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**Austin ISD board president Mark Williams joins Aware Awake Alive board of directors
On heels of pending retirement from AISD, shifts focus to alcohol poisoning awareness**

AUSTIN, Texas – Austin Independent School District board president Mark Williams recently announced he will not seek reelection in November to his seat on the board. He steps from one leadership role to another, however, joining the board of directors for Austin-based Aware Awake Alive, a non-profit 501(c)3 organization dedicated to raising awareness around alcohol poisoning through education and outreach.

“I’m excited to become more involved with such a critical organization,” Williams said. “As a father of two college-aged children now, as well as a high school senior, the issue of alcohol abuse and alcohol poisoning is at the forefront of my mind. This group addresses the issue reasonably and effectively, providing tools to students and their families to recognize the signs and take appropriate action before it’s too late.”

Aware Awake Alive was created by Austin family Julia and Scott Starkey in response to the death of their 18-year-old son, Carson, from alcohol poisoning during a fraternity hazing initiation at Cal-Poly in 2008. The organization’s mission is to equip youth, their parents and their communities with the tools and confidence to prevent lives lost from alcohol poisoning. In addition to free online programming to combat alcohol poisoning and its fatal consequences on school campuses, the organization promotes nationwide 911 immunity legislation and policies.

Williams has a long-standing commitment to his community, serving in various roles with the Center for Child Protection, United Ways of Texas, Communities in Schools and the Ex-Students Association of the University of Texas (Texas Exes), among many others.

“Mark brings a unique and critical perspective to the organization,” said Scott Starkey, founder. “His work in the trenches with AISD will inform Aware Awake Alive well about the practices and mindsets of our high school youth. In addition, he brings a tremendous network of contacts and a wealth of enthusiasm to our efforts and we are thrilled to have him on board.”

For more information on Aware Awake Alive, and to read more about Carson’s story, visit www.awareawakealive.org.