

## **Welcome to the District Advisory Council ....**

On behalf of the Superintendent and the Board of Trustees, welcome to the District Advisory Council (DAC). The DAC is the oldest and largest of all AISD advisory bodies. The DAC is the only district advisory body on which the Superintendent sits as a member, and the DAC is only one of two district advisory bodies on which a Trustee sits as a member. Your input on the DAC helps the district address a wide range of important issues.

As with all district advisory bodies, the DAC has its own website, located at:

<http://www.austinisd.org/advisory-bodies/dac/>

The DAC website includes the DAC membership, meeting schedule, agendas, minutes, and several other resources for your reference.

Your email address will be placed on the DAC email distribution list, through which you will receive announcements of meetings and other information.

If you ever have any questions or need any additional information, please feel free to contact the DAC Coordinator at any time:

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***Please read the following DAC Overview, and become familiar with the other resources on the DAC website.***

## DAC OVERVIEW

Information on the DAC website (<http://www.austinisd.org/advisory-bodies/dac/>) related to this overview:

- ☞ *AISD Glossary (a large collection of acronyms and terms)*
- ☞ *State Laws Pertaining to District and Campus Advisory Councils*
- ☞ *DAC Bylaws*
- ☞ *DAC Annual Report*
- ☞ *DAC Meeting Schedule*
- ☞ *DAC Membership*
- ☞ *Effective Leadership and Basic Parliamentary Procedure*

### **Law**

- State law requires that every public school district have a district advisory council (DAC), and that every school have a campus advisory council (CAC).
- The law also requires that every district annually prepare a district improvement plan (DIP), and that every school annually prepare a campus improvement plan (CIP).
- The law is stated rather generally, but more detailed bylaws have been developed by AISD for its DAC and CACs.

### **DAC Bylaws – DAC Purpose**

- Please become familiar with the entire DAC bylaws – these are just some highlights.
- The mission of the DAC is a broad one – essentially anything the district administration and/or Board of Trustees wants the DAC to provide input on – but it is definitely focused on student performance and ensuring a quality education for all students.
- Like many other large local governments – whether school districts, cities, or counties – AISD has several other advisory bodies that focus on specific issues or concerns, because no single committee can do this effectively. AISD has other committees that focus on particular areas such as special education, English Language Learners, health, bond programs, budget, facilities, and boundaries.
- However, in some cases, the DAC may be asked to provide input into these areas, so that the district can gain a broader perspective.
- The DAC Annual Report provides a good indication of the types of items that may come to the DAC over the course of a year.
- As a standing item on the DAC agenda, the Superintendent provides an update and opportunity for discussion.

### **DAC Bylaws – Meetings**

- Normally, the DAC meets on the third Tuesdays of the month, but there are some exceptions. First, the DAC does not meet in June, July, or December unless there is a special need. In some years, the spring break causes the DAC to push its March meeting to the fourth Tuesday.
- Normally, the DAC meets in the Board Auditorium. However, most Januarys, because of the MLK Monday holiday, the Board meets on Tuesday, and the DAC meets at a campus. The DAC has also on occasion held other meetings at campuses as part of its outreach to CACs.
- Normally, the DAC meets from 4:30 to 6:30, although we try to wrap things up before 6:30 if we can. However, the big exception to this is the annual DAC retreat. For the October meeting, the DAC goes to another location and meets most of the day, usually from around

8:30 to 3:30. (The retreat is considered an excused absence for AISD staff members, and Human Resources pays for teacher substitutes.)

- Like all district advisory bodies, regular meetings of the DAC are open to the public. A standing item on the DAC agenda is citizens communications – about 10 minutes are allotted to hear from citizens. The DAC normally doesn't get too many people showing up for this, but occasionally there are speakers. Also, visitors may be present just to observe.
- From time to time, the DAC may form subcommittees on particular topics. This is normally to allow extra time to address topics that can't be covered in the time span of regular DAC meetings. Subcommittees make recommendations for the full DAC to consider. Participation in subcommittees is totally voluntary.
- DAC members are expected to have regular attendance. We know people have lives and can't make every meeting, but excessive absences could result in us having to find someone else who can attend more regularly.
- The DAC, by its name, is an advisory body, so it doesn't actually approve anything. However, this advisory role is important. The DAC is often asked to provide recommendations, and the DAC must agree on what recommendations to make. The preferred decision-making process is simple consent. In other words, the chair will ask if anyone has a problem, and if not, that's all there is. However, if there is some disagreement, following discussion there will be a call for a motion and a second, and a vote may occur. But don't worry about getting bogged down in parliamentary procedure – it usually doesn't get any more complicated than that.
- As a matter of meeting management, please wait until any people providing updates or presentations are finished before asking questions. And, please raise your hand and be acknowledged by the presiding co-chair before speaking. Please respect if the co-chair needs to bring questions to a close in order to move on in the agenda.

### ***DAC Bylaws – Membership***

- There are a few points of state law related to membership, but most of the membership provisions are determined locally by the district and are part of the bylaws.
- State law requires that the DAC (and CACs) include parents, teachers and other professional staff, community members, and business representatives. But the law doesn't say how many. The law also defines these member categories. For example, a district employee can't serve in a parent member position. This is to ensure a balance of perspectives.
- The bylaws spell out how many people are in each member category. AISD has added categories for principals, Austin Council of PTAs (ACPTA), classified employees, at-large members, and students. The largest chunk of members are based on vertical team representation. There are 12 vertical teams, with 2 parents and 2 teachers from each vertical team – that's 48 people right there. With the other members, the full DAC is about 70 people.
- The term of service for members is two years, but there is no limit on the number of terms. There are a few members who have served multiple terms, but at any given time the average tenure on the DAC is less than two years. In some cases, due to a resignation, a new member may be brought on to fill a partial team.
- Please read over the conflict of interest, conduct, and undue advantage clauses carefully. But in a nutshell, abstain from any item you have any monetary connection to, be polite and respectful to one another, and don't use your position on the DAC to try and get something you wouldn't ordinarily be entitled to.

### ***DAC Bylaws – Co-Chairs and Executive Committee***

- The DAC has two co-chairs – one who is an employee of AISD, and one who is not. The co-chairs served staggered two-year terms, but there are no term limits. The co-chairs have two main functions: to preside over meetings, and to represent the DAC in other functions.

- The DAC also has an Executive Committee, which consists of 12 members, including the two co-chairs, 7 members elected by the DAC, and 3 members selected by the co-chairs to ensure a balanced representation. Executive Committee members serve one-year terms, but there are no term limits. The Executive Committee has three main functions: to set the agendas for DAC meetings, to make certain membership selections, and to serve as a “kitchen cabinet” for the Superintendent, who attends Executive Committee meetings.