

DATE: October 12, 2026

TITLE: Community Education Director

TYPE: Information

PRESENTER(S): Jennifer Lawhead, Community Education Director

BACKGROUND:

Community Education uniquely serves Austin community members across the lifespan, from early childhood through older adulthood, in support of the district's mission to prepare all learners to make a difference in the world. The department identifies emerging community needs and develops responsive programs and services to address them. These needs are assessed through both formal and informal data collection, community engagement, and ongoing collaboration with local partners and stakeholders.

SUPPORT AND RESOURCES TO ENSURE A SAFE AND WELCOMING LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

All

- Enhance operations of Community Education Department
 - Workflows in development for tasks completed frequently
- Community Education Advisory Council
 - First CEAC meeting was on October 8, 2026.
 - Reviewed audit from MCEA
 - Continued to develop bylaws and Community Ed Advisory Council based on feedback from audit.

ABE

- Standard Response Protocol practices
 - We continue to refine and improve our communication with our hosts at Riverland Community College.

Early Childhood

- Communication Expectations
 - Focus of PD on September 28, 2026
 - Staff reviewed purpose of expected communication with families and discussed opportunities and strategies for improvement
- Family Engagement
 - 219 people attended Transportation Fair on October 1, 2026
- Mid-Year Student Adds
 - Moving students off of waiting list as we have students drop and adding students to classrooms based on special education qualification. We have added a home and/or classroom visit prior to start dates to build family and student confidence and comfort.
- Strengths
 - Monthly School Leadership Team participating in Strengths training.

Wellness Committee

- Representatives from Departments and Buildings
 - Packers Pause posters are placed in high traffic areas in all buildings and departments providing short, helpful tips on the five areas of wellness; social, financial, nutritional, physical, and mindfulness
 - Monday Wellness Moments are being sent weekly, selected by the District Wellness Committee based on the work of Dr. Amit Sood.
 - Triennial Assessment has been completed by district leaders and reviewed by Cabinet. The Wellness Committee will review in November and make recommendations for goals.

PACKER PROFILE FOR ALL LEARNERS

All

- Staff Packer Plates are present at the CLC and out at Riverland for our ABE staff
- Staff from the CLC and ABE participated in the AI training on October 5, 2026

Early Childhood

- Several staff are participating in PD offered by the Minnesota Community Education Association on the importance of Meaningful Learning Through Play. This topic will be the focus of several professional development opportunities this school year.

DISTRICT-WIDE MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT FOR ALL LEARNERS

ABE

- 355 students for 8380 hours in 2025 from May – November
- 350 students for 7628 hours in 2026 from May – September 30

Early Childhood

- Early Childhood general education staff will have PD with myIGDI's on October 14th to learn how to administer the tool used for universal screening in early childhood.

EXCELLENCE IN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Community Education Enrichment

- ARUX is fully implemented for facility usage internally and is rolling out via buildings and grounds for external partners.
- ARUX is fully implemented for Kids Korner School Age Childcare enrollment and billing.
- ARUX is being used for registration and payment for Community Education Enrichment when new courses are added. [Home - Austin Public Schools](#)

[Early Childhood Family Newsletter](#)