

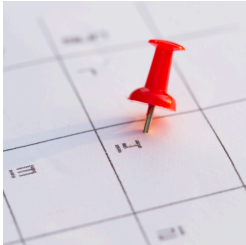



## ESAC & AISD Sustainability News & Updates






November 14, 2024





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

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

ESAC members, thank you for joining the upcoming 11/14 ESAC meeting. We look forward to a productive and engaging conversation!

	<p><b>November 14th: AISD Environmental Stewardship Advisory Committee (ESAC) Meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● November 14th - Join the <a href="#">virtual meeting</a>, 5:30-7:30</li><li>● This meeting will include a conversation with Trustee Boswell about <a href="#">Recapture</a>.</li><li>● See the <a href="#">ESAC webpage</a> for the meeting agenda, upcoming meeting dates, and previous meeting materials.</li></ul>
	<p><b>ESAC Working Groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● This is the list of <a href="#">working group topics</a> that have emerged this year.</li><li>● ESAC Members: If you haven't already done so, please sign up for the working group(s) you would like to serve.</li><li>● We will have dedicated Working Group time at the November 14th ESAC Meeting.</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Welcome, Carsen Daniel, Sustainability Coordination Manager!</b> Carsen is focusing on program coordination, communications, and administration, and looks forward to learning more about school district operations, food service, zero waste, and student engagement while developing a communications strategy! Click <a href="#">here</a> for Carsen's bio.</li><li>● <b>Outdoor Learning Specialist (part time)</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ AISD seeks candidates with a passion for connecting children and nature, teaching experience, and ideally the ability to communicate in English and Spanish. The position will be student-centered, focusing on field trips and the development of AISD's new Outdoor Wonder and Learning (OWL) Center. The position is part time (no benefits), 15-19 hours a week, and will pay \$38.50/hour. Please help spread the word with anyone you think may be a great fit for our team! Links: <a href="#">Application link</a>   <a href="#">Job Description</a></li></ul></li></ul>
	<p><b>(AISD Staff Update) Transportation</b> (Update from Rica Sunga-Kwan, Kris Hafezizadeh, Miguel Rios)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● We are on track, with the support of our Construction Management team, to purchase 17 more electric buses per the EPA grant.</li><li>● The Texas Transportation Institute, affiliated with Texas A&amp;M, will conduct a study of our current 3 electric buses.</li><li>● We are finalizing a contract with JLL to provide a master plan to transition to an electric AISD transportation fleet by 2035 per the <a href="#">Board's resolution</a>.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● We have received our new diesel buses per the 2022 Bond and all routes now have air conditioned buses, keeping our promise to the public.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>(AISD Staff Update) Sustainable Food</b> (Update from Diane Grodek &amp; Lindsey Bradley)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● We will continue our annual Thanksgiving school lunch offering a traditional Turkey Plate or our Famous Lentil Frito Pie as we open our doors to thousands of AISD families.</li> <li>● Our Winter Menu starts on December 9 and will feature a new plant-based product called Planetarian Strips in an Asian Sauce over whole grain Ramen noodles! We will also be featuring a Spicy Cucumber and Jicama Salad, new Tacos, a Falafel Wrap and so much more!</li> <li>● We will continue to offer breakfast and lunch at all of our High Schools during Finals Week!</li> <li>● As a Department we will continue to serve our students high quality, fresh, flavorful food into 2025 and beyond.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>(AISD Staff Update) Nature &amp; Outdoor Learning</b> (Update from Colleen Garland &amp; Mandi Golman)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●  We are working to rehome outdoor amenities to reuse in our 2022 Bond Modernizations projects.</li> <li>● We kicked off the first round of 25 Girls+ Outside field trips with an outing to El Ranchito at Shield Ranch. We played games outside, made nature journals, and got to tour the camping cabins. As program participants, the girls are invited to attend sleepaway camp at El Ranchito at no cost to them.</li> <li>● The OWL Center is in the final design stage and will undergo major construction of Phase 1 this summer!</li> <li>● Earth Camp and Earth School are back at the OWL for field trips this semester, activating and beautifying the space.</li> <li>● We continue to learn more about the incorporation of Universal Design practices into the outdoor learning world and will soon complete the “Naturally Inclusive” course series.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>(AISD Staff Update) Urban Forestry</b> (Update from Sydnie Levell)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The first tree planting of fall has been completed! Thirty trees have found a new home at Norman Simms Elementary. A big thank you to all the volunteers, TreeFolks, PARD, and our event sponsors, Takeda and American Forests.</li> <li>● The AISD Urban Forester and the Office of Innovation and Development have applied for a City of Austin Urban Forest Grant to partner with the <a href="#">Texas Conservation Corps</a> and enhance tree care capacity at the district level. This is an exciting partnership that will be led by the AISD Urban Forester!</li> </ul>
	<p><b>(AISD Staff Update) Planning &amp; Asset Management</b> (update from Dr. Raechel French)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Austin ISD in collaboration with Kirksey Architecture has recently agreed to participate in a new building rating system called the <a href="#">Building Equity Standard</a>. Specifically, we are pursuing <a href="#">Building Equity certification for</a></li> </ul>

	<p><a href="#">Norman-Sims Elementary</a>, related to the equity-centered design and post-occupancy experiences.</p>
	<p><b>(ESAC Working Group Update) Outdoor Amenity Rehoming &amp; Mapping</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Group Leader(s):</b> Melody Alcazar + Yasmine Anderson + Mandi Golman <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ We are currently scrubbing data, then we will analyze.</li> <li>○ We will develop summary for Board/Superintendent this winter.</li> <li>○ AISD Outdoor Learning Design &amp; Activation Specialist, Mandi Golman, is working to rehome salvageable amenities from schools undergoing bond-related construction.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<p><b>(ESAC Working Group Update) Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Green Career Pathways</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Group Leader(s):</b> Mo Beacham + Mike Eggen <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The working group's focus is on providing students with hands-on experience in AI and sustainability, promoting critical thinking about AI ethics and its environmental impact, engaging them in community-benefiting projects, and preparing them for future careers in emerging tech fields.</li> <li>○ Possible activities include AI &amp; Machine Learning Sustainability Awareness Discussions, Learning Lab Modules for AI ethics, geospatial analytics, and sustainability.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<p><b>(ESAC Working Group Update) Legislative Affairs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Group Leader(s):</b> Catherine Martinez <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Our Goal:</b> To make legislative advocacy more accessible, raise awareness of legislation on the docket in this year's legislative session that impacts ESAC goals and priorities.</li> <li>○ <b>Recent Progress:</b> Met with Edna Butts, AISD Director of Intergovernmental Relations and Policy Oversight, and Luke Metzger of Environment Texas to determine what attainable goals and strategies might look like.</li> <li>○ <b>Next Steps:</b> Focusing priorities to get additional guidance from Luke on what is achievable</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
 <p><b>SNAP THE QR CODE TO TAKE THE SURVEY!</b></p>	<p><b>(ESAC Working Group Update) Greenies Connect! (Resource List)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Group Leader(s):</b> Jen Cregar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ We're building a directory of ESAC members and others to help advance sustainability at AISD schools. Have something to offer? <b>Please let us know by taking <a href="#">this survey</a> by Friday, Dec. 6.</b></li> <li>○ This survey is just the first step! Want to join us in connecting AISD teachers and staff with sustainability resources? Check out our <a href="#">meeting notes</a> and email Jen (<a href="mailto:jcregar@gmail.com">jcregar@gmail.com</a>) if you want to sign up.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



### (ESAC Working Group Update) Zero Waste

- Group Leader(s): Lavanya Selvam Alli
  - The group is discussing priorities. Possibilities include: improving sorting practices in cafeterias, redesigning sorting posters and signs, reviewing Standard Operating Procedures with the AISD Custodial Leadership team, zero waste in athletic facilities, reviewing previous actions taken by this ESAC working group.
  - Resources: [Keep Austin Beautiful](#), [Parents Climate Community](#) and [Plastic Reduction Project](#).



### (ESAC Working Group Update) Energy Engagement

- Group Leader(s): Rey Torres & Tamera Tate
  - Tamera Tate, ESAC member and Austin Energy Education Outreach Coordinator, recently completed outreach at Pecan Springs through the [Austin Energy School Outreach Program](#). Last year, the Educational Outreach Team did 58 AISD presentations.
  - Currently exploring other partnerships to support green energy career pathways and internships.
  - **Host a summer intern in the green energy sector!** Local businesses can offer 10-12th grade AISD students work experience, skills, and mentorship through a partnership with the Austin Ed Fund and Austin Chamber of Commerce. While energy-related businesses are ideal, all companies are welcome. Last summer, 36 students from 7 high schools participated. The Chamber will help onboard hosts. For more details, visit the [Summer Internship Webpage](#).



### (ESAC Working Group Update) Walk 'n' Roll to School

- Group Leader(s): Sahiti Karempudi
  - First meeting was held on Tuesday, November 12
  - Determined how often we would like to meet: once a month
  - Determined working group goal: **create sustainable change around the biking and walking cultures at schools**

**Resources:** [AISD Sustainability Website](#) | [ESAC Google Drive](#) | [ESAC Website](#) | [ESAC Working Group Notes Folders](#) | ESAC listserv: [aisd\\_esac@googlegroups.com](mailto:aisd_esac@googlegroups.com)

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

Kind regards,  
Darien Clary

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