



DATE: 06/08/26

TITLE: Task Force Action Plans: Attendance and Substitute Services

TYPE: Information

PRESENTER(S): AOA/ALC Principal Dr. Jessica Cabeen, Teacher Rebecca Deyo, Southgate Principal Derik Gustafson, Teacher Amanda Lee, and Principal Jill Rollie

BACKGROUND:

During the 2025-2026 school year, Austin Public Schools convened both an Attendance Task Force and a Substitute Task Force to examine two operational areas that directly impact student learning and school success. The task forces included representatives from across the district and were charged with reviewing current practices, identifying challenges, and developing recommendations for improvement.

The Attendance Task Force focused on strengthening systems, partnerships, and supports that improve student attendance. The Substitute Task Force focused on strengthening substitute staffing systems, coverage practices, and supports that ensure instructional continuity. Both groups developed recommendations and implementation frameworks designed to create sustainable, long-term improvements aligned with the district's Strategic Plan.

RATIONALE:

Student attendance and consistent classroom coverage are foundational conditions for learning. Students benefit most when they are present in school and when classrooms are consistently staffed by qualified educators. Both task forces recognized that meaningful improvement requires coordinated systems, clear expectations, strong communication, and sustained implementation over time.

The Attendance Task Force developed recommendations focused on:

- Infrastructure and attendance teams
- Family/caregiver and community engagement
- Multi-tiered attendance supports
- Assessment and early identification
- Data-based decision making

The Substitute Task Force developed recommendations focused on:

- Strengthening substitute staffing systems
- Expanding and supporting the substitute pool
- Protecting specialized instructional services
- Data-informed staffing decisions
- Improving substitute preparedness and retention

Both reports utilize a three-year implementation framework designed to:

- Year 1: Build the System
- Year 2: Expand and Refine Supports
- Year 3: Sustain and Scale Effective Practices

Together, these plans provide a roadmap for strengthening two essential systems that support student success: ensuring students are present and ensuring classrooms are consistently staffed when employees are absent. The recommendations will be implemented through existing district structures and monitored over time to assess effectiveness and identify opportunities for continuous improvement.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is presented for information and discussion. No board action is requested at this time.