

December 15, 2009

Plan Created with Districtwide Input —
Austin School Trustees Approve New Five-Year Strategic Plan

Austin School Trustees have adopted a new Five-Year Strategic Plan, to guide the District's educational philosophy, aspirations for student achievement, fiscal decision-making, and operational focus from 2010-2015. The Board took action at its Regular Meeting on December 14.

Adoption of the Strategic Plan culminates a process that began in the Spring of 2009, and through a series of "kitchen table" conversations, focus groups, community meetings, on-line surveys, and other forms of community engagement, received input and feedback from nearly 4,000 School District and community partners.

The District's Strategic Plan Task Force concluded its work on November 5, and, since then, the Board has discussed the draft document, and provided additional input and guidance on four other occasions, prior to adoption.

In presenting the Strategic Plan for formal adoption, Superintendent Dr. Meria Carstarphen said the final document includes substantive revisions, based upon the latest input received by the Board on December 7. These most-recent additions included:

- ï An Action Step to develop a plan to better serve East Austin schools and their communities.
- ï Separate Action Steps to address student attendance and high school completion, with different implementation plans.
- ï An Action Step to regularly monitor program effectiveness and to manage taxpayer resources wisely.
- ï An Action Step to emphasize the important of public-private partnerships.
- ï An Action step to establish goals to prepared children to be healthy, fit, and ready to learn.

Additionally, before final adoption, Trustees approved that Fine Arts would be considered a strong core academic curriculum for all students.

"This version of the Strategic Plan is very responsive to what we've received as direction from the Board and our stakeholders," Superintendent Carstarphen said. "We will initiate a communication and education plan designed to build community understanding of the plan, as approved, and to recruit community participation in key aspects of the plan."

The Strategic Plan Task Force was tri-chaired by Rene Sanchez, principal of AISD's Liberal Arts and Science Academy; Vikki Goodwin, realtor, Homes ATX; and Ashton Cumberbatch, vice president at Seton Family of Hospitals.

“Our 40-member task force had broad representation from across the School District and community,” tri-chair Sanchez said. “Members brought a wide range of perspectives that enriched the plan and what it offers to students over the next five years.”

More information about AISD's newly-approved Strategic Plan is posted on the District Website at http://www.austinisd.org/inside/initiatives/strategic_plan/. Video excerpts of the presentation are also available at http://www.austinisd.org/inside/initiatives/strategic_plan/video.phtml.

“I believe adopting this draft strategic plan and these performance goals will be a positive step forward for Austin ISD,” said Amy Jones, 2009-2010 Chair of the Austin Chamber of Commerce Education Progress Report Task Force, in a written statement.