)	-3%
Wastewater	249,470,245 (Gallons)	198,972,428 (Gallons)	-20%

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(AISD Staff Update) US Department of Energy Renew America’s Schools Grant

- AISD’s proposed project: ~\$15M for rooftop solar and/or building automation controls at 16 schools. Please take a peek for [more info about the Department of Energy’s Renew America’s Schools Grant at AISD](#) for the latest updates and timeline.
- In February, AISD posted a public solicitation for a project manager. The submission date was March 5th, and proposals are currently being reviewed.
- This has been a multi-departmental initiative and we are so grateful to AISD’s Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) team, Construction Management, Energy & Water Management, Operations Chief, Network Security, Procurement, Innovation & Development, and others for their hard work with us on this project so far!



(AISD Staff Update) Sustainable Food

- **AISD Food Services invites you to be a Zero Waste Hero! Volunteer at an AISD School During Earth Week on April 24th.** Staff and ESAC members are [invited to volunteer](#) at elementary schools on Wednesday, April 24 to help students sort their lunch waste into compost, recycling, and landfill. After signing up, you will receive an email with a sorting guide that shows which items are for the compost, recycling, and share table, customized to the AISD lunch menu. Staff: Please seek approval from your supervisor before signing up. Thanks to our AISD Food Services team and to volunteers for supporting Earth Week and zero waste at AISD!
- This month we will be celebrating our Salute Employees of the Year with 3 nominees from Travis Early College High School, Mathews/Casis Elementary, and Joslin Elementary
- Our Spring menu will feature new items like spicy lime jicama sticks, fresh cut honeydew melon, BBQ wings and mango habanero drumsticks, and a new sandwich for our secondary students with turkey, bacon, guacamole, lettuce and tomatoes!



(AISD Staff Update) Nature

- **April 8, 2024 Solar Eclipse!** AISD will be OPEN and provide eclipse glasses and outdoor programming for every student. Students will be outside to witness this once in a lifetime event at school. More info here: <https://www.austinisd.org/2024-eclipse>
- **Girls+ Outside:** all ten of our schools had fun, nature-filled days to Pease Park over the winter. This week, we are having BIG gatherings over two days at Mesa Rim Climbing Center to learn new skills! We will wrap up the spring with outings to the grotto at Westcave Preserve in May.
- **2022 Bond Update:** Our Campus Architectural Teams (CATs) have been busy providing input to the design firms working on the full modernizations. Now, the pace of meetings will slow down while the design teams put their ideas to work. We look forward to seeing these visions come into fruition!
- **Metz OWL Center:** In partnership with CoA Watershed, we have happily welcomed students back into the space by hosting Earth School Outside at Metz. The students provide such a welcome presence and perspective, as they draw mock-ups for what they would like to see in the outdoor spaces at the OWL!

(AISD Staff Update) Air Quality

- **Outdoor Particulate Matter Sensors:** The Purple Air Sensor [“Be Air Smart” program](#) was rejuvenated by AISD staff, City of Austin staff, and the Clean Air Force of Central Texas who now have monthly project coordination meetings. The team is currently troubleshooting network connections. The City of Austin will also be funding a Clean Air Force Intern to help with the program.





(ESAC Working Group Update) Amenity Mapping Working Group

- Group leader: Melody Alcazar + Yasmine Anderson
 - Data collection process and tools developed
 - Hosted virtual training + conducted practice site visits at Small MS, Reilly ES
 - Goal to assess all campuses by end of summer, then annually
 - Data will live in spreadsheet until GIS can be integrated



(ESAC Working Group Update) Air Quality Webinar Working Group

- Group leader: Eileen McGinnis
 - We are planning a district-wide AQ awareness webinar on Tues, April 23rd 2-3 pm, with UT Austin researcher Dr. Pawel Misztal (see photo)
 - We'll need help from ESAC members spreading the word about the event; stay tuned for promotional materials the first week of April.

Resources: [ESAC Google Drive](#) | [ESAC Website](#) | [ESAC Subcommittees and Working Groups \(padlet\)](#) | [ESAC Working Group Notes Folders](#) | ESAC listserv: aisd_esac@googlegroups.com | [AISD Advisory Bodies Bulletin](#)

(If you need access to the ESAC Google Drive or listserv, please contact darien.clary@austinisd.org)

Kind regards,
Darien Clary