Austin Independent School District

Environmental Stewardship Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes

November 15, 2018
5:30 – 7:30 pm
Carruth Administration Center, 1111 W. 6th Street, Board Auditorium

Attendees

Members in Attendance

Pamela Abee Taulli
Aimee Aubin
Bianca Bidiuc Peterson
Karen Bishop
Rob Borowski
Liz Cardinal
Alecia Casper
Colleen Garland
Charlie Gutierrez
Kristi Hibler-Luton
Cari Land
Sherry Lepine*
Lauren Maples
Kate Martin
Amanda Mortl Walker
Anne Muller
Mary Priddy*
Justo Ramirez
Ilya Shmulenson
Richard Shearman
Dub Taylor
Jeff Wacker
Jessica Wilson

Staff Coordinators in Attendance

Darien Clary

Members Not in Attendance

Jake Carter
Sam DeSanto
Amir Emamian
Kris Hafezizadeh
Monica Lopez Magee* **
Susan Peterson
Lonnie Sclerandi
Ryan Spencer
Anneliese Tanner **
James Tosh
Cynthia Wilcox**
Louis Zachary

Citizens Communication

Emma Pabst

Visitors

Christopher Stanton
Carrie Schreiber
Carina Bracer
Mandi Golman
Gina Cordero
Natalie Casper

* Indicates Committee Tri-Chair
**Indicates excused absence

Minutes

I. Welcome and Approval of Minutes

The ESAC Tri-chair Mary Priddy facilitated the meeting and called the meeting to order at 5:45pm. The team building activity began and approval of the minutes was put on hold until there were enough members present to reach quorum. The team building activity included four questions that were projected on a slide and ESAC members were encouraged to discuss with someone that was not on their subcommittee (see meeting materials for more information). When quorum was reached at 6:20pm, the ESAC member, Dub Taylor, moved to approve the previous meeting's minutes, seconded by Lauren Maples. The minutes were approved unanimously. New members, Kate Martin and Irene Dooling, were welcomed to the committee. Guests also introduced themselves.

II. Public Comments & Announcements

ESAC Tri-Chair, Mary Priddy, spoke about the Bright Green Futures Grant. They had a record-breaking 120 applicants and will announce the winners on Monday.

Emma Pabst with Environment Texas spoke about Solar panels at schools. She advocated for the school district to put solar on all schools by 2025 and mentioned that solar installations at AISD schools could help reduce energy costs, support STEM education, and showcase the District's commitment to sustainability. Emma Pabst informed the committee that Environment Texas will send a draft resolution that they would like to see AISD adopt.

VI. Presentation: CIP.

Gina Cordero, AISD Assistant Director of Campus and District Accountability, discussed how AISD sustainability strategies could be integrated into Campus Improvement Plans. The items included should have data for measurement (waste diversion, energy use, etc.). If schools are struggling in a particular area, they will be required to add the relevant content to their CIP. Gina suggested that a point-person for each action area identify the strategies and how to implement a strategy. She also advises having resources and best practices available to the school and a contact person in case schools have questions about a particular strategy. The CIPs are published online for each school. If desired, the CIPs could help feed a "sustainability" rating for the school. There are currently 36 CIP focus areas, and sustainability could be a 37th. It will be important to have support from a Chief or Executive-level AISD staff member, and it was suggested that perhaps Nicole Conley Johnson, AISD Chief of Business and Operations, could help with this since the ESAC is under her purview. Some campuses may not be required to fulfill all the sustainability strategies but may choose to. An executive-level staff person could require particular strategies to be mandatory if they feel they are necessary for all schools to do. Plans are submitted and reviewed in November, although the strategies can be adjusted throughout the year.

Gina also mentioned the following items about the process:

- Executive level staff sends email to Gina Cordero requesting that Sustainability be included in the Campus Improvement Plans.
- CIPs are usually limited to 5 strategies, but there could be more in this case since sustainability is such a broad field.
- Gina recommends addressing teaching, operations, community (three pillars) for each

criterion we propose.
- The new CIP strategies could go into effect for the next school year. Strategies for each sustainability action area could be added when ready – we don't have to wait until all action areas/subcommittees have finalized their items to include. Some schools may have early adopters who want to try some strategies.

III. Team Building Activity

The team building activity was moved to an earlier time in the evening's proceedings to allow time for members to arrive and quorum to be reached. See "Welcome and Approval of Minutes," above.

IV . AISD Sustainability Update

The AISD Sustainability Manager, Darien Clary, shared information about how ESAC members can be active in AISD bond projects. She shared the AISD 2017 Bond website (austinisd2017bond.org) and the calendar that showed opportunities for public engagement. One member asked if any Campus Advisory Teams (CAT) were going to be forming soon, and Darien responded that she would look into this and share with ESAC members who may be interested in joining a school CAT. Darien also thanked ESAC members who have been involved in bond projects already and mentioned that this is a very exciting time for integrating sustainability into long-range planning and building construction at AISD.

V. Action Area Updates

AISD Zero Waste Specialist and ESAC Member, Amanda Mortl-Walker, provided the Food Action Area update on behalf of Food subcommittee leader, Anneliese Tanner. Amanda shared photos of the Maplewood Elementary kickoff in celebration of eliminating Styrofoam trays and implementing composting in the cafeteria.

The ESAC Member and AISD Outdoor Learning Specialist, Anne Muller, updated members about the Nature Action Area. One year ago, the AISD Construction Management Department and partners, including AISD Science and the Travis County Audubon Society, uncapped the incinerator chimney at Brooke Elementary and it is now home to approximately 100 chimney swifts. Maplewood Elementary is planned to be the next school and the project is supported by Travis County Audubon. Decommissioned incinerator chimneys have also been uncapped at other schools for the same purpose of providing habitat for the chimney swifts. The schools receive educational signs to post at the incineration in both English and Spanish that describe the birds and the habitat. An ESAC members suggested promoting "watch" parties at the schools. Anne also welcomed the new Discovery Hill coordinator, Colleen Garland. Colleen joined the AISD team this week and will help grow the program at the Science and Health Resource Center. Anne also shared that TA Brown's motto will be "a green school rooted in STEAM and outdoor learning." AISD received a City of Austin Urban Forest Grant to support TA Brown with tree-focused education and teacher training. Anne announced that The Texas Children in Natures summit will take place December 6-7 in Corpus Christi, Texas. People from all over the state will attend, and Anne will be presenting with ESAC member, Lauren Maples, about outdoor learning and school gardens. Barrington Elementary hosted a pollinator Bioblitz in partnership with the National Wildlife Federation and 35 people participated. New schools participating in the National Wildlife Federation Monarch Heroes program include O. Henry,

Highland Park, Gullett, Wooldridge, Winn, Boone, Bailey, and Pease. All have planted Monarch habitats- everyone should see them in full bloom this spring!

The ESAC member and AISD Energy and Water Manager, Richard Shearman, shared the Energy and Water Action Area Updates. Richard presented to the AISD FABPAC about sustainability in the 2017 bond. The presentation to the FABPAC also included an update on the energy conservation and efficiency measures associated with the 2013 bond. The 2013 bond enabled an energy savings performance contract for 12 schools which is in the process of starting. This will include lighting retrofits, HVAC control upgrades, and faucet retrofits. Richard also showed the campus energy reports that are sent to school principals. The first reports were sent this week, and principals can click on their school to see their utility use and targets for energy reduction. At present, the District pays the utility bills (rather than the schools), so it has been difficult to motivate schools to conserve. Hopefully, integrating energy and water conservation in the CIP can help. Richard also showed photos of the EV charging station ceremony that took place in November 2018. Trustee Amber Elenz emceed, and speakers included City Council member, Ann Kitchen; Austin ISD Construction Management and Facilities Executive Director, Bob Cervi; Austin Energy General Manager, Jackie Sargent; and Akins Green Tech Academy Assistant Principal, Ernesto Wallace. City Council members, Ann Kitchen and Delia Garza, also read the Mayor's proclamation that declared November 4th as EVs for Schools Day.

The ESAC member and AISD Zero Waste Specialist, Amanda Mortl, provided the Zero Waste and Procurement Action Area Update. All school cafeterias now have composting! This is the culmination of a multi-year project to bring composting to all school cafeterias and is an important step in meeting the City and District's common goal to divert 90% of waste from the landfill by 2040. Amanda showed photos from Webb Middle school, as they were the final school at AISD to join the compost program. Amanda also shared that during the City of Austin's recent boil water alert, Barbara Jordan Elementary students turned used water bottles into art pieces. Eastside Memorial High School had a National Wildlife Federation Green Flag renewal ceremony. Amanda mentioned the great collaboration among custodial staff, students, and teachers to make this happen. Amanda also announced the upcoming dumpster observation study and green team development at 15 schools. For two weeks, custodians at each of the 15 schools will observe how full their dumpsters are at the end of the day and note if there is any contamination. At the end of the two weeks, Amanda will analyze the data to see if any schools can adjust their pick-up schedule to "flip a dumpster" (reduce a landfill haul and increase recycling and/or composting pick-up) so that these schools divert 50% of their waste. Amanda will also work with the schools to make action plans to improve their sorting and ease custodial operations for waste diversion. Participating schools will also receive bins, posters, and the custodians will attend a TDS site visit in December.

The ESAC Member, Rob Borowski, provided the Transportation & Air Quality Action Area update. He shared that kids ride free on Capital Metro transit until December 10th, and that the Capital Metro board is considering whether to extend this program. Rob encouraged ESAC members to provide comments to feedback@capmetro.org. Rob also commented that any school wanting help with transportation can call him to set up a transit adventure. Rob shared that a Transit Empowerment Fund has been set up for low income populations with transit needs. The funding mechanisms include free and reduced passes and a micro-grant of up to $100k for transit connected programs. This may be an opportunity to expand EV charging. AISD Transportation Safety Supervisor and ESAC member, Justo Ramirez, shared that AISD is piloting a special needs bus that will help reduce idling through battery technology. The driver will be able to shut off the engine and operate the lift and A/C for 20 minutes. An ESAC member

asked if AISD had a no-idling policy for buses. Justo replied that there is currently a five minute idling policy in place. Another ESAC member asked why the AISD fleet plug-in vehicle could also run on gas. AISD Sustainability Manager, Darien Clary, responded that the model with gas back-up was selected because there isn't a charging station where the vehicle is housed. The vehicle will use all EV power before using its fuel reserve, and hopefully we can keep it charged at stations around town or at schools so we very rarely use the gas reserve.

Please see Meeting Materials for additional information regarding action area updates.

VII. Work groups

Due to time constraints, members did not divide into work groups. They were, however, asked to stay after the meeting was adjourned to coordinate their next community engagement event and to draft their School Improvement Plan strategies related to their action area.

IX. Request for Information and Future Meetings

No requests were made.

The ESAC member, Lauren Maples, motioned to adjourn. The motion was seconded by the ESAC member, Jeff Wacker. The meeting adjourned at 7:17pm.