

MEETING MINUTES

Austin Independent School District Environmental Stewardship Advisory Committee

Sanchez Elementary School | Sanchez Elementary School | 73 San Marcos Street
Austin, TX 78723

September 19, 2024 | 5:30-7:30 pm

The AISD Environmental Stewardship Advisory Committee met at Sanchez Elementary School on September 19, 2024 to consider, discuss, and take action on the items listed in the agenda. These meeting minutes are supplemented by the meeting materials, which can be accessed on the [ESAC website](#).

Attendees

Members in Attendance

Yasmine Anderson
Michael Eggen
Tracy Geraldez
Bobby Sandoval
Arianna Colasanti
Nicole Howard
Gretchen Calderon
Rica Sunga-Kwan
Rey Torres
Catherine Martinez
Kevin Lanza
Monique Beacham*
Elizabeth Harper
Mike Berryman
Jeff Wacker *
Tamera Tate
Melody Alcazar
Sahiti Karempudi
Kathleen Cane

Visitors in Attendance

Colleen Garland
Mandi Golman
Bonny Gray
Aubrey Lethbridge
Janice Hagerman
Alicia Kim
Lavanya Selvam Alli
Nancy Hohengarten

Staff Coordinators in Attendance

Darien Clary

Members Not in Attendance

Nishtha Verma
Rue Nava
Laykha Chopra
Kir Kraus
Cheyenne Wright
Vibha Sheth
Antonio Ross
Kindal Keen
Kevin Tran**
Jen Cregar**
Matthew Garland
Shaun Auckland**
Bill Schnell**
Greg Behl
Meredith Clarke**
Carinne Maravilla**
Ashleigh Cibelli-Pettus**

Citizens Communion

None

* Indicates Committee Co-chair

** Indicates excused absence

Minutes

I. Optional Green Building Tour

Members were invited to arrive early to the meeting for an optional Green Building Tour of Sanchez Elementary School. 7 Members joined the tour, led by ESAC Co-chair, Jeff Wacker and AISD Director of Sustainability, Darien Clary. Sanchez Elementary was recently constructed as part of the 2017 AISD Bond program, and received a Three-star rating from the Austin Energy Green Building Program.

II. Welcome & Connect

Jeff Wacker, ESAC Co-chair, called the meeting to order at 5:37 pm. ESAC Co-chair Jeff Wacker, Co-chair Monique Beacham, AISD Director of Sustainability, Darien Clary introduced themselves and welcomed members to do the same. Jeff Wacker then led an icebreaker activity, then reviewed the ESAC purpose, shared reminders, and reviewed the meeting agenda. See meeting slides 2-8 for additional information.

Melody Alcazar motioned to approve the minutes from the May 22, 2024 ESAC meeting, Bobby Sandoval seconded the motion, and a majority of ESAC members passed the motion at 5:57 pm.

III. Public Comments & Announcements

Nancy Hohengarten of the Austin ReUse/Plastics Project introduced herself, shared information about her organization, and stated that would like to work more closely with schools to reduce plastic use in the schools and address recycling issues. ESAC Zero Waste working Group Leader, Lavanya Selvam Alli, said she will be happy to connect and would welcome Ms. Hohengarten to participate in the Zero Waste Working Group conversation. See meeting slides 9-11 for additional information.

IV. AISD Budget Committee Updates

ESAC Members and Liaison to the AISD Ad Hoc Joint Budget Committee, Catherine Martinez, updated members. There have been four meetings, but they have not had much traction, and there is concern among the Ad Hoc Joint Budget Committee members that the meetings are not truly engaging members authentically. The next committee meeting will be on September 24th, and all meetings are open to the public. ESAC members are encouraged to attend and become informed and aware. Ms. Martinez shared the topics the committee will explore and noted that there was especially concern for closing schools.

ESAC members then began a discussion about the current budget, Proposition A, and Recapture. Members shared that trustees are speaking with PTAs about these topics, and Ms. Clary offered to invite an AISD trustee to speak about Recapture at the next ESAC meeting. Members agreed this would be helpful. Ms. Clary also said she would send a follow up email to members with information and resources about the AISD Ad Hoc Joint Budget Committee and AISD's website links about Proposition A and Recapture. See meeting slide 18 for additional information.

V: ESAC & Strategic Planning Recap

ESAC. Co-chair, Jeff Wacker, thanked ESAC members who participated in the optional Strategic Planning meeting on August 30th, 2024. About 20 members joined to consider what has been going well, areas for improvement, and general priorities for the upcoming year. Mr. Wacker shared that there are currently open voting positions for non-teaching staff, and encouraged members to reach out

if they know of anyone that would be interested in joining the committee. He also shared that the ESAC had members from all trustee districts, the breakdown of member demographics by ethnicity and gender. Mr. Wacker recognized the previous ESAC Equity & Community Engagement Subcommittee for their hard work to foster a diverse membership. The new membership cohort is much more representative of the AISD student body and has a more varied background and experiences than in years past. Mr. Wacker acknowledged that we have more work to do to center the voices of our marginalized students and AISD community members in our work.

AISD Sustainability Director, Darien Clary, recapped the “Big AISD Topics” that were discussed in the summer Strategic Planning meeting. This included the 2022 Bond in its inclusion of green building standards, the electric bus initiative, facility repurposing, the District’s budget, and rooftop solar installation at an additional 14 schools.

ESAC Co-chair, Monique Beacham, summarized the meeting feedback that included what members enjoy, what makes them feel inspired in their ESAC work, how to improve our meeting time together, and what members would be proud of at the end of the year. The suggestions and insights were helpful and will be incorporated into the meeting cadence for this year. Anyone can reach out to the Co-chairs and Ms. Clary if they have additional ways to improve. For more information about the strategic planning recap, see meeting slides 12-19.

VI: Amenity Mapping Update

ESAC Members and Amenity Mapping working Group leaders, Melody Alcazar and Yasmine Anderson, shared that volunteers and summer interns with the City of Austin Parks & Recreation Department have completed inventories of outdoor features and amenities at 26 schools. They logged 1,997 features and the most common were cisterns, gardens, and benches. There was a wide range in current quality of the features. They noted that there were discarded desks in the dumpster at one school they were mapping and shared concern that the desks could have been salvaged if they were not broken. They shared photos of different types of cisterns the volunteers have come across at schools. Given the time intensity of completing the assessments at each school, the group is pausing the assessments. The working group’s next topics include rehoming features from schools undergoing construction, data analysis, mapping, creating a summary of findings, connecting with partners, and considering repair and maintenance of features. See meeting slides 20-26 for additional information.

VII: Working Group Pitches

ESAC Co-chair invited working group leaders to briefly share information about their group. Leaders please introduced themselves, shared the general concept or goals of the group and the rough meeting schedule (if known). The following working groups were presented: Amenity Mapping, Zero Waste, Energy Engagement at Schools, A.I. for Green Career Pathways, Take Me Outside Day Promotion, Outdoor Learning Amenity Rehoming - Coordination and Fundraising ESAC Member Resource List, Outdoor Learning peer sharing platform for design and maintenance, Legislative Affairs, ESAC Member Engagement Activities. Several groups with similar interests decided to combine into one group. See meeting slides 27-30 for additional information.

VIII: Working Groups Connect

Working Group leaders then spread around the room and hosted conversations about their topic. Members then went to the group(s) they wanted to join or learn more about.

IX: Closing & Adjourn

At 7:25 pm, Jeff Wacker, ESAC Co-chair, wrapped up the meeting and shared that the ESAC

leadership would follow up with next steps about working groups. The meeting was adjourned at 7:31pm.