

AISD 09-24-2026



WELCOME!

AISD Environmental Stewardship Advisory Committee (ESAC)

September 24, 2026



HELLO!



Aubrey Lethbridge,
ESAC Co-chair



**Lavanya Selvam
Alli,**
ESAC Co-chair



Darien Clary,
Director of
Sustainability,
Energy, and
Environment/Staff
Liaison



**Carsen
Daniel,**
Sustainability
Coordinator/Staff
Liaison



Nia Nickens,
Administrative
Assistant/Staff
Liaison



I. Welcome, Connect, & Celebrate	5:30-5:40
II. Public Comments* & Announcements	5:40-5:50
III. AISD Updates	5:50-6:00
IV. Strategic Meeting Planning Recap	6:00-6:05
V. Working Group Pitches	6:05-6:30
VI. Working Group Activity	6:30-6:55
VII. Final Remarks & Closing	6:55-7:00
VIII. Recycling, Composting, & Landfill Sorting Training	7:00-7:30



Welcome & Connect



Welcome & Connect

We did it!

☆☆☆
Materials
Salvaging!

Roll w/punches
& rise to the
occasion!

Amenity!
Mapping.

Sustainability!
Newsletter.

Student ☆
Solar
Engagement +
Solar Summit!

The year of
the bikebus!
w/ dedicated staff
Vol's (but still a
work in progress)!

"I joined the ESAC because I wanted to support my community and foster green minds across AISD."

"I'm advocating for indoor air quality and public health in public schools."

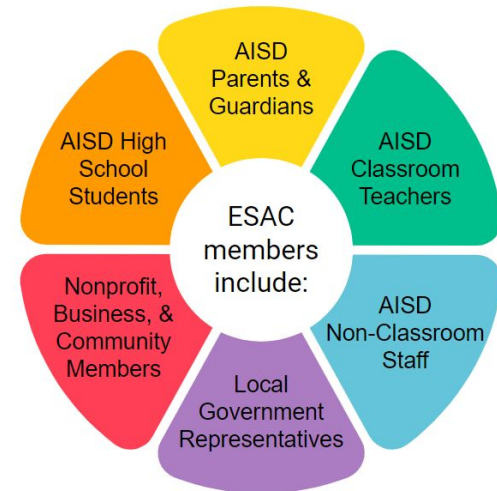
"ESAC is important for every child and educator. I am thrilled to see the interest in sustainability. It is my passion on a larger scale."

"I joined ESAC to get more people on bikes!"

"I am on the ESAC because I love the work we do! So many interests, we can all make a small difference in our own way, and collectively, it's amazing to witness!"

ESAC Purpose: To engage AISD students, staff, parents, and community members in advancing environmental education and sustainable operations that enhance learning and support resilient, healthy, and equitable school communities.

Learn More



To accomplish its purpose, the ESAC shall:

- Serve as an advisory body to the Superintendent
- Foster communication & collaboration among members
- Serve as a means for members & the public to remain current in the status of sustainability and related initiatives at AISD.
- Support the [2011 Environmental Sustainability Policy \(CL\)LOCAL](#) and ongoing efforts to reach new heights for sustainability in infrastructure and operations, teaching and learning, and community engagement.

Reminders about ESAC

ESAC Has a listserv!

AISD_esac@googlegroups.com please use it for sharing news, info, updates with your ESAC colleagues.

ESAC has a google share drive! tinyurl.com/ESACfiles

Please keep your subcommittee files here. You can also access templates and see what other subcommittees are up to! We will add members to the drive.

ESAC has a website!

www.austinisd.org/advisory-bodies/esac Great for knowing when meetings take place, reviewing previous meeting materials/videos, seeing general info about the committee.

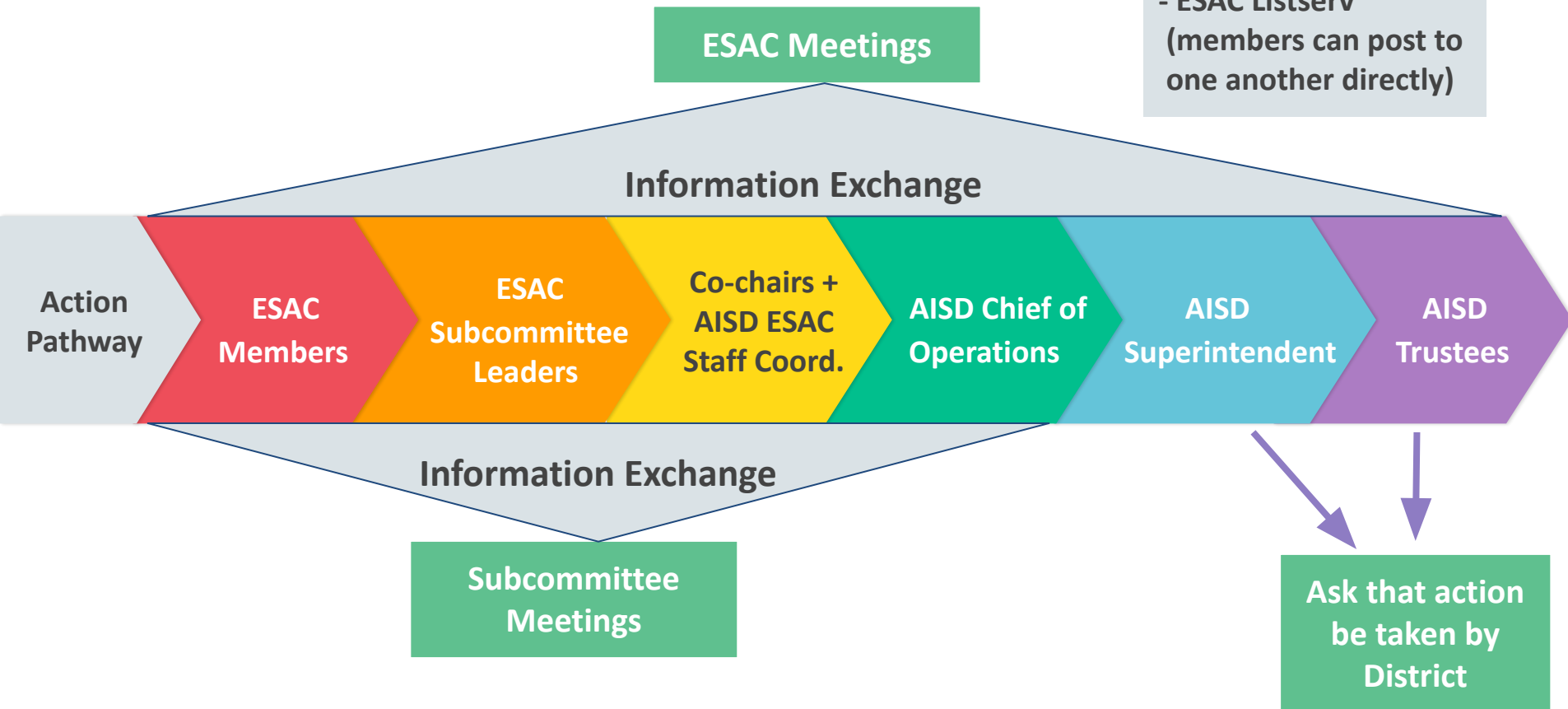


NEW! ESAC Bio Book



Information & Action Flow

Communication tools:
- Board Updates
- ESAC Listserv
(members can post to one another directly)



Approve Minutes



Public Comments

Visit austinisd.org/aisdhelp to submit public comments by noon the day of the meeting



Announcements



How to become an AISD Volunteer



**Calling all New
& Returning**



VOLUNTEERS

It's time to submit your annual background check!



Join the Austin ISD
Volunteer Program!

austinisd.voly.org

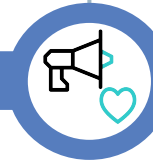
Volunteer Sign-up

Volunteers create
an account
austinisd.voly.org



Opportunity Selection

Volunteer signs up
to their selected
opportunities



A background check is
processed
*Processing time: 1 -5
business days*

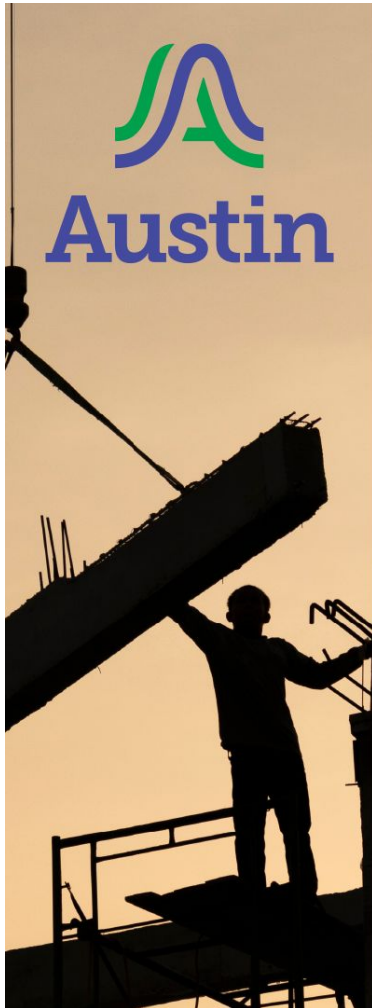
Background Check



Volunteers uplift
our schools

Volunteer!

www.austinisd.voly.org



SAVE THE DATE

Austin Sustainable Building
Materials Forum
Friday, Nov. 13, 2026



Design, (de)construction, and
the circular economy!

Free sessions, panels, and
exhibits, approx. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Learn more + get updates



**GREEN SCHOOLS
CONFERENCE**

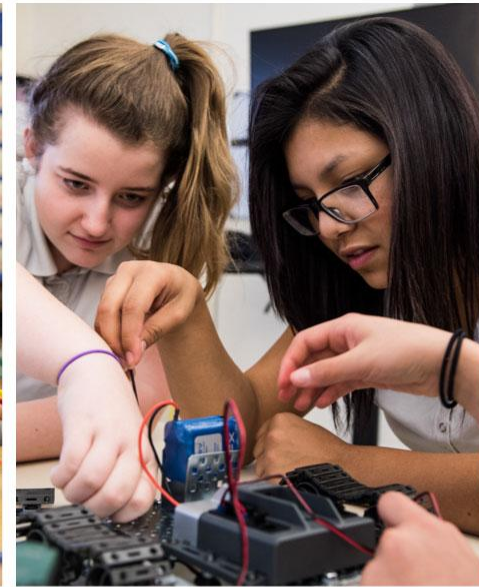
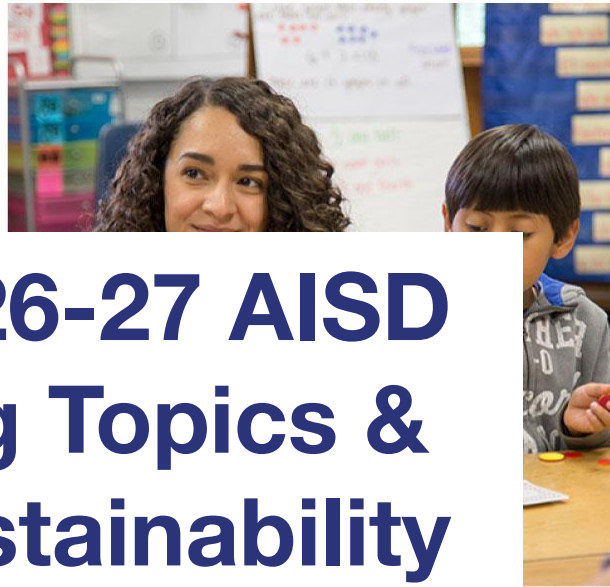


Austin, Texas

February 8-10, 2027

Hyatt Regency

Join us for sessions and local tours featuring
Austin ISD projects and presenters!



2026-27 AISD Big Topics & Sustainability



Budget Update

More Info: www.austinisd.org/budget

- **Update:** In June 2026, the Austin ISD Board of Trustees approved the 2026-27 budget with more than \$200 million in cuts. AISD will need to make up another \$60 million by the 2027-28 budget.
- **Some contributing factors:**
 - Recapture (“Robin Hood”) payment, high annual operating costs, projected property tax revenues came in lower than expected, State of Texas Student per-student allotment not sufficient.
- **Strategies that have been implemented**
 - Staff changes (layoffs, reorgs, hiring freeze, overtime reduction, etc.), school consolidations, transportation policy changes, real estate sales, student technology reduction, scaling down partnerships/programs, reduction in planning time for some campuses.



2022 Bond Modernization & Open Concept Projects	LEED Certification Targeted	AEGB Certification Targeted	AISD Sustainability Scorecard Targeted
Cook Elementary School			X
Oak Hill Elementary School			X
Odom Elementary School			X
Williams Elementary School			X
Harris Elementary School	X	X	
Allison Elementary School	X	X	
Linder Elementary School	X	X	
Wooten Elementary School	X	X	
Barrington Elementary School	X	X	
Sadler Means YWLA	X	X	
Anderson High School	X	X	
McCallum High School	X	X	
Andrews Elementary School	X	X	
Burnet Middle School	X	X	
Crockett Early College High School Phase 1	X	X	
Navarro Early College High School Phase 1	TBD	TBD	TBD
Oak Springs Elementary School	X	X	
Travis Early College High School	X	X	
Langford Elementary School	X	X	
Houston Elementary	X	X	
Pecan Springs Elementary	X	X	
LBJ Early College High School	X	X	
Northeast Early College High School	X	X	

2022 Bond Modernization and Open Concept Projects	LEED Certification Targeted	AEGB Certification Targeted	AISD Sustainability Scorecard Targeted
Martin Middle School Phase 1			X
Wooldridge Elementary School	X	X	
Hill Elementary School Phase 2	TBD	TBD	TBD
O. Henry Middle School Phase 1	TBD	TBD	TBD
Austin High School Phase 2	TBD	TBD	TBD
Dobie Middle School Phase 1			X



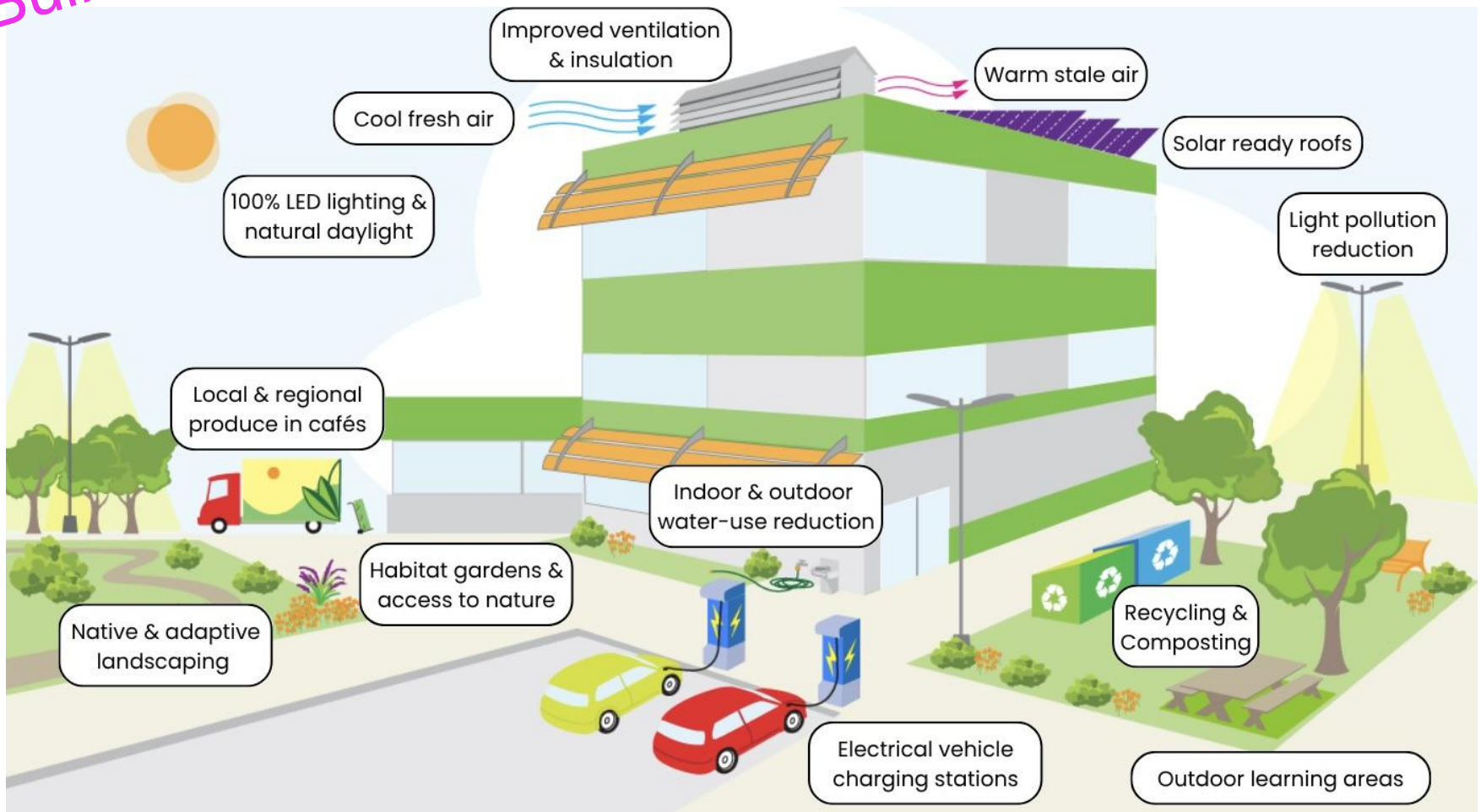
Doss Elementary
A school in the Trees
LEED Gold | AEGB 4-star

- Schools undergoing bond construction, timelines, etc: <https://bond.austinschools.org>
- 31 schools, 8 facilities/athletic centers will be newly build or have major renovations, plus other projects districtwide.
- Construction complete 2028

Why Green Building?



**BOND
PROGRAM**
AUSTIN ISD 2022



AISD Sustainability-Related Updates

Texas Civilian Conservation Corps

This summer, Sydnie Levell, AISD Urban Forester, worked with Texas Civilian Conservation Corps to get our campus trees ready for this school year.



Congrats to Sydnie for winning the International Society of Arboriculture Texas Chapter the **Arboreal Project of the Year** for her work with TxCC.

2022 Bond: Indoor Materials Salvaging

AISD partnered with Austin Creative Reuse to save thousands of pounds of school supplies from Linder, Oak Springs, and Barrington.



Educator Extravaganza: AISD Sustainability x Austin Creative Reuse (ACR)

On Aug. 8, AISD Sustainability and Austin Creative Reuse hosted a resource fair supplying teachers with reused materials from consolidated schools. Thank you to our featured community partners: Austin Climate Action & Resilience, Austin Energy All-Stars, EcoRise, Keep Austin Beautiful, PEAS, and Ghisallo Cycling Initiative!



Greenhouse Gas Inventory

We have completed our first Greenhouse Gas Inventory with an Environmental Defense Fund intern with the US Green Building Council.

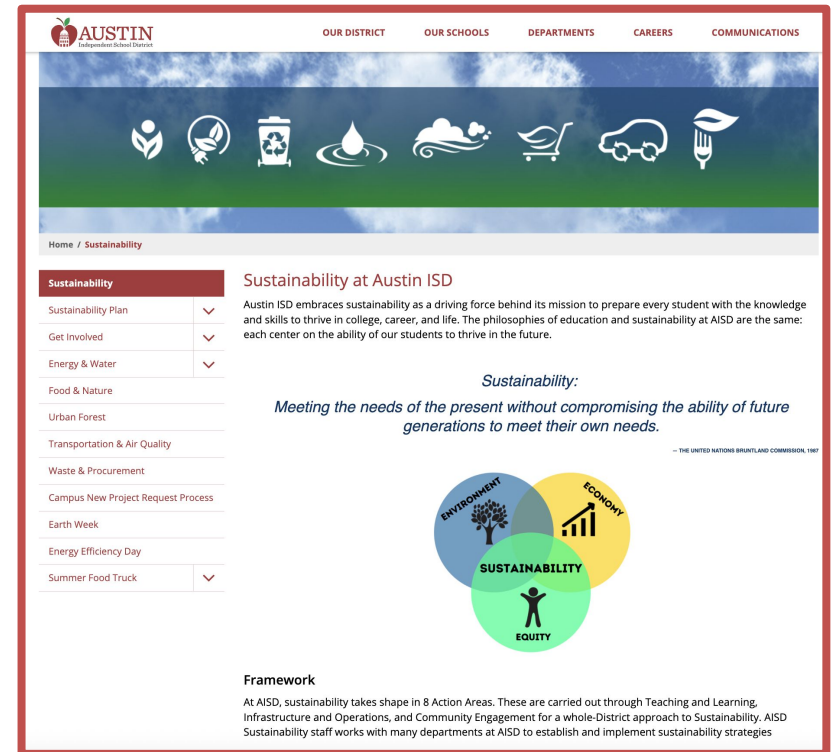


Solar for Schools



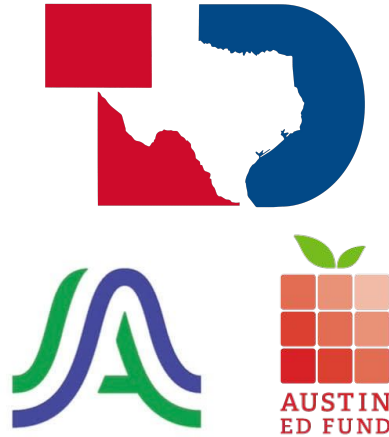
Updated Website (in progress!)

austinisd.org/sustainability





National Wildlife Federation (NWF) EcoSchool Certifications



NWF Eco-Schools Honors: 13 AISD campuses earned certifications, led by Odom and Maplewood Elementary achieving top Green Flag status through student-led Green Teams.

Green Team Leaders Accelerator Program: We are partnering with NWF Eco-Schools to support 40 teacher-leaders district-wide, funded by TDS, Austin Ed Fund, and the City of Austin.



Austin ISD Schools Awarded National Wildlife Federation Eco-Schools Certifications

 Certification Level	Campus
Green Flag (top honor)	Maplewood Elementary Odom Elementary
Gold	Garza Independence High School General Marshall Middle School Gus Garcia YMLA
Silver	TA Brown Elementary Navarro ECHS Overton Elementary Sunset Valley Elementary
Bronze	Galindo Elementary Linder Elementary Kealing Middle School Norman-Sims Elementary



Composting & Recycling Competition

(October 1-31, 2026)



Our **Golden Trashcan Awards**, in partnership with Texas Disposal Systems, are back & **with a new addition!** Thanks to a generous donation from HEB, we will be having a composting and recycling competition for the month of October. The top 20 schools from waste surveys will be competing for the grand prize of a Golden Trashcan Trophy and \$5,000 in cash (top 3). The other 17 schools will receive an HEB gift card. Awards will be presented in mid-November, around **Texas Recycles Day**.



CIP Optional Goal: Sustainability

Goal 1. Systemic Support & Opportunity: Ensuring district-level alignment to meet the diverse needs of every learner.

Performance Objective 1: (TEC) 100% of campuses will develop a program or initiative to enhance community collaboration and facilitate parental involvement at the school.

Strategy. Host events with your families and campus community, such as It's My Park Day, Keep Austin Beautiful Day, a Campus Campout, or a Roots & Wings Festival

Performance Objective 2: (TEC) 100% of campuses will implement coordinated school health activities, using data to demonstrate measurable gains in student and staff well-being, directly contributing to campus improvement goals.

- ***Strategy 1 & 2.*** Sustainable Food & School Gardens
- ***Strategy 3:*** *Outdoor Learning.*
- ***Strategy 4:*** *Healthy Air Quality.*

Performance Objective 3: (TEC) 100% of campuses will review their campus data to create, at minimum, one violence prevention strategy in their Campus Improvement Plans.

Strategy: Incorporate outside time and outdoor learning experiences for students starting in PreK through 12th grade as a violence prevention strategy.

Guide: Add Sustainability to "Optional" section of CIP!

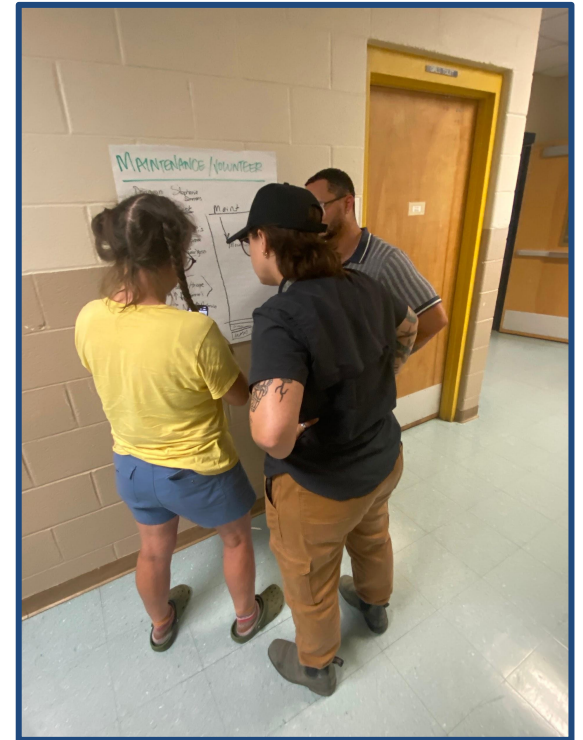
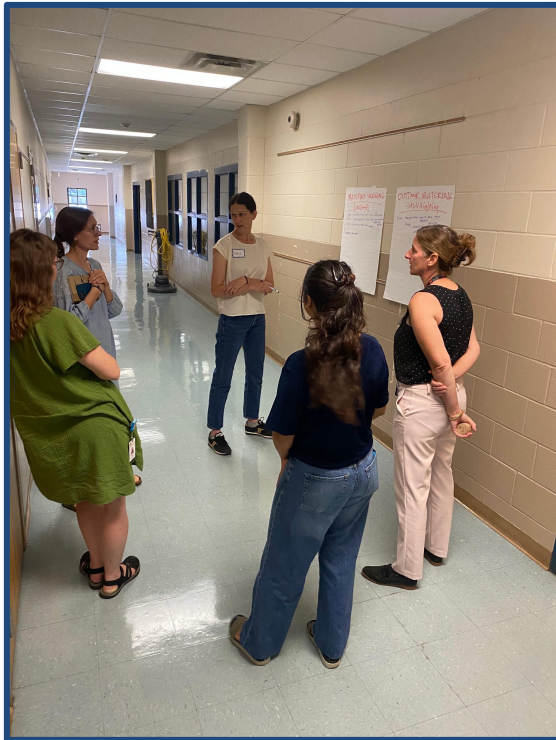


Sustainability Topics

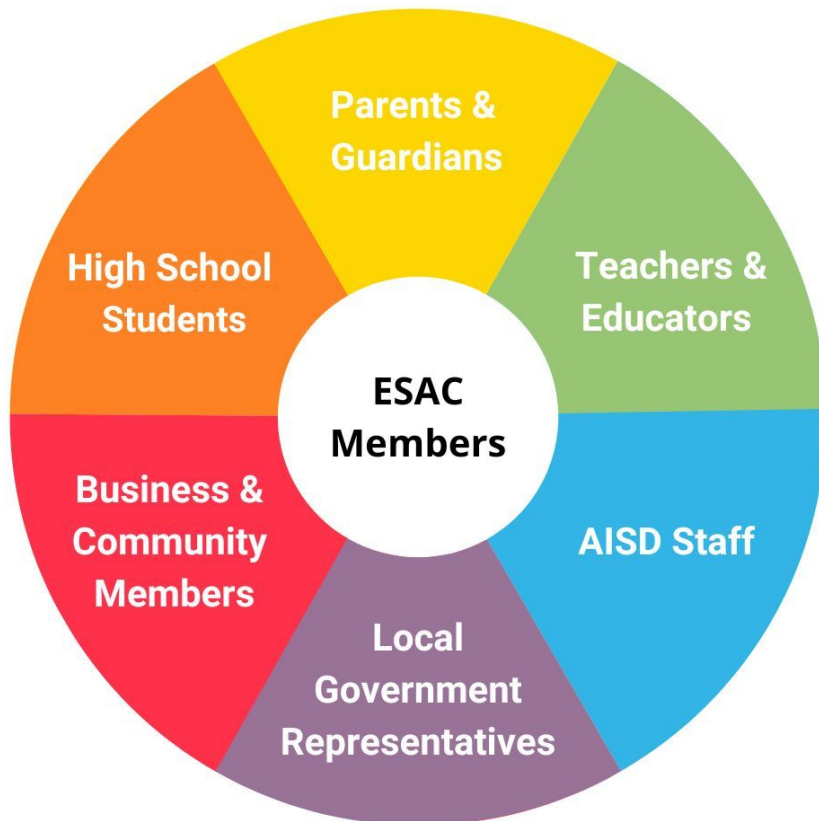
Energy & Water Conservation | Renewable Energy | Outdoor Learning | Active & Sustainable Transportation | Air Quality | Environmentally & Ethically Responsible Purchasing | Zero Waste, Recycling, Composting | Sustainable Food Systems | Environmental Justice | and more!

Strategic Planning Recap

Membership | Working Groups



ESAC Members

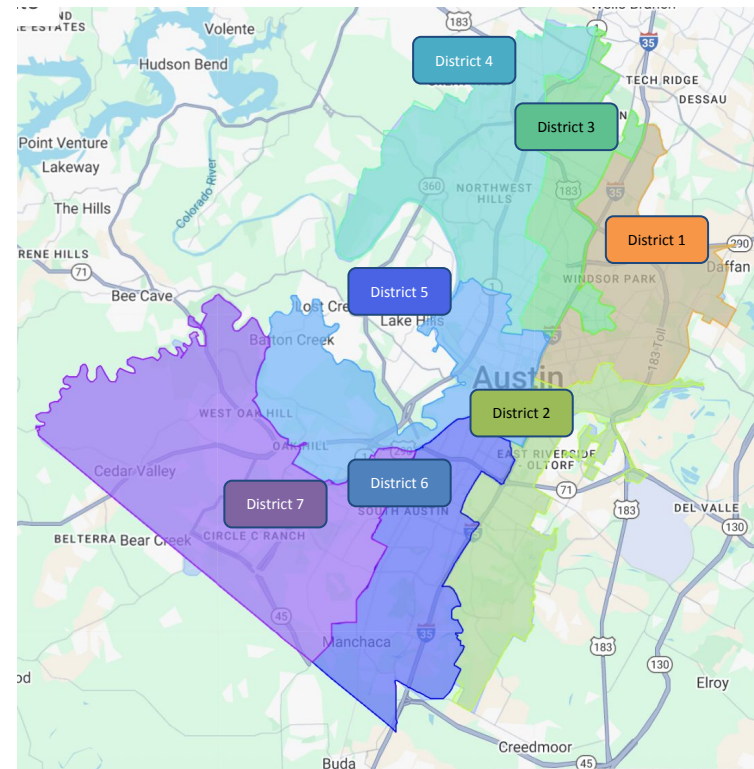
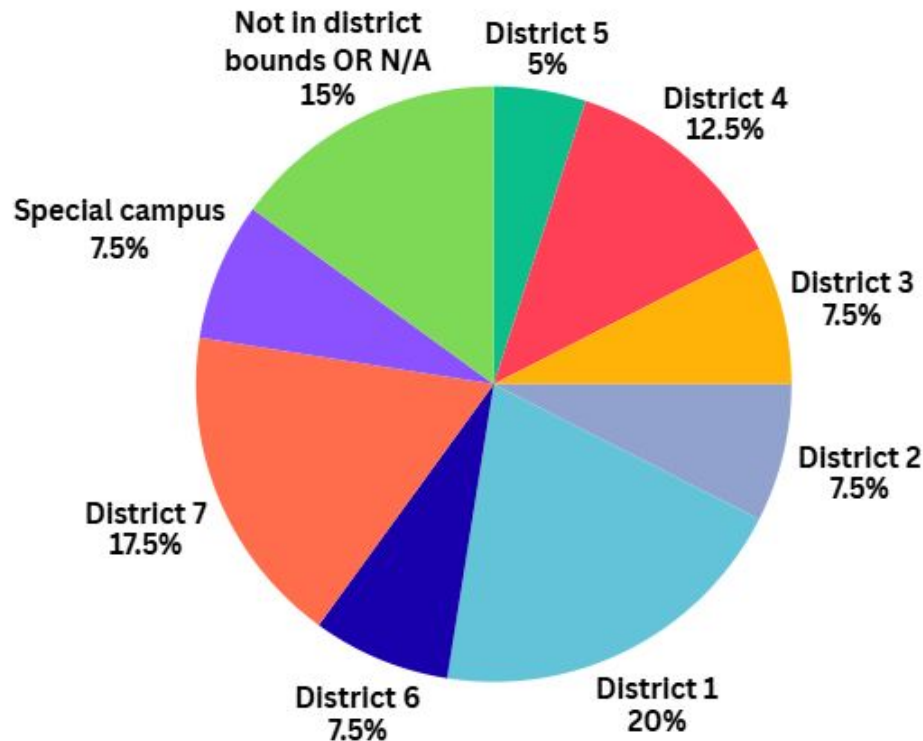


- 6 AISD high school students
 - **1 open position**
- 6 parents of AISD students
 - *No open positions*
- 6 AISD classroom teachers
 - **2 open positions**
- 6 AISD non-classroom staff
 - *No open position*
- 12 representatives from businesses, nonprofits, & the community
 - *No open positions*
- 6 representatives from local government
 - *No open position*
- Total = 42 voting member positions



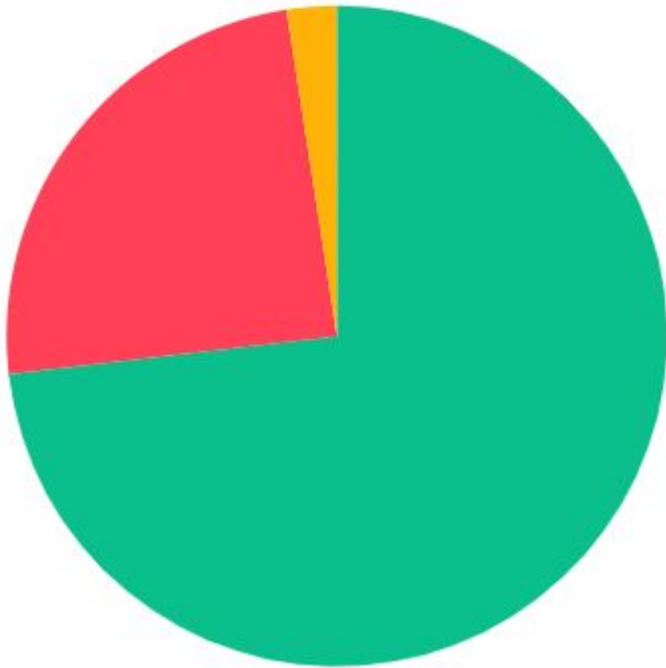
APPLY HERE!

SY 2026-27 Members

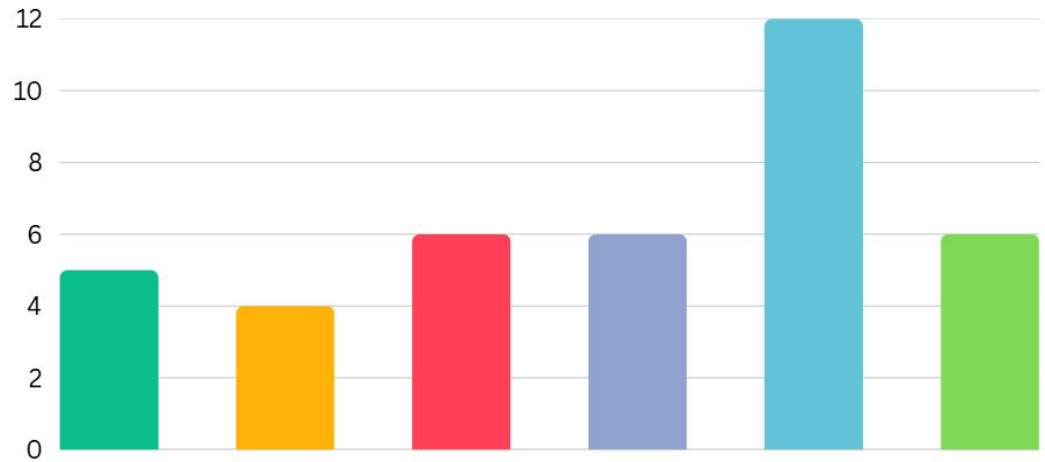


SY 2026-2027 Members

Female Male Nonbinary

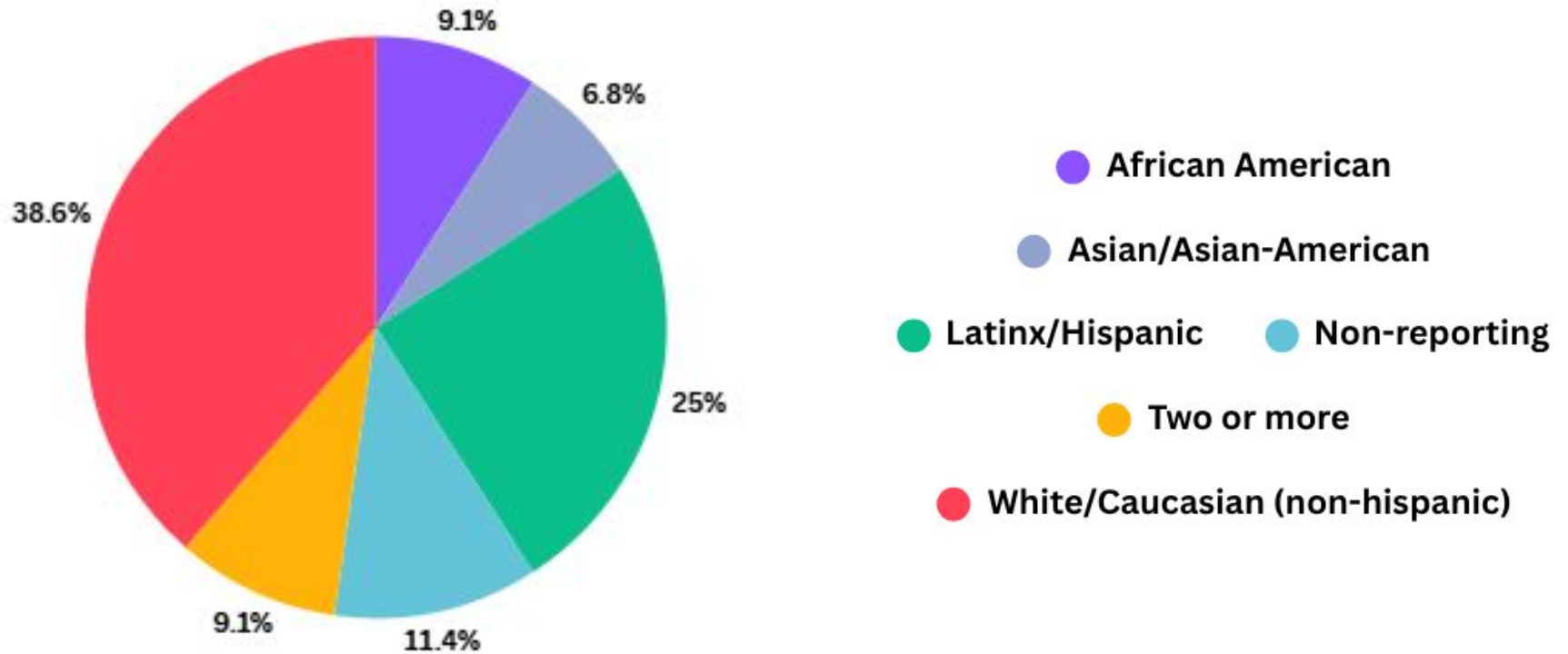


Students Classroom Teachers Parent/Guardian
Non-classroom employee Business, nonprofit, community member
Local government



SY 2026-27 Members (cont'd)

Ethnicity - How do you identify?



2026-27 Working Groups

Propose a group or join one here:
tinyurl.com/ESACWorkGroups



Forming a Subcommittee / Working Group

Propose a group or join one here:
tinyurl.com/ESACWorkGroups

- Any ESAC member may propose a Working Group or Subcommittee.
- The proposer should have the capacity to (co-)lead or find someone for the role.
- (Co-)lead responsibilities include:
 - Ensure meaningful participation for members
 - Organize/host meetings and communicate about activities
- **Every ESAC member should serve on at least one group.**



We can help make connections!



Refresher: Working Group Best Practices

- Each ESAC member should participate in at least 1 Working Group each year.
- Each Working Group should have 2+ participants.
- Co-leadership is encouraged.
- Working Groups follow the guidelines for subcommittees in the ESAC bylaws.
- A Working Group could form around a specific activity(ies). Once that activity is complete, they can decide to sunset or continue to meet if a related opportunity arises.
- Each Working Group should provide regular updates to the ESAC (newsletters, meetings)



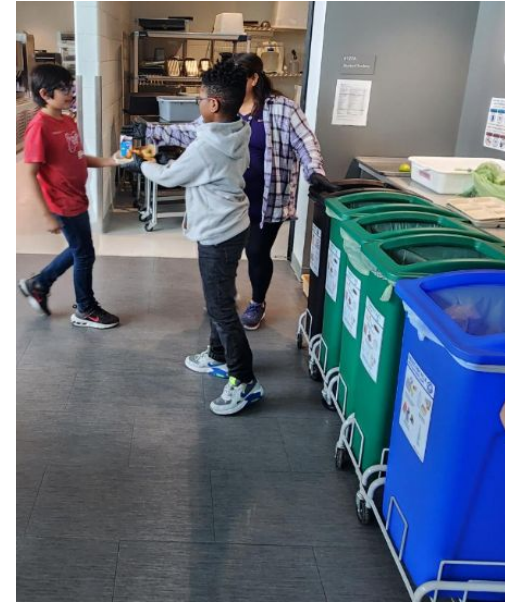
Tips for Working Group Success

- Needs based vs. passionate projects, make sure these are aligned
- Making and asking for realistic commitments
- What does success mean? Define it!
- Don't get frustrated, get connected and get inspired
- Focus: Picking something reasonably sized and actionable to start
 - SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time bound)



Working Group Pitches

- **Fragrance Free Zones** | Gabriela M
- **Cafeteria Zero Waste** | Lavanya & Jengo
- **Nature Healing** | Joanna
- **Habitat Maintenance & Protection** | Stephanie
- **Building Deconstruction Material Salvage** | Mary
- **Civic Engagement & Advocacy** | Cate
- **Energy & Water Conservation** | Rey
- **Active & Sustainable Transportation** | Bobby
- **Others?**



Briefly:

- Introduce yourself
- Describe your working group and general aims
- If known, share when you are most available to meet

HABITAT MAINTENANCE & PROTECTION

Mission:

ACTIVELY and INTENTIONALLY
MAINTAIN and PROTECT the living
 ecosystems and their supporting
 infrastructure on AISD campuses in support
 of [AISD's Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights](#).



Maintain & Protect	Wildlife	Students	Community
Food	✓	✓	✓
Water	✓	✓	✓
Cover	✓	✓	✓
Place to Raise Young	✓	✓	✓



HABITAT MAINTENANCE & PROTECTION

♥ Members will have a **DIRECT IMPACT** on the health of campus habitats for ALL to benefit ♥

Goal(s)

- **DOCUMENT:** Develop standard identification mechanisms for **HABITAT ASSETS**
- **COMMUNICATE:** Develop a communication process to support their respective maintenance and protection needs.
- **DEPLOY:** Embed maintenance and protection needs into existing AISD services.
- **Develop and Deploy processes to all AISD Campuses in 3-years.**

Group Lead(s):

- **Stephanie Simmons**
(TheFeralLandscaper@gmail.com)
- **(co-lead "A" welcome!)**
- **(co-lead "B" welcome!)**

AISD Staff Champions:

- AISD Forester ← Year 1
- AISD Facilities ← Year 1
- AISD Irrigator ← Year 1 when hired
- AISD GIS team ← Year 2
- AISD Legal & Contract Managers ← Year 3



Improving Indoor Air Quality in Schools

Fragrance Free School Zones

Indoor Air Quality - *Why is this important?*

September 23, 2025- **United Nations, NYC**

-This event launched the **Global Pledge for Healthy Indoor Air** – the first international effort to formally recognize **clean indoor air as a basic human right** essential to health and well-being.



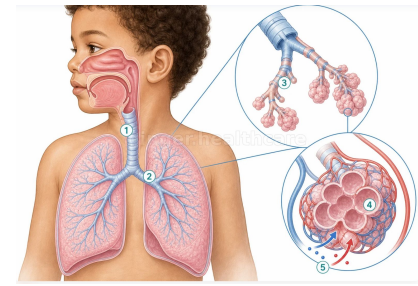
One source of indoor air pollution
that we can modify....

Fragrances e.g.

- Perfumes
- Lotions
- Air fresheners
- School supplies



Fragrances



- Fragrances are a source of indoor air pollution
- Fragrances are volatile organic compounds (VOC)
- Most fragrances are a mixture of many chemical compounds that are largely **unregulated** and **undisclosed** in the U.S.
- **Children and older individuals** with respiratory conditions are at **greatest risk** of experiencing health problems
 - Children breath more air relative to their body size ~ they inhale a higher concentration of VOCs

Recommendations

- Several medical organizations recommend **removing or reducing fragrances from school environments** due to the potential to exacerbate asthma and other lung diseases in children and adults
 - Asthma #1 reason for school absenteeism
 - Prevalence of asthma higher in population with high poverty rates



Atopic diseases: eczema, rosacea, psoriasis

- Estimated that 10-20% of school children are affected by eczema.
- Fragrance is a known irritant to children and adults with conditions such as eczema, rosacea, and psoriasis.
- Recommended that these populations **avoid products with fragrances**



Existing AISD policy prohibiting air fresheners

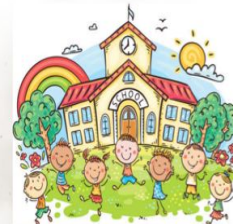
- Teacher training Indoor environmental quality module #7

AISD Indoor Air Quality

Keep our schools healthy: avoid air fresheners & plug-ins

Air fresheners and plug-ins might smell nice, but they don't actually clean the air. Instead, they add extra chemicals that can trigger headaches, allergies, or asthma. Staff are not permitted to bring cleaning products, pesticides, air fresheners, or other chemicals into schools. Maintaining a fragrance-free environment helps protect student and staff health, and supports academic success.

Did you know? Reasons to avoid artificial air fresheners:



01 They Add Pollution to Indoor Air

Most air fresheners and plug-ins release volatile organic compounds (VOCs). These chemicals do not clean the air—they add contaminants. In classrooms, these pollutants can build up quickly and reduce indoor air quality (IAQ).

02 They Trigger Asthma & Allergies

Fragranced products are common triggers for asthma attacks, headaches, allergic reactions, and respiratory irritation. Children are especially vulnerable because their lungs are still developing.

03 They Mask Problems Instead of Fixing Them

Air fresheners do not remove odors—they cover them up. Odors can sometimes be a helpful indicator of underlying building conditions, such as moisture, plumbing issues, or ventilation that may need attention. Masking smells may delay proper maintenance.



04 They Create Accessibility Concerns

Fragranced environments can make schools inaccessible for students and staff with asthma, chemical sensitivities, migraines, or chronic respiratory conditions. A scent-free environment supports health, equity, and inclusion.

Learn more:
American Lung
Association



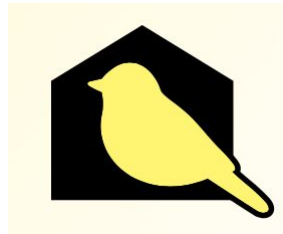
Contact:
sustainability@austinsisd.org
austinsisd.org/sustainability/indoor-air-quality

For more information see
the [board policy](#) [here](#)



Goals

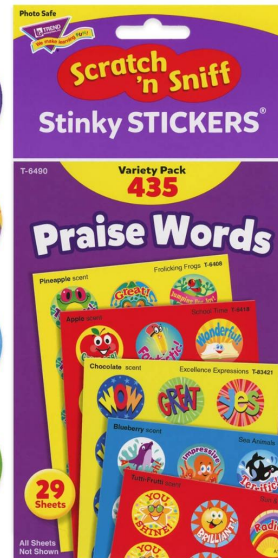
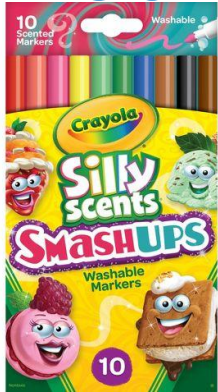
- Establish at least 3 schools as “Fragrance Free School Zones” this school year
- Create more awareness in schools about AISD policy prohibiting air fresheners
- Have AISD sign the *United Nations Air Club* pledge for healthy indoor air.



Draft Plan for implementation of *“fragrance free zone schools”* SY 26-27



Examples of school materials that would not be used inside the school

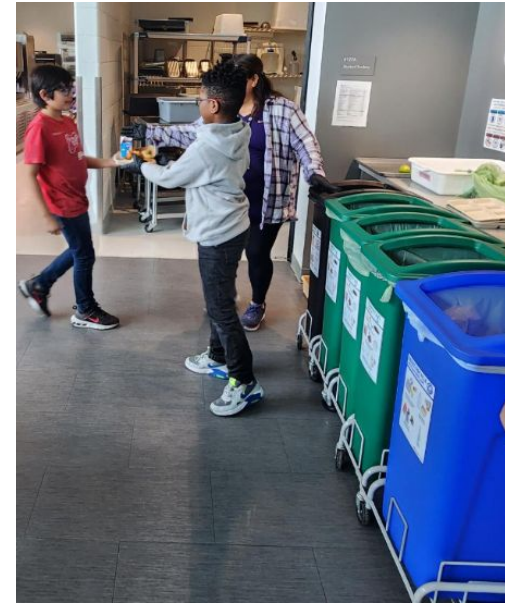


Examples of products that should not be used inside the school or by students /staff



Working Group Pitches

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Briefly:

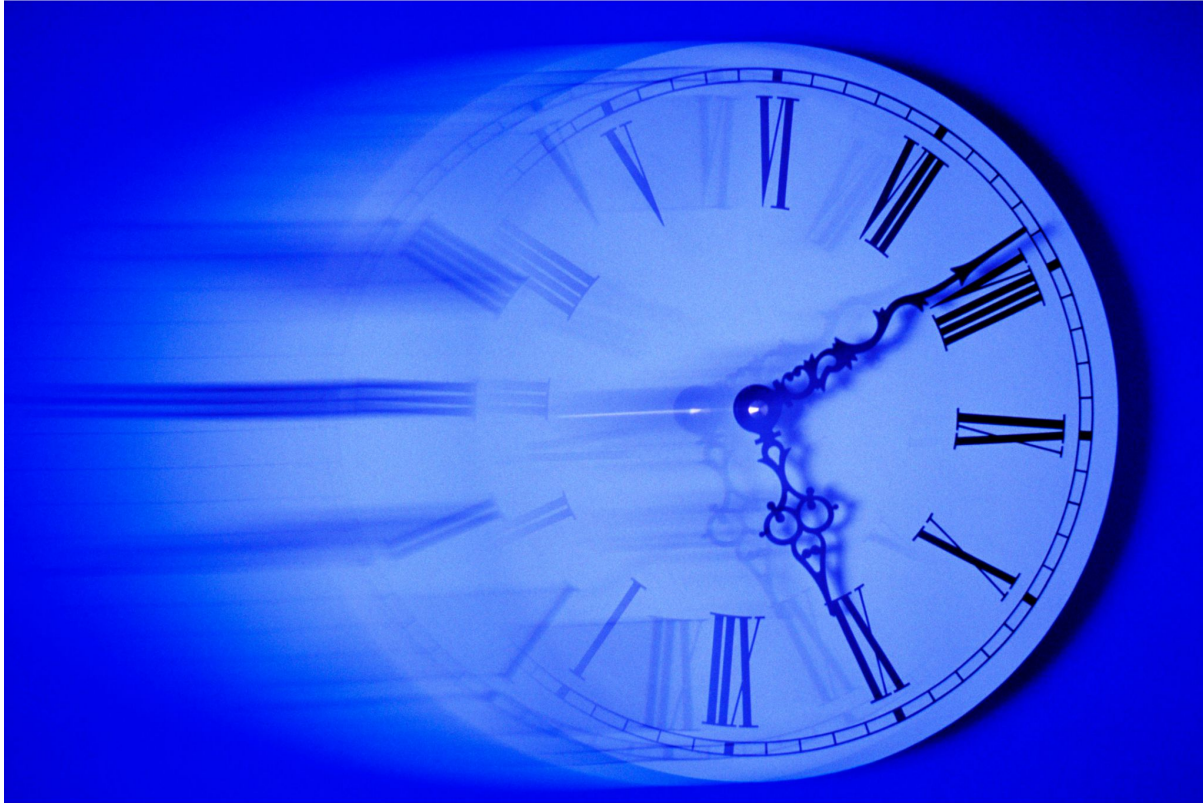
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2026-27 Working Groups

Propose a group or join one here:

tinyurl.com/ESACWorkGroups





Working
Group Tracker

Come back together at 6:55!



Recycling, Composting, and Landfill Sorting Training - Jengo Russell (Texas Disposal Systems)

COMPOST COMPOST 	MIXED RECYCLE RECICLAJE MEZCLADO 	LANDFILL BASURERO 
Any Food Scraps Cualquier resto de alimentos  Compostable Containers and Utensils Recipientes y utensilios compostables  Soiled Cardboard and Paper Cartones y papeles sucios  Updated 4/2024	Clean Paper & Cardboard Papel y cartón limpio  Empty Hard Plastics Including cereal bowls, apple sauce and fruit cups, fruit and vegetable serving containers Plásticos duros vacíos Incluye tazones de cereal, puques de manzana y taza de frutas, recipientes para servir frutas y verduras  Rinsed/Empty Aluminum Aluminio enjuagado o vacíos  Glass Vidrio  Updated 4/2024	Plastic Bags, Wrappers, Film, etc. Bolsas, envoltorios, film plástico y mas  Lined Paper Papel revestido  Plastic Utensils Utensilios de plástico  Styrofoam Poliestireno  Updated 4/2024



SY 26-27 Meeting Dates

All meetings are 5:30-7:30pm.

- September 24, 2026
(in-person, Harris ES)
- ★ November 17, 2026 (virtual)
- January 28, 2027 (virtual)
- April 1, 2027 (virtual)
- May 19, 2027
(in-person, location TBD)





**THANK YOU for all you do to help AISD
be green!**

