



ESAC & AISD SUSTAINABILITY, ENERGY, AND ENVIRONMENT NEWSLETTER

austinisd.org/sustainability

November 19, 2025

AISD Sustainability, Energy, and Environment & ESAC Updates

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Greetings, AISD Environmental Stewardship Advisory Committee (ESAC) members and friends of AISD Sustainability,

Please see below for the latest highlights of sustainability news and info from our AISD staff and ESAC working group leaders.

ESAC members, thank you for joining the upcoming 11/19 ESAC meeting. We look forward to a productive and engaging conversation in-person!

ESAC Meeting Reminders



November 19th: AISD Environmental Stewardship Advisory Committee (ESAC) Meeting

- Meeting Details:
 - Join the [virtual meeting](#), 5:30-7:30PM.
 - See the [ESAC webpage](#) for the meeting agenda, upcoming meeting dates, and previous meeting materials.

AISD Staff Updates

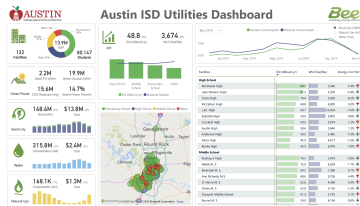
The below updates are from AISD staff and departments that are contributing to AISD's sustainability efforts.

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Sustainability, Energy, & Environment (Update from Darien Clary & Carsen Daniel)

- **Our Sustainability Department has a new name: Sustainability, Energy, and Environment.** The scope now includes sustainability, environmental quality & compliance, grounds & schoolyards, and energy and water conservation. See our [new org chart](#).
- **Host an intern this summer to support green career pathways.** By [registering](#), business partners can cultivate a talent pipeline, engage with students and educators, increase company exposure in the community, and mentor our future workforce.
- **Eastside Early College High School won the Austin Green Award for sustainable design.** The campus, designed by [Perkins&Will](#), was recognized for its design to positively influence what Austin's future will be- addressing the urgent environmental, health and social challenges of today and tomorrow. Darien Clary, Director of Sustainability, Energy, & Environment, was the event's [keynote speaker](#).
- **Follow us on social media!** [Linkedin](#), [Bluesky](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter/X](#).



Energy & Water (Update from Reynaldo Torres, Louis Zachary, Darien Clary, & Carsen Daniel)

- **Utility Dashboard.** Reynaldo Torres, Energy & Water Manager, is updating the dashboard with the past 5 years of data. This was paused during the pandemic, and we will be excited to relaunch the dashboard. Schools can still request current data from reynaldo.h.torres@austinisd.org or [generate reports online](#).
- **Solar Summit.** In partnership with [EcoRise](#), [Austin Energy](#), and [Axis Solar](#). We are coordinating a field trip for 4th graders at two schools that are included in our Department of Energy solar grant. Students will visit the [Austin Energy La Loma Community Solar Farm](#) and [The Thinkery](#).
- **Demand Response.** As of November, the [Demand Response](#) earnings from Austin Energy are \$260K for this year. This program pays utility users to conserve energy during peak use.



Transportation (Update from Kris Hafezizadeh & Miguel Rios)

- **Air Conditioned Buses.** Transportation has ordered 47 new Diesel buses. Next year, all our buses will have AC- a growing need as heat increases.



Sustainable Food (Update from Diane Grodek & Lindsey Bradley)

- **AISD foods were featured in the Urban School Food Alliance [Plant-Forward Edition of their School Bites publication](#).** Foods featured included our Alfredo Flatbread, Asian Strips with Broccoli, Falafel Wrap, Lentil Chili Frito Pie, Honey Ginger Carrots, Peach Crisp and Strawberry Sorbet.
- **Donate to the AISD Food Service non-perishable food drive, Dec 1-16.** [Donate online](#) or place in boxes located at the Service Center, Central Office, Brooke, Metz or Warehouse.
- **Winter Menu - mmmm!** Our Winter Menu will begin December 8 and will feature new items like: Cuban Sandwiches, Planetarian Philly Cheesesteaks, and Jerk Chicken Tacos!
- Follow us on [Instagram](#), [X](#), and [Facebook](#)!



Warehouse (Update from Mark Curtis)

- **Furniture reuse.** We are collaborating with AISD Construction Management to connect the Wooten swing space furnishings with other AISD schools and recipients. The remaining materials will be collected as surplus for future requests and possible sales.
- **The warehouse is providing logistical support for the Junior League of Austin's [Coats for Kids](#) drive.** This year, we will deliver 7900 new and gently used coats to our students. This is a great opportunity to find a new home for outsized coats in your closet. [Sign up](#) to host a coat drive or donate.



Outdoor Wonder & Learning (OWL) (Update from Colleen Garland, Mandi Golman, & Joanna Orozco)

- **The nature play area at the OWL Center at Metz is officially open for field trips!** See the opening ceremony [news story](#) with Congressman Lloyd Doggett, Superintendent Segura, Trustee Boswell, and 5th graders from Sanchez.
- **The OWL Center is soaring!** We recently hosted 2 nature play field trips, 2 Austin Watershed Earth Camps in the learning courtyard, 1 Girls Outside field trip, and a group of UT Engineers are conducting a water study of the site for their capstone projects.
- **Austin Parks & Rec hosted a [natural play training](#) at the OWL Center** to showcase the first [Bienenstock nature play system](#) in Austin.
- **Outdoor Learning staff, Mandi Golman and Colleen Garland, presented at the [Outdoor Leadership Summit](#).** 15 AISD staff

	<p>joined to learn about the benefits of taking our students outside for learning and free play.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Amenity Reuse. We have salvaged 90% of the outdoor amenities on our campuses receiving 2022 Bond program renovations.
	<p>Urban Forestry (Update from Sydnie Levell)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Texas Conservation Corps (TxCC) is back! Thanks to a City of Austin Urban Forest Grant, Sydnie is leading crews November 10-21 in comprehensive tree pruning at Joslin Elementary and Clifton Career Development Center. This grant has enabled TxCC tree pruning at 18 campuses and 4 facilities since 2024. ● Tree Planting. TxCC will return in January to plant trees at Eastside ECHS (25 trees) and Govalle Elementary (15 trees). ● A City of Austin Youth Forest Council member is working with TreeFolks and AISD to add an additional 15 trees at Govalle Elementary. Stay tuned for the Spring volunteer opportunity to help plant these trees! ● AISD Tree Inventory. The City of Austin Youth Forest Council continues to assist with five interns updating AISD's tree inventory through TreePlotter.
<p style="text-align: center;">ESAC Updates</p> <p>This section includes news and updates from AISD Environmental Stewardship Advisory Committee Working Groups.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">austinisd.org/advisory-bodies/esac</p>	
	<p>Upcoming ESAC Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Remaining meeting dates for the 2025-26 school year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ November 19, 2025 (virtual) ○ January 21, 2026 (virtual) ○ March 25, 2026 (virtual) ○ May 20, 2026 (in-person, location TBD) ● You can always check the ESAC website for meeting dates, agendas, and materials.
	<p>Construction & Demolition Materials Salvaging</p> <p><u>Group Leader:</u> Mary Petrovich</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The C&D Materials Salvaging and Greenies Connect! Working Groups held their 1st combined meeting on 11/12. ● Participants will support enhancements to AISD's existing materials salvaging process and help connect ESAC volunteers with materials rehoming initiatives. ● To join, email Mary.Petrovich@austinenergy.com.



Energy & Water Engagement

Group Leaders: Rey Torres & Tamera Tate & Aubrey Lethbridge

- Looking to make a connection with Austin Water outreach & engagement team
- Austin Energy continuing to engage AISD students in electrical safety
- Contributing to the “Solar Summit” for Widén and Norman Sims 4th graders to engage in solar & renewable energy as part of the Dept. of Energy Renew America’s Schools grant in early 2026.



Greenies Connect! (Resource List)

Group Leader: Jen Cregar

- Greenies Connect! has merged with the Construction & Demolition Materials Salvaging Working Group for SY25-26 to help connect ESAC volunteers with materials rehoming initiatives to divert materials from the landfill.



Student Civic Engagement

Group Leader: Catherine Martinez

- Met with teachers from Navarro, Crockett, and NECHS to discuss outreach to students and student groups
- Creek clean-up occurred on November 1st at Pickle ES
- Texas legislature reconvenes in January 2027



Walk & Roll to School

Group Leaders: Julie Gutierrez & Bobby Quindlen Sandoval

- Bike Bus Training Clinic for Bike Bus Leaders is on December 13th at Cepeda Branch Library. [Learn more here!](#)
- Cyclovia was a hit this November, and we look forward to growing it for next year!



Zero Waste

Group Leader: Lavanya Selvam Alli

- Members are contacting their kids’ school PTA’s
- Based on the responses from these schools, we can update the information template
- We are going reach out to custodial team once again to check in on their custodial trainings updates/trash resources
- All information will be updated on [Google docs](#)

Resources: [AISD Sustainability Website](#) | [Sustainability Resources for Schools Flyer](#)
[ESAC Google Drive](#) | [ESAC Website](#) | [ESAC Working Group Notes Folders](#) | ESAC listserv:
aisd_esac@googlegroups.com

(If you need access to the ESAC Google Drive or listserv, please contact
carsen.daniel@austinisd.org)

Kind regards,
AISD Sustainability Department, Darien Clary & Carsen Daniel

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