



AUSTIN ISD

BUDGET



Staffing and Compensation
Preliminary Findings and Recommendations

STAFFING & COMPENSATION SUBCOMMITTEE INTRODUCTION





- **86% of AISD current expenditures are staff salaries and benefits**
 - Proportionate Staffing/Benefits share of \$30 Million Target is > \$24 Million
- **Team was immediately led down a path of examining big ticket proposals where Potential Realizable Savings > \$1 Million**
 - “7 of 8” (\$16.4 Million) vs. Changes to Staff Ratios (Up to \$18.8 Million)
 - Eliminating Central Support Specialists (\$6.8 Million)
 - Reduce extra spending on small schools (\$3.4 Million)
 - Eliminate Holiday Pay for Classified/Aux Employees (\$1.5 Million)
- **Staffing subcommittee did not reach consensus on these “big ticket” items**
 - Still, the Subcommittee had High Level Findings & survey info to share with BSTF
 - Extend our survey to the larger taskforce?

Staffing Subcommittee - High Level Feedback



- **Making “big ticket” recommendations generally made group uncomfortable**
 - Short Evaluation Timeframe made whole process feel like a high pressure sale
 - Group was uncertain how recommendations & guardrails might be used
 - Group felt that potential actions need to be piloted & thoughtfully researched
 - Group was more open in an anonymous survey format
- **Proposing by “Next School Year” may run counter to stated goals/values:**
 - Allowing time for Community Engagement
 - Multi-Year Focus to Hire/Retain/Develop more Highly Experienced Teachers
 - Minimize Impact on the Instructional Core (Requires Actions be Studied/Piloted)
 - Staffing Models present uncertainties for Class Size, Equity & Staff Morale
- **Subcommittee wants community engagement & more analysis by grade level:**
 - Studies by subject area: how class size impacts equity & student performance
 - How Staffing Models would be piloted & implemented (campus & subject levels)
 - Detailed staffing data on Central Admin (similar to the provided Campus staff levels)



SHORT TERM RECOMMENDATIONS



Eliminate Cell Phone Stipends (\$209,000)



- Subcommittee was generally in favor of eliminating cell phone stipends
- No perceived impact on classroom nor student equity
- Recommendation that AISD work with a preferred provider to get a discount for District staff

Teacher Salaries - What we Know/Learned



- **AISD teacher salaries by experience level are:**
 - Above local competition for starting teachers & those with 1-5 years
 - \$3,000-\$5,000 below state average for those with 6+ years of experience
- **PPfT was designed to develop teachers at all levels & may help to close pay gaps**
 - Other actions may also be needed to attract/develop/retain experienced teachers
 - Campus Climate & Job Satisfaction may impact retention more than pay increases
- **AISD has a higher percentage of new, inexperienced teachers than statewide average**
 - Title I campuses tend to have less experienced teachers
 - Title I campuses also experience higher teacher turnover
 - An equity goal should be to reverse these two trends at Title 1 campuses



Recommendation: Targeted teacher salary increases



- **Subcommittee was in favor of finding funds for a small teacher pay raise**
 - Target increases for teachers with less competitive salaries vs. peers
 - Explore bonuses for teachers who stay at a Title I campus for a # of years
 - Support teacher cost of living increases to fit the Austin market
- **Survey exiting teachers for what influenced them most in hiring/leaving**
 - Can the Teacher Climate Survey be leveraged?
- **Total Compensation comparisons should factor in:**
 - AISD Benefits (Social Security, Medical Contribution, Leave Provisions)
 - Workload vs. Peer Districts (Staff Ratios, # of Preps & Sections Taught, “6 of 8”)

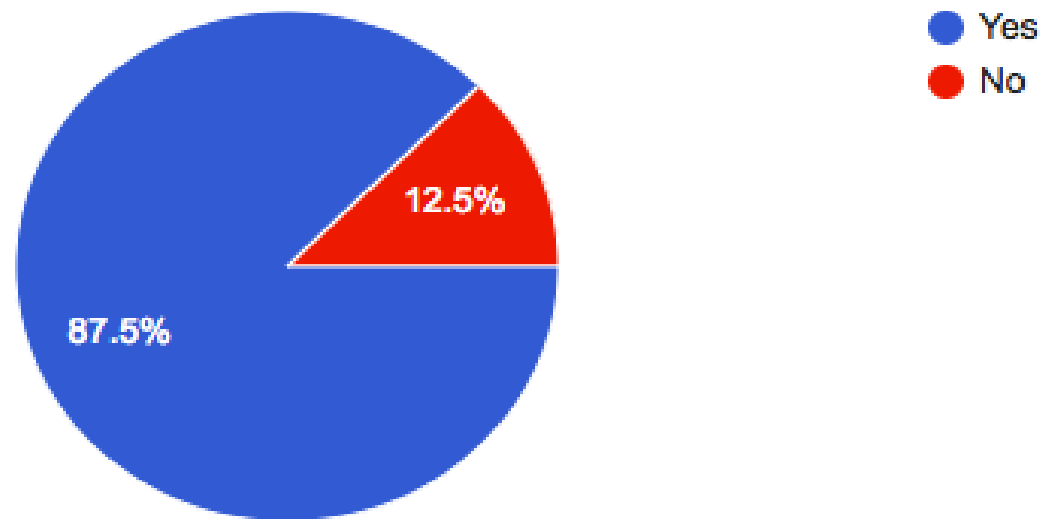


Data on Teacher Pay Raise from Initial S&C Survey



Provide a 1% pay raise for teachers at a cost of \$3.22 Million?

8 responses



Recommendation:

Make Changes - Central Support Specialists Roles



- **Reassignment of positions to campuses as part of a multi-year plan**
 - Idea: Specialists teach one section to stay connected to Instructional Core
 - Informal campus feedback: Current resources spread too thin to be impactful
- **Group had some discussions about full vs. partial elimination**
 - Equity Impact needs to be determined before migrating roles
 - Direct staff reduction next year not seen aligning with staffing goals
- **Strategic Direction requires more forethought**
 - “Should we be doing a lot of things OK or fewer things really well?”
 - “Where are these resources most used and most needed?”
 - “Should these resources be determined at the campus level?”
- *Will not translate into a \$6.8 Million reduction next year, but provides direction*

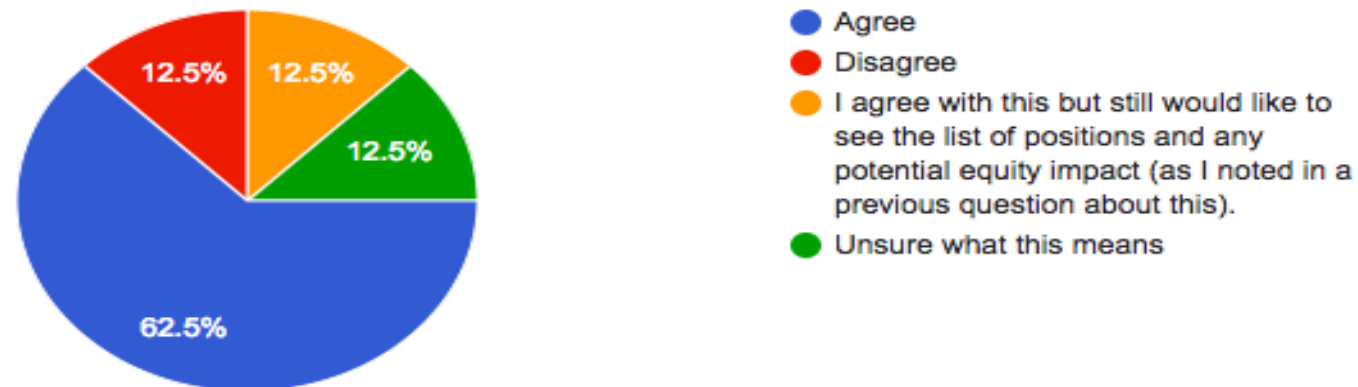


S&C Survey about Central Support Specialist



Regarding Central Support Specialists, team believes resources should be provided at the local school level when possible.

8 responses



SURVEY RESULTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

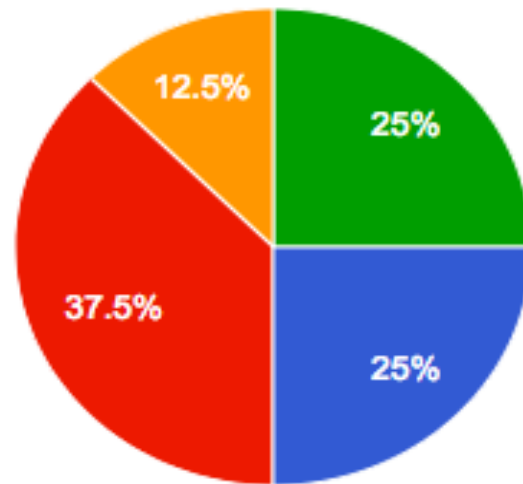


Increase of Staffing Ratio Data



Increase K-4 Staffing Ratio from 22:1 to:

8 responses



- 23:1 at a savings of \$5.53 Million
- 23:1 except at Title 1 & IR Campuses
- 24:1 at a savings of \$9.46 Million
- 24:1 except at Title 1 & IR Campuses
- No Increase

Increase the elementary teacher staffing ratio?



Subcommittee initially leaned slightly in favor of small increase (from 22 to 23:1)

- **When we asked for discussion on this point, verbal support disappeared**
 - Some studies indicate teacher quality = success
 - Other studies indicate adverse impact for Economically Disadvantaged students when class sizes grow
 - Should AISD do it's own study?

Studies on very small class sizes are not relevant to where AISD operates currently

- Concerns exist around any resources being repurposed from K-4 Reading, On Grade Level Literacy, with mixed concerns on ELL/ESL resourcing (General concerns exist on how ELL/ESL strategies are being pursued.)
- There was discussion of after school programs (which might operate at break even) to boost results at Cohort 1 campuses, allowing for changes to staff ratios

If financial climate deteriorates further in future years, this probably gets considered again

- It would be valuable to have the necessary data going forward

Increase the secondary teacher staffing ratio



EARLY ON, the Subcommittee was generally in favor of considering minor increases to secondary staffing ratios, with widely differing opinions on how much & secondary was preferable to K-4

Example Only: An increase from 29:1 to 30:1 = \$3.36 Million

- Group discussion centered around consistently monitoring impact & maintaining existing ratios at Cohort 1 campuses
- With additional discussions, serious questions arose for further study
- Proposal seems counter to attracting/retaining best teachers & goal of not touching classroom experience
- District should investigate further & provide data on outcomes
- This likely comes up again in a future budget cycle
 - Where is AISD vs. peer districts?



MAYBE ITEMS



Reduce Extra Spending on Small Schools (\$3.36Million)



Subcommittee or BSTF needs to discuss this topic further

- Where small school staffing models don't make sense, this might be more of a topic for the team handling school utilization/boundary/consolidation
- Campus size impacts enrichment offerings & electives available to students
- Could have classroom impact if we cut resources to our smallest schools
- Generally, the subcommittee did want to see more adherence to staffing models

Reduce Staff Development Offerings



Subcommittee was generally in favor of departments being more efficient with use of subs (\$135k)

- No perceived impact on classroom nor student equity for a 20% staff development reduction, given the carve outs, but we did want more info on the impact of such an across the board reduction (\$500k)
- *There does seem to be group uncertainty on what the 20% reduction entails*

Eliminate Partial Pay During Extended Leave



Maybe: Team learned how/when this has been used

- This can be a tool to retain staff who have a serious illness or FMLA situation
- With a savings of \$500,000, we believe it should be reviewed
- Why did AISD implement this initially since other Districts do not? Is it a competitive benefit?
- Very limited immediate classroom impact

Eliminate Holiday Pay for Classified Employees



Maybe: Team wanted to see a detailed breakdown of classified/auxiliary employee holiday pay costs by position

- Did not impact classroom
- Has potential equity impacts on the “staff” themselves

Eliminate Surcharge Payments on Retired Applicants (\$120k)



- Maybe: Some members of the team felt we should leave this up to the District.
 - Most of the team felt that surcharge payments should be utilized only for “Hard to Fill” positions - ESL/ELL.
 - Debate on length of time to post positions
 - *Adequate time vs. filling classroom positions quickly*
 - Concern about creating administrative overhead
 - *Potential nightmare to monitor for a small item*
 - Suggestion made to “grandfather” existing rehires

Reduce the Number of Specials Teacher Allocations (Art, Music, PE) to Reallocate \$1.26 Million



- MAYBE: The group was less enthusiastic about this suggestion
 - We want to see the staffing figures for Specials by campus & section
- Topic raises philosophical questions on campus autonomy
 - Is the District or Campus best suited to allocate resources?
 - Post-allocation, how are resource impacts being consistently measured?
 - Who has gotten better results from past decisions?
- General support for campus autonomy
- General support for more adherence to existing staffing models
 - Consistent measures needed to evaluate pilot program effectiveness





OPTIONS NOT
RECOMMENDED



Items considered but not recommended



- Additional Spend
 - Generally, the group could not get behind items of additional spend since we did not find an 86% share of the targeted \$30 million in savings.
 - Compelled to save \$25 million before allocating spend
 - Exception: Bringing Teachers up to market rate of compensation
 - This exception aligns with AISD District goals of attracting/retaining highly qualified teachers.
 - Group did believe targeted stipends only for Cohort 1 campuses should be costed out for consideration
 - \$37.5 Million for all Title 1 campuses just too expensive

Items considered but not recommended



- Additional Spend Items (Continued) -
- The group generally could not justify additional spend when other areas would be cut. Still, areas of interest for future were:
 - Equity Weight in staffing Cohort 1 campuses
 - Extend school day with a meaningful program to boost outcomes, especially where it might break even
 - Stipends for Cohort 1 campuses
 - Guiding principle would be preserving equity, even as resource allocations may need to change in future

Items considered but not recommended



- Areas where there was really less or no savings
 - Eliminating travel stipends
 - Paying mileage leads to potentially larger costs
 - 4 Day Week - Savings is not 20%. It's closer to 5%
 - Scheduling drawbacks; could push students to charters
 - Reduce leave entitlement by one day
 - Not all teachers take all full leave balance = less actual savings
 - Reduction in benefits could impact morale & retention.

Items considered but not recommended



- Moving from “6 of 8” to “7 of 8” in Secondary
 - Despite a potential savings of \$16.4 Million, subcommittee was not in favor for next year
 - Much debate centered on block scheduling changes & offsetting raises, reducing potential savings
 - Staffing formulas would be easier to adjust if AISD found course correction necessary in 2-5 years
 - Ongoing concerns about teacher workloads, retention & PD need to be more carefully researched
 - An “8 of 10” concept was discussed as a new idea, which would also need to be carefully studied/piloted

Items considered but not recommended



- Reduce District Contribution to Healthcare from \$545 to \$225/Employee/Month (=\$42 Million)
 - Not recommended next year because:
 - Not financially or tax efficient for District or teachers
 - \$1 AISD saves reduces Teacher Net Pay by over \$1
 - Essentially a pay cut which likely impacts retention
 - Counterproductive when teacher compensation is not keeping pace with inflation
- For continued review
- Why is AISD higher than surrounding districts?
- Does this impact retention? (Competitive Advantage)

Items considered but not recommended



- Eliminating Professional Pathways for Teachers & National Board Certification Stipends
 - Moves AISD away from attracting/retaining best teachers
 - PPfT was developed at significant cost & collaboration
 - There would be costs to implementing a new program
 - Dallas ACE program is simply too expensive
- Subcommittee instead was more in favor of:
 - Monitoring effectiveness of PPfT
 - Keeping Board Certification Program Stipends
 - Consider adding a formal Mentoring program to PPfT

Items considered but not recommended



- One Day Furlough
- Reduce leave entitlement by one day
 - These were viewed as budgeting “tricks”
 - District should focus on sustainable changes
 - Such items should be reserved for a decision point where it’s an immediate staff reduction or a furlough
 - Reduced leave entitlement may not yield full savings and would be viewed as a takeaway from Benefits (total compensation)
 - Such items impact staff morale

Subcommittee Staffing & Compensation Survey Questions



- Provide a 1% pay raise for non-teaching professionals at a cost of \$590k?
- Provide a 1% pay raise for teachers at a cost of \$3.22 Million?
- Increase K-4 Staffing Ratio from 22:1 to:
- Cell Phone Stipends seem out of line given the current budgetary environment. District could instead find a discount with one or more providers.
- Generally, the team recommends paying surcharges to employee retired applicants only for hard to fill, ESL and Bilingual positions and only when non-retired applicants cannot be found with similar skill sets... Agree or Disagree
- Implement 7 of 8 teaching at a savings of \$16.39 million?
- Eliminate Central Support Specialists at a savings of \$6.8million?
- Would the group be interested in exploring other items like an "8 of 10 concept" where there may be more sections and shorter classes, with some single and some double blocked?





Questions?

