

**AISD/City of Austin
Task Force on Hispanic Education and Quality of Life**

**Meeting of February 15, 2006
11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Conference Room 224
ACC, Highland Business Center**

Minutes

Members in Attendance:

Rick Burciaga, Eyna Canales-Zarate, Janis Guerrero, John Limon, Rosie Mendez, Veronica Rivera, Angela Valenzuela, Linda Velasquez

Others in Attendance:

John Moore, Della May Moore, Joey Crumley, Justin Fried

Proceedings:

- Janis Guerrero provided a recap of the previous task force meeting on January 24, 2006, which included the results of several interviews that had been conducted and the identification of compelling issues by task force members.
- Dr. Guerrero reported that the interview process had been concluded, with perspectives of about 70 individuals having been obtained. She explained that interviews with a few of the people on the original list simply could not be arranged, and a few people declined to be interviewed, so some substitutions had been made.
- Dr. Guerrero and Eyna Canales-Zarate explained that the previous work done by the City of Austin in regard to the quality of life for African Americans included several issues in addition to education, and that the two joint AISD/City of Austin task forces currently underway were concentrating solely on the quality of education for African Americans and Hispanics.
- Dr. Guerrero further explained that the joint task force on quality of education for African Americans was relying largely on data previously gathered from City of Austin surveys and public forums. By comparison, she said the task force on quality of education for Hispanics was gathering information through interviews and an online survey.
- Angela Valenzuela provided members with a report by Pedro Noguera, which emphasized academic preparedness and mentors/advocates for Hispanic students.
- Joey Crumley briefly walked members through the first draft of the task force report, pointing out that several sections still needed to be prepared, including results of the online survey and upcoming public forum.
- Dr. Guerrero asked members to focus on the recommendations section, and discussion points included:
 - Goals and strategies not necessarily contingent on availability of resources
 - Social workers needed at more schools
 - Need to make sure vocational education goal does not detract from college preparation goal

- Importance placed on outcomes may detract from processes
 - Need to continue to stress bilingual education
 - Need to look more at the successes of other school districts (e.g., Hidalgo County and Laredo)
 - Need to emphasize importance of community relations and gaining a better understanding of how to work with Hispanic students and families
- In order to move to remaining items on the agenda, Dr. Guerrero requested that members email other comments they might have.
- Dr. Guerrero went over a draft of the online survey to be conducted soon. She explained that the survey consisted of 20 items that respondents would be asked to rate by importance, and that some basic demographic information was being requested from respondents. She said that the survey would be available in Spanish, and would be widely publicized, including press releases, newspaper ads, and communications to schools. Discussion points included:
 - How to reach people who do not have online access
 - Broadening publicity efforts to perhaps include Spanish-language television and notes to parents in Spanish
 - Consideration of adding more demographic information, including gender, zip code, education level, income level, and nativity
 - Making certain language in the survey more user-friendly
 - Replacing certain vague terms with more specific language
 - Consideration of certain additional survey items
- Dr. Guerrero went over the remaining work calendar for the task force, and members requested an additional meeting on March 1 to review the next draft of the report, and a meeting on March 22 to plan for the public forum.
- Members elected officers to formally represent the task force to the media, City Council, and Board of Trustees. Veronica Rivera was elected Chair, and Rosie Mendez was elected Vice-Chair.