



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:17-6634

Agenda Item Number: 3.

Agenda Date: 12/12/2017

In Control: Governance Committee

DEPARTMENT: Human Services

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Melody Woosley

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Higher Education Student Advisory Board

SUMMARY:

On July 21, 2017, Councilman Rey Saldaña submitted a Council Consideration Request (CCR) to create a City-appointed Higher Education Student Advisory Committee. The stated purpose of the committee would be to advise the Mayor and City Council on matters that are of interest to students who are enrolled in local colleges and universities in San Antonio with the objective to help increase college enrollment and retention of college graduates in San Antonio.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Under the CCR's proposal, the Mayor and City Council would each select and nominate one member from a pool of students nominated by local higher education institutions, for a total of 11 members on the advisory committee.

The following local colleges and universities would each nominate three students for the committee: University of Texas at San Antonio, Texas A&M University-San Antonio, University of Incarnate Word, St. Mary's University, Our Lady of the Lake University, Trinity University, San Antonio College, Northwest Vista College, Northeast Lakeview College, Palo Alto College, and St. Philip's College.

The committee would meet monthly during each month of the academic year (September to May). The committee is proposed to have two distinct tasks. First, the committee would provide input and

recommendations regarding six priority issue areas: (1) Multi-Modal Transportation; (2) Environmental Sustainability and Public Health; (3) Housing and Affordability; (4) Jobs and Economic Development; (5) Public Safety; (6) Arts, Culture, and Recreation.

The second charge for the committee would be to consider the following questions and issue a yearly executive summary of recommendations to City Council:

- 1) What steps can San Antonio take to retain local students and attract students from outside the San Antonio area to our colleges and universities?
- 2) What steps can San Antonio take to support college students from all areas of the city and ensure equity in educational opportunity?
- 3) What amenities, programs, or future developments would make college students interested in living in San Antonio for the long-term?
- 4) How can San Antonio ensure that students are supported when making the transition from education to the workforce?

Currently in San Antonio, the University of Texas at San Antonio Student Government Association supports the San Antonio Higher Education Representative Assembly (SAHERA). Members from the student government associations of all higher education entities in the city serve on SAHERA, which is comprised of those student government presidents and one additional representative. SAHERA would continue to exist if the City of San Antonio's Higher Education Student Advisory Board is approved. SAHERA discusses issues of access, equity, affordability and completion as it relates to higher education.

The only higher education student advisory boards and councils that appear to exist in major cities are university-led, similar to the SAHERA structure, and are not affiliated with local governmental entities. A review of San Antonio's peer cities did not find any similar municipal higher education student advisory board.

Several state governments (e.g., Arizona, Massachusetts) have higher education advisory boards that focus on increasing access and success in higher education institutions. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has an Undergraduate Education Advisory Committee that makes recommendations on improving undergraduate programs. Structures similar to this primarily have members composed from faculty and usually one (sometimes non-voting) student member.

High school student municipal commissions are common, including San Antonio's Youth Commission, and similar groups in Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, and San Jose, California. These groups work to promote civic engagement among young people.

ISSUE:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

ALTERNATIVES:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the creation of a city-led Higher Education Student Advisory Board. DHS will coordinate the Advisory Board's work with existing City boards and initiatives so the higher education perspective is included in their work.