

MEETING MINUTES

**Austin Independent School District
Environmental Stewardship Advisory Committee
Strategic Planning Meeting (Optional Attendance)**
City of Austin Permitting and Development Center
6310 Wilhelmina Dr. | Austin, TX 78752
August 22, 2023 | 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

The AISD Environmental Stewardship Advisory Committee met at the City of Austin Permitting and Development Center on August 22, 2023 to consider, discuss, and take action on the items listed in the agenda below. These meeting minutes are supplemented by the meeting materials, which can be accessed on the [ESAC website](#).

Attendees

Attendance for the ESAC Strategic Planning Meeting was optional. Absence from this meeting does not count against members.

Participants in Attendance

Jeff Wacker *
Jennifer Cregar *
Rey Torres
Melody Alcazar
Yasmine Anderson
Tracy Geraldez
Amanda Braziel
Michael Eggen
Tamera Tate
Kindal Keen
Kevin Lanza
Greg Behl
Ana Echeverria
Colleen Garland
Elizabeth Harper
Mary Priddy
Monique Beacham

Staff Coordinators in Attendance

Darien Clary
Lucia Sewing Cole

Citizens Communion

None

* Indicates Committee Co-Chair

Minutes

I. Welcome & Introductions

Jeff Wacker, ESAC Co-Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:22 am and asked everyone in the room to introduce themselves with a few icebreaker questions. Jeff Wacker then introduced the ESAC Leadership Team and the AISD Staff Sustainability Leadership Team (see Meeting Materials, slides 3-4).

II. Public Comments

There were no public comments submitted through the online portal. Participants used this time to share announcements and comments. At 9:58 am, Colleen Garland shared that "Heat Week" was airing on KUT, and that AISD Executive Chef Diane Grodek was recently featured on a podcast about zero waste, sustainability, cultural cooking, and scratch-made school meals. Amanda Braziel asked where to get recycling bins for AISD Athletics, and Ana Echeverria answered that after hours, anyone using AISD Athletics facilities are responsible for their own waste, and that a form is available to request training and get waste bins (email Ana Echeverria for details). Kindal Keen shared that at Murchison Middle School, the 6th and 7th grades do not have science teachers, only substitute teachers. Colleen Garland suggested submitting a Let's Talk to bring attention to this issue.

III. ESAC 101

At 10:05 am, Darien Clary, AISD Sustainability Director, shared that the ESAC is one of many AISD advisory bodies (see Meeting Materials, slide 7). Kevin Lanza asked how the AISD advisory bodies normally interact with one another. Darien Clary answered that the Co-Chairs normally represent their advisory bodies when collaborating, and in the past, the ESAC has mostly collaborated with the School Health Advisory Committee (SHAC) and sometimes the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Advisory Committee. Kevin Lanza also asked if the superintendent ever gives a charge to the advisory bodies. Darien Clary answered that there are opportunities for this; the ESAC writes letters and makes recommendations to the AISD Board of Trustees with the hope that they will then direct the ESAC to take action. Darien Clary, AISD Sustainability Director, then provided an overview of the ESAC purpose and scope (see Meeting Materials, slides 8-9).

At 10:14 am, Jeff Wacker, ESAC Co-Chair, provided a breakdown of the current membership demographics, noting that more than half of ESAC members are new this year (see Meeting Materials, slides 10-12). Rey Torres asked if there is past demographic information to compare with the current data. Jennifer Cregar, ESAC Co-Chair, responded that this information has not been consistently tracked in the past, but that she would share some past demographic data later in the meeting. Tamera Tate asked why there are so few teachers on the ESAC, and participants briefly brainstormed how to recruit more teachers for the ESAC, noting that lack of time and energy is a significant barrier for many teachers.

At 10:23 am, Jeff Wacker, ESAC Co-Chair, covered the ESAC information and action flow, history, and past successes, and then called for any questions from participants (see Meeting Materials, slides 13-16). Greg Behl asked what the ESAC Leadership Team considers to be its greatest accomplishments. Jeff Wacker, ESAC Co-Chair, said the development of the AISD Sustainability Plan. Darien Clary, AISD Sustainability Director, said seeing different organizations represented. Jennifer Cregar, ESAC Co-Chair, said supporting AISD staff and getting staff positions created and protected. Kevin Lanza asked how often AISD Sustainability staff pursues federal funding. Darien Clary, AISD Sustainability Director, responded that AISD has been pursuing a lot of IRA funding and has been looking for external funding for positions, such as the Urban Forester position. Darien Clary also shared that AISD is in negotiations with the Department of Energy for a grant of up to nearly \$15 million to fund solar panels and building automation system upgrades for 16 schools.

IV: Alignment with AISD & City of Austin Priorities

At 10:39 am, Darien Clary, AISD Sustainability Director, shared AISD priorities for SY2023-24 that intersect with sustainability (see Meeting Materials, slide 19). Jeff Wacker, ESAC Co-Chair, shared City of Austin priorities that intersect with sustainability (see Meeting Materials, slide 20).

V: Break

Participants took a break from 10:45 am - 10:58 am.

VI: Equity Framework

At 10:58 am, Jennifer Cregar, ESAC Co-Chair, presented on the ESAC Equity Work Plan and shared the current ESAC member demographic data compared to the ESAC member demographic data from SY2019-20, which shows that the ESAC has greater racial diversity but similar gender representation compared to SY2019-20 (see Meeting Materials, slides 21-25). Jennifer Cregar, ESAC Co-Chair, explained AISD's Equity by Design Framework (see Meeting Materials, slide 26) and asked participants to reflect on what questions they have about the Equity by Design Framework and what is important when thinking about this framework in an educational setting. Meeting participants were given time to reflect on their own and to share with the whole group.

VII: An Agile ESAC

At 11:35 am, Darien Clary, AISD Sustainability Director, provided an overview of how ESAC subcommittees and working groups will function this year. Darien Clary explained that having working groups (i.e., groups that meet as needed, historically high frequency for short durations to strategize, take quick action, and/or organize events and activities) in addition to standing subcommittees makes the ESAC more agile. Darien Clary covered best practices for how to form a subcommittee or working group, shared some working group ideas, and asked participants what ideas they have for working groups they might like to lead. See Meeting Materials (slides 27-32) for more details. Kevin Lanza requested a learning session to understand what AISD's needs are so that ESAC members can better understand what working groups would be most helpful.

VIII: Making the Most of ESAC General Meetings

At 11:55 am, Jennifer Cregar, ESAC Co-Chair, facilitated an activity to uncover the meeting activities and settings that are most meaningful and fun for participants. Jennifer Cregar asked participants to work in small groups to answer questions, and then had them report back as a group. Jennifer Cregar then asked everyone to develop their own "time budget," or agenda, for ESAC general meetings, which are always two hours long. She had participants write down how they would like to spend the first 30 minutes, second 30 minutes, third 30 minutes, and fourth 30 minutes of the 2-hour ESAC meetings. A few participants shared their time budgets with the group. Lucia Sewing Cole, Sustainability Admin Assistant, shared that a follow-up survey would be sent to capture this feedback from anyone else who wanted to share and from members who were not able to attend the Strategic Planning Meeting.

IX: What's Next & Closing

At 12:22 pm, Jennifer Cregar, ESAC Co-Chair, wrapped up the meeting by sharing contact information for the ESAC Leadership Team and a reminder of the upcoming ESAC general meeting on September 6, 2023. Jennifer Cregar adjourned the meeting at 12:24 pm, and participants were invited to attend an optional lunch following the meeting.