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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Update on the Future of Joslin Elementary Next steps in the #PilotJoslin initiative to reimagine education in South Austin are happening now

Representatives from the Joslin CAC and PTA recently met with Dr. Cruz and administrators from Austin ISD.

This was the first meeting with Dr. Cruz since the CAC voted to adopt a new school model at Joslin Elementary on October 9.

Prior to the school board's adoption of School Changes Version Two on November 18, AISD announced plans for the new pilot school, Joslin Foreign Language Elementary. Under the leadership of its new principal, Mr. Chang, the new Joslin Foreign Language Elementary School will be the first school of its kind in the United States. Offering a combination of cultural enrichment for all students and Mandarin language immersion for select students, Joslin will be the first Mandarin language elementary school in South Austin.

Mandi Richey, CAC chair, said, "While it's regrettable the plans for the new school weren't reflected in version one, the oversight was remedied in School Changes Version Two and we are confident that the school district will allow us the time, without interruption, to do something truly remarkable that will be a big win for Austin ISD."

On behalf of the PTA, member Julie Barschow added, "We believe Dr. Cruz and his administration recognize the opportunity a new Joslin school at the current location presents, not just to neighborhoods near Joslin, but citywide."

Ryan Kellus Turner, CAC member, agreeing said, "To be clear, our extended school community has been working on school changes for more than a year. In light of recent events, I believe that AISD has a heightened public interest in honoring our school's efforts. And to their credit, they have. We have already begun the 'continuing conversations' and are working to procure the resources and public support necessary to make it all happen."

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Strategic planning is underway. A more detailed timeline and next steps will be announced in January, prior to the initiative being submitted to the school board and the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

Since being awarded \$284,000 by TEA this past summer, AISD and Joslin Elementary have been actively exploring the best way to bring the new school model to fruition. Joslin has the potential to be awarded millions of additional dollars through the TEA grant program.

In late October, Mr. Chang and leadership from Austin ISD visited schools in China. The objective of the trip was to:

1. Learn more about the education system in China and explore ways to introduce Chinese culture to students;
2. Search for a potential sister-school partnership for the teacher/student collaborations; and
3. Network with other United States administrators who also have Chinese programs and engage with sister-school partnerships.

Similar exploratory trips to Taiwan involving Joslin staff and AISD officials will occur during spring break in March 2020.

Utilizing the TEA grant funds, working together with the school's current supporters and new strategic partners, AISD will reimagine and reinvent Joslin into a city-wide foreign language school. The transition will happen over the next several years. If you would like to know more about our school changes, [read AISD's press release](#) and follow #PilotJoslin on social media.

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