

Austin Independent School District

**Environmental Stewardship Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes**

September 27, 2018

5:30 – 7:30 pm

Carruth Administration Center, 1111 W. 6th Street, Board Auditorium

Attendees

Members in Attendance

Pamela Abee Taulli
Aimee Aubin
Jake Carter
Alecia Casper
Colleen Garland
Charlie Gutierrez
Kris Hafezizadeh
Cari Land
Sherry Lepine*
Monica Lopez Magee*
Lauren Maples
Amanda Mortl Walker
Anne Muller
Susan Peterson
Mary Priddy*
Justo Ramirez
Lonnie Sclerandi
Ilya Schmulenson
Richard Shearman
Jeff Wacker
Jessica Wilson

Staff Coordinators in Attendance

Darien Clary

Members Not in Attendance

Bianca Bidiuc Peterson**
Karen Bishop**
Liz Cardinal**
Rob Borowski
Sam DeSanto
Amir Emamian
Colleen Garland
Mary Priddy* **
Cory Skuldt
Melina Martinez
Vivian Perez
Ryan Spencer
Anneliese Tanner
Dub Taylor
James Tosh
Cynthia Wilcox**
Louis Zachary

Visitors

Christopher Stanton
Joe St. James Lopez
Tamera Tate
Amanda Rolich
Kate Martin

Citizens Communication

none

* Indicates Committee Tri-Chair

**Indicates excused absence

Minutes

I. Welcome and Approval of Minutes

The ESAC Tri-chair Monica Lopez Magee facilitated the meeting and called the meeting to order at 5:57pm. The ESAC members each introduced themselves and said something they are excited about related to sustainability for the upcoming year. The ESAC member, Lauren Maples, motioned to approve the May meeting minutes, which was seconded by Sherry Lepine. The meeting minutes were approved with no modifications. Guests introduced themselves.

II. Public Comments & Announcements

There were no citizens communications.

III. Team Building Activity

The ESAC members were seated at group tables with members from subcommittees other than their own. Due to the meeting's late start from delayed arrivals, the formal team building activity was skipped and members were encouraged to introduce themselves to others at the table that they didn't know and chat about their organization and current programs at AISD.

IV . AISD Sustainability Update

The AISD Sustainability Manager, Darien Clary, reviewed the 2004-2018 timeline of ESAC and AISD sustainability milestones and briefed new members on the Sustainability Plan. Darien also updated members on the status of the AISD/PARD Joint Use Agreements. These apply to 23 schools that are jointly owned by AISD and the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) with the intent to enable recreation opportunities while allowing efficient use of tax dollars. Both agencies are working together to revise the agreement to add clarity for design standards and maintenance responsibilities, and to allow for elements that support the Cities Connecting Children to Nature Initiative, outdoor learning, and sustainable land stewardship. New elements in discussion include rain gardens, trails and pathways, meadows and native grasslands, nature play areas, trees, and community gardens. Darien also shared that the District's standard operating Procedures for tree care was created over the summer, and she shared photos from the training that took place with the AISD grounds crew.

V. Action Area Updates

The ESAC Tri-chair, Monica Lopez Magee shared a recent article that highlights the work that ESAC member and AISD Nutrition and Food Services Director, Anneliese Tanner, is doing. The article states: (1) If every student not currently eating school lunch made the choice to do so once a week, all beef served in Austin ISD could be grassfed; (2) If every student not currently eating lunch ate school it twice a week, AISD could serve entirely organic produce; and (3) If students who aren't eating school lunch now ate it three times a week, AISD could serve organic milk at every meal. Monica reminded the ESAC members that the choices we make as parents, teachers, administrators, and community organizations can have a bigger impact. This also indicates that sustainability is a culture within AISD.

Before the ESAC meeting, the AISD Nutrition and Food Services department had appealed to the ESAC to sign a letter in support of the Board adoption of the Good Food Purchasing Program. The letter had been sent via email in advance of the meeting for members to consider their vote. The ESAC members were also given a hard copy of the letter in case they wanted to read it again before the motion to vote. The ESAC member, Aimee Aubin, motioned that the ESAC should sign the letter of support, and Anne Muller seconded the motion. The motion

passes unanimously, and the letter of support was signed by the ESAC chairs, Sherry Lepine and Monica Lopez Magee.

The ESAC Member and AISD Outdoor Learning Specialist, Anne Muller, updated members about the Nature Action Area. They have completed one of their Sustainability Plan strategies by delivering a Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights (COBOR) poster and folder that contained partner flyers and green schoolyard infographics to the principal at every school. An ESAC member asked if there are COBOR posters available in Spanish. Anne shared that they are available for download on the City of Austin web page. Anne also shared that the Girls Outside program started its second year, and is connecting 300 girls to nature and pairing the participants in a mentorship. They had many repeat participants, and this was made possible through a Co-op grant in partnership with Westcave Preserve. Thirty girls from each school are selected to participate in the program. Menchaca had 64 girls apply for their thirty spots, and decided to create a campus-based program so they could all participate. Thirty of the Menchaca students still participated in the official Girls Outside program.

AISD Sustainability Manager, Darien Clary, presented the Energy and Water Action Area slides on behalf of ESAC member and AISD Energy and Water Manager, Richard Shearman. She showed the online utility dashboard that Richard created to enable schools to view and track their water and electricity consumption. Additionally, all schools received a classroom energy checklist to ensure all classes are helping to conserve electricity. The EV for School pilot program, in partnership with Austin Energy, has enabled the installation of electric vehicle charging stations at Kealing Middle, Travis High, Akins High, and Lanier High schools. The ribbon cutting ceremony will be held on November 14th at Akins High School, and all ESAC members are invited to attend. Darien will send the invitations via email. The ESAC member and AISD Outdoor Learning Specialist, Anne Muller, added that EcoRise is developing the curriculum that will accompany the stations, creating opportunities for students to learn about green tech. Students will be able to get the data produced by each charging station for their classroom projects.

The ESAC member and AISD Zero Waste Specialist, Amanda Mortl, provided the Waste and Procurement Action Area Update. The Zero Waste Specialist position was renewed for an additional year with joint funding by AISD and Texas Disposal Systems. Only three school cafeterias are left to get cafeteria compost, after which 100% of school cafeterias will have composting. Amanda also updated the ESAC about the City of Austin Universal Recycling Ordinance and showed the landfill waste diversion rates she calculated for AISD. This is based on dumpster volume, not weights measured. Amanda selected 15 schools to target for a dumpster waste study and targeted training to achieve 50% landfill waste diversion. This would save \$500/month for the 15 schools. When Amanda adds a compost pick up, she helps the school remove a landfill haul. Breakfast in the Classroom and paper towels in the restroom present additional opportunities to divert organic waste from the landfill. An ESAC member noted that there seemed to be inconsistent bin placement in his school and that items did not seem to be sorted correctly. Amanda shared that the standard placement should be landfill (left), Compost (center), Recycle (right) and offered to train schools upon request. As a standard, she provides school trainings when she implements compost. An ESAC member asked where the compost goes, and Amanda responded that it is picked up by the District's hauler, Texas Disposal Systems.

The ESAC Member and AISD Transportation Director, Kris Hafezizadeh, provided the Transportation & Air Quality Action Area update. In his department, Kris is piloting a battery pack that enables the wheelchair access ramp on a bus to function without turning on the

engine. The intent is to reduce the need to idle this bus. The ESAC members will be invited to the forthcoming media event. AISD Sustainability Manager, Darien Clary, mentioned the Clean Air Force of Central Texas no-idling campaign and press conference at Highland Park elementary. AISD also purchased the district's first EV/gas hybrid fleet vehicle because it needed to replace an old vehicle.

Please see Meeting Materials for additional information regarding action area updates.

VI. Strategic Planning Meeting Update

The ESAC Tri-chair Sherry Lepine briefed the members on the strategic planning meeting that took place over the summer. The participants recognized the strengths of the ESAC as a hub of knowledge and expertise and the significant accomplishments that include the Board resolution, the permanent sustainability manager position, and the Sustainability Plan, to name a few. With this awareness, meeting participants explored opportunities to identify how the ESAC can be most productive and of service in the 2018-2019 school year. The following proposed 2018-2019 goals reflect the discussion: (1) Advance strategies in the Sustainability Plan; (2) Advocate for policies, practices, and awareness building in support of Sustainability within AISD; (3) Give voice to the community at-large and create a space that is inclusive of people who have not traditionally been present in sustainability initiatives; (4) Leverage sustainability as a platform for improving academic achievement and the student experience; (5) Create a space for community connection, network building, resource sharing, collaboration, and alignment among the members.

VII. Goal setting and next steps

The ESAC Tri-chair, Monica Lopez Magee, led a discussion about opportunities to engage as ESAC members. She posed the question of how to continue the active work of implementing and updating the strategies while opening new conversations about sustainability. How can the group tie sustainability to bigger AISD and community missions so it is applicable beyond our compartmentalized action area strategies? If we always frame our work along a natural resource, then we are leaving people out of the conversation because sustainability applies to others on a broader level (student achievement, etc.). Think about sustainability as wraparound services for our schools, and be aware of how we are framing the conversation to broaden the reach and inclusivity. Monica posed some ideas and challenged members to think of how they could individually "show up." Suggestions included joining the community engagement subcommittee, implementing a community engagement poster session, getting their organizations to sign a letter of endorsement for the AISD Sustainability Plan, representing the ESAC at an external event, etc. The ESAC member and AISD Transportation Director, Kris Hafezizadeh, asked if the ESAC can meet at schools rather than the central office. Sherry volunteered Fulmore Middle School for a future meeting.

VIII. Slack Training

The ESAC Member and AISD Outdoor Learning Specialist, Anne Muller, trained the ESAC members to use the online Slack platform. There are three ways to access Slack (phone, computer, web). The Food and Nature subcommittee and the AISD Science Department use this as a primary means of communication. The benefits include less emails, quick response and communication, easy-to-find info, and it helps collaborators feel close even without seeing each other frequently. In this respect, it enriches the sense of community within the group.

IX. Request for Information and Future Meetings

No requests were made.

The meeting Motioned by Amanda Mortl Walker and seconded by Kris Hafezizadeh. The meeting adjourned at at 7:37.