

MEETING MINUTES
Austin Independent School District
Environmental Stewardship Advisory Committee
Virtual
March 25, 2026 | 5:30-7:30 pm

The AISD Environmental Stewardship Advisory Committee met at General Marshall Middle School on March 25, 2026 to consider, discuss, and take action on the items listed in the agenda. These meeting minutes are supplemented by the meeting materials, which can be accessed on the [ESAC website](#).

Attendees

Members in Attendance

*Lavanya Alli
*Catherine Martinez
Navvab Taylor
Tracy Geraldez
Waliya Lari
Alicia Kim
Rey Torres
Jen Cregar
Stephanie Simmons
Melody Alcazar
Brian Pena
Ashleigh Pettus
Bonita Gray
Mandi Golman
Arianna Colastani
Jeff Wacker
Jen Cregar
Reynaldo Torres
Jim Stephens
Mary Petrovich
Carinne Maravilla
Tamara Tate
Kevin Lanza
Selene Castillo
Matthew Garland
Erica Sterling
Julie Gutierrez
Sahana Ranganathan

Visitors in Attendance

Katrina Montgomery
Alex Terrazas
David Simon

Brian Pena
Adriana Cedillo
Amir Emamian
Colleen Garland
Amanda Mortl
Amber Fowler
Gabriela Macias
Crystal Batty
Jengo Wiley Russell
Katori Maeder
Julian Moreno
Cristy Garcia

Staff Coordinators in Attendance

Darien Clary
Carsen Daniel
Nia Nickens

Members Not in Attendance

Luca Sims
Delaney Lavelle
Juan Gomez
Sara Montoya
Bobby Sandoval
Nicole Howard
Azocena Salinas
Gabriella Bermea
Kathleen Cane
Aubrey Lethbridge

Citizens Communion

None

* Indicates Committee Co-chair

** Indicates excused absence

Minutes

I. Welcome & Connect

The meeting began at 5:33 pm. Lavanya Alli, the ESAC Co-Chair, opened the meeting with an icebreaker asking attendees their favorite bird they've seen so far. Darien Clary, Director of Sustainability, Energy, and Environment, introduced new members that were accepted into ESAC including Navvab Taylor, Erica Sterling, and Stephanie Simmons.

II. AISD Districtwide Planning Updates

At 5:35pm, Darien introduced Katrina Montgomery, AISD's Chief Financial Officer, who presented a slideshow explaining the district budget. At 5:38pm, Katrina started the presentation by sharing various aspects of the budget including the importance of having a strong fund balance, reasoning for fluctuating revenue, and findings from a previous budget workshop.

After the presentation, ESAC members asked Katrina questions about the budget, including inquiries about decreased enrollment, recapture payments, and staffing allocations. See presentation slides and video.

III. Public Comments & Announcements

At 6:11pm, Lavanya shared ESAC resources, the purpose of ESAC in supporting the 2011 Environmental Sustainability Policy, Information & Action flows. There were no public comments.

At 6:14pm, Darien shared Austin ISD's Earth Week(s) (April 20 - May 1) and encouraged attendees to check out new events and activities on the Earth Week website. Carsen Daniel, Sustainability Coordinator, then promoted the Earth Week classroom experience database inviting attendees to request presentations or activities for their students. In addition, Carsen shared information about the Zero Waste Survey, which was emailed to the listserv as well. Carsen noted that they will be working with Texas Disposal Services (TDS) and the ESAC Zero Waste working groups for additional support. Surveys must be completed by May 15th and attendees are invited to the Golden Trashcan Award Ceremony as well.

Jen Cregar, ESAC Member, promoted the Climate Action Fund run by Austin Community Foundation as they are doing their second round of funding open through April 10th to support central Texas locals who have climate initiatives.

Darien congratulated several student groups who received EcoAudit Awards including Overton Elementary, Navarro High School, Odom Elementary, and Gorzycki Middle School.

At Navarro High School, ESAC member Alicia Kim shared that her students earned a \$624.27 EcoRise grant for "Setting the Table for Sustainability," which revealed the campus discards an estimated 351,000 plastic utensils each year.

At Overton Elementary, Ms. Daniela Willett's class received a \$650 grant for "Let's Make Our Breakfast Green," a project analyzing breakfast waste and single-use spoon consumption. At Odom Elementary, librarian Lisa Richardson and her students received a \$700 EcoRise grant for their "Vini, Vidi, Bici" project, proposing relocation of bike racks to encourage safer, more accessible biking. In addition, Ms. Joelle Don De'Ville's students at Gorzycki Middle School studied soil erosion caused by preferred walking paths and developed a phased plan to stabilize affected areas.

Lastly, Darien shared the AISD Site Repurpose website that was recently launched which is a resource to show how property is used for land banking or if it will become surplus.

IV: Co-Chair Nominations

At 6:27 pm, Lavanya invited members to approve meeting minutes. Erica Sterling motioned to approve. Jeff Whacker seconded. Stephanie Simmons abstained.

At 6:29pm, Catherine Martinez, ESAC Co-chair, announced that her term as co-chair is ending and introduced the co-chair nomination process. She encouraged ESAC members to mentor more students. Nominations will take place in May, and a nomination form was shared.

V. Breakout Groups

Breakout rooms for working groups started at 6:33pm and ended at 7:00pm.

VI: Working Group Share-outs

During the Working Group Share-outs, Mary Petrovich reported that her group has been conducting site assessments, and Mandi Golman noted that they have mapped thousands of amenities that will be incorporated into a GIS map. The group hopes to focus next on construction demolition and salvaging, developing standards and guidelines for materials such as wood and bricks. Mandi also mentioned sharing the amenities data with the AISD Moving Committee.

Rey Torres, Energy & Water Manager, shared that their group discussed water conservation, noting strong interest among members in advancing conservation efforts across AISD. Rey and Darien also highlighted the upcoming "big check" event at Govalle on April 30 where Austin Energy will present AISD with a "big check" for earnings through demand response and energy conservation rebates.

Catherine provided updates on upcoming meetings, including a local leader's conversation with Monica Guzman, and noted that alternative dates will be offered for a Capitol tour. She also recapped the Final Planning Meeting with ACC, where members learned about environmental policy, and expressed interest in visiting campuses during Earth Week.

Lavanya spoke about the daily bus and bike leaders program and Austin's Annual Kidical Mass Bike Ride, and also shared updates on Zero Waste audits within the Zero Waste Working Group. She reminded the group that although AISD is not required to compost under the City of Austin ordinance, the district continues to do so in support of its goal of achieving 90% diversion by 2040, and that AISD is legally required by the state to recycle.

VII. Closing & Reflections

At 7:38pm, Catherine shared the upcoming meeting dates.

The meeting adjourned at 7:39pm. Mandi Golman motioned to adjourn. Bonita Gray seconded.