

Austin ISD

Austin ISD (AISD) has 83,000+ students and 12,000 employees at 130 schools that span 230 square miles of Central Texas. Nearly 60 percent of AISD students are Hispanic and 58 percent are economically disadvantaged.

The district's vision is to reinvent the urban school experience. The AISD class of 2015 had an all-time high graduation rate of 89.7 percent, up more than 15 percentage points since 2008. Additionally, all student groups posted significant gains over the prior year.

AISD students continue to perform well on the SAT and ACT. Their most recent scores exceeded averages for the state and nation, a trend that they have sustained since 2013.

AISD students are also proving themselves ready for college and career. Last year, 65 percent of our graduating class enrolled in college within a year of graduation, and high school students completed nearly 3,000 industry licensures and certifications.

The district's placement on the Seventh Annual AP District Honor Roll showcases students' proficiency in advanced academics. AISD is one of only 23 school districts in Texas being honored by the College Board with this distinction. AISD students made these achievements while marking an attendance rate of 95.4 percent—the highest in 22 years.

AISD's key focus areas are three fold: 1) preparing all students for college, career and life, 2) creating an effective, agile and responsive organization and 3) creating vibrant relationships for successful students and schools. Within these goals, the district is placing specific importance on equity, literacy, Social and Emotional Learning and closing achievement gaps.

Dr. Paul Cruz is the superintendent of the Austin Independent School District, serving more than 83,000 students and 12,000 employees. Dr. Cruz guides the district in realizing the vision to reinvent the urban school experience.

Dr. Cruz began his career in education in 1987. He worked as a teacher, campus administrator, central office administrator and superintendent in Corpus Christi, San Antonio and south Texas. He also served as the deputy commissioner for dropout prevention at the Texas Education Agency. He currently serves as a board member for the Austin Area Research Organization, Austin Ed Fund and Austin Partners in Education.

Having set a personal goal to earn a doctorate before he turned 30 years old, Dr. Cruz received his Ph.D. in educational leadership from the University of Texas at Austin at the age of 29. In his doctoral program, Dr. Cruz was a fellow in the Cooperative

Superintendency Program, which is designed to prepare future urban school superintendents.

He received a Bachelor of Science degree in education from UT-Austin, with a specialization in English, and a Master of Science degree in educational administration from Corpus Christi State University.

Dr. Cruz and his wife, Diana, have four children: Maricristina, Selly, Paul and Manny.

A statement from Dr. Cruz regarding the Texas Urban Council:

"The Texas Urban Council is of great value to Austin ISD and our state. The council's focus on leadership development and student performance is strengthening public education in Texas, as well as our state's future workforce."