

DRAFT Resolution February 8, 2017

WHEREAS, The Early Childhood Council of the City of Austin is charged with making recommendations to the City Council that support optimal development of young children and their families, continued development of a system of high-quality early care and education, and cooperative arrangements to support quality early care and education; and

WHEREAS, Today's children are the workforce of the future for the City of Austin; and

WHEREAS, There is strong evidence that the preschool years are critically important for success in school, likelihood of graduating from high school, and being a productive citizen; and

WHEREAS, There is strong evidence that children who attend high quality pre-kindergarten programs are more likely to be ready for kindergarten than those who do not attend; and

WHEREAS, The educational opportunities provided by the Austin Independent School District are central to the health and welfare of the community; and

WHEREAS, The pre-kindergarten classes for three- and four-year-old children make important contributions to children's readiness to enter kindergarten; and

WHEREAS, The AISD Facilities Master Plan will have long-term effects on the types of educational experiences provided to students; and

WHEREAS, The current AISD Facilities Master Plan does not appear to be adequately informed about the unique needs of very young children and their families; and

WHEREAS, The current AISD Facilities Master Plan contains proposals to close two of the three current pre-kindergarten centers (that is, entire schools devoted to pre-kindergarten and/or kindergarten classes); and

WHEREAS, Data collected by AISD show that children who attend pre-kindergarten centers perform better on tests of school readiness than do those who attend pre-kindergarten classes in elementary schools

(https://www.austinisd.org/sites/default/files/dre-reports/rb/13.55_RB_a_Prekindergarten_Program_Student_Academic_Performance_2013-2014.pdf) ; and,

WHEREAS, Pre-kindergarten centers are staffed by teachers, staff, and administrators with specific expertise in early childhood education;

WHEREAS, The City of Austin Early Childhood Council recommends that the City Council support and encourage the AISD Facilities Planning Committee to create facilities and programs that support high quality pre-kindergarten education, including assuring that teachers and principals have expertise in early childhood and that facilities

are designed to promote optimal social and intellectual development of young children;
NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN: The City of Austin supports specific consideration of plans that use available information to create facilities and programs that support high quality pre-kindergarten education, including assuring that teachers and principals have expertise in early childhood and that facilities are designed to promote optimal social and intellectual development of young children.

DRAFT