



2023 Annual Report



AUSTIN
ED FUND

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Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Every year as we prepare this report, I find myself surrounded by stories of gratitude from Austin ISD teachers. Each one is a story of extraordinary good will, creativity, and resilience — and each one is a result of your generosity.

I wish you could hear them all! They demonstrate the strength of our public schools and the magic that happens when we encourage and celebrate the creativity and innovation of our educators.

The stories in these pages highlight the impact you've made on one campus, Navarro Early College High School. Each year, Navarro enrolls hundreds of students from families who are new to our community. The faculty and staff work hard to support these hardworking students and families — and as you'll see from the stories in this report, your investment makes a huge difference.

The stories and programs at Navarro make two things clear. First, our public schools are valuable community hubs that serve and support the entire family. Second, they are also powerful engines of economic opportunity, offering paths to a stable future.

Your investment yields extraordinary benefits. Day after day, on Austin ISD campuses across town, you are making a difference by supporting our public school teachers and students. Thank you.

With gratitude,



Michelle Wallis, Executive Director

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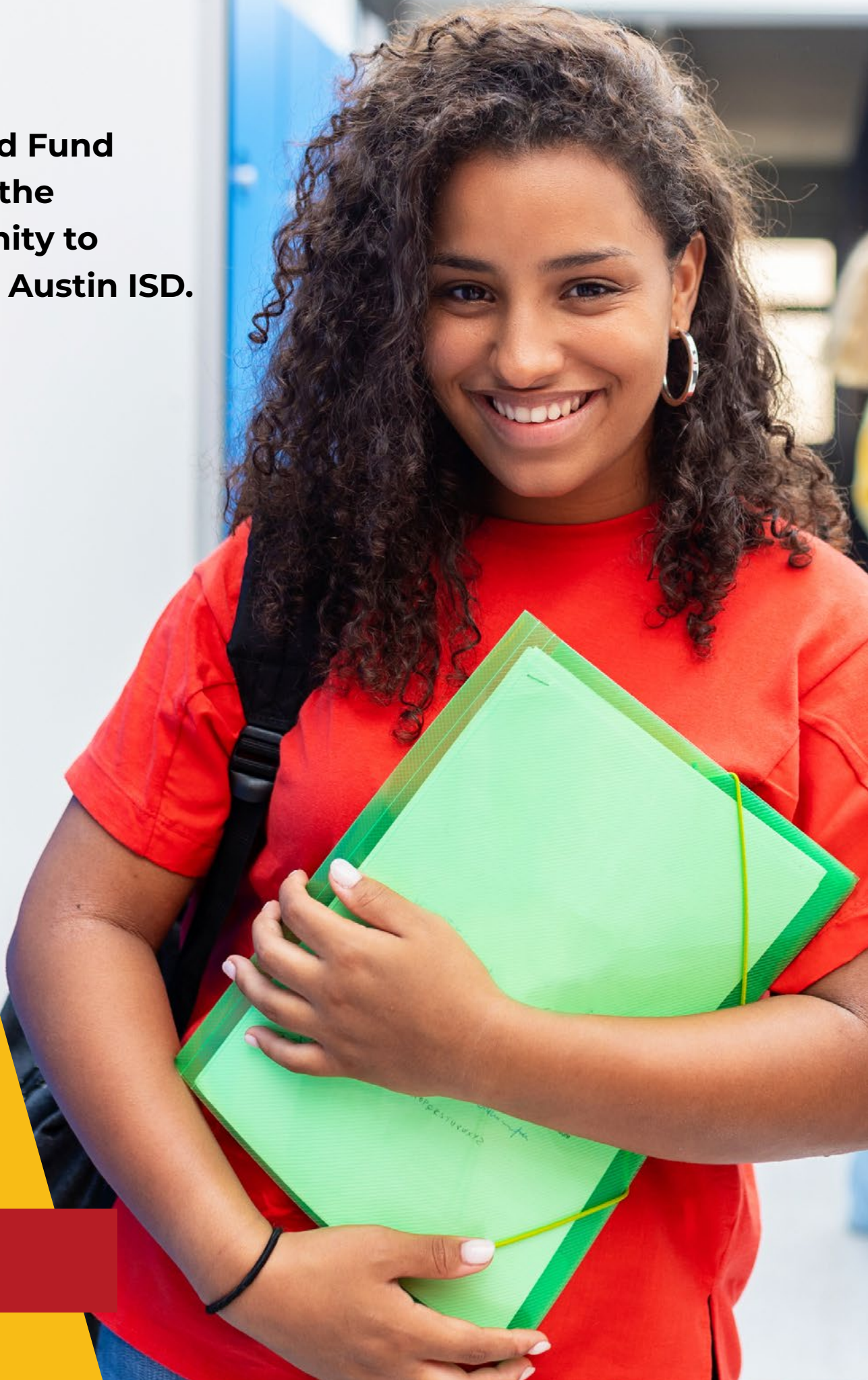
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Ex-Officio Members

Matias Segura, Austin ISD Interim Superintendent

Kathryn Whitley Chu, Austin ISD Board of Trustee

**Austin Ed Fund
Inspires the
Community to
Invest in Austin ISD.**



Your Impact

NAVARRO EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL

On the surface, Navarro Early College High School in North Austin looks a lot like other high schools in the district.

But dig a little deeper, and you will find a tightly woven network of information and support for students and their families, many who are immigrants from Central America or Asia. The school welcomes more than 100 newcomer families every year.

“Our students speak more than 30 languages at home, and 70 percent of them speak Spanish,” explained Parent Support Specialist Ana Whited. “We need to work harder to help them navigate the system and support their kids.”

“Students from immigrant families often take on significant responsibilities,” explains Assistant Principal Areli Sanchez. “I know from experience with my own family — I picked up English faster than my parents did, so I was translating for them, trying to figure out financial aid so I could support my younger brothers.

“The Austin Ed Fund has been an incredible partner for us in building programs and events that truly support and empower our students and families.”





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“The Austin Ed Fund has been an incredible partner for us in building programs and events that truly support and empower our students and families.”

— Ana Whited,
Austin ISD Parent Support Specialist



Your Impact



In the Classroom

WOMEN WHO WELD

In her freshman and sophomore years at Navarro Early College High School, Cynthia was sure she would study cosmetology. “I was so certain that was what I was going to do! But then I saw a virtual welding machine at a school event,” she explained. “I put the goggles on, and I tried it.”

The instructor assessed her efforts with a challenge: “He said it wasn’t bad ... but it wasn’t good, either,” Cynthia remembered. Soon, she was spending most of her time in the Ag Mechanics classroom, getting used to the intense

heat under the hood and honing her skills. Now a senior, Cynthia is confident about her future — because she’s seen Navarro graduates get snapped up quickly by local employers looking for skilled welders.

“If you are a girl, you speak Spanish, and you have welding skills, you are a unicorn in today’s job market,” explained welding teacher and Women Who Weld program director, Tracey Cortez. “So I applied for a grant from the Austin Ed Fund to help create more opportunities for our students.”

“Most kids are so afraid about where they’re going to end up. But I’m not worried because I know what my future will be.

— Cynthia, Senior, Navarro Early College High School

Austin Ed Fund grant funds provided tools and protective equipment like helmets and gloves. “The students have to provide their own pants and boots, but we get them everything else they need,” Mr. Cortez explains. “That really broke down barriers for our program.”

In past years, one or two girls might check out Mr. Cortez’s Intro to Welding class, but they would not stay through the advanced classes. Support from the Austin Ed Fund changed that.

“This year, we’ve got 15 girls in the welding program, and several are doing a dual credit welding program at Austin Community College,” explained Mr. Cortez. “Now the girls are ambassadors in the school, telling their friends to come check it out.”

Welders are in high demand and earn competitive wages. “My friends who have graduated, they have good jobs,” Cynthia explains. “Travel welders make a lot of money in places like Colorado and California. I have a lot of options when I graduate. “Most kids are so afraid about where they’re going to end up,” she continued, “and adults just tell you not to worry about it. But I’m not worried, because I know what my future will be.”



Around the School

STUDENT OF THE MONTH

Assistant Principal Areli Sanchez brings a unique perspective to her role at Navarro Early College High School.

“We have 1200 emergent bilingual students and the biggest newcomer population of any Austin high school, she explains. We want all our students to feel supported, respected, valued, and welcomed.

“I mean, they come with stories that are heartbreaking — and then we expect them to do well on the STAAR test. It was important to me to ask the question: ‘How do we bring more joy to our campus every day?’”

She turned to the Austin Ed Fund for help funding the Student of the Month initiative. Individual teachers across campus are encouraged to nominate students who may not always get the spotlight, but who deserve to be recognized, for any reason at all. Here are some of the teachers’ comments:

“R is always positive and keeps a smile on his face even when things get rough.”

“S is adjusting well to her new classroom.”

“M has really improved this semester. I have seen her working very hard on being more attentive in class.”

Nominated students receive pizza for lunch, a \$15 gift certificate ... and a boost of confidence and support that can make a lasting difference in their school experience.

“When we nurture and value our kids and we show them that we’re paying attention to what they’re going through, they start to have faith in themselves,” explains Ms. Sanchez. “That’s worth a lot more than the price of a pizza.”





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“When we nurture and value our kids and we show them that we’re paying attention to what they’re going through, they start to have faith in themselves.”

*— Areli Sanchez, Asst. Principal,
Navarro Early College High School*

Your Impact



In the Community

EMPOWERING EDUCATION

Navarro Early College High School students have the opportunity to graduate with an Associate's Degree. Austin ISD students in early college programs save an average of \$12,000 in tuition, books, transportation and other costs.

But that is only the beginning. Navarro also offers programs in graphic design, cosmetology, animal science, and law enforcement — to name only a few.

"There's so much opportunity here, and it's wonderful," explains Assistant Principal Areli

Sanchez. "But there's also a lot of need. Our parents are working really long hours every day, and many of our students are working hard, too."

"If we hold meetings during work hours, that might be convenient for our schedules, but it doesn't work at all for our families," she explained.

An Austin Ed Fund grant allowed the school to host community dinners throughout the year, so parents didn't have to choose between an evening meal and a meeting at school.



“ I’ve seen my son take advantage of the opportunities that are available to him.”
— Fabiola, Navarro Early College High School parent

“Our parents have people they need to feed every day, and it makes such a difference to be able to say to them, ‘please come, and bring your kids and whoever else you want to bring,’” says Parent Support Specialist Ana Whited. “They have time to ask questions and to really understand how they can support their kids.”

The dinners were an immediate hit with the parent community, with attendance soaring into the hundreds. One dinner was dedicated to helping families fill out FAFSA financial aid paperwork. “If families don’t know about the FAFSA, then they don’t complete it — and leave money on the table,” explains Ms. Sanchez. “We want to empower every one of our families to understand the process and take full advantage of all the resources that are available to them.”

Hosting the dinners had a ripple effect across the school: Parents became informal resources for each other. Attendance at school events like coffee with the principal soared.

“Before we started hosting the dinners, we would have maybe five, seven parents attend those regular events,” says Ms. Whited. “Now we have 45 to 50 parents show up. Our parents understand that what happens here is important, and that they’re an important part of their child’s success.”

Fabiola, whose son will graduate this spring in the top five percent of his class with a high school diploma and two years of college under his belt, feels grateful to the school for working so hard to build these family connections.

“I’ve seen my son take advantage of the opportunities that are available to him here,” she said. “As parents, we need to know what opportunities exist, so we can help our children achieve their goals.”

Your Reach



**Austin Ed Fund invested
\$400,000 in 70 projects across
Austin ISD schools in 2023.**

Program Highlights

CRISIS FUND

The Crisis Fund began in 2020 because of the incredible outpouring of support from our community. Thanks to community support, the Ed Fund continues to support Austin ISD families experiencing crisis situations.

In 2023, the Austin Ed Fund provided more than \$29,000 in support for these students and their families. Funds are distributed as needed through partnerships with Austin ISD programs serving families experiencing homelessness, newcomer families, families experiencing poverty and staff experiencing crises.



FAMILIES AS PARTNERS

Families as Partners strengthens partnerships between schools and families. The program increases parent engagement to support and enhance learning and utilizes a peer-to-peer leadership model with parent champions leading initiatives focused on literacy, social and emotional development and needs identified by the community.

Families as Partners is staffed by two full-time employees who support 73 Parent Champions on 23 campuses with enrollment of 10,000 students. From 2018-2023, 316 unique individuals have served as Parent Champions.

Families as Partners was launched with funding from W.K. Kellogg Foundation in 2016. The Austin Ed Fund continues to support Families as Partners and is grateful to the St. David's Foundation and the Orsinger Foundation for their support.



DISCOVERY DEN

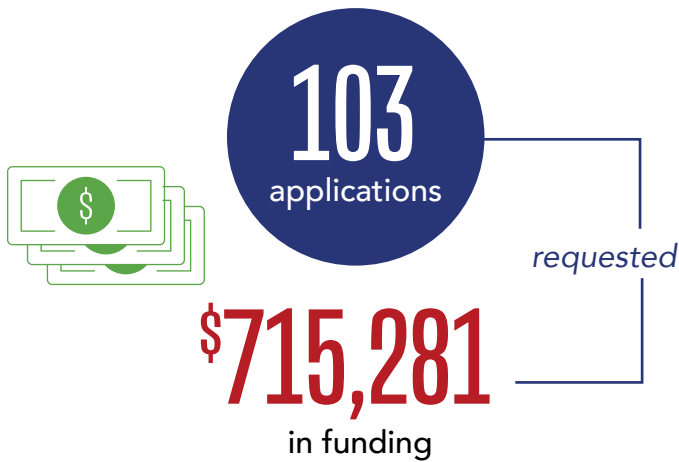
In 2023, Derrick Johnson's Defend the Dream Foundation, in partnership with the Austin Ed Fund, celebrated the opening of Discovery Dens in libraries on two additional elementary school campuses: Langford and Pickle. The projects transform a space in the library with flexible seating and hundreds of new books that reflect the diverse student population.

The Austin Ed Fund is proud to work with Derrick Johnson, a former Texas Longhorn and Kansas City Chiefs All-Pro linebacker, to establish

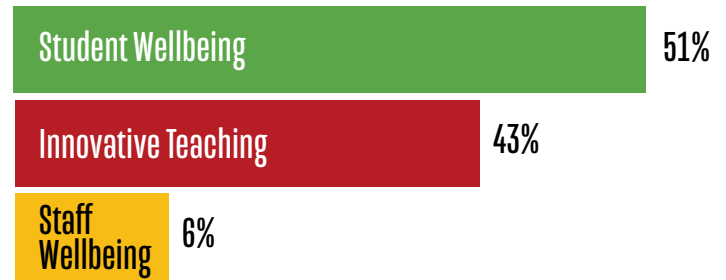


Discovery Dens across Austin. The Austin Ed Fund works closely with the Foundation, AISD Departments, and the campus to bring the projects to life.

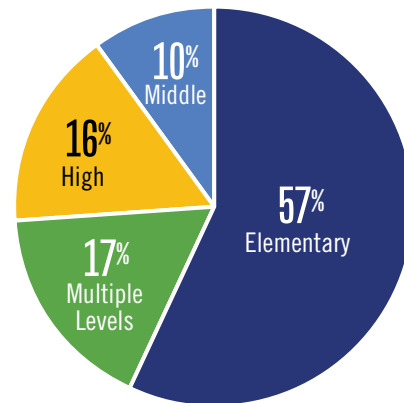
Grant Program 2023



FUNDING IMPACT BY FOCUS AREA



FUNDING IMPACT BY SCHOOL LEVEL



Funded Projects Provide Innovative Opportunities



Supplies to ensure engaging hands-on learning experiences



Books to diversify classroom libraries with more inclusive representation



Materials to help foster comfortable work environments for teachers and staff



Field trips and community events for students and families to explore college and career opportunities



Tools that help students calm down and regulate their emotions for school



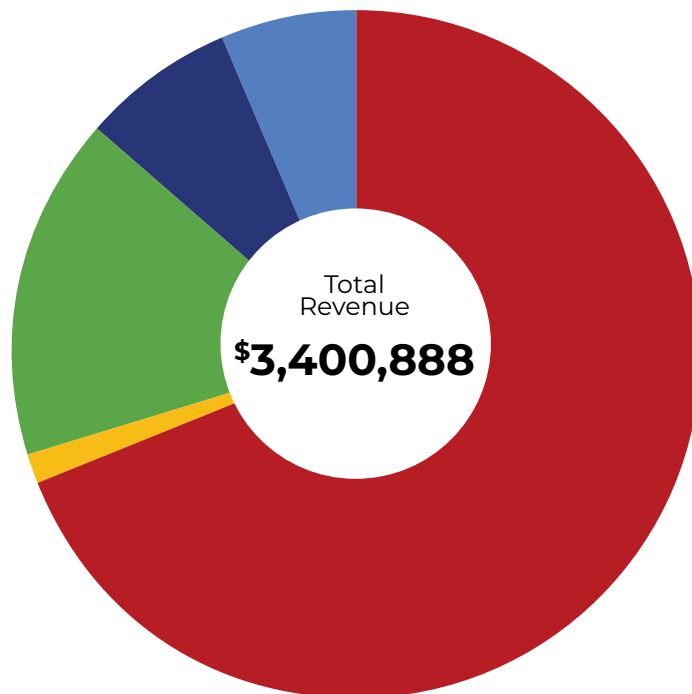
Professional development to support the growth and wellbeing of teachers and staff

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Ed Fund Financials

REVENUE

- **69%** Foundation Grants
- **16%** Special Events
- **1.4%** Corporate Gifts/Grants
- **7%** Individuals
- **6%** Other



Total Expenses

\$3,683,350

EXPENSES

- **91.01%** Program
- **5.74%** Administrative
- **3.25%** Fundraising

2023 Austin Ed Fund Grant Winners

SCHOOL	APPLICANT	GRANT AREA OF FOCUS
Akins Early College High School.....	Kyle Monk.....	Innovative Teaching
Allison Elementary School.....	Lupe Molina.....	Innovative Teaching
Andrews Elementary School.....	Nicole Verkerk.....	Staff Wellbeing
Austin ISD Dyslexia/504	Suzann Vera.....	Innovative Teaching
Austin ISD Equity	Diana Trimino, Sundal Ali.....	Staff Wellbeing
Austin ISD Food Services	Lindsey Bradley, Diane Grodek.....	Innovative Teaching
Austin ISD Multilingual	Harishini Ernest.....	Innovative Teaching
Austin ISD Multilingual	Andrew Johnson.....	Innovative Teaching
Austin ISD Project HELP	Kevin Hopper, Bree Rolfe	Student Wellbeing
Austin ISD Special Education	Bailey Gates.....	Student Wellbeing
Austin ISD Special Education	Rebecca Rice, McKinzee Steve.....	Innovative Teaching
Austin ISD STEM	Colleen Garland, Amanda Braziel.....	Student Wellbeing
Austin ISD Student Enrollment	Connie Soong, Jeffrey Thomas.....	Student Wellbeing
Austin ISD Student Support Services	David Torres.....	Student Wellbeing
Barrington Elementary School	Atenas Vallado, Lluvia Valentin.....	Student Wellbeing
Bedichek Middle School	Stacy Evans.....	Innovative Teaching
Blazier Elementary School	Veronica Rivera, Angelica Aguilar	Innovative Teaching
Blazier Elementary School	Debby Harris.....	Innovative Teaching
Bryker Woods Elementary School	Alicia Hill, Nicole Osborne.....	Innovative Teaching
Burnet Middle School	Brianna Rivas-Benavides, Selena Aguero	Student Wellbeing
Campbell Elementary School	Keith Moore, Willie Anderson.....	Student Wellbeing
Clayton Elementary School	Jill Robillard, Tamara Black.....	Innovative Teaching
Cook Elementary School	Janette Ruiz, Priscilla Sanchez.....	Student Wellbeing
Crockett Early College High School	Cristina Coro, Marissa McGraw	Student Wellbeing
Crockett Early College High School	Odera Anyasinti.....	Student Wellbeing
Crockett Early College High School.....	Tashala Thompkins.....	Student Wellbeing
Dawson Elementary School	Amy Rattaninad, Susan Torres.....	Innovative Teaching
Dobie Middle School	Lisa Shockey.....	Innovative Teaching
Dobie Middle School	Alastair MacPhail	Innovative Teaching
Galindo Elementary School	Rocio Merino Gomez, Irma Marshall.....	Student Wellbeing
Garza Independent High School	Elaine McGinty, Lin Joel	Innovative Teaching
Garza Independent High School	Sylvia Stinson.....	Student Wellbeing
Gorzycki Middle School	Matthew Balter, Chris Martin.....	Student Wellbeing
Govalle Elementary School	Diana Vallejo	Student Wellbeing
Govalle Elementary School	Yasmin Espinoza	Student Wellbeing
Harris Elementary School	Paola Arroyo-Forteza, Nicole Adams.....	Student Wellbeing
Hart Elementary School	Monica Sanchez, Olivia Barrow.....	Student Wellbeing
Highland Park Elementary School	Maria Satterwhite.....	Staff Wellbeing
Houston Elementary School	Robledo Frutoso, Korinne Litrell.....	Innovative Teaching
Houston Elementary School	Yadi Landaverde, Cecilia Bermudez.....	Innovative Teaching

2023 Austin Ed Fund Grant Winners

SCHOOL	APPLICANT	GRANT AREA OF FOCUS
Kealing Middle School	Roscoe McCormick	Student Wellbeing
Linder Elementary School	Jayan Pillai	Innovative Teaching
Lively Middle School	Brianna Garcia	Innovative Teaching
Lively Middle School	Michelle Garcia, Domonique James	Student Wellbeing
Marshall Middle School	Stacey Smith	Student Wellbeing
Martin Middle School	Gloria Cortez	Innovative Teaching
Menchaca Elementary School	Lauren Dalzin	Student Wellbeing
Navarro Early College High School	Tracey Cortez, Amy Torres	Innovative Teaching
Navarro Early College High School	Areli Zarate Sanchez, Julia De Alba	Student Wellbeing
Norman-Sims Elementary School	Alexis King	Student Wellbeing
Norman-Sims Elementary School	Kelly Merritt	Student Wellbeing
Odom Elementary School	Lisa Richardson, Sondra McWilliams	Student Wellbeing
Ortega Elementary School	Sandra Brown, Raquel Abrajan	Student Wellbeing
Overton Elementary School	Esperanza Gonzalez	Student Wellbeing
Patton Elementary School	Robin Beasley	Staff Wellbeing
Reilly Elementary School	Yohei Sparks	Student Wellbeing
Rodriguez Elementary School	Amanda Lengnick-Hall, Monica Mills	Innovative Teaching
Sadler Means Young Women's Leadership Academy	Erica Powell	Student Wellbeing
St. Elmo Elementary School	Joy Poole	Innovative Teaching
Sunset Valley Elementary School	Marizza Marquez, Claudia Shudic	Staff Wellbeing
Sunset Valley Elementary School	Lluvia Faz, Denise Escudero	Student Wellbeing
Travis Early College High School	Heather Merritt	Student Wellbeing
Travis Heights Elementary School	Natalia Chapa Mills, Kimberly Ruiz	Innovative Teaching
Travis Heights Elementary School	Dave Massman	Innovative Teaching
Walnut Creek Elementary School	Jon David Saucedo, Rachel Sanchez	Innovative Teaching
Walnut Creek Elementary School	Zizi Ellison	Innovative Teaching
Widen Elementary School	Sandy Chilton	Innovative Teaching
Widen Elementary School	Veronica Rodriguez	Innovative Teaching
Winn Montessori School	Bridget Farr, Virginia Luff	Innovative Teaching
Zavala Elementary School	Jennifer Hernandez	Staff Wellbeing



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Thank you to Leadership Giving Circle members who consistently give \$1,000+ annually.

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