

ROUND ROCK

RRISD employees to have affordable workforce housing beginning in August



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Starting in August, Round Rock school district employees will be eligible for special housing discounts as officials try to retain staff who are having affordability issues.

The agreement was passed on a 5-1 vote. Trustee Danielle Weston was absent, and Mary Bone was the sole no vote.

The school district approved a memorandum of understanding with the Texas Workforce Housing Foundation for it to provide affordable rent prices to district staff through four apartment complexes in the Round Rock and Austin area.

The complexes are Legends Lakeline, Legends Lake Creek, Enclave at La Frontera and Lakeside at La Frontera. The housing will be to no cost to the district.

As the cost of living continues to rise in the area, many Round Rock teachers are struggling to keep up. Some are working second jobs or moving out of the district to be able to afford their homes. District officials say they have between a 12% to 14% teacher turnover rate, a rate higher than normal.

More: Round Rock ISD staff could get cheaper rent at certain apartments

The foundation will establish an initial \$1 million affordability fund, \$250,000 for each complex, and an annual contribution of \$50,000 for each property moving forward to be used to provide discounted rent prices to district staff at the four apartment complexes. The fund can be used by district personnel for rental payments, to cover moving expenses, security deposits or for downpayment assistance if they choose to move out.

If more apartment complexes are added to the agreement, the foundation will provide the

same payments. The district will have to approve any complexes that are added to the agreement, said Adam Harden, a foundation representative.

A representative for the foundation said some units are reserved for families making no more than 30% of the area median income and others for those making no more than 60%.

Rent for a one-bedroom apartment starts at \$1,295 and at \$1,829 for a two-bedroom unit. But rent for district staff would start at \$621 for a one-bedroom unit and \$744 for a two-bedroom apartment for an employee making no more than 30% of the area mean income, or \$36,690.

Staff making no more than 60% of the area income, or \$73,380, would pay rent at \$1,242 for a one-bedroom, saving \$43 per month, and \$1,489 for a two-bedroom apartment, saving \$340 per month.

Harden said if there is little interest in the units available, those who rent the units may have to pay higher subsidies. There will be 25 units reserved to district staff per property. Harden said the district has no obligation to fill all the units.

Harden said the foundation would be responsible for operating, financing, maintaining, repairing and rehabilitating the housing units, according to district documents.

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