



DATE: April 13, 2026
TITLE: APS Site Reports
TYPE: Informational
PRESENTER: Dr. Joey Page, Superintendent

BACKGROUND:

The following is a summary of events and items from our sites.

Austin High School:

- Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.
 - Graduation rate – Austin Public Schools has increased its 4-year graduation rate to 80.6%, a 5.6 percentage point gain from the previous year. This marks one of the strongest year-over-year increases in recent years for the district.
 - **Activities:**
 - Fully staffed at all levels for Spring Sports
 - Brought the cost of Summer Strength & Agility down by 50%; even more with the Ed Benefits sliding scale
 - Girls Flag Football – new club activity for girls 9-12; 63 girls are registered. Three paid coaches (equal split among 2 stipends); 2 volunteer coaches
 - Boy's Volleyball: numbers increased and were able to add a 3rd level of play
 - Track and Field: Record registration numbers in my tenure – 1168 (85 girls, 83 boys)
 - Packer Speech hosted the Big 9 Competition on March 12 – all 12 schools were represented
 - Bleacher Captains meeting to set Spring Theme Days for student Fans
 - Used our Form A funds from MSHSL to pay for 10 students activities fees; next steps, how to help identify and support Ellis students as well
 - Record Spring Participation Numbers

- Packer Profile for all learners.
 - Beginning with the class of 2027, students graduating from Austin High School, Austin Area Learning Center, and Austin Online Academy are required to complete a portfolio as a graduation requirement. Students will be supported throughout high school in developing their portfolio using SchoolLinks.
 - AHS Career Fair was a huge success with over 40 community partners and hundreds of students attending.
 - Our first ever Military signing event is happening at 1:45 in Knowlton Auditorium on April 8.
 - **Activities:**
 - Boy's Swim and Dive: 2026 State Tournament:
 - 200 IM Relay Team: Brent Dahl, Carter Holt, Hunter Peters, Simon Pischke (18th)
 - Brent Dahl: 200 IM (11th); 100 Back (2nd), All State, All Big 9, State Champ, All American
 - Packer Speech: Consistently one of the top contenders in the small team category and are making the podium in their individual categories.
 - Dance:
 - Hosted a Youth Clinic (grades 5-7) March 23-25
 - Boy's Basketball: Advanced to the Section 1AAA Finals vs. Northfield
 - Robotics: Two Competitions in March: St. Mary's University in Winona and Cedar Falls, Iowa
 - 2026 Austinaires Show, 'Sailing Away': March 26-28
 - Baseball: Youth Clinics @ Packer Dome, Grades K-8, March 15 & 22; Hayden Quitmeyer and Noah Dunlap had signing days for baseball
 - District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.
 - As part of the district's commitment to a strong Multi-Tiered System of Supports, instructional observations were conducted throughout the school year to monitor the implementation of High Impact Teaching Strategies and their influence on student engagement. Administrators and instructional leaders completed classroom observations across grade levels and content areas using district aligned walkthrough tools. These observations focused on evidence of High Impact Teaching Strategies such as clearly defined learning intentions and success criteria, structured student discussion, explicit instruction, formative assessment, and feedback. Across classrooms, teachers demonstrated increased clarity in lesson design, more consistent use of modeling and guided practice, and improved instructional decision making to support students across MTSS tiers, reflecting strong alignment between professional learning and daily practice.

- In addition to instructional improvements, observers noted a clear increase in student engagement. Students demonstrated greater participation in academic discussions, collaborative learning tasks, and independent work, with sustained focus and purposeful involvement. Engagement was reflected in students explaining their thinking, responding to feedback, and taking ownership of their learning. Classrooms with stronger implementation of High Impact Teaching Strategies consistently showed higher levels of student engagement, reinforcing the connection between effective Tier One instruction and positive learning experiences for all students within the MTSS framework.
- **Activities:**
 - Spring Packer Study Table Start Date – April 8
 - Head Coaches have access to Infinite Campus for Ed. Data Management where they are able to check grades and attendance
- Excellence in resource management.
 - We are pleased to announce that we have hired Kim Sherva as our new security paraprofessional. We are excited to welcome Kim to our team and are confident she will make an immediate positive impact on our school community.
 - Our staff handbook is now live and accessible to all staff members through Schoology. The handbook serves as an operational guide to support day-to-day procedures and ensure clarity across our building. As we move forward, we will continue gathering staff feedback and making enhancements to strengthen the document. Our goal is to keep the handbook responsive, practical, and reflective of our evolving needs as a school community.
 - The rollout of our new copiers is now complete. As part of this transition, we intentionally reduced the overall number of machines to increase efficiency, streamline workflow, and better align with our current operational needs. This adjustment supports more effective resource management and helps ensure our staff have reliable, updated equipment that improves daily productivity.
- **Activities:**
 - Received a \$2500 check from Austin Noon Lions for the 2025 Football Season
 - Austin Packers Girls Flag Football – Fully funded by a MN Vikings Grant
 - 62 girls registered
 - 5 coaches (3 paid thru grant), 2 volunteers
 - Practice on Wednesday's, Games on Sunday evenings starting April 26
 - We are in District 4: Austin, Fairmont, NRHEG, W-E-M

- Home Game on Sunday, May 17, Hass Field
Newsletter: <https://app.smore.com/n/dtb82k>

Austin Online Academy/Austin ALC :

- Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.

Austin Online Academy continues to expand its reach across Minnesota, with steady enrollment growth and consistently positive feedback from families during the onboarding process. Notably, the most common referral source remains word of mouth—an indicator of both strong family satisfaction and growing trust in the program.

This momentum is also reflected in our Summer Acceleration program, where interest has already doubled compared to this time last year. Open to high school students across the state, the program offers flexible, online coursework taught by licensed Austin teachers and supports both credit acceleration.

- Packer Profile for all learners.

This spring, ALC students, members of the African Student Association, and selected AOA students will participate in a Junior Achievement financial literacy experience, either in person or virtually. Through hands-on budgeting simulations and real-world financial scenarios, students will build skills in saving, investing, and financial decision-making. This experience is especially meaningful for students navigating complex or unfamiliar financial systems, as it builds both knowledge and confidence.

In addition, MAAP STAR students recently participated in a career exploration visit to Clasen-Jordan Mortuary. During this experience, students learned about business operations, cost management, and the importance of professionalism and interpersonal skills in a service-based field. Opportunities like this expand students' awareness of career pathways while helping them connect classroom learning to real-world applications.

Together, these experiences reflect our commitment to developing students who are prepared, confident, and capable beyond graduation.

- District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.

Our MTSS structures continue to strengthen both recognition and intervention systems across ALC and AOA.

Staff have sent over 100% of targeted positive postcards at both sites, reinforcing a culture of recognition and connection. In addition, BARR meetings continue to be a key structure for monitoring student progress, with 59 of 77 ALC students and 69 of 164 AOA students discussed for targeted support.

Recent data shows encouraging trends. At ALC, failure rates have decreased overall since late January, while behavior referrals dropped significantly following a mid-February spike. Attendance has remained relatively stable. At AOA, attendance remains steady, with continued focus on improving consistency, while failure rates highlight areas where additional support is being implemented.

- Excellence in resource management.

Our focus on maximizing resources to support student success is reflected in increased access to credit recovery opportunities. Since November, the number of students engaged in credit recovery has grown from 80 to 106.

This increase demonstrates both a growing need and an expanded capacity to ensure students stay on track toward graduation.

Ellis Middle School:

- Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.
 - We believe our Parent Engagement night was a huge success. Although we have no perfect way to measure attendance, our events were well attended in each time block. We had families coming in and out until 7:30pm. The taco bar was a huge success.
 - We want to thank our cast and crew for another successful performance with our latest musical.
 - Our Crisis Team meets monthly to review any major issues or address any safety concerns
 - One safety concern we are working on with the YMCA is the Y-bus after school. The bus can only seat about 15 students and we will have up to 30 who want a ride. The remaining students have to wait for the bus to return to pick them up. We have had some concerning behavior issues as the students are not supervised during this time.
- Packer Profile for all learners.
 - Next year we will be working with AHS and the Packer Profile coordinators to add programming connected to the profile.
 - We will be planning a Career Project for next year that will be cross-curricular
 - We are also applying for a grant to bring back our Eagle Bluff trips (staff who attended these in the past requested we bring them back.
- District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.
 - Our staff is becoming more adept at using EduClimber to access student data more regularly.
 - During our PLC work time teachers use EduClimber weekly to adjust instruction to meet student needs.

- Next year Ellis and AHS are required to provide reading interventions for students who qualify. We are developing that class for implementation next year.
- We have successfully connected our BARR meeting work with our MTSS process so we are having quality discussions about students who need support on a weekly basis; all the right people are around the table to make adjustments.
- Excellence in resource management.
 - Due to a reduction in state funding, we are making budget adjustments with staffing. We have a few teachers who are transferring to other buildings and a few transferring in. These adjustments will take place over the next few weeks.
 - We also have to make adjustments to supply budgets and ensure we are spending appropriately for things we need. We meet monthly with district personnel to report or work in these areas.

Newsletter: <https://app.smore.com/n/jsz01>

IJ Holton Intermediate School:

- Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.
 - Our BARR U-Time lessons are introduced by Mr. Malo every Thursday morning so we can have building wide themes.
 - Our last dance, although not as well attended was still a huge success with well over 200 students attending and very few if any behavior issues.
 - Our Crisis Team meets monthly to review any major issues or address any safety concerns
 - One safety concern we are working on with the YMCA is the Y-bus after school. The bus can only seat about 15 students and we will have up to 30 who want a ride. The remaining students have to wait for the bus to return to pick them up. We have had some concerning behavior issues as the students are not supervised during this time.
- Packer Profile for all learners.
 - We continue to work on choosing artifacts for the Packer Portfolio.
 - Teachers use WIN time and Connect time when available to check student grades and missing assignments.
- District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.
 - Our staff is becoming more adept at using EduClimber to access student data more regularly.
 - Our PLC work and Data meetings use EduClimber weekly to adjust student groups for reading interventions.

- Our reading interventions occur during WIN time or Connect time depending on the grade.
- We have successfully connected our BARR meeting work with our MTSS process so we are having quality discussions about students who need support on a weekly basis; all the right people are around the table to make adjustments.
- Excellence in resource management.
 - Due to a reduction in state funding, we are making budget adjustments with staffing. We have a few teachers who are transferring to other buildings and a few transferring in. These adjustments will take place over the next few weeks.
 - We also have to make adjustments to supply budgets and ensure we are spending appropriately for things we need. We meet monthly with district personnel to report or work in these areas.

Newsletter: <https://app.smores.com/n/m3ps51>

Banfield Elementary School:

- Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.
 - At the end of March, students participated in a building-wide cup stacking tournament as part of our PBIS celebrations, promoting positive behavior and school engagement. Families and the community can view highlights and the tournament winner through our S'more video.
 - The school successfully hosted four winter concerts, including a milestone first performance for our kindergarten students at the end of the month.
 - Looking ahead, Family Fun Night is scheduled for April 30th and will feature a silent disco, pizza, and a variety of glow-themed activities for students and families.
- Packer Profile for all learners.
 - Our 4th grade students attended a performance of *Dinosaur World* at the Children's Theatre Company. This experience provided students with an opportunity to engage in live theater, bringing storytelling, creativity, and the arts to life in an authentic setting. For many students, this was their first opportunity to see a live stage production, making it a memorable and impactful experience. All 4th grade students represented Austin Public Schools very well, demonstrating strong behavior, respect, and positive manners in a new environment.
 - Looking forward to the next two months of school, staff across the elementary buildings have worked hard to align the remaining field trips.

- District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.
 - The 4th grade team has spent time this spring piloting and refining their schedule to more effectively use student data to guide instruction, interventions, and supports based on individual student needs. This work has the potential to serve as a model for broader implementation across the building.
 - Due to winter weather disruptions, staff utilized two Wednesday PLC sessions to make up missed professional development. These sessions focused on standards alignment as staff work to close out the current school year while also beginning to plan and prepare for the upcoming year.

- Excellence in resource management.
 - Due to a reduction in state funding, the school is making budget adjustments that include staffing changes. Some teachers will be moving to another teaching spot within the building, while others will be joining our team. The communication to these staff member has been occurring the past few weeks and we look forward to supporting staff through these transitions.
 - Adjustments are also being made to supply budgets to ensure resources are aligned with priority needs. The school meets monthly with district personnel to monitor and manage these areas.
 - Staff have reviewed class rosters and enrollment projections at each grade level and will make staffing adjustments accordingly to best support students.
 - The school will continue to receive support from Reading Corps and Math Corps. Having two staff members in each program remains a strong asset in providing targeted support for students.

Newsletter: <https://app.smores.com/n/pfwex>

Neveln Elementary School:

Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.

- During the month of March, Neveln students consistently demonstrated our PBIS expectations of being **Respectful, Responsible, and Safe** across all school settings. positive behavior, students earned 10 Golden Shields, achieving our schoolwide PBIS goal.
- This accomplishment reflects strong implementation of our PBIS framework and a shared commitment among students and staff to maintaining a safe, positive, and welcoming learning environment.
- In recognition of this success, we are planning a building-wide PBIS celebration to reinforce positive behavior and continue strengthening our school culture.

Packer Profile for all learners.

- Our 4th grade students attended a performance of *Dinosaur World* at the Children's Theatre Company.
- This experience provided students with an opportunity to engage in live theater, bringing storytelling, creativity, and the arts to life in an authentic setting. Our Knights loved the experience and for most students this was their first opportunity to see a live production on stage.

District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.

- Strong attendance ensures students are engaged in instruction, connected to their classroom community, and positioned for a successful start each day. Even small amounts of missed instructional time can impact student achievement.
 - Our schoolwide goal is **90% attendance or higher each week.**
 - **Weekly Attendance Data:**
 - Week of March 2–6: 87.67%
 - Week of March 16–20: 91.58%
 - Week of March 23–27: 94.03%
 - Week of March 30–April 3: 92.57%
- Overall Attendance Rate (March 2–March 31): 91.24%**

Excellence in resource management.

- Neveln Elementary has begun strategic planning for the 2026–27 school year, including a detailed review of student enrollment trends. We will be increasing a section of KG at Neveln next year.
- This process will guide decisions around staffing, programming, and resource allocation to ensure alignment with student needs. We will be making staffing adjustments based on the new FTE allotments.

Newsletter: <https://app.smore.com/n/n6h42>

Southgate Elementary School:

1. Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.

We continue to integrate our monthly themes into learning activities into our school day. This month the theme revolves around "teamwork." Last month we celebrated filling up our GREAT Gator Swamp by spending a day at the Packer Dome. Our students continue to show that are amazing at being "Respectful, Responsible, Safe and Caring."

2. Packer Profile for all learners

As part of the Packer Profile, our elementary school students are starting to build a portfolio of work using our electronic learning system, "SeeSaw." Throughout their time in elementary school students will have entries in SeeSaw using examples from math, reading and writing.

We are also approaching our MCA testing windows. We are working hard to make sure that staff and students are ready and can put their best foot forward during testing. These tests for 3rd and 4th graders help us determine student progress and appropriate educational paths.

3. District-wide multi-tiered systems of support.

Each week, our student support teams continue to meet to discuss the needs of our students whether it is in the typical classroom or for those who may need additional supports. Members of our support teams are part of the district MTSS teams and continue our own learning.

After our last assessment window, we are continuing to adjust our classroom practices and how we provide services to students who may need additional supports. One group that we are fortunate to have in our building is Reading and Math Corps. After reapplying for position allotments for next year, we were granted another year with tutors in our building. We are very lucky to have these staff in our building to directly impact student achievement.

4. Excellence in resource management.

We are still working on our staffing needs for the 2026-2027 school year. These discussions are an important part of our planning process and serve as a jumping off point for in school services, scheduling and school staffing.

In addition we are starting to build rosters for the 26-27 school year. As part of this process we gather teacher input, use achievement data and formulas to balance classrooms and then have teachers put eyes on rosters one more time before they are finalized.

Newsletter: <https://app.smore.com/n/49pae-gator-gazette>

Sumner Elementary School:

- **Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.**

We are proud to report continued progress in student attendance, driven by strong systems of support, meaningful family partnerships, and monthly recognition efforts. Currently, 93.52% of our students are attending school consistently, reflecting the

positive impact of our collective work to promote engagement and a strong sense of belonging.

We are also excited to share that we have submitted our application to be considered a School of Excellence through MESPA, highlighting our ongoing commitment to continuous improvement and high-quality learning for all students. MESPA (Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association) recognizes School of Excellence award recipients as schools that demonstrate exceptional leadership, strong systems, and measurable success in improving student achievement and school culture.

In addition, we have submitted an application to be recognized as a Healthiest School, specifically under nutrition, as part of the Minnesota Healthiest Schools program, which recognizes schools across Minnesota that promote student wellness through healthy eating, physical activity, and overall well-being.

We are SUMNER!

- **Packer Profile for all learners.**

Our students continue to experience meaningful learning through our field trips. Our second-grade students had a wonderful visit to the Hormel Historic Home today! During their tour of this beautiful historic home, they explored what life was like in the past and learned about the idea of a time capsule. Students had the opportunity to reflect on their futures by drawing what they imagine themselves will look like when they graduate high school. They also wrote thoughtful letters to their future selves—messages they will one day open when they reach that exciting milestone. What a meaningful way to connect the past, present, and future!

Our fourth-grade students had an unforgettable experience seeing Dinosaur World LIVE at the Children's Theatre in Minneapolis! This interactive production brought life-like dinosaurs to the stage, combining puppetry, storytelling, and audience participation. Students were thrilled to meet a variety of dinosaurs up close while learning fun facts about these prehistoric creatures. It was an exciting and engaging experience that sparked curiosity, imagination, and lots of smiles!

- **District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.**

We have been fortunate to have both a Reading Corps tutor and a Math Corps tutor supporting our students at Sumner this school year. Through their work, we are able to provide additional reading and math intervention services to students who qualify for extra support. Our tutors, Ms. Karina and Ms. Celeste, have been making a meaningful impact on the students they serve.

Math Corps

24 students receiving services

An average of 34 minutes of tutoring per student each week
91% intervention fidelity

Reading Corps

13 students receiving services
An average of 67 minutes of tutoring per student each week
99.7% intervention fidelity

We are so grateful for the dedication, consistency, and care Ms. Karina and Ms. Celeste bring to our students each day.

- **Excellence in resource management.**

We continue to monitor student enrollment numbers to determine staffing needs for the upcoming 26-27 school year.

Newsletter: <https://app.smores.com/n/471nw>

Community Learning Center:

- Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.
 - The district Wellness Committee continues to encourage and promote positive wellness behaviors in students and staff. Planning is already underway for some new opportunities in the 26-27 school year.
 - Strengths conversations are part of all group work in Community Education.
 - The Community Education Advisory Council has added several new members from both inside and outside of the district as we reconsider how this advisory council can positively impact our work in the district.
 - Kids Korner Summer registration is open for current families and will open for the public soon. We will be located at Woodson this summer and have many fun activities and field trips planned for participants.
- Packer Profile for all learners.
 - ABE continues to collaborate with other members of our SE MN Consortium to offer courses that met the needs of our adult students. The Para class, for examples, continues to be popular, with one student actually coming to the CLC to do some of their required observation hours.
 - Emily Hovland, Packer Profile Coordinator, presented to the early childhood team about the work of the Profile across the district. Early Childhood now has preK appropriate profile posters for their classrooms.

- Planning is underway for Community Education enrichment opportunities for the summer months. More Than Pink and Beyond Blue will be available for students interested in enhancing their social emotional and physical wellness.
- The "Thrift Shop Hop" through Community Education is scheduled for April 17, 2026. This trip was a big hit last year! Registration for Community Education enrichment classes can be done [online](#). Many opportunities for youth summer enrichment are posted now, with more being added each week.
- District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.
 - A few of our classes in early childhood have piloted the Heggerty phonics program with their students this year. As we have been completing our universal screening tool (MyIGDI's) we see notable learning in our students who have had this targeted instruction. We look forward to expanding this offering in the 26-27 school year.
 - We have been using the concepts and materials of "Handwriting Without Tears" at the CLC for many years, but have not had a refresher on best practices with this program in many years. On April 20th we will revisit the core tenets of this program as we work toward continued program alignment.
- Excellence in resource management.
 - One of the key partnerships early childhood has in our community has been with MacPhail and their music therapy program. With the funding for this no longer available through MacPhail, Amy Goette, early childhood coordinator, wrote a grant to SMIF for support for this offering to continue as well as resources and education for parents about the value of music. We were awarded this grant and are thrilled to continue with this impactful programming at the CLC.

Newsletter: [April Family SMORE](#)