



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Commission on Immigrant Affairs

Recommendation Number: 20200504-3a: Creation of Summer Camps in Spanish or Dual Language Summer Camps

WHEREAS, 22% of Austinites speak primarily Spanish at home¹, and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin is committed to “making reasonable efforts to ensure that City services and information about those services are provided in a manner that is accessible, relevant, and timely to residents” even if those residents are limited in their English proficiency (LEP).², and

WHEREAS, on November 3, 2016, the City of Austin passed Resolution No. 20161103-052 directing the City Manager to develop “Language Access Procedures” for each City Department that interacts with the public. The procedures were to specify steps for staff to follow to, among other things, deliver services to LEP individuals and ensure effective services are provided, and³

WHEREAS, 26% of the 81,000 students enrolled in the Austin Independent School District are English learners⁴, and

WHEREAS, 88% of those English Learners speak Spanish as their primary home language⁵, and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARC) offers a wide variety of summer camps for children in Austin at affordable rates, and

WHEREAS, the stated goal of the PARC’s summer program is to “provide children with exciting experiences through structured recreation in a safe and welcoming environment”⁶, and

¹U.S. Census Data from 2008 available at:

https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=language%20austin%20tx&g=1600000US4805000&hidePreview=false&tid=ACSST1Y2018.S1601&vintage=2018&layer=VT_2018_160_00_PY_D1&cid=S1601_C01_001E

² See the [City of Austin’s Language Access Plan](#) p.3 available at:

https://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/images/Airport/Travel_Security/Language_Access_Plan.pdf

³ Resolution No. 20161103-52 available at:

<http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=267426>

⁴ <https://www.austinisd.org/multilingual>

⁵ Data provided to the Commission by Dr. David Kauffman, Executive Director of Multilingual Education at A.I.S.D.

⁶ <https://austintexas.gov/department/summer-camp-recreation-centers>



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Summer Camps

WHEREAS, the PARD currently offers their summer camp information, website and enrollment materials in languages other than English, but conducts all its over 500 camps in only English, and

WHEREAS, English-only summer camps are not welcoming environments for children who speak another language at home, and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin's Commission on Immigrant Affairs received testimony and feedback from the Austin community regarding the need for City summer programming in Spanish, and

WHEREAS, the Austin Independent School District offers Dual Language programs for elementary and secondary students in which the goals of the program are rigorous cognitive and academic development, academic proficiency in two languages, and cross-cultural development, and

WHEREAS, there are many additional students in Dual Language programs in the City, including English dominant students, who receive at least 50% of their school-year instructional time in Spanish and are emergent bilingual, and

WHEREAS, these students would benefit from continuing their exposure to Spanish throughout the summer,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Commission on Immigrant Affairs recommends that the City of Austin's Parks and Recreation Department offer at least 10% of its total number of summer camps in Spanish and/or as Dual Language Summer Camp(s) initially reserving at least 50% of the available spots for children whose primary home language is Spanish. The Commission further recommends that the PARD conducts specific outreach to the Spanish speaking community to advertise these camps and available financial assistance for registration costs.

Date of Approval: May 4, 2020

Record of the vote: Unanimous on a 8-0 vote, with commissioners Nicole Merritt, Rennison Lalgee, Juan Vences-Benitez, and Banafsheh Madaninejad not present

Attest:

Connie H. Gonzales