



Travis County Commissioners Court Agenda Request

Meeting Date: August 27, 2013

Prepared By/Phone Number: Juanita Jackson – 854-4467

Elected/Appointed Official/Dept. Head: Sherri E. Fleming,
County Executive for Health and Human Services and Veterans Service

Commissioners Court Sponsor: Judge Samuel T. Biscoe

AGENDA LANGUAGE:

Consider and take appropriate action on request to approve the joint resolution between Austin Independent School District (AISD), City of Austin (City) and Travis County (County) for the funding and creation of the Austin/Travis County Mentoring Advisory Council.

BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF REQUEST AND ATTACHMENTS:

On January 18, 2013, the Members of the Joint Subcommittees directed staff to draft a resolution for action by the Austin City Council, Travis County Commissioners Court and the Austin ISD Board of Trustees in support of the recommendations of the Mentoring Task Force, including a proposed budget (Exhibit 1 to this Resolution) to address expenses of the newly created Austin/Travis County Mentoring Advisory Council through school year 2013-14.

On June 21, 2013, the Members of the Joint Subcommittees unanimously adopted a motion to seek the approval of the City, County, and District to created Austin/Travis County Mentoring Advisory Council and related budget.

During the meeting Austin Independent School District, City of Austin, and Travis County each agreed that the Council funding for activities and services for one twelve-month period will be approximately \$45,000. Each the City, District and County, will invest an amount not to exceed \$15,000. The funds will be used to support the efforts and outcomes of the Mentoring Advisory Council, in accordance with the attached budget and the resulting Contract.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff recommends the approval of this item.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES:

This contract will allow Travis County to partner with AISD and the City to mentor as many as 5,000 students.

AGENDA REQUEST DEADLINE: All agenda requests and supporting materials must be submitted as a pdf to the County Judge's office, agenda@co.travis.tx.us by **Tuesdays at 5:00 p.m.** for the next week's meeting.



Travis County Commissioners Court Agenda Request

Research has shown that youth participating in mentoring relationships experience positive academic returns, such as, improved attendance, increased likelihood of high school graduation, increased likelihood of post-secondary education, and a more positive attitude toward school.

FISCAL IMPACT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:

If approved, funding for the request for the Mentoring Advisory Council Project will be from the Health and Human Services and Veterans Service budget line item. The funds will come from cost center 1580540001 and GL #511300.

REQUIRED AUTHORIZATIONS:

Mary Etta Gerhardt, Assistant County Attorney'
Leslie Browder, County Executive, Planning and Budget Office
Cyd Grimes, CPM, Travis County Purchasing Agent
Nicki Riley, CAP, CMA, Travis County Auditor
Aerin Toussaint, Analyst, Planning and Budget Office
Shannon Pleasant, Purchasing Agent Assistant, Travis County Purchasing Office
Sherri Fleming, County Executive, HHS/VS

AGENDA REQUEST DEADLINE: All agenda requests and supporting materials must be submitted as a pdf to the County Judge's office, agenda@co.travis.tx.us by Tuesdays at 5:00 p.m. for the next week's meeting.

JOINT RESOLUTION
of the
AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT (AISD or DISTRICT),
CITY OF AUSTIN (CITY),
and TRAVIS COUNTY (COUNTY) in the STATE OF TEXAS
regarding the
Creation of the Austin/Travis County Mentoring Advisory Council

WHEREAS, "youth mentoring" is defined as a sustained relationship between a young person and a caring adult who is screened and trained to provide the young person with support, guidance and assistance; and

WHEREAS, research has shown that youth participating in mentoring relationships experience positive academic returns, such as, improved attendance, increased likelihood of high school graduation, increased likelihood of post-secondary education, and a more positive attitude toward school; and

WHEREAS, it has been estimated that as many as 5,000 students in AISD would benefit from the support, guidance and assistance of a trained, caring, responsible volunteer mentor; and

WHEREAS, the Joint Subcommittees created a Mentoring Task Force in response to the recommendation from the Connecting the Dots Initiative on December 16, 2011, and directed the Task Force to report to the Joint Subcommittee with findings and recommendations before the end of calendar year 2012; and

WHEREAS, on January 18, 2013, the Mentoring Task Force presented a final report with recommendations to the Joint Subcommittees, which included the following recommendations:

1. creation of the Austin/Travis County Mentoring Advisory Council, consisting of 24 members, whose composition includes 7 members appointed by each governmental agency and 3 mentor service providers,
2. appointment of an AISD staff member to oversee the District-wide mentoring efforts and to provide support and guidance for the Mentoring Advisory Council, and
3. presentation of an annual accountability update to the Joint Subcommittees; and

WHEREAS, on January 18, 2013, the Members of the Joint Subcommittees directed staff to draft a resolution for action by the Austin City Council, Travis County Commissioners Court and the Austin ISD Board of Trustees in support of the recommendations of the Mentoring Task Force, including a proposed budget (Exhibit 1 to this Resolution) to address expenses of the newly created Austin/Travis County Mentoring Advisory Council through school year 2013-14; and

Finally, **WHEREAS**, on June 21, 2013, the Members of the Joint Subcommittees unanimously adopted a motion to seek the approval of the City, County, and District to created Austin/Travis County Mentoring Advisory Council and related budget.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Austin Independent School District Board of Trustees, City Council of the City of Austin, and Commissioners Court of Travis County each hereby approves the creation of the Austin/Travis County Mentoring Advisory Council (Council), as described, to address the following, subject to the negotiation and execution by AISD, City and County of the appropriate contract (Contract) regarding funding and specific activities of the Council:

1. explore and pursue the creation and implementation of a data sharing system between the City, County, and District;
2. create and implement a system based on broad community support for mentor recruitment;
3. define program quality standards;
4. explore and pursue funding models that ensure providers have the capacity to scale services to meet the depth of existing and future need;
5. pursue collaborative grants and private gifts to the extent possible to offset the need for local funding;
6. facilitate access to schools on behalf of service providers; and
7. operate under the auspice of the Joint Subcommittees of the City of Austin, Travis County and Austin ISD, with at least one report annually to the Joint Subcommittees that can be shared with the members of each member's governing entity and other reporting requirements as may be agreed to in the Contract.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED, that Austin Independent School District, City of Austin, and Travis County each hereby agree that the Council funding for activities and services for one twelve-month period will be approximately \$45,000, which may be borne by the City, District and County in an amount not to exceed \$15,000 each, as set forth in the Contract, to support the efforts and outcomes of the Mentoring Advisory Council, in accordance with the attached budget and the resulting Contract.

Approved on the _____ day of _____, 2013 for submission to

ADOPTED: _____, 2013

Vincent M. Torres
President
Austin ISD

ATTEST: _____
Elaine Hopkins
Secretary to the Board

ADOPTED: _____, 2013

Lee Leffingwell
Mayor
City of Austin

ATTEST: _____
Janette S. Goodall
City Clerk

ADOPTED: _____, 2013

BY: _____
Sam Biscoe
Travis County Judge

BY: _____
Ron Davis
Commissioner, Pct. 1

BY: _____
Bruce Todd
Commissioner, Pct. 2

BY: _____
Gerald Daugherty
Commissioner, Pct. 3

BY: _____
Margaret Gómez
Commissioner, Pct. 4

EXHIBIT 1

**AUSTIN/TRAVIS COUNTY MENTORING ADVISORY COUNCIL
PROPOSED BUDGET*
Fund Year 2014**

A. Professional and Contracted Services	
1. Technology Development	\$ 19,800.00
2. Technology Licensing	\$ 7,200.00
3. Technology Administrator	\$ In Kind
4. Reproduction Services	\$ In Kind
A. Total Professional and Contracted Services	\$ 27,000.00

B. Supplies and Materials	
1. Reading Materials	\$ 1,000.00
2. General Supplies	\$ In Kind
B. Total Supplies and Materials	\$ 1,000.00

C. Other Operating Costs	
1. Travel	\$ 15,000.00
2. Conference Registration	\$ 2,000.00
3. Food/Refreshments	\$ In Kind
C. Total Other Operating Costs	\$17,000.00

Grand Total**	\$ 45,000.00
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Notes:

A.1. Expansion of Effort to Outcomes (ETO) system to include mentoring data. The ETO system was initiated through the Family Resource Centers and sponsored by the Joint Subcommittees. This is a non-recurring cost for development. NOTE: This item does not include an additional system development fee for After School (out of School Time/OST) programs.
A.2. ETO Licensing Fee – This is an annual recurring cost for the technology system. NOTE: This item does not include an additional licensing fee for After School (Out of School Time /OST) programs.
A.3. The ETO Administrator will serve as project manager for development and implementation of the technology system.
A.4. Reproduction services for documents used to created a Mentoring Advisory Council (MAC) handbook for each MAC member and for recruitment documents.
B.1. Books and/or publications purchased for MAC members.

B.2. Supplies for MAC members to use during meetings, including the creation of a notebook for each Council member.
C.1. Travel cost accounts for MAC members to attend the National Mentoring Summit: includes hotel, airfare, meals and fares. In addition, cost accounts for MAC members to visit other comprehensive mentor programs.
C.2. Conference registration for MAC members to attend the National Mentoring Summit.
C.3. Food/refreshments for MAC work sessions and trainings.

* Budget not to exceed \$45,000 (up to \$15,000 per governmental entity), subject to execution by AISD, City and County of the appropriate contract.

** Budget totals indicated an amount not to exceed listed values.



MENTORING TASK FORCE REPORT

JOINT SUBCOMMITTEE
JANUARY 18TH, 2013

AGENDA

- Background
- Charge to the Task Force
- Participating Members
- Highlights
- Current Landscape
- Definition of Mentoring
- Vision
- Recommendations



BACKGROUND

- December 16, 2011- The Connecting the Dots Committee recommended forming a mentoring task force
- March 23, 2012 – The JSC Executive Team convened a planning meeting for the task force
- May 7, 2012 – The mentoring task force convened its first meeting



On December 16, 2011, the Joint Subcommittee approved the formation of a mentoring task force. The task force would be under the leadership and guidance of the City of Austin's, Assistant City Manager Bert Lumberras and Austin Independent School District, Chief of Staff Mel Waxler.

On March 23, 2012, the executive leaders convened a pre-planning meeting to organize the task force.

The first mentoring task force meeting was held on May 7th with AISD as the lead. The MTF held standing meetings on Mondays from 3:00p – 5:00p. At the initial meeting, there was a sincere effort made to include all interested stakeholders around the issue of youth mentoring.

CHARGE TO THE TASK FORCE

- Develop a system/structure to identify and monitor students assigned to or needing mentors
- Utilize the electronic child study tool (eCST) as a key information system



The initial Mentoring Task Force (MTF) was convened by AISD, Chief of Staff Mel Waxler. AISD was identified as the lead to head the efforts to bring together the City, County and area nonprofits, to develop a system/structure using the electronic child study tool (eCST), to help identify and monitor an estimated 5,000 students assigned to or needing mentors. The goal is to develop an action plan to create a mentoring support system that is collaborative, high quality and sustainable.

In the initial conversations, Councilwoman Morrison underscored the goal of the effort being to expand the number of mentors and promote the initiative, especially with large companies.

The MTF made a commitment to:

- Create an innovative, user-friendly system of providing and managing comprehensive mentoring services that functions effectively for the school district, service providers, children, families, and volunteer mentors;
- Take joint responsibility for the creation and success of the system
- Identify and utilize best/evidence based practices that build stronger mentor relationships and meet student needs in order to
- Link our work to academic, behavior, attendance and health outcomes.

PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

- **Service Providers**

AiM Truancy Solutions
Austin Partners in Education
Big Brothers Big Sisters
Con Mi MADRE

Communities In Schools
AAMB/Harvest Foundation
Seedling Foundation

- **Community Representation**

Steve Swanson
The Infinity Movement, Inc.
United Way of Greater Austin

- **Staff:**

Austin ISD
City of Austin
Travis County



Pat Abrams

Dahlinda AlanizCarmen Ruffino

Katie Arens

Jennifer Braham

Deborah Britton

Cinda Christen Barbara Swift

Brian Dooley

Sabine Foster

John Fuerst

Emmitt Hayes

Brenda Hummel

Juanita Jackson

Darryl Johnson

Melissa Jones

Shirlene Justice

Tina Knox

Laura LaFuente

Gil Levy

Estela Medina

Susan Millea

Ben Ornelas

Susan Patterson

Maggie Reyes

Kirsten Siegfried

Suki Steinhauser

Steve Swanson

Falba Turner

Dolores Vasquez

Sari Waxler

Gloria Williams

HIGHLIGHTS

- Task Force charter
- Gantt Chart/Timeline
- Presentations by subject matter experts
- Identification and review of best practices
- Service provider survey
- Mentoring Initiative staff position



A charter was established to define our purpose, describe how we would approach our task, The MTF created a Gantt chart to manage and organize the process.

The task force invited experts to educate us on issues pertaining to our work so that we'd be in a position to make the best possible decisions:

As we explored how information is currently being stored and communicated among stakeholders, we learned from AISD IT and Research specialists about the capabilities of the eCST system as well as SAR and YSM, and began to discuss the design features which would need to be added to the current technology to accomplish our goals.

We heard from Dr. Michael Karcher, a professor at UT San Antonio, and national expert on youth mentoring.

And we were briefed by AISD staff on the process, policy and development of an advisory council.

Literature Review of existing research and resulting Nine Best Practice Steps: While mentoring programs are not identical, and there is space for some variations in how programs are designed and administered, there are some widely accepted core practices which the MTF believes should be present in any program providing mentoring services as part of this initiative, and the MTF agrees that these best practices should be a common link between all of us.

1. Targeting youth most likely to benefit from mentoring
2. Using rigorous approaches to screen and train mentors
3. Clearly articulating program goals and expectation for all participants
4. Arranging activities to facilitate mentor-youth relationship development
5. Providing ongoing support for mentors to strengthen relationships and minimize early closures
6. Supporting and involving parents
7. Coordinating linkages with other programs and services
8. Using systematic monitoring and evaluation to engage in continuous quality improvement
9. Promote relationships that have potential to span multiple school years

A preliminary survey was conducted to gather information from the programs listed in the YSM database that describe themselves as providing mentoring services to youth.

Finally, AISD identified a support staff person that would support this work moving forward.

CURRENT LANDSCAPE

- Lack of a common definition for youth mentoring among providers
- Utilization of various models and outcome measures
- Lack of centralized volunteer recruiting system
- Limited student level data sharing
- Technology systems not interfaced
- Inadequate financial resources necessary for providers to scale services
- Different levels of relationships between providers and the District



- Definition: The term “mentoring” describes a variety of different types of programs functioning on AISD campuses; not a coordinated body of services
- Variable effectiveness: While we expect some variation between different programs, some providers using evidence based or research informed best practices, others likely do not, no current system to measure program quality or to determine what a solid mentoring program looks like
- Recruiting: Each program/provider responsible for its own volunteer recruitment
- Data Sharing: providers can access aggregate level data (groups of students, de-identified) using Student Aggregate Reports (SAR), but most currently cannot access individual student data, which would be helpful in setting goals with students and measuring outcomes
- Technology challenges: AISD currently using three data systems that are relevant to this initiative (eCST, SAR, YSM) and at this time they do not interface with each other
- Scale: At the moment, providers do not necessarily have the capacity to scale up to the level the JSC envisioned....5000 matches and requisite funding
- Relationship with District: wide variations - (1) some with close or formal relationship, contracted in some cases (2) some function independently based on campus level relationships, some duplication of services likely occurring, unsure whether every provider is using YSM system

DEFINITION OF MENTORING

“Mentoring is a *sustained relationship* between a young person and a caring adult who is screened and trained to provide the young person with support, guidance and assistance.”



Discussion took place on what mentoring looked like and how it is provided. The task force came to a consensus that there needed to be a common definition for mentoring based on the various ways, methodology and systems that mentoring is delivered through our providers.

This definition recognizes or allows for differences in program models such as services provided strictly in school settings, community settings, after-school settings, etc.

VISION OF THE TASK FORCE

- Broad and inclusive community partnership involvement
- More students being mentored
- A two-way technology system
- More funding support for mentoring providers
- Utilization of research informed practices across provider spectrum



The task force envisions a broad and inclusive community partnership that will

- Increase the number of students having access to mentors
- Help develop a two-way technology system that will capture and have the capacity to report information needed by mentoring agencies and the school district
- Help secure funding for mentoring on a larger scope and scale
- Require that mentoring services being provided to AISD students be “research informed” or moving in the direction of being “research informed” as defined by the work of the Task Force on Mentoring.
- Ensure that all service provider agencies enter into an MOU with AISD and be registered in the YSM system.
- Provide for the efficient and timely recruitment of volunteers
- Two way technology systems where providers for an exchange of information between AISD and service providers
- Provide a better understanding of how mentoring supports academics

RECOMMENDATION

- Creation of a Mentoring Advisory Council staffed by an AISD Coordinator



Utilize technology to eliminate duplication of mentee services

We want to recommend moving from a Task Force to a more permanent structure by forming a mentoring Advisory Council. This Advisory Council will capture the intentions of the District's Whole Child Every Child initiative which called for the creation of a Mentor Advisory

Through the 2012-2013 Whole Child Every Child: A multicultural District-wide endeavor that for outcomes for the mentoring efforts which are the recommendations -

AISD :

1. Will create a Mentor Advisory Committee for the purpose of engaging key stakeholders in supporting the design and funding of quality mentoring programs for students.
2. Will create a two-way mentor data system that identifies mentees and provides data out to providers.

MENTORING ADVISORY COUNCIL ROLES

- Oversee the creation and implementation of a two-way data sharing system
- Create system which builds broad community support for mentor recruitment
- Explore funding model that ensures providers have capacity to scale services
- Define program quality standards
- Facilitate access to schools on behalf of service providers



The purpose of the Advisory Council will be to ensure that the vision and goals of the MTF are realized. To be an effective body, the Advisory Council will need to be comprised of individuals who believe in the importance of youth mentoring as an effective and important intervention for children and who are willing to contribute their time and expertise, share their spheres of influence, and commit to making youth mentoring better in our community.

Specifically, at a minimum, the Advisory Council would be asked to address their attention to:

Bridging communication between program providers and technology experts in the development of the two-way data sharing system. This system, when developed, will be the tool that allows schools to know who is being mentored, by which agency, whether the relationship seems to be impacting academic outcomes, who needs a mentor who doesn't have one, who has more than one mentor, etc. ***So, we would need technology experts and those who understand both schools and programs that work within schools.***

To achieve and to maintain 5,000 mentoring matches requires doing business differently than many of us now do. The charge for the Advisory Council would be to build community involvement in the mentor recruitment process. This is a good time to acknowledge and thank the City of Austin for its Mentor/Tutor policy that both allows and encourages city employees to get involved in the schools and – importantly – designates two staff positions to act as mentor and tutor program ambassadors and recruiters. If other entities in our community had similar infrastructure in place, reaching that goal of 5,000 children being served would not be an unrealistic goal at all. Sitting on the Advisory Council, we must have ambassadors who are willing to help recruit government, business, and faith communities to get on board with this initiative and say they'll help find volunteers. ***So, we would need community leaders who can***

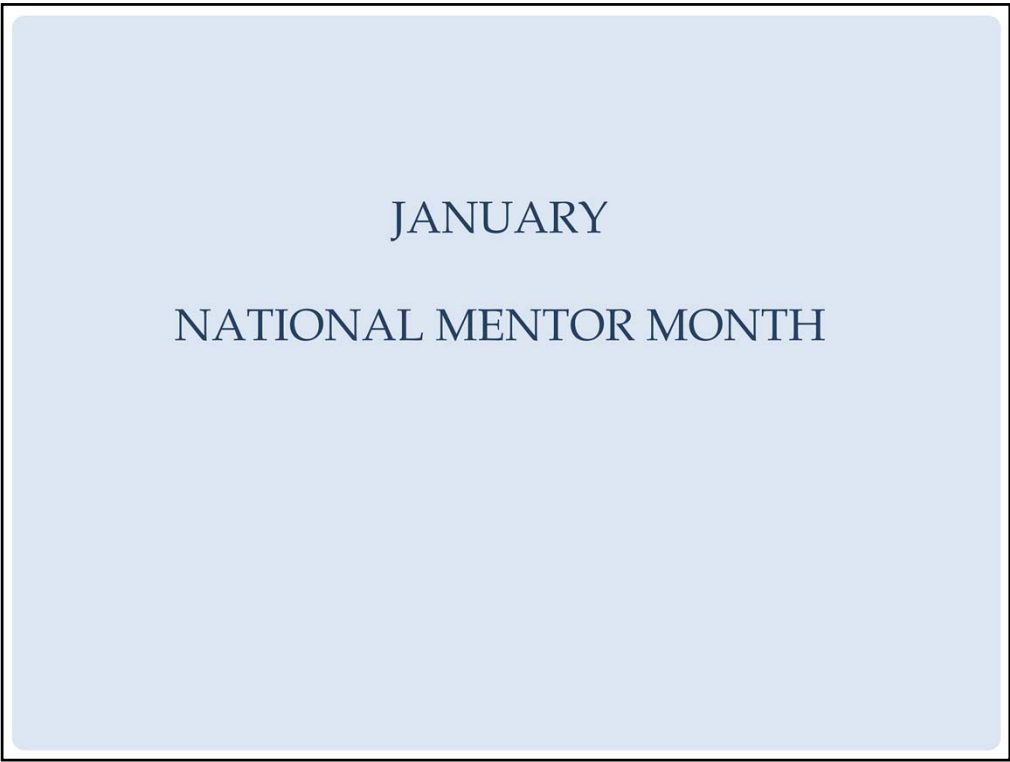
open doors with executives who have access to and influence with those who would volunteer.

To achieve and to maintain 5,000 mentoring matches will also require increased levels of funding. Sources of funding for mentoring programs are honestly few and far between. A key role for the Advisory Council will be to market the importance of this initiative to local, state, and national funders so that mentoring agencies will have the financial capacity to take their programs to scale. ***So, we would need grant makers and funders on this council who have relationships and influence with other grant makers and funders.***

The MTF was very clear that we could not approach entities for support of any kind unless we felt good about the quality of the product we were offering. That said, our vision is that the Advisory Council will play an important role in holding providers to high levels of accountability for the quality of the programs they offer. Research informed mentor program practices should be the norm and not the exception in our community. Agencies that need help to achieve that level should be helped by experts on the Advisory Council and then held to the established standard. The Advisory Council will help ensure that when people talk about mentoring in AISD schools, everyone has a clear picture of what that will look like, what they can expect in terms of quality programs, and what they can expect to see relative to outcomes. ***So, we would need program experts who would model research based standards and be willing to mentor colleagues.***

Finally, the hope of the MTF is that the Advisory Council will play a role in helping service providers know how to best interface with schools and schools will know how to effectively welcome service providers and volunteers to their campuses. ***So, we would need school partners to help us navigate the culture of the schools most effectively.***

On behalf of the entire MTF, it has been our privilege to serve our community in this way. We are complimented that the JSC elevated mentoring to this level of discussion. We are eager to support the effort moving forward and willing and ready to provide help and guidance to the Advisory Council should the JSC decide to move forward with this recommendation. Thank you.



Questions?