



HISPANIC/LATINO QUALITY OF LIFE RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION 20240326-10

Expand Funding for AISD Parent Support Specialists

Date: March 26, 2024

Subject: FY25 Budget Recommendations

Motioned by:

Seconded by:

Recommendation

Renew and increase Austin Public Health's funding for AISD Parent Support Specialists (PSS). The additional funding will help increase base pay for PSSs and PSSs lead positions.

Description of Recommendation to Council

- Increase funding for a total of \$2.4 million.
- Provide bilingual stipend to those required to provide services in multiple languages.

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. PSSs provided support to the community during the pandemic, winter storm Uri, fires, etc..

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 \$22 per hour, which is an annual income of \$36,784. Austin homes are expensive with a median home price of \$430,000. The February 2024 median rental price was \$2,183. The positions are partially or fully grant funded, and employment is contingent upon availability of funds. Ensuring one funding source that takes into account the rising cost of living in Austin helps us eliminate that uncertainty and retain staff who are vital to student success.

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:

Against:

Abstain:

Absent:

Attest:

Commissioner Neri, Commissioner Silva, Commissioner Afifi, Commissioner Vargas,
Commissioner Perales, Commissioner Castañeda, Commissioner Galvan, Commissioner Jackson
Jr., Commissioner May, Commissioner Vigil, Commissioner Maldonado

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah Afifi", is located at the bottom left of the page. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Amanda Afifi, Chair

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

Parent Support Specialist Job Description - <https://www.applitrack.com/austin/onlineapp/1BrowseFile.aspx?id=11293>

AISD Compensation Manual 2023-2024 - https://docs.google.com/document/d/1PewpUJ84dHWz_DoINvWSxhvQ3xRpY95W/edit

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

<https://services.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=419875>

	CIB Rec
\$2.4 million	<p>Parent Support Specialists: Our PSS serve some of our most vulnerable students and their families, often becoming first responders when families face crises. They help get families involved in their students' education, which is tied to increased academic outcomes and student success beyond Austin ISD. This additional CoA funding will help us attract and retain experienced staff who are often a true lifeline for children and their adults, and will allow the district to create leadership pathways among the PSS. It will elevate the base pay to at least \$25/hour for 533 PSS and create 16 PSS lead positions at \$30/hour. The current funding system is a patchwork of grants and district money that often means job insecurity for the team and uncertainty for campuses and students. Ensuring one funding source that takes into account the rising cost of living in Austin helps us eliminate that uncertainty and retain staff who are vital to student success.</p>