



**DATE:** November 12, 2024

**TITLE:** APS Site Reports

**TYPE:** Informational

**PRESENTER(S):** 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.
  - On October 10th, AHS had a College Fair. This opportunity provided a chance for our students to speak informally with representatives from a variety of colleges.
  - On October 11th, we welcomed guest speaker Justice Anne McKeig. She talked with our students about her upbringing on the Leech Lake Reservation in Federal Dam, family history, educational background, and work experience in the legal sector as a former prosecutor, family law judge, and her current role: Associate Justice on the Minnesota Supreme Court.
  - ALC students had the chance to explore the AHS Maker Space this month, thanks to BARR's support for students on track in their coursework.
  
- Packer Profile for all learners.
  - Stephanie Emanuel led our College Application Day on Monday, November 4th. The open house event in the Career Center allowed seniors to come down and start applications to Riverland or other colleges of interest to them. We had close to 50 Riverland applications completed this day!
  - This month four students served as delegates at the Global Youth Institute where they presented their research on global food security challenges. They received mentorship from Hormel Foods team members and are among a group of 175 delegates, experts, researchers and leaders within the space. Congratulations to Chloe Cannon, Makayla Dokpodjo, Sabreen Nagid and Isabella Rosenthal
  
- District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.

- Our Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) strategies are actively fostering greater student engagement and growth. By implementing universal (Tier 1) strategies—such as structured group activities, interactive participation techniques, and diverse instructional approaches—we are seeing encouraging progress in student involvement during discussions and activities. These strategies are designed to help students feel more comfortable asking questions, grasping concepts, and building meaningful connections with each other. Through regular feedback, we are continuously adapting our methods to align better with student interests, which is already contributing to improved motivation and focus across classrooms.
  - Check this out! Austin Online Academy was featured in the Austin Daily Herald: <https://www.austindailyherald.com/2024/10/connective-education-austin-online-academy-seeing-growth-rising-gpas/>
- Excellence in resource management.
  - An ELL curriculum review/PLC was completed, providing valuable insights into the current curriculum's effectiveness and identifying areas for improvement to better support language acquisition, alignment with state standards, and the diverse needs of our students.
  - The Special Education teachers are working tirelessly on their OLLA training, a rigorous process initiated by the state's recent adoption of the READ Act. Their dedication reflects a strong commitment to not only meeting new literacy requirements but also providing high-quality, individualized support that addresses each student's unique learning needs. Through this intensive training, they are enhancing their skills to make a meaningful impact on student achievement and literacy growth.
  - October alone, students recovered 69.5 credits, significantly aiding their path to graduation. If your child is in need of credit recovery please reach out to your counselor for more information.
  - Site Newsletter: [AHS Newsletter - October 1, 2024](#)

**Austin Online Academy/Austin Area Learning Center:**

- Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.
  - Our ALC students had an opportunity to engage in the use of the AHS Maker Space this past month. This is in part to the work of BARR and support and recognizing students who are on track in their coursework.
  - AOA is working with MDE to align our attendance and engagement practices to meet the needs of students and families this year. This past month we put additional interventions in to support students who are falling behind in coursework. With parental support we have implemented virtual study halls where

students can log in and learn while teachers are on standby for help.

- Packer Profile for all learners.
  - In October the ALC and AOA staff engaged in professional development to align the AHS pathways to our Ideal Student Avatar. By spending time getting to know who are students are and what they need we can start planning how it will look next year.
- District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.
  - BARR supports and interventions continue to be an area of strength in both programs. During the October Parent Communication night teachers reached out to parents and received positive feedback on the goals set for students in the ALC and the progress our supplemental students are making in Austin Online.
- Excellence in resource management.
  - Credit Recovery continues to provide support for students in accelerating learning and regaining credits to be on track to graduate.
    - September: 23 .5 credits were recovered.
    - October (as of the 25<sup>th</sup>) 69 .5 credits were recovered.
  - Austin Online had recent press on the increased growth in programming and academic success. Thank you to our school board for ongoing support and awareness of this program for students statewide.
- Site Newsletter: [AHS Newsletter - October 1, 2024](#)

### Ellis Middle School:

- Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.
  - **Ellis BARR Update**
- **Small Block and Big Block team meetings** are going well for all 5 teams. One goal that we have as part of BARR is to have a strength-based conversation about every student at least once before the end of the school year. As of 10/30/24, we have discussed 199 students so far at Block meetings. This is 25% of our student population at Ellis. If we keep up the current pace, then we are on track to reach this goal.
- In order to keep our **Special Education teachers** connected to the work of BARR, the BARR Coordinator attends an optional department meeting to share information and answer any questions that teachers may have. This happened most recently on Wednesday, 10/30. The BARR Coordinator shared with them how to access the

notes from the BARR meetings and how to attend meetings if they see a student of theirs on an upcoming agenda.

- Our **BARR Coach** visited Ellis for the first time on 10/24/24. During the visit, he had the opportunity to meet with Ellis Administration, attend a Big Block Meeting, attend 2 Small Block meetings, attend a Community Connect meeting, and observe two different I-Time Lessons (one Grade 7 and one Grade 8). He had very complimentary things to say about the work we are doing. We will receive a formal feedback report from this visit soon.
- The **I-Time lessons** continue to go well. They take place most Wednesdays during the school year with a total of 32 I-Time Lessons spread out equally across the core departments. So far, the main focus is Building a Connected Community. On Wednesday, 11/6/24, the I-Time lessons will take place in the Math classes. The Grade 7 students will participate in a lesson called "Freeze and Thaw". This lesson includes an activity as well as conversation around the concept of positive and negative group dynamics. The Grade 8 students' lesson is titled "Internal GPS". The students will watch a video clip from a commencement address given by Oprah Winfrey as she speaks on this topic. Then, they will participate in an activity to learn more about listening to their inner voice and recognizing what can take them off course.
- **Positive Postcards** home to students is another part of BARR. Our goal is that every Ellis student receives at least one positive postcard during the 24-25 school year. We started this work on 10/16/24. As of 10/30/24, 67 different students have received at least one Positive Postcard. This is 8.5% of our student population.
- A group of 6 (Ellis BARR Coordinator and IJ Holton Principal, Assistant Principal, Counselor, and Teacher) traveled to **Willow Lane Elementary** in White Bear Lake on 10/23/24. It was very interesting and informative to learn about how BARR works for them. They have integrated it effectively with both their MTSS system and PBIS. Their support staff is heavily involved pairing with a grade level to support their small block meetings and I-Time lessons.
- We will be looking at **attendance, academics, and behavior data** throughout the year comparing it to our baseline data from 2023-24.
  - **Academic** Baseline Data from 2023-24 for Quarter 1: 65.4% of students had 0 F/Us, 17.6% of students had 1 F/U, 8.6% of students had 2 F/Us, 8.4% of students had 3 or more F/Us.  
Academic Data from 2024-25 Quarter 1: 67.8% of students had 0 F/Us, 15.2% of students had 1 F/U, 8.7% of students had 2 F/Us, 8.3% of students had 3 or

more F/Us.

**Attendance** Baseline Data from 2023-24: 91.95%. As of 10/31/24, our average daily attendance is at 93.12%

- **Behavior** Baseline Data from 2023-24: 324 Major Referrals in September-October 2023. There were 114 major referrals in September-October 2024.
- Our leadership team held a staff vote to see if they would be willing to have Connect every week. The vote failed by a very narrow margin. We will move forward with an alternative plan using the Late Start Schedule.
- We are meeting with Sped. Leadership to review the progress of our Co-Taught Classes.
- Packer Profile for all learners.
  - At Ellis we have created career pathway posters that will be placed on the pillars by the main entrance.
- District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.
  - We have had two sessions of our HITS training on our staff development days. The Instructional Coaches met with our Leadership team in October to design the scope and sequence of the work. We will update before each staff development session. Thus far we have covered: Objectives and Structured Lessons. Both sessions went very well.
- Excellence in resource management.
  - We meet regularly with the finance department for long-term planning: cafeteria tables, classroom desks etc.
  - We continue to make progress replacing classroom desks.
- Here is a link to our current behavior data which is showing dramatic improvement this year:

#### [Behavior Data 10.28.24-Ellis Middle School](#)

- Site Newsletter: <https://secure.smores.com/n/k47ud>

#### **IJ Holton Intermediate School:**

- Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.
  - We have visited one school so far to investigate how BARR may look at Holton (see BARR updates above).
  - In both buildings we are in year 3 of strengths finder. Bethany is working with department chairs to incorporate Strengths in their departments.

- We are investigating scheduling options for next year at Holton. With our reading training it has become obvious that we need a larger block of time for reading. The math department has asked for the same.
- Packer Profile for all learners.
  - We are also working on visuals at Holton. These posters connect our classes with Carrer paths.
- District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.
  - All of our staff development time this year is devoted to Reading Training. Our teachers are doing well and on track to meet deadlines.
  - For both buildings, finding time for effective PLC's has been difficult.
- Excellence in resource management.
  - Again, we meet regularly with the finance department to make sure our projects are on track.
  - We did not check out laptops to individual students this year. Although it seems to be saving money thus far, we have had a lot of screen damage. We have only had a few requests to take laptops home. We work with those on an individual basis.
- Site Newsletter: <https://secure.smores.com/n/qynpj>

### **Banfield Elementary School:**

- Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.
  - Our students have been working hard on showing their" Bobcat Best" throughout the school. This had led to several classes earning their individual classroom celebrations.
  - In October, staff started using a Bobcat Best Coupon for individual acknowledgements for showing their best behavior. These also serve as a communication home tool for families to show their students positive behavior.
- Packer Profile for all learners.
  - On October 28<sup>th</sup>, staff participated in professional development using SeeSaw to create a portfolio of artifacts. These artifacts are to show student growth throughout the school year.
  - Staff continue to work through their CORE/OL&LA training that is connected to the READ Act. As a building and a district, we've allocated a significant amount of time for teachers to complete this training.

- District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.
  - Staff are participating in monthly PLCs, connected to their learning with the CORE/OL&LA. This time together as a grade, with the support of the Instructional Coach, allows them to discuss the change in instruction.
- Excellence in resource management.
  - Due to the increase in size and enrollment, we've been able to post positions for a shared ML teacher and social worker. We look forward to filling these spots in the near future.
  - We have been lucky to have volunteers helping out in supporting the library, along with organizing the new work room materials and shelves.

Newsletter Link: <https://secure.smores.com/n/fsraz-banfield-banner>

### **Neveln Elementary School:**

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

We held our October parent meeting in Spanish on October 23 at noon and 5PM. We are grateful for our families that attended our meeting. We discussed several topics including Attendance Matters, Your Child's Growth in English, Healthy Screen Time, and Technology Tips for Parents. Our next parent meeting in Spanish will be held in December!

Our Neveln Knights have earned a building wide celebration for earning 10 Golden Shields! The students will have an extra recess during the week of November 4. Congratulations to our Knights, we are proud of you demonstrating Respect, Responsibility and Safety at school.

- **Packer Profile for all learners.**

Our Neveln staff learned about the Packer Profile and how to use See Saw to create a portfolio of artifacts for each student. These artifacts will be used to showcase student growth throughout the year in reading and math for parents. Our staff are currently teaching lessons in Digital Literacy to students in grades KG – 4. These lessons include topics such as: using computer tools, evaluating online information, and practicing responsible behavior digitally.

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

On October 16<sup>th</sup> the Neveln staff participated in professional development sessions targeting student fall benchmarking scores in reading and math. The staff discussed instructional supports that would accelerate learning for all students at Neveln. The grade level staff created goals in both reading and math and teams discussed how they would measure student success. We are excited to see our December benchmarking data and celebrate student learning.

- **Excellence in resource management.**

Our Neveln student population is growing and so are the students that receive support in learning English. Currently, we are looking for a shared Multilingual Learners staff member that will teach at both Neveln and Banfield. The position is posted on the APS website, and we are excited to onboard a new staff member at Neveln in this role.

- Site Newsletter: <https://secure.smores.com/n/m4r5k>

### **Southgate Elementary School:**

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

Students at Southgate have now earned almost 3000 Gator Tickets for being Respectful, Responsible, Safe and Caring. Our students will celebrate with an extra recess block of time in November. Our school counselor continues to visit classrooms for whole group instruction on bullying and self care and our behavior interventionist is assisting students in classrooms and in small groups to be in the best possible situations to learn.

Our cafeteria has also had a facelift with some new serving areas and signage to make our environments more welcoming. We appreciate the support of food service in this project!

#### **2. Packer Profile for all learners.**

The Packer Profile reflects what our students, staff, and families desire each day for our students and supports their preparation to become college, career, and life-ready. Our students, while learning foundations skills will use SeeSaw to start to create an portfolio of students work. Students will also have multiple opportunities for exposure to possible future career and educational choices.



Students have been able to visit local farms and agriculture operations, work with local emergency responders and explore community career options over the last month. Our goal continues to be to help students see the connection between their work in school and their future careers.

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

Southgate is spending extra time this year focusing on our literacy instruction.

Teachers and specialists meet in teams once a week in professional learning communities to plan lessons tailored to the individual needs of all students. This year, teachers are receiving reading training grounded in the science of how students learn to read in accordance with the "READ Act" in Minnesota.

Our 3 main instructional teams are the School Leadership Team, the Supplemental Support Team and the Intensive Support Team. These teams meet at lead bi-monthly to monitor student progress, set goals for student growth and explore ways to meet the needs of all of our students. We are working with the University of Minnesota to ensure we are doing this work to our best ability.

We sent results home over the last 2 weeks regarding progress in academics. If you have any questions or concerns about your student's progress please do not hesitate to reach out!

### **4. Excellence in resource management.**

We are lucky at Southgate to have a supportive parent organization that works hard to ensure that students at Southgate have a safe, fun and welcoming environment for students. With the support of the PTC, we have been able to purchase additional recess equipment including kickballs, footballs and flag football equipment to give more opportunities for play during the day.

We also have staff who benefit from the work of the Austin Education Foundation. Through this grant, our teachers have been able to benefit from the purchase of additional enrichment materials that help bring learning alive for our students. We appreciate the support of both of these organizations.

Site Newsletter: <https://secure.smores.com/n/deyuc-gator-gazette>

### **Sumner Elementary School:**

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

We hosted a successful Fall Family Focus Group in October. We had seven families attend this meeting. At this meeting we had two guest presenters to share information on Attendance Matters and Healthy Screentime Habits, as well as solicited insight from our families on these topics. We even had some courageous family members support bringing awareness to Healthy Screentime Habits! Stay tuned!

We will have a Winter Family Focus Group in February! All families will have an opportunity to sign up during January conferences and are welcomed to participate! We love partnering with parents!

- **Packer Profile for all learners.**

Our Sumner teachers received training on Digital Literacy Citizenship. Currently, 50% of teachers have completed all lessons with students. These Digital Literacy Citizenship lessons are to be completed by the end of the school year.

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

Our Sumner staff engaged in professional development targeting Fall Benchmark Data to inform class wide interventions with our students! Teachers created SMART goals and action steps to accelerate learning based on the findings in the data.

- **Excellence in resource management.**

Currently we are seeking a special education paraprofessional to join our Sumner team!

- Site Newsletter: <https://secure.smores.com/n/k8cxw>

### **Community Learning Center:**

- Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.
  - The Wellness Committee has asked Dr. Page to include two items on a regular cadence in his 492 Happenings. The first is a weekly wellness tip adapted from Amit Sood's Year of Healing. The second is a monthly tip related to the resources available to district employees. Below is the first reminder that went out to staff.
    - On the staff tab of the APS website we have link to the "Employee Assistance Program" as well as login and password information.
    - We also have access to the Lifeworks app.

- We are hosting several students at the CLC, from a Life Skills student, college students seeking internship hours, they are working and learning in our classrooms from our licensed staff at the CLC.
- Packer Profile for all learners.
  - The importance of play was emphasized during our LETRS training and reminded of why the play we do in early childhood is vital to learning.
  - The CLC has been identified as a Unified Champion School for Special Olympics and were generously awarded 14 strider bikes for our students.
- District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.
  - All teachers who teach reading and prereading to early childhood students are actively engaged in LETRS training this school year. Our PLC work is also centered around this learning.
  - Our ABE teachers all had professional development with ABE teachers from around the region on November 1 learning about best practices in adult instruction.
- Excellence in resource management.
  - Working diligently to improve process when applying for the Great Start grant for our SACC employees wages and to improve the salary structure for these vital employees.
- Site Newsletter: <https://secure.smores.com/n/xpg1j2>