

SHAC Meeting In-person - 2026/01/21 17:33 CST - Transcript

Attendees

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca), Amy Tyler, Christine Khamisi, Diya Mankotia, Fernando De Urioste, Francesca Leahy, Francina Hollingsworth, Imee M.A. del Mundo, Janet Mejia, LM F, Mary Renfro, Michelle Gallas, Rachel Dunn, Stephanie Hebert

Transcript

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): I started recording as well at this time. So, we're going to call the meeting to order. It is 6:08. Our first item on our agenda is approval of the January 21st, 2026 meeting agenda. We're not able to make a motion to vote on that item. We don't yet have a quorum. I'd like to move on to our next item, which is introductions. If we could start with, we have a trustee that is a non-voting member of SHAK that's joined us online tonight. Trustee Deodorost, if you take a minute to introduce yourself.

Fernando De Urioste: I'm Trusty Fernandeost.

Fernando De Urioste: I'm one of the two large trustees. So, I'm representing the whole district. Not that other trustees don't represent the whole district, but I'm not specifically assigned to one. Thanks for having me. I really appreciate the work that everybody here at the SHA does. So I'm happy to be part of the

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): for being here tonight.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): If we can go around the room and introduce Austin ISD staff. I can go first. Ela the executive director of health services and nursing. Good afternoon. My name is Eva Cardinus and I'm the executive director of academic programs. Hi, Landanda Lewis. I'm the executive director of student support services. Hi, I'm Stephanie Hayear. I'm the health education curriculum specialist in the HP department. Good evening. I'm Francina Hollingsworth. I'm the administrative supervisor for fiscal education and coordinated school health.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): Do we have any staff online, Miss Hollingsworth? Not that I see. So, next would be recognition of guests. We do have guests joining us in the room tonight. Would you guys like to introduce yourselves? Yeah, I'm John Graph. I came just to support Zayn who hopefully should be here to present. Thank you for being here. We're always always happy to have community members. Thank you for joining us. I'm Heath Newton, also here to support Zayn. And I know Zia, it's Dia, too. Hi. Hey, Dia. I don't know if you can hear me. It's good to see you over there. But I also work with Integral Care on the schoolbased team. So, lots of friendly faces in the room. Just a tidbit of information to Heath was my previous program manager. So, thanks for being here tonight, Keith. Happy to be here. All righty. ourselves members. Yes.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): Next, would SHAK members like to take a moment to introduce themselves? If you are a voting member of SHAK and you've joined us online, we'd like to start with you. So, do we have any voting Shack members online? Please just come off mute.

Michelle Gallas: Hey guys, I can start. Michelle Gallas, pediatrician, and three kids at three different schools here in Austin ISD.

AIISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): And thanks for being here tonight, Dr. Gallas. Thank you.

Imee M.A. del Mundo: I'll go second. Dr. Amid Mundo, I'm a researcher at UT Austin. I have a kiddo third grader over at Lee Elementary. glad to be here and help.

AIISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): Do we have other online voting members, Miss Hinesworth?

AIISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): I don't see anyone there. We have someone with their initials, so I'm not sure if they're a member or not. Nina, would you like to go next? Sure. My name is Nina Miller and I'm a health and wellness coach and a consumer advocate and a nutrition educator for kids. thanks for being here. Ann. Hi, I'm Ann Ty and I am the chair of the Jack Mental Health Subcommittee. I'm also a member of the newly formed nutrition committee and Nina is also a member of that committee. I'm a former trustee for district 3 and I was appointed by trustee Foster. Hi. And I'm Leah Kelly. I'm the shack chair.

AIISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): I am appointed by Trusty Dear Yost and I am the parent of a previous student that graduated from Austin High School last year. I am chair of the mental health subcommittee along with and I believe that's all for our introductions. we may have one forthcoming if we have a guest joining us a little bit later. So, I'd like to read community communication notices. So, please note the process for public comments on video conference meetings. Persons wishing to provide public comments will be asked to state their name and acknowledge that they have read the note about public comments listed below. And I will read it out into the record.

00:05:00

AIISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): If more than five people wish to speak, the co-chair will draw five names in random order. Note about public comments. Speakers and visitors are expected to provide comments in a respectful manner. If the presiding officer deems a speaker or visitor to be disrespectful, that person may be warned or asked to cease any further comment or behavior. Non-compliance may result in ejection from the meeting. So, if you are here to provide public comment and you have put the date, name, and email address in the chat, Miss Hollingsworth will let me know who is here. We would like to hear from you now. Miss Hollingsworth, who would we like to hear from first? Switching over.

AIISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): LMF Lisa, if you'd like to come off mute, you public comment time is two minutes.

LM F: Thank good evening. My name is Lisa Flotus. I've actually pre previously served as a member of SHAK and I'm here today to speak about safety of students with disabilities, specifically the importance of special education cameras. Under Texas law, the purpose of these cameras is very clear to protect students and staff. is to safeguard against abuse and neglect. The cameras cannot be used for general monitoring, but only to ensure safety.

LM F: These cameras protect everyone, students and teachers alike. Right now with campus consolidations, there's fuller classrooms and staffing short shortages.

AIISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): There is heat.

LM F: So the risk level in self-contained special education classrooms increased. Some campuses don't have enough trained staff to safely support the number and needs of their students. And I understand there's even a wait list for additional special education staff. Austin ICD routinely records in hallways,...

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): Excuse me.

LM F: cafeterias, and buses without any question. But when it comes to protecting our most vulnerable students, there's hesitation. Special education cameras are no different in terms of privacy or safety standards, except that these classrooms often serve children who cannot speak up if something goes wrong. Cameras provide critical documentation when peer conflict or accidental injuries occur. Many districts across Texas have their boards vote annually to operate cameras in all eligible special education settings as a matter of duty. I'd like to urge SHAK members to recommend that our trustees do the same to make the safety of students with disabilities a true priority. we claim to have the most progressive board ever, yet there is a hesitance to take any action around protecting kids. So, thank you in advance for perhaps adding this to a future agenda item or writing a letter of support that the trustees take this in order to safeguard the safety of our students with disabilities and to give their families peace of mind.

LM F: I thank you for your

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): Thank you for your comments.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): We will take them into consideration at the end of our meeting when we talk about the possibility of future agenda items. Do we have any other community members for public comment? Thank you. I'd like to take a step back because we have had a new guest join us in the room. I don't know if everybody online can see but Superintendent Sagota has joined us. So, if you'd like to take a moment to introduce yourself, thank you for being here with us tonight. We have youth presenters and I'm very excited about our presentation tonight. I can't think of anything more important than hearing from the students that the district serves.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): So, I appreciate you prioritizing being here tonight. I'd like to give you a minute to introduce yourself, please. Yeah. hello everybody. I think I know I'm not sure how the camera is set up, but Matias Cigura, superintendent, Austin I see Trusted Yoda on here as great to see the support and continued engagement with our advisory groups. this is important Very much appreciate it. for me, I don't want to take too much time, but wanted to create space to answer any questions, have a conversation with kind of where we are as a district.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): I'm committed to continuing to be transparent and engaged and an important part of it is getting in front of you all as often as I can throughout the course of the year. it can be challenging at times, but one of the great space here. So, I won't take any more time as far as introducing myself, but if there's an opportunity to provide responses to questions or just kind of share an update on the district, I'm happy to do so as well. thank you for being here tonight.

00:10:00

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): So, I think a week and a half ago, I sent you all an email and the trustees also an email asking where we were on the school consolidation plan. So, I'd appreciate an update on that. would you like me to do it You to do it How's the agenda? Am I I don't want to. So, let's see. I think I had some time to talk at 6:30. I don't want to get in front of that time. If there are students or if there's anybody else

that's already one of them is on Zoom and then Zayn and his family are on their way fighting traffic. Right yeah, I'm happy to answer that question. so in regards to where we are on the consolidation process, as you all are aware, on November 20th, the board took a vote to consolidate the implementation plans for those schools have progressed. there are key milestones that I'm monitoring. The work is being led by GA, who I think y'all may know.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): she's an executive director within the chief of staff's office is the way I would describe it. we named principles on December 10th. It was really important for me to communicate to our community who the leaders of these schools are going to be. we know that it's important for families to know that before they make a decisions about where their student is going to go or maybe not go. since then we created plans. We brought principles together. many of them have been engaging together and planning the transition of the schools. it's been working I think very well. Everything is nuance. There are some instances where you have three principles working together because there are three transitions occurring in one area. the cases is a little bit cleaner. So we bring them together at least once a week. we have milestones. It's organized around community.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): It's organized around staff support and operational support and the documents are available our entire plan is available. You can share that. You can actually send it as a resource if you'd the one thing I'll say is right now we are processing feedback from our staff. We sent a survey to all of our staff that are being impacted. We asked about, what do you need from Austin ISD at this moment of uncertainty so that we can incorporate into our plan. there are different things that we know of our staff and how they will align or maybe not align to some of the transition plans because there are requirements in those plans in order to be compliant with the state of Texas.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): And so we have that information, but I also want to know if there's an educator who's been with us for 20 years and wants opportunity up north, we need to know that. if there is an educator who has been in elementary and would like to explore something different, we want to know it as well. And so all that has come in. we also want to know if someone wants to transition out of the organization, right? That's helpful to know as well or if they want to find another opportunity elsewhere in Austin the results of that at a high level will share with our board and in the similar information session. We now have almost all of it collected. There's still some coming in and large we have a really understanding and we're using that to inform the initial placements of educators because our goal and what I've communicated from the beginning is if you are an Austin IC educator, you will remain an Austin IC educator if you choose to be with us and we really want you to stay with us.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): And so right now those lists have been given to principles at these campuses and through the work that we're doing with GA we're kind of identifying kind of what the balance of educators needs to be so that our students who are coming into a new leadership team still have familiar faces right and then at the same time we're able to ensure that the staffing plan meets the requirements in the turnaround plan. so that is happening right now. all of the staff who are either TIA designated or who are identified and this is a TA word highly effective. We are doing that match and creating that support and saying you have a home at these two schools period. If you want to go beyond that then there's a process.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): We have three sessions that have already been scheduled to create match fairs for only those educators that are going to this transition and only if we go all the way through the end of it and there's no home for a couple educators then we will place but right now it's going I think quite well. it's been Hi, how's it Come on in. So that's the update. and I will give an update at the February information session. we've been kind of concerned or had discussion about supports for mental health for students

and staff during this whole transition time. So what's being So Dr. Lewis and the team has been integral into developing those efforts.

00:15:00

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): And so when you actually look at the plans themselves and the guiding documents, mental health and support for our students and also our staff is the number one priority. There are different things that we're doing. there are instances where we're introducing curriculum different opportunities for our educators to kind of have the resources to talk to our students about what this change could be, but also at the same time give our parents resources so they can have that conversation at home as well. every school's look a little bit different. It's kind of how it gets introduced, whether it's, during, Dr. Louis can probably speak this better than I can, but in some cases for middle school might be the advisory period. In other cases, it might be through home. It really depends. So, we're allowing the principles to kind of figure out where the entry point is. but it is the number one thing in our document. And I will say I'm not sure if they've seen that document.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): we presented to the board back in December, but it would be useful because there are five elements within it and mental health supports is The one at the bottom is operations which is all the logistics around the move that will occur in the summer preparing for it. Obviously, but that's how s so these plans are online. We could see them. I'm looking for them now. We've shared them in with our board and publicly. I don't know where they live online, but I can get that out. That'd be shared with the board. They should be in board Yeah, it's gonna be in board dogs, but we actually have a landing page for them transitions themselves as a whole. I'm curious to know how much on your radar SB25 is because it mandates nutrition education. I was on a webinar this morning offered by the SHs in concert with healthy action for healthy kids, action for healthy kids.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): And they talked about how there's an enormous effort now coming from the top. It used to be all grassroots to create a protocol for all Texas schools where nutrition education was priority. So they talked about everything from stop giving cupcakes at celebrations. Let's brainstorm how else we can What about treats and rewards? How can we get away from junk food? It was really very comprehensive and covered, everything from, tasting events to, farm to cafe and school gardens and all of this kind of stuff. I had submitted to you a proposal for gardens at every AIB school about six months ago and your special assistant on Yeah, He's over here in the corner. great. Okay.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): So I just want to make sure that that's on your radar because this is something that's being prioritized by Texas HHS and it is long overdue and all the research shows that you want kids to recover from mental health, put them outside, let them grow something and see the accomplishment that they get of, being out and in a garden. I mean, there's tons of research that this is very tightly tied to mental health as well as physical health and Texas is number eight in the country for obesity. We have a lot of work to do, but there's a lot of traction. So, I just don't know where you are in that mix in terms of driving that agenda. Yeah.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): So, where I'm at in the mix is I'm very supportive of having opportunities for our students and our community to engage in different things that actually improve the being of a student as a whole, right? Nutrition is at the top of the list. and there are different ways that you can tackle you mentioned a couple here in Austin ISD years ago, we got rid of Cokes in many there are things that we've done as a function of operations and food service and that speaks to some of it.

AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): A lot of the things that we do here are locally sourced where other school districts they're not. We have a lot of control over our ability to provide healthy, nutritious meals in a way that Many school districts actually outsource their food service division. We do not do that here. If you actually want to do an incredible tour, just go right down the street and we can take you there and you can visit the warehouse where we have opportunities to do tasting menus. We do adjustments all the time. I think the opportunity is there. We will be compliant. I think we're probably ahead when it comes to other school districts. I'm always game for it. When it comes to community gardens or, my question becomes, how do we operationalize it? And how do I hold the system accountable? And so, what I don't want to do is to agree to something that I know I can't execute on the back end and be successful long term.

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AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): I was there when we worked with Peas to actually create the culinary partnership with Emerald Legosi at Cunningham. I put half a million dollars into that to create the foundation of it. I know where we've mapped gardens within Austin and so I think there's a really good opportunity to segue into it and build upon it. but the plan's got to be tight and I think that's where I'm at. And so I'm aware of the emails. Unhill and I have had conversations about Darren and I have had conversations about it. it's the action of doing it, the ability to maintain and have it sustainable and then finding its way to the curriculum. If those things can be true, then I think we're going to find the solution. I'm just not quite all the way there yet with everything that's been happening. But that's helpful. We will work we're on a subcommittee to make sure that we fulfill your requirements. So we need to know what they are. We'll get Yeah.

AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): to thank you for telling me what they are and let's make sure we're working very closely together because then it'll be successful. we also need assistance from Dr. Maxwell in examining curriculum that's already being used in the school system and then we were acquainted with some curriculum today in the webinar. So I've already got an email out to Dr. Maxwell hopefully or she so what I want to communicate to you all and I love this organization and I'll do anything for it. We've been tackling thing after big thing since as long as I can remember certainly as long as I've been in the seat.

AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): And so, I want to provide grace where we need to because I want to move the work, but just in full transparency, the focus is on moving accountability and doing what we need to. And a lot of that falls under Dr. Maxwell's purview. And so, we're moving the work, but if there's a lack of urgency that you're feeling, I want you it's not because we don't believe in it or want to support it. It is because we are navigating hyper complex things at the moment that include the agency, it includes the state, it includes budgeting, finance, accountability, sped, we just announced that we're taking back Mendes, so one of the things we have to talk about is what's the program going to be? How are we going to staff the curriculum? It's got to be unique enough and tailored to the community so that our community sees themselves in the school.

AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): But I have to acknowledge that the students that have been there for three years have had a different experience. And I also need to figure out what counter am I going to use to ensure that we don't revert back and actually put ourselves at risk again. And so there are lots of things that are consuming lots of energy in the system. There are fewer big things ahead of us now than there never have been. so it's important and I don't want to leave here thinking that it isn't. But I also want you to know that it may feel like it's not going as quickly as you want to and that's the reason why. But it is on our radar. I am following up and I am there. So thank I just had a quick comment because I think that kudos to

Superintendent Sigura that at Mets where I am the old Met school, we have an outdoor learning lab. They grow all their fruits and vegetables. There's little minnows out there. We have school kids come every day to see it. We were out there today because the weather was good and they are getting that experience.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): They love it. They get to taste whatever they grow. So that could continue to prosper. But there is a section. I just didn't know how if everyone was familiar with it. But that's a great opportunity for them to be outside to see things, nature. It's wonderful out there. And AIC has a garden to cafe program that you can apply to. Only one school that we know of has done it because it's complicated. It takes money. But part of our challenge is to try to find some of that money. So we're working very closely with Diane Grodick. all of our challenges and problems and we're trying to so that she's taken away. All right. So, I know we're going to segue, but what are any other questions I can answer while I'm here? I mean, I don't want to be in the way, but I just have to ask when are y'all going to consider shifting those boundaries around so that we can have streamline vertical teams? Yeah.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): So, one of the things that presented to the board on December 19th, I believe, was a proposed timeline to reintroduce boundaries, as we move forward. I am not going to leave this seat without getting boundaries done. just to be clear, like that is going to happen. I want to do it with this board. This is an incredible board. They can do incredible things. I have to acknowledge that here in November there's going to be elections and so I have a window of opportunity. The work is already progressed to a point where I think with some refinement, some more engagement, some adjustments, we can get there. What I've communicated to the board is the desire to progress the academic vision and framework all the way through April and May and then pick up boundaries and then carry those through and get them approved by October. That's the plan.

00:25:00

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): That will keep it out of the election cycle. It'll be early enough to where I don't mess up enrollment, which is even at this point challenging from as late as we went, which is early than we would have in the past. I want to make sure we have a candid conversation around what's our philosophy around single gender schools. What's our philosophy around early college high schools? We have seven of them. They're all in East Austin. why is that? who are we and are we like doing what we've been doing for the last 20 years or 30 years because that's what we think we should be doing or should we really challenge and I just don't want to miss an opportunity to pick up an adjustment in the boundaries if there's something we find in that first two or three steps in the academic vision and framework effort. The language will be another one, right? If that's running full steam and that'll be part of that work.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): We talk about how we value librarians and the love for reading but we don't have that codified anywhere and I know and I'm kind of getting my rant like it seems like it's not like Matias of course you believe in librarians of course you believe in developing a love for reading and having voracious readers right but here's the thing when it comes to budget when it comes to these huge huge decisions it is difficult to rely back on a foundational document that's in this organization that says this is why we're doing it I can say it on blue in the face. Our trustees can say to our blue in the face, but until we have that to identified and codified and agreed to some of those really big things become difficult. we ran into this year with wall to language programs. what is our philosophy around academic programming when it comes to fine arts, right? We have orchestra in Some of our school districts around us don't have orchestra, right? If we believe in orchestra, then every middle school should have it.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): then I need to make a budget adjustment to ensure that if the class doesn't make with four or five students, we're still going to fund it because we're going to see the program. That doesn't exist right now. But those are the sorts of things that we have to get in place so that we can truly move the system. And outcomes are moving. The civilian system is there. I just need that to be totally codified and aligned to take the next couple steps, which is why I don't want to get to boundaries if I have a slight delay and miss perhaps some slight adjustment in the academic programming. I kind of went on a rant there, but just Yeah. So, one other quick thing is that we have so many vacancies on this council that we can barely make quorum. This has been going on for years.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): I have a friend who's a health practitioner, a parent of two kids, enormously qualified, who has applied three times over the last two and a half years, and nobody knows where her applications are. This is not helping us. We're here to help the kids, but There are three of us. We have voting members online. We have voting online. They're more online, but only a few. Not all shad members there. so this is a system improvement, So, we have 13 or 14 advisory committees that we run, right? ESAC, SHAK, DAC, CBOC, the list goes on and on and on.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): And some of them are board advisory committees, some of them are administrative committees or district committees. And one of the things that we didn't have is a thoughtful way to identify future members because what happened in the past is we're relying on trustees. they have a lot going on. They don't have any staff. So if I go ask a trustee, hey, who do you want to place on this committee? Unless it's someone they know directly, they're not going to be able to connect the dots, which is why we have to come in. So, we've structurally changed that. There was usually one person before that was overseeing a lot of this work. We've since created a team GA now is responsible for all the advisory groups, the committees, the bylaws, everything. You have Joshua John who's providing board services and support them to tackle all of it. so I have a list when I meet with trustees.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): I tell them these are the vacancies that you have in your committees. This is how it's impacting our work because it does impact our work. If you need me to get names, I will get you names. We just haven't been that direct in years past. And we got to a point where, you just at least fill them. And trust me, this is not the only one that has vacancies. I do think that this is the only one that statutoily required and we don't have 51% parent representation right now. So, I do appreciate the commitment to improving those steps. The particular member that Nina is talking about reached out to me today. She has submitted three applications. that has been passed along. I have shared that information with Josh. and we're still somewhere in that process, having a breakdown in communication that is preventing us from being able to get people appointed.

00:30:00

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): So, anything that we can do to help support that process is really appreciate And I will reinforce that with our trustees. what I don't want to do is to point so again point someone and then the trustee be Matias why did you point that and so I can never have it both ways. So we do need a student appointed by you. So I can find a student. All right. I thought you could. Anything else? I appreciate the time the opportunity to talk and have a conversation. Thank you for coming to the meeting today. Thank you so much for being here. Of course. Thank you.

Fernando De Urioste: can and sorry to just step slightly on the end of the superintendent there. I just want to say for everyone there please keep mugging us about this stuff.

Fernando De Urioste: The trustees do get busy, the superintendent gets busy. I can only speak for myself, but my impression for many of the other trustees it's okay to nag us about this stuff because it is helpful.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): And here's the other thing.

Fernando De Urioste: Yeah, I asked for it.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): Thank you, Trustee One of the other thing is I assume that our trustees and you all are talking. That is not the case. not in every instance. it has been discouraged in some instances. I will say that I follow Trusty's recommendations to bug them. It's sometimes hard to find a balance of where that line is, but I'll be back on my business.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): And I think that's where I can be helpful as well, just kind of introducing and I just thought that and maybe that's a misunderstanding of me in this role and previous roles here because a lot of times when I came on and I think trusty types saw this is the trustees would be the ones making it, the administration would implement and I just thought they were talking and what I found over time is they weren't talking and so I got to figure out a better way to help facilitate that. We appreciate that. Yeah. and certainly having Trusty Deios as part of our committee has been very helpful in bridging that gap. So appreciate having him here as a member of Shack. And they can't talk to each other. So I think a lot of times they're like, " Trusty Odysius is going to tell the trustees about this." No, he can't. And so I'm the mechanism to use. I can be loud when I need to be loud. So just let me know when I need to be. And he knows he knows I can. All right. Thank you.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): Does anybody here have a concern if we move our district updates to the end of our agenda to allow us to be responsive to our guests that are here to present tonight? Okay, So, moving on to our next agenda item is our Eagle Scout project. And I just want to say I feel like this is the most guests that we have had in the room in quite some time. And I really appreciate everybody being here and everybody being online. youth voice is something that is very near and dear and important to me. It's what I do in my professional life.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): And I appreciate everyone that is here tonight to hear our youth presenters. So, with that, I will hand it over to Zayn Shay to speak to us tonight about his Eagle Scout project. Zane, is there something to hook up slides? Yes. And Zay, when you please introduce yourself fully where did you go to school? What are you doing now? Yes, sir. how do you have it? What kind of

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): So just if you're with us online just one moment while we work out some you can go and start standing there okay is that okay for the online is just working on installing the slides. Cool. J. Don't take anything away. I got a speech right here. So, I got you with that. Hello, honorary board members. My name is A Shay and I'm a high school senior and an Eagle Scout.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): I attended Cassiss Elementary School, Mart my Middle School, Macallen Fine Arts Academy High School, and I now attend Zach Academy. Thank you so much for your concern about teen mental health and for inviting me here today to share my story, how my Eagle Scout project grew into something I truly believe can help teens like me. Over the past few years, mental health has stopped being something distinct. has become painfully close Last month, a family friend's daughter here in Austin took her own life. She was only 19 years old. She had a loving, supportive family and access to resources,

everything we assume should protect someone. Two months ago, one of my best friend's friend from middle school died by suicide. I was there for my friend as he processed that loss.

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AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): This fall, my family took in a classmate who is estranged from her family and had nowhere to stay. And just last month, we spent a day with her at Double Children's after concerns of self harm. She was advised to begin therapy, but because of parental consent requirements and a broken system, she hasn't been able to start. So, we take life one day at a time. Two years ago at 1 in the morning, I rushed to a friend's house to help him throw up pills he was trying to overdose on. He lived in a single parent household. And after this episode, his parent avoided school counselors or an ER visit because of the costs and the disruption it could cause. That same year, another friend was contemplating giving up.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): I was able to talk him through those before it became too extreme. My girlfriend at the time lost a childhood friend due to suicide during her freshman year. Her family now hosts an annual music festival called Meadow Fest in her memory. Even now, the grief still hits hard. And that is just what I've witnessed around me. When I started high school, I was excited. I was honored to be one of the only two freshmen cast in the fall music school, but the stress, expectations, and sudden isolation of a new environment overwhelmed me. I felt completely alone. My friends noticed I was struggling. They saw the bruises on my neck and reported it to a counselor. I was sent to the office. My parents were called and I was immediately processed through Delro Jun's ER.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): I felt like I had done something wrong, I was broken, I felt embarrassed. I went through formal recovery counseling and time away from performing. But during that time, I found something that truly helped me. Music. Hearing other people sing about their struggles reminded me that I wasn't alone. I began writing music myself. And through that, I was able to reflect, process, and heal. After my recovery, I noticed something else. I became the person that people leaned on. Maybe it's because I'm an actor and a musician, and I tend to feel deeply what others are feeling. But friends started coming to me for support because I could relate to their struggles. And as a Boy Scout, I'm to take action. If you see something, say something, do something.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): That mindset helped me save several of my friends' lives. When it came time to choose my Eagle Scout project, I knew it had to support teen mental health. Because music played such a huge role in my recovery, I knew I wanted to include that. I connected with Integral Care, which works with teen mental health in schools. My original idea was to create an album of music by teens for teens focused on mental health struggles. And this would also be used in World Care's outreach efforts. I called it Project Full Measure like in sheet music. I brought together teens from all over Austin, my rock band, friends from theater, classmates. We held songwriting sessions. We had incredible adult mentors, music teachers, professional artists, and of course, an Integral Care staff.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): What surprised me most was what happened during the process. Some of the collaborators told me that their parents could never know which song was theirs. At the same time, some parents told me that they had no idea how personal their child's music was, and they respected that privacy. By creating music together, there's no single author, just a collective voice. What started as an album turned into a safe space because when we create together, we don't feel studied. We feel understood. The songs became our strength and releasing them was a way of saying we are here and

we are heard. During full measure sessions, we were invited to perform at Thrifest, an annual mental health awareness festival.

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AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): He also desperately needed a youth speaker and encouraged me to tell my story. At first, I hesitated because I didn't want to relive everything. I worried people would judge me. Measure group showed me that I really wasn't alone. Our stories Firsthand experiences help others heal and help ourselves heal, too. Through this work, I've stepped into the role of a mental health advocate. Even after my Eagle Scout project officially ended, I've spoken at Health and Human Services quarterly meeting. I presented to the Capitol Area Council Scouting America Board, and I'm developing my senior project at Zach Academy around mental health through music and songwriting. What I've learned is this.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): Traditional therapy is important, but the system often fails Our voices get filtered to fix structures that don't always understand meaning programs can be sympathetic, but without lived experience, they often Teens are afraid to share because they fear of being judged or minimized. My project found another one outside bureaucracy and Empath teens facing hard times can come together to express, and support each other through Songwriting as a group pulls people out of isolation. And publicly publishing anonymously allows voices to be heard without fear. And it works.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): I've worked with my parents to develop a framework for how Project Full Measure could be implemented into schools as a student-led club with faculty guidance and supervision. The concept isn't a new one either. At Zach Conservatory, my sister participated in iv a theater class where each student wrote a scene based on their own personal story and another actor would perform it for an Zach Prep Professional Company, which I am a part of, also staged a showcase where students could use spoken word or music to tell their stories. Feedback from the audience is how powerful the messages were. All right, I'm going to move on to the slideshow Project Full Measure.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): The mission project full measure exists to provide students with a safe, supportive and creative space to express shared experiences through music and performance collaboratively through guided artistic creation, community building and responsible adult oversight. Program empowers students to develop their voices, support one another and transform lived experiences into meaningful art while prioritizing respect, privacy and School infrastructure required. Sorry, I was moving the box. sponsoring teacher. So, for most clubs, at least at my school, we had to have a sponsoring teacher.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): So they have to be trained in mental health first aid, be able to recognize emergency warning signs, refer crisis situations as needed. they also have to have an interest in performance arts and of course provides encouragement, guidance and access to resources. School administrator. This person would approve of the club and the sponsoring teacher and of course help support the medical representative. So, this person could be a school counselor or a school nurse, but they would have to be trained in mental health first aid, act as a third party evaluator when concerns arise and consult with the schools regarding next steps.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): It's going to be emergency room referral if Recommendations to parents for additional care as well as appropriate referrals. Thanks. That's Physical resources. Most schools already do have a few of these in place, but of course in designated meeting space, instruments as you see, keyboards, percussion, and then recording and technology. Next opportunities next music writing. So this

could build on existing school programs. For example, at Macalluman Lawson, they had songwriting classes there. I was a part of it and it could build off of that. cross-disiplinary collaboration.

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AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): This could be like a song and a poem or spoken word that combined to make a more powerful message. They could also learn song structure instrument basics like basic guitar chords also be opportunities to possibly collaborate with other schools. So for example, if Macallum had project full measure here and Anderson had their club as well, they could come together and collaborate with each other possibly creating a bigger community both for Texas Austin. Of course, opportunities to work with guest artists from the music industry. Next, community building. So we would all be sharing experiences in a safe, respectful environment.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): we would create a shared voice in music. It's not just focused on individual ownership but more on how everything is a collective and it's all a single body. of course encourage connection and mutual understanding between everyone. Live performances. This is one of my favorites. we could possibly perform at coffee shops, local markets like Real Market and Central Market, community venues like Cactus Cafe, and even school hosted events. For example, Macallum had a battle of the bands which is put on by the guitar program. So it could even be something like that. It's also just school sanctioned.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): And then these opportunities could also build confidence in students and teens for real world performance experiences. Publish music would be able to record songs and produce it and release it on Spotify Music all the other streaming platforms. You can release videos on social media platforms, Instagram, Tik Tok, such and such. be able to work with industry professionals for recording and mixing. We already have connections with that. modern self-prouction tools have also made this very accessible just because of the times we live in. But health providers can also use the music as part of their outreach structure.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): members who can join. Musicians, storytellers, poets, artists, creatives of any kinds. but more importantly, students who want to create a voice that is heard. Student leadership roles. There'll be a president, secretary, music lead, tech lead, instrument leads, lyric leads, and of course outreach slashpublic relations leads. Cloud values and ground rules. This is a brave slashsafe space for sharing personal experiences. No perfect people allowed is kind of like our thing. of course, privacy is respected. All the experiences and stories shared there is to remain confidential with the group and ground rules respect and trust. No judgment. Focus on creating a shared voice.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): You might be asking yourself, why does full measure meets teens where they are at their personal level with their peers where they spend most of their time. It's also accessible since it's school-based and encourages creativity, collaboration, connection in a safe space, and it aligns with school wellness and arts education goals. Finally, two schools have already reached out wanting to build something similar. With the support of AISC and others, I believe this can grow into a program that truly helps teens help one another. These scenes don't just need to be talked about, they need to be heard. Thank you. so now,

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): a nutrition with Austin Regional Clinic. if there's time she offers some comments and you said about five minutes? Yeah, she kind of helpful. Yes, please. Introduce yourself. She's gonna come up speak or challenges caregiver and actually do you want to go to the next slide? There's a couple

more so I'm a doctor with Austin Regional Clinic. I'm a pediatrician, mom to Zane. and I want to just say I'm really proud of him, for presenting this project. I'm really proud of the impact that it's had for him and hopefully in the future.

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AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): But I do see kids all the time with mental health problems. teenagers, depression, anxiety, all the things. I just wanted to kind of I'm sure people are familiar, but there are so many barriers to mental health for teens. And I just kind of summarized everything into two categories. first one being barriers to diagnosis. and I'm just going to go through this real quick, but parents don't often recognize that there's a problem or they don't want to admit that there could be a problem. They try to minimize, how bad it might be. sometimes there's cultural stigma like certain groups just don't want to acknowledge that that. kids can be really private. they try to hide their struggles. or sometimes they don't even think that there's a problem.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): We have screening in the office. We do, for teenagers if they're well checks. but even if we get positive results on those, sometimes a single office visit is not enough to really draw out what the story is. So we can go to the next one. But then there's barriers to access. So even if you, catch these kids and they agree therapy, kind of all these other issues. So sometimes insurance doesn't cover mental health or if it does, maybe there aren't enough providers that are even convenient or location-wise or having appointment availability. So long wait times, sometimes weeks to months.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): where you're on a wait list you don't have insurance or you opt to just go self-pay. It can get really expensive. Some families can't make time for the appointments either work schedules or single parent family other kids responsibilities. It's just hard to get there. Some families don't really want to get treatment. again they might just think needs to just suck it up and sometimes an unstable home life can be the actual source of the issues.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): So, if there's family, strife or financial, all those kinds of things. I've also heard about kids, they've done therapy and they're like, that didn't work. I didn't, connect with anybody." why bother doing that again? We have virtual visits, but a lot of people don't like that because on the screen, it's hard to make a connection with a therapist. school-based counseling. Some schools might have it, but again, there may be some stigma having to go to the counselor's office. another issue we've come across, if parents aren't supportive of therapy, these are minors, they're kind of stuck because the parents have to consent if they're less than 18. So, that's been an issue.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): And last thing is sometimes visits and they clear them to go home for outpatient therapy, but they don't really follow up, if that actually came through or if the parents followed up. So, I'm sure there's more I could elaborate, but I just want to say counseling and psych, they're definitely essential. and we need to keep working on that as far as the medical community. but as pediatrician and also a parent who's guided three kids through some mental health struggles, I do think Project Full Measure would be a great resource.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): it kind of doesn't have to deal with a lot of these barriers because it's in school, doesn't cost anything. and as teenagers, this is kind of our last opportunity to really make an impact on teaching them how to cope and deal with stress and big emotions and things like that before they move on into adulthood. So, I think whatever we could do to support That's all I got to say. Wait, is there time for questions? Yeah, I would like to ask. Yes. I think it'd be really really helpful and you may already be

planning this to keep data what data data like you give a survey to people who join the club for example. Yeah.

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AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): ask them five questions, and you could talk to your school counselor about shaping them and that kind of thing, but having to do where are you right now in your mental health, how are you feeling? are you attempting self harm, whatever. And then once they've had a school year in the club, give a post survey, "How are you feeling now? I mean, has this helped you?" And I think collecting that kind of data and perhaps giving it to the counselors and then they could funnel it to Dr. Lewis's team, I think that would build support for your program. I think it's excellent program. I'm a retired middle school teacher. I know that's how to reach teens is through music and also collective action, And then you can support each other. So I would urge you to somehow add that kind of component. Just do a little survey thing. Collection. Are you suggesting that it would be anonymous or not?

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): I think an anonymity would be great. I mean, that's appropriate, the way to go. but you need to collect some statistics because our world's built on data and funding is built on data. I just wanted to say I love the emphasis on the the peer-to-peer model is evidencebased and I appreciate you connecting with your other peers. For anybody in here who is a medical provider that doesn't know, peer services for children 14 and up will become a Medicaid billable service. I heard in a meeting today, I believe it's in March or April. So there is a way to get pure services for children that will be a Medicaid billable service.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): I will have to follow up in an email, but I believe it's in March April for children but I appreciate you being here and I love the concept of your model. I have seen you perform at Thrivefest last year. and am going to be interested in continuing the conversation maybe after this meeting or through email. Thanks for being here. Thank you. There's a followup step too. I think the shack might want to consider a recommendation for support from the trustees and the superintendent for this so that it's kind of an official sort of a thing that you've been here and presented.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): We do that, we have an evaluation tool that Miss Hollingsworth can give us again and we can do that, and then we can write up a formal recommendation so that you get a little bit more support than just, hey, we like this. totally. Yes. Thanks. It's great. Thanks. I wonder if in this model, you kind of touched on it. I realize it's mostly peer-to-peer, but the whole time I was thinking about famous musicians and not so famous musicians or other artists who have been through, horrific tragedy or PTSD or whatever, I feel like the value of hearing somebody who's a creative person who has overcome terrible challenges is hugely inspiring. So, I'm not sure what the balance would be between wanting it to be a mostly to-peer model, but then also bringing in people

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): to bring inspiration and real life stories that kids could connect with because remember they're all the same age. So if they could see people who have gone through the teenage years and are now flourishing. Absolutely. Yeah. Thank you for your incredible urage. Really amazing. Thank you for sharing your experience and to your parents for being here and sharing your experience not just with your own child but with the other kids that you're supporting.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): Thank you guys for being here and for all that you do. Really appreciate. We do have another youth presenter that's joining us tonight. She's online. I have seen this presentation at a Kids

Living conference. If you're not familiar, Kids Living is an organization of child serving professionals here in Travis County. Those meetings are open to the public.

AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): The name of this presentation is the body project. Our youth tonight is also a member of RoundRock ISD's school health advisory council. Her name is Dia. please feel free to share any other information about yourself and correct me if I am mispronouncing your name. I apologize. but thank you for joining us tonight and go ahead. It's all yours.

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Diya Mankotia: Thank you. and...

Diya Mankotia: it is Dia, but it's okay.

AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): Thank you. Yes.

Diya Mankotia: It's okay. I am very grateful for this opportunity and I'm really sorry I couldn't make it in person tonight. I was planning on arriving in person. However, there was a lot of traffic and I got out of school a little bit late. So, unfortunately, I am virtually presenting tonight, but I did make a presentation. So, if it would be all right, could I share my screen? Okay. Are you able to see my screen?

AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): It's coming up. It's there.

Diya Mankotia: It's there.

AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): You can't see.

Diya Mankotia: Okay, perfect. I guess I'll just introduce myself. as Miss Kelly mentioned, I am serving on the Brown ISD Student Health Advisory Council. I'm from McNeil High School. I'm a 12th grader at McNeil High School and I'm also a research intern for Stanford University for their department of psychiatry as part of the SCE lab which is an eating disorder prevention lab. And today I'll be speaking about the body project which is an eating disorder prevention program that has went over 25 years of clinical trials and has proven to reduce the onset of eating disorders up to 63% person trials. so just for a little introduction I already introduced my name but my interest is really in eating disorder prevention.

Diya Mankotia: I was diagnosed with anorexia nervosa when I was 13 in 8th grade and I was hospitalized for it and during my recovery afterwards, I transitioned into high school after 8th grade obviously and I just noticed that there was really a lack of resources or even counselors that I felt safe to talk about this and that were trained in talking about this. And this was later confirmed when I was scrolling through my school's website where they listed resources for mental health, depression, anxiety, but there was nothing for eating disorders. And that's where I was like, okay, that I'm not just imagining things. There really is an absence for eating disorders. And since then, I have been really motivated to bring this into schools specifically because adolescence is where eating disorders are more likely to develop.

Diya Mankotia: And so I started off as a school club. I created a eating disorder support club at my school and this was in partnership with the National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders which is America's oldest eating disorder nonprofit since 1976 I believe. and I served as their youth program developer where I developed this model for a school-based support club. And so I piloted it that at McNeil High School during my junior year. And from there, we were able to publish resources on our

school's website and launch our first ever eating disorders awareness week campaign. So that was all in the span of a year. And after noticing the positive improvement in my school, I really wanted to expand this in more schools.

Diya Mankotia: So I founded project EDSA which stands for eating disorder support and awareness and this was really to bring this support club in partnership with this national organization into more schools around across the country. on top of that as I mentioned I am also doing research and how I can bridge this advocacy work with evidencebacked research and prevention because I know awareness is not just enough to treat eating disorders. I'm also very well not heavily involved but I'm putting my foot into policy because the thing is as much as research and this stuff works policy is really how you get things to be implemented more broadly. So I recently joined Harvard striped which promotes the prevention of diet supplements to minors and there I'm leading the North Carolina campaign to push this bill to representatives for the state.

Diya Mankotia: And then I'm also the school health advisory council. So that's a little bit of my background in eating disorder research and prevention. since I founded Project EDSA, we have over 88 chapters in 13 countries. And it has just been incredible seeing how many schools really needed this at their schools and how many students were interested once this was available. Before I used to think that eating disorders were really very stigmatized which I still think they are but I really think that with the opportunity for students to become involved in speaking openly discussing this and finding support for it they are interested and the body project is a way to bring that more broadly.

Diya Mankotia: So, moving forward to what the body project is, I'm going to be basically discussing the rationale for why the body project exists, provide the whole, evidence base for it over the 25 years of clinical trials, and then discuss some barriers that I've noticed to implementation and how I've personally been trying to overcome those barriers. So I'm sure I don't need to spend too much time on this slide because I heard some people talking about the importance of nutrition in adolescence and also schools. So eating disorders are a huge part of that and there isn't only anorexia which is a lack of eating but also binge eating disorder, bulimia and all sorts of eating disorders that exist because of mainly the social and cultural representations of what an ideal body type looks like. however despite the prevalence of eating disorders which is over 28.8

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Diya Mankotia: 8 million Americans across their lifetime, over 80% of them do not receive treatment either due to stigma, cultural barriers, or because let's face it, treatment can be very expensive as I went through myself. And it usually takes a long time to fully treat these disorders, which is why I'm also interested in prevention because then we can prevent individuals from ever reaching that state to have to pursue this costly treatment. in Texas alone, I did some research and I found that there are over 675,000 cases of eating disorders.

Diya Mankotia: 8,000 of which are youth z zero to 17. I don't know why I put zero. There's definitely no zero. but I'm pretty sure it's up to 17 years old that have been diagnosed with an eating disorder, and 50% of youth in Texas are actively trying to lose weight, which is a risk factor for eventually developing eating disorders. and like I mentioned there is significant research done that proves that eating disorder re resources are lacking in schools. Fewer than 10% of schools actually do have specific programming for it. And 75% of students and teachers lack the education to support their peers or to recognize eating

disorders. So the professor I'm working under Dr. Sty, he used to teach at the University of Texas at Austin before he moved over to Stanford University.

Diya Mankotia: And his early research in eating disorder prevention found that this is the main outcome which is the eating disorder. But it really originates from the very initial early risk factor from the pressure of being otherwise known as the internalization of the thin ideal, which is basically where individuals develop a very intense strive to pursue a very slender body type due to cultural representations. And so after figuring out that that was a risk factor, they decided to try to find a prevention program to not prevent eating disorders as a whole, but to prevent the main risk factor associated with it. And what they found was educational programs, which just talk about awareness and the importance of nourishing yourself weren't very effective for adolescent, but dissonance-based programs were.

Diya Mankotia: And what dissonance-based program basically are in a more simple way is when individuals hold something that is opposite to what they're behaving as they're more likely to change one aspect of their behavior to match their thinking. So this is how there are programs which really talk to people about the importance of smoking and stuff like that. And if you're teaching that to a smoker, he's going to develop thoughts that smoking are bad and that's going to contradict with his behavior and that just creates an internal tension which then wants to either change his behavior or his thoughts. But most of the time it's the behavior. So he stops smoking. And essentially that is what the body project tries to do is tries to teach young girls and adolescents about the costs of pursuing the thin ideal.

Diya Mankotia: And after they go through a four session curriculum of that intervention, they are less likely to pursue in these behaviors after they learn and emotional costs of pursuing the thin than ideal. so I guess I just explained that in the previous slide. I forgot to move forward. But that is what the body project is and it has been developed in order to build a stronger self-esteem in adolescence, decrease body dissatisfaction and reduce unhealthy diet behaviors which all cumulatively end up reducing the onset of eating disorders. like I mentioned, this has been going through 25 to 30 years of clinical trials and so far it's been implemented in over 8 million girls in 140 plus countries and 350 campuses.

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Diya Mankotia: And the greatest reduction that has been found of the Body Project has actually been through virtual programs just like this one where it has shown a 77% reduction in future eating disorder onset over a two-year follow-up. And I find this absolutely crazy considering treatment like I mentioned take years to accomplish and the Body Project is It's only 4 hours of lessons to produce an effect that lasts over two years. So I really think that that is such a great intervention to really prevent almost a public health crisis based on how much eating disorders are actually the second highest I think mortality rate of any mental health illness. So they are a public health crisis.

Diya Mankotia: So if you can achieve that in 4 hours with probably a fraction of the cost of actual treatment, I really do think that there is a benefit to the body project not in a biased way of course but the implementation barriers for the body project. However, even though it has been highly successful, as you can all imagine, teachers implementing it requires teachers to be trained in facilitating it. And when I went through training to become a body project facilitators and lead prevention groups myself, it was about four hours of my time and then I also had to read all the scripts and there was a lot of fidelity requirements and in the earlier trials it was implemented with clinicians. So it was really difficult to find

clinicians especially who had the time on their hands to lead these groups in person. And that's what sparked interest in led implementation.

Diya Mankotia: And how we talked about in the previous presentation, peer-led implementation is highly evidence-based because peers responding to them. And also I think peers have more time on their hands to engage in these types of stuff. And after they did a few trials of peer implementation, it showed that peer implementation was actually more stronger than clinician-led body project groups. And it also produced a greater reduction than video interventions or ebody which is basically educational body project without the dissonance-based framework. So this is all sort of a background to the intervention itself and why it has now transitioned it still is delivered by teachers but more stronger interest in peers delivering it.

Diya Mankotia: And so going back to the implementation barriers even after peers implement it. I tried implementing it at McNeel and I've received a lot of push back I would say because teachers still complain that obviously setting up a whole group to talk about in person like a discussion circle and talking in groups it can be a little wracking especially. So I started thinking about how I could implement the body project at my school in a way that was easy for teachers. And I noticed that almost every lesson that we did in school relied on Google classroom slides. So I thought, what if we took the body project and we adapted it to be a lesson plan? So it's already in a format that teachers like using, but it also delivers that dissonance-based education through the slideshows instead.

Diya Mankotia: And so what I did was I took the intervention, I looked over the script, I looked over all of the research, and I adapted it into a slideshow format that includes slides, interactive materials like cahoot games, and just classroom based discussions that normal classrooms have to promote that dissonance-based education. However, it was to replicate the interventions efficacy in a way that both students and teachers are familiar with. And it got these reviewed by Dr. precise and everything to ensure they were matching the fidelity of the actual intervention. And I had the opportunity I went back to McNeil and I told my teachers, I was like, I came up with a new intervention. Would you be able to let me pilot it during the last week before Christmas break because I know there isn't much going on in classrooms. So, I had the opportunity to do that.

Diya Mankotia: And after I did my first pilot on December 18th, after just one lesson, which took about 40 minutes or so with the whole classroom, I calculated that I did a survey pre and post anonymous and there was up to a 35 reduction in thin ideal internalization of the students and a 0 52 increase in body satisfaction and that was only in one session. So I think these are very promising results and I compared it to the early trials of the actual body project interventions clinical trials and the thin ideal internalization was a little bit lower than what the actual one produced but the body satisfaction was very much similar to what the early body project trials produced.

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Diya Mankotia: So that has kind of been my efforts so far in trying to implement it in a way that is feasible for teachers and students. And my mission moving forward is to flesh out all four lesson plans because it is only a 4h hour and now that I've reduced it into 40 to 50 minutes slides then it's even lower than that. So I want to continue piloting all four lessons. Hopefully I have time to do it for the rest of the year. I just have three more to do. And after I do that,...

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): It's

Diya Mankotia: I want to use the pilot data that I'll have collected from the whole curriculum pilot to pitch it to other district leaders and talk about the implementation of this in other schools and work with Dr. Sty to speak with other professors and researchers in this field to see if this can be a project that we can receive NIH funding to pilot broadly. And I also want to work with other student leaders through project EDSA because I have been trained to deliver and facilitate the body project intervention. hopefully I'm planning on training other student leaders to also be trained to deliver this so they can take these slideshows and work in their own schools. So it doesn't just have to be me driving around everywhere to present these slideshows.

Diya Mankotia: And I do think this whole thing was created for teachers. So to work with my school's health counseling department or even the school health advisory council to have teachers look over the slideshows and maybe deliver these as a lesson sometime when they have a free class period because I know we are supposed to have some days where if they're able to do presentations on substance abuse and depression during flex time. I think that a 30 minute eating disorder/body acceptance prevention program could also likely fit in the yearly calendar if that makes sense. But that is my presentation about the body project.

Diya Mankotia: And that is a QR code to my project EDSA website. But if anybody has any questions, then I would be happy to answer anything either about the intervention itself or about school-based implementation of...

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): What happened?

Diya Mankotia: how this would look like in schools. thank you very much. I tried talking a little bit fast because I know the meeting ends at 7:30, so I didn't want to take up too much of your time, but I really appreciate the opportunity to present today.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): We have any questions? I So, thank This is excellent. And you answered the data question even before I, anticipated that. So, I'm going to make the same offer that we use our evaluation tool and then we write a recommendation that your program be implemented maybe as a pilot project in Austin ISD.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): So, you've got the right people listening to you and I think it's an excellent program and my own niece suffered from anorexia and bulimia. So, it hits home with me. Took her a long time to come out of it. She is healthy now,...

Diya Mankotia: Thank you.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): but if she'd had something like this in high school, I think that she would not have had the years of therapy that she ever had. Thank I have a question and thank you so much for presenting every time I see your presentation. I'm so appreciative of the work you do and Zane just I can't imagine a way for programs to be more responsive to improve themselves than to really hear and listen and value the feedback from the people that are benefiting from the services. So I appreciate your presentation so much.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): My question is, can you tell me when you piloted that first session the week before winter break,...

Diya Mankotia: Hm. I did not have to take permission.

AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): did you have to get permission because of Senate Bill 12 from the parents? And if you did, how did you overcome that?

Diya Mankotia: So, I initially asked my counselor about it. which she told me that she didn't know. She wasn't sure if she was the one to give permission. So, I would have to go speak to my assistant principal. So I went to my assistant principal and I showed him the whole presentation. I forwarded the presentation and I showed him Dr. Stiss's approval that this was similar to what the actual present body project intervention is which of course is very evidence-based and surprisingly I wish I had a better answer but there wasn't after he noticed the evidence-based framework he didn't ask any further questions he kind of gave me the permission which I was kind of surprised about but there was

01:20:00

Diya Mankotia: no mention of any bills and in terms of the survey I made it anonymous so I didn't collect any identity identifying stuff from the participants but for your question specifically there was nothing that was mentioned to me about the bill or...

Diya Mankotia: requesting parents information for the pilot

AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): Okay, thank you.

AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): Just a quick comment. I know we're wrapping up here, but I just wanted to reinforce how important frame of reference and perspective is and the importance of prevention, which of course, nutrition prevents disease, so why wait till people are sick? and just a quick anecdote that I think is so relevant is that one day in my Tai Chi class, which is outside, the teacher said, "Look around at all these trees around you. Nobody ever looks at a tree and says, "I wish it could be a little bit more like that." And it was the idea of diversity is beautiful and nature is perfect or something along those lines.

AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): and that concept and...

AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): Of course I'm short and I'm too this and that but that really stayed with me and so I thought that's part of what you're teaching right

Diya Mankotia: Yes. Yes.

Diya Mankotia: Thank And that is what I initially noticed in my pilot. it was a little nerve-wracking because I expected you would think that many adolescence of course there is an ideal that we stick up to, but when it comes to talking about it in public, we all value diversity. Nobody says anything bad about bodies that are not the beauty ideal I would say but I faced a lot of comments and people just saying about how there is really an emphasis and they believe that there was a question that I mentioned there was what are the costs of or do you think that this benefits you to pursue the thin ideal and a lot of them mentioned that it benefits me because I am more socially accepted if I look a certain way and I initially didn't know what to say because I wasn't expecting

Diya Mankotia: that. But the whole point of this is to have them say it out loud and then see how after they notice the costs of...

AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): All

Diya Mankotia: what it really is to pursue this in terms of emotional costs, physical costs, they realize the absurdity of trying to pursue this for a benefit that is so marginal in terms of the costs that are profound I would say. So I definitely think that is relevant and it's hard to kind of promote this ideal when we have kind of been raised to believe there is a certain body type to attain to.

AISD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): Sorry.

Michelle Gallas: Hey guys, can you hear me?

Diya Mankotia: Yes, I can.

Michelle Gallas: This is Michelle Gallas. I'm a pediatrician here in the community and I just want to say one to you and to Zane. Wow, you guys are two amazing amazing teens. and I'm so blown away by your projects. I do have a question for in regards to the curriculum,...

Diya Mankotia: Mhm. that is a good question.

Michelle Gallas: do you think that it's something that could be offered asynchronously that the students could do modules and then perhaps come together for discussion with an educated facilitator?

Diya Mankotia: So with the curriculum there are home exercises. So it doesn't really the four hours it is four hours plus 30 minutes of exercises at home to continue the learning.

Diya Mankotia: However, so far it has only been since they did do educational modules and it didn't produce that much of an effect. It is more recommended to either do it in person do it Virtually has actually produced the most results.

Michelle Gallas: And do you think that this is something that like...

Diya Mankotia: I did virtually over the summer. I led a few of the groups for his recent program that he also created related to this. but if there isn't the time to do it in person, I would say the next best option is definitely virtual groups over something like Zoom or Google Meet.

Michelle Gallas: if a health educator wanted to understand eating disorders better, that they could participate in, not so much to necessarily change their opinion about eating disorders,...

Michelle Gallas: but to learn about eating disorders and understand some of the things that the students might be thinking.

Diya Mankotia: Yes. Yes,...

Diya Mankotia: I definitely think so. when I went through training, a little bit obviously I had recovered by that time, but I didn't fully understand the cost. I just realized that I needed to get my health back better to actually live life. but when I went through the whole intervention itself, I would say it is very helpful to seeing really the perspective of how absurd it really is of some of these thoughts that are associated with body types and what the true costs of it are other than the generic how people say you shouldn't base your life about counting calories and stuff like that. I feel like that kind of stuff isn't helpful for someone...

01:25:00

Michelle Gallas: Excellent.

Diya Mankotia: who truly is struggling with this kind of stuff.

Diya Mankotia: So, it definitely is helpful to gaining more education and perspective about eating disorders regardless of what your perspective is right now.

Michelle Gallas:

Michelle Gallas: Great job, guys. Both of you. So proud.

Diya Mankotia: Thank you.

AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): Thank you.

AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): Thank you both for being here tonight. This is I think maybe my favorite presentation that we've had scheduled all year. I think I can probably get through the rest of the year and I really appreciate both of you being here tonight. I hope we can continue to stay in touch about future stuff that I'm talking about. and then I know we're running a little bit behind schedule. So, the things that we have left for items on our agenda are the reading and the approval of the December 17th meeting minutes. At the time that we have that posted on our agenda, we didn't have quorum.

AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): Is it possible for us to move that to our February meeting? So, we'll review our December and January minutes at our February meeting and then items from members brief announcements and suggestions for future topics. I'd also like to suggest that in February we use our rubric tool to evaluate reef carees project full measures and the body project presentation that we heard tonight. So, if we can add those to our February agenda, that would be appreciated. And then I know we had a conversation with Superintendent Sakura about the appointment of all of the vacancies on our council.

AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): I just hope that we can continue to put attention to that because as chair I feel like it is my responsibility and my obligation to make sure that we are maintaining compliance and I just want to bring it to everyone's attention that we continue to be out of compliance. We do have parents who are interested. I really appreciate the outreach flyer that Miss Hollingsworth has provided to us. I am reticent to go out and start soliciting family members to join because until we can fix whatever is broken within the communication system that is not allowing us to easily respond to parents and provide them the feedback and close that communication loop.

AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): I'm concerned that if we continue to invite them, we are perpetuating distrust. And I think that our district is at a time where it's critical that we not continue perpetuating that distrust and we start building more positive community engagement. So, I would like to begin sharing that flyer, but I think it's really critical that we find out where that breakdown in communication is happening that's not allowing us to easily appoint members to our council. And does anybody else have any items that they would like to suggest? just a cele Megan Vasquez from Becker Elementary. She was selected as a 2026 HB Excellence in Education So, another celebration for PE.

AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): Yes, I saw that for Miss Vosquez and I also saw that there was another teacher, Allison Deini, who was my daughter's fourth grade teacher. So, if we can just mention her as well. She was

a fabulous teacher for Harper at fourth grade at Travis Heights Elementary. So, congratulations to those teachers. I have one quick announcement that I need to make just not long but next month because next month I'm going to present on some** updates but I just want it to be on our members radar and maybe also so we are going to be updating doing a kind of a complete update of middle school sixth seventh and eighth grade lessons and the way that that's going to be laid out and we would like to get that approved this spring to

AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): go to the board by June so that it can be implemented next school year. So, I just want to let you all know that. I'm going to give you a much bigger update next month on things, but I wanted that to be a heads up. Leah and I were talking we're not sure that we need a subcommittee necessarily for it because of all the meetings that are already required to happen with the community, but I just wanted on your radar that we're going to have to have extra meetings in March and April for the community. You may not need to be here for it, but it is a shack hosted thing. and I'll give you more detail next month, but reach out to me if you have any questions before then, otherwise you'll hear from me next month. And then we had two additional items on our agenda, which were receiving an update from Elena and then also an update from Dr. Lewis. I am particularly interested in both of those things.

01:30:00

AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): I believe that given the time and in respect of everybody trying to get home, can we also move those items to our next agenda? Absolutely. And did I notice that they was the information in the slides for their information, the immunization? if you could share that with me, I'd be happy to send it out as a followup to this meeting just to make sure that everybody gets it. Is that all right with 100%. I do have a time sensitive so the Austin Travis County Community Health Assessment was published back in December just state of the health on this Friday. So I know this is short notice but if anyone hasn't seen any emails or anything they're having a partner summit for community members people representing different agencies. So if anyone is interested in going to that you can Google it and register to attend. What is it again?

AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): It's the Austin Travis County Community Health Assessment. They're having a partner summit inviting anyone it seems like from the community and also if you represent any professions or agencies, organizations they're going to have some breakouts and just share information from the health assessment. I think they do it every three years. Where is that located? It's going to be I can send it and we can maybe share it out. If you send it, I'll be happy to share it out to the rest of the members. We have hand up.

Fernando De Urioste: I was just going to ask is Zayn still there?

AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): No. Yes. Yes.

Fernando De Urioste: Leah, if I think you should email them. I was just remembering Lloyd Mains and Terry Hendris have that charity. I don't...

AISSD-HQ-221 (Lavaca): Yeah,...

Fernando De Urioste: if he knows about that charity would be a good thing to put him in contact with for his program.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): definitely I can do that. Harper has participated in those camps and I know Terry, so I'll make that connection. Thank you for bringing that up. That's a good Thought of so with that, we will adjourn our meeting at 7:41. Thank you everybody for being here. See you online in February. Thank you.

Fernando De Urioste: Thanks everybody.

Diya Mankotia: Thank you.

Michelle Gallas: Thank you. Bye.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): Thanks everybody.

AISS-HQ-221 (Lavaca): Is February Z think It is Zoom. If it's not, I'll email. Am I going home Why am I falling apart. I gota pick my daughter up. thank you. This is your time, It's actually quite productive. I got to sign which contracts

Meeting ended after 01:33:52 🙌

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