BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Early Childhood Council

Recommendation Number: 20200311-3c:
Encourage Austin ISD to Fund Pre-K Teaching Assistants

WHEREAS, current kindergarten readiness in Austin ISD (AISD) is 60% compared to the district goal of 77%;

WHEREAS, the current teacher-child ratio in AISD Pre-K classrooms is 1 teacher to 19 students;

WHEREAS, all surrounding districts (Round Rock ISD, Pflugerville ISD, Del Valle ISD, Manor ISD) and other large districts (Dallas ISD and San Antonio ISD) maintain lower ratios;

WHEREAS, the high ratio in AISD makes it extremely challenging for teachers to provide the oral language development and small group instruction needed to insure all kids become kindergarten ready;

WHEREAS, data analyzed by the E3 Alliance demonstrated that smaller teacher-child ratios significantly increase kindergarten readiness;

WHEREAS, AISD children in the few Pre-K 4 classes that do have lower ratios score higher on the CLI Engage Pre-K Assessment;

WHEREAS, all Pre-K programs that produce long-term beneficial results maintain low teacher-child ratios;

WHEREAS, long-term benefits include less grade retention, fewer referrals to special education, and higher high school graduation rates;

WHEREAS, the Texas Education Agency's Guidelines for High Quality pre-K recommend a 2:22 teacher-child ratio;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Early Childhood Council recommends that the Austin City Council encourage AISD to maintain $3M funding in the AISD budget for approximately 170 full time Pre-K teacher assistants.

Date of Approval: March 11, 2020

Record of the vote: Approved on a vote of 8 – 0 with 1 recusal (Member Ami Cortes-Castillo)

Attest: Rachel Farley