



**HISPANIC/LATINO QUALITY OF LIFE RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMISSION
RECOMMENDATION 20220322-3a iii**

EXPAND FUNDING FOR AISD PARENT SUPPORT SPECIALISTS

Strategic Direction: Economic Opportunity & Affordability; Safety; Health & Environment

Date: March 22, 2022

Subject: FY23 Budget Recommendations

Motioned by: Garay

Seconded by: Perales

Recommendation to Council:

Renew and increase Austin Public Health's funding for AISD Parent Support Specialists (PSS).

Background and Rationale:

The City of Austin has an interlocal agreement with Austin Independent School District for the provision of resources connecting parents and families to family-centered and other social services. AISD Parent Support Specialists, who are funded 50% by the City of Austin, are placed in Title I schools. PSSs are charged to identify, develop, and engage parents in their child's education by providing parent and family support, conducting communications and outreach, and creating parent leadership opportunities.

AISD relies on PSSs to educate and refer students and their families to City and County resources, and to collaborate with social services community partners to provide support to the families and help to alleviate stressors. Their work helps improve maternal, child, and adolescent health outcomes. PSSs annually organize and conduct approximately 3,000 parent education events, with approximately 80,000 parents and guardians in attendance. PSSs organize and conduct approximately 600 life skills events annually, with approximately 17,000 parents in attendance

Parent Support Specialists are rooted in the community and have meaningful relationships with the families they serve. Many are bilingual, and they communicate with families in their preferred language. The skills and relationships PSSs build and maintain are essential during times of crisis. At the start of the pandemic, PSSs saw an increase within the first three months of the pandemic. They served 8,000 families. On February 7, 2021, KVUE published a story about a

PSS helping an AISD mother of two create a resume to get a job. This story also mentioned how PSSs have been working continuously since the pandemic began. At the February 26, 2022, Quality of Life Commission Budget Engagement Town Hall, commissioners learned that the PSS at Padron Elementary has been coordinating and finding housing for the school families that were affected by fires that happened in North Austin.

Parent Support Specialists play a critical role in the communities they serve; however, there continue to be job openings. One reason for open positions is the low salary offered for this position. Current openings for PSSs show a salary of \$17.34 per hour, which is an annual income of \$28,992.48. Austin homes are more expensive than ever with a median home price of \$499,995. Between January 2021 and January 2022, average rent prices increased 35% per Redfin data. The Skills Requirements on the Job Description state some schools will require that the employee be bilingual. If an employee must be bilingual to complete the job, they should receive a bilingual stipend. They should not be expected to do more work for the same pay as monolingual staff.

Vote:

For: Afifi, Vigil, Solis, Garay, Ramirez, Perales, Silva

Against: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Peña, Garcia

Attest:



Amanda Afifi, Chair

Parent Support Specialist Webpage - <https://www.austinisd.org/family-support/pss>

Parent Support Specialist Job Description - <https://www.applitrack.com/austinisd/onlineapp/1BrowseFile.aspx?id=688455>

AISD Compensation Manual 2021-2022 -

<https://www.austinisd.org/sites/default/files/dept/hr/docs/Comp%20Manual%20rev%2001-20-22-r.pdf>

KVUE -

<https://www.kvue.com/article/news/education/schools/parent-support-specialists-work-continuously-during-pandemic/269-e236d82e-4f3a-4876-a89a-dc74d9247fb0>

Current Contract with AISD -

https://financeonline.austintexas.gov/afo/contract_catalog/OCCViewMA.cfm?cd=MA&dd=4700&id=NI180000005