

AUSD Launches “Scholar Program” at Five Elementary Schools

To support and highlight academic achievement among our Black, African-American, and Multi-Ethnic students, this year AUSD has initiated a “Scholars Program” at five elementary schools: Love, Otis, Paden, Bay Farm, and/or Ruby Bridges.

The goal is to build a solid foundation so that “ultimately our children are seen, nurtured, and prepared for the future of college and career,” says Shamar Edwards, AUSD’s new Senior Director of Equity, African-American and Multi-Ethnic Student Achievement. “We firmly believe that if we partner with families in their students’ primary years to both personalize and optimize their school experience, students will thrive.”

During this first year, Scholar Program families will set educational goals for their students and meet quarterly with teachers to ensure those goals are being met.

The program was initiated as part of the district’s Comprehensive Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CCEIS) Plan. The state mandated that AUSD develop a CCEIS plan to address a disproportionate number of African-American students who had been identified as requiring special education services in our district. More information about the CCEIS process is available [here](#).

“Our district has historically underserved our African-American and Multi-Ethnic students and their families,” Edwards says. One of the outcomes has led to the over-identification of African-American students into Special Education, primarily at the elementary levels. To disrupt this trend, our district has identified five elementary schools to infuse additional training for staff and a commitment to more individualized support for our African-American, Multi-Ethnic students and their families.”

The first meeting was held on September 2; for those who could not make that meeting, a second one is being held this Monday, September 13. The meetings themselves are for families in the school communities, but we will continue to update on the program throughout this year.