



## RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

### Joint Inclusion Committee

Recommendation Number: [20260325-034]: FY 2026-2027 Budget for AISD Parent Support Specialists

#### **Date of Approval:**

#### **Recommendation:**

Affordability and access remain among the most highly rated concerns expressed by Austin residents, and the families served by AISD Parent Support Specialists (PSSs) are among those most vulnerable to rising costs and economic instability. PSSs are a proven, community-rooted workforce that connects Title I families to the City and County resources they need.

#### **Description of Recommendation to Council**

- Maintain funding for AISD Parent Support Specialists.

#### **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 (PSSs), funded 50% by the City of Austin, are placed in Title I schools. PSSs identify, develop, and engage parents in their children'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 alleviate stressors. Their work helps improve maternal, child, and adolescent health outcomes. Parent Support Specialists are rooted in the community and maintain meaningful relationships with the families they serve. Many are bilingual, communicating with families in their preferred language. These skills and relationships are especially vital during times of crisis. PSSs have provided critical community support during the pandemic, Winter Storm Uri, and other emergencies.

Despite the essential nature of this work, PSS positions continue to go unfilled due to inadequate compensation. The PSS salary remains among the lowest for the demanding scope of the role. The

City of Austin's own living wage is currently \$22.05 per hour, and yet PSS positions have historically been posted near or below that threshold, leaving workers unable to keep pace with Austin's cost of living. The median home price in the Austin-Round Rock-San Marcos metropolitan area was approximately \$439,000 as of late 2025. A PSS earning near the minimum wage cannot reasonably afford to live in the community they serve.

Additionally, the Skills Requirements on the PSS job description indicate that some schools require the employee to be bilingual. If an employee must be bilingual to perform the job, they should receive a bilingual stipend. AISD already provides a \$7,000 annual stipend for certified bilingual teachers. PSSs who are required to provide services in multiple languages deserve comparable recognition for the additional linguistic labor they perform. They should not be expected to do more work for the same pay as monolingual staff.

**Date of Approval:** March 25, 2026

**Motioned By:** Commissioner Alvizo

**Seconded By:** Commissioner Laake-Stanfield

**Vote:** 10-0

**For:** Vice Chair Bondi, Commissioners Alvizo, Benson, Castaneda, Chang, Laake-Stanfield, Kanawati, Oliva-Martínez, Parsons, Thakkar

**Against:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Recuse:** None

**Off the dais:** None

**Absent:** Chair Afifi, Commissioners Bullard, McNary, Melendez

**Attest:** *Ryan Sperling*  
(Ryan Sperling, Staff Liaison)