

**DATE:** March 9, 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.

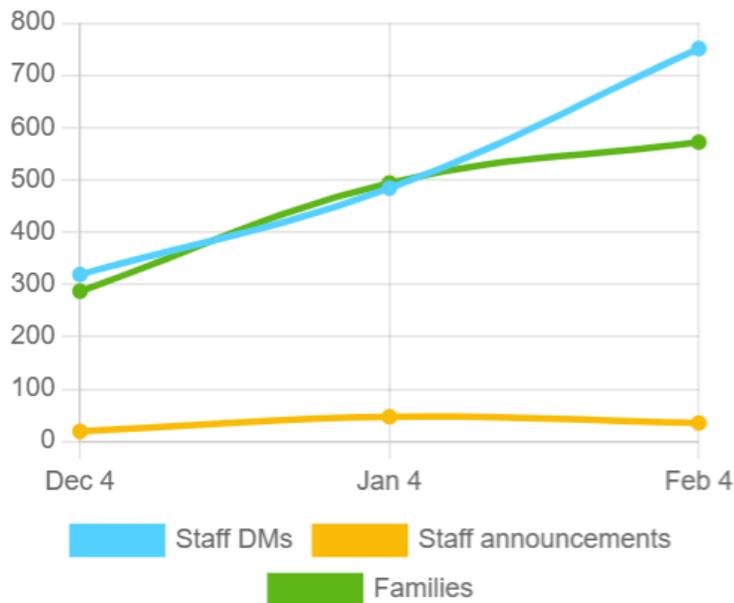
**Austin High School:**

- Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.
  - The Building Response team continues to evolve and become stronger. During our last meeting we had an overview of PREPARE training led by members of the Student Support Team.
  - Student council class representatives and multi-sport athletes attended a leadership and culture conference last week. We are excited to see them bring their ideas back to AHS.
  - The third annual Unified Basketball Day at Austin High School took place last Thursday. Students from six local high schools gathered at Austin High School participated in the fun event.
  
- Packer Profile for all learners.
  - The Packer Showcase event took place on Tuesday. Teachers and students loved showing all the great things happening at AHS. At 7:00 the band, orchestra and choir performed. At the end of the night a newly commissioned piece was played in honor of long-time orchestra teacher Phil Burkart.
  - Here's another big opportunity for our students!
    - The Hormel Institute is offering TWO on-site summer research programs:
      - BioDiscovery Internship (3-day hands-on lab experience)
      - High School Summer Research Scholars (8-week paid research program)
    - This is one more way the Packer Profile comes to life for our students. Learn more and apply at <https://hi.umn.edu/high-school-training>.

- The Packer Portfolio will be a graduation requirement starting next year with the class of 2027. We are proud of the work both teachers and students have made.
- District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.
- **MTSS & Attendance Board Report — MTSS & Attendance Committee Highlights**
  - Our MTSS Attendance Committee met weekly throughout the semester, demonstrating a strong and consistent commitment to proactively supporting student attendance and well-being.
  - Teaching staff are more informed and engaged than ever, thanks to expanded data-sharing protocols and collaborative action planning that keep everyone working toward the same goals.
  - Families are increasingly connected to their students' success, with enhanced engagement efforts making a meaningful difference — particularly for students facing chronic tardiness challenges.
  - Cross-team collaboration between PLC and BARR has strengthened our whole-school approach by weaving attendance awareness and social-emotional learning directly into faculty conversations.
  - A successful site-wide reading assessment (CAPTI) was completed, giving our team powerful insights to drive targeted, data-informed reading interventions for students who need them most.
- **Early Warning System (EWS) & EduClimber Integration**
  - Our staff are leveraging EWS dashboards with great effectiveness, quickly identifying students in need and ensuring no one falls through the cracks when it comes to absences, academic struggles, or behavioral concerns.
  - EduClimber has become an invaluable tool for our teams — enabling thorough data analysis, clear intervention tracking, and real-time progress monitoring that keeps both MTSS and attendance efforts on track.
  - Regular data meetings have built a strong culture of collaboration, keeping teachers and administrators well-aligned and responsive to student needs as they evolve throughout the year.
- **Attendance Intervention Work**
- *Strategies & Interventions Implemented:*
  - Direct parent contact and outreach to build strong home-school partnerships around attendance
  - Timely notification to student case managers to ensure a fully informed and connected support network
  - Meaningful attendance check-ins with the social worker or BARR Coordinator to collaboratively review data, uncover root causes, and set achievable improvement goals
  - Strategic referrals to BARR or Grade-Level teams to surround students with the right support at the right time

- Productive meetings with the truancy officer focused on solutions and student success
- Formal truancy referrals when necessary, ensuring all available resources were activated on behalf of students
- Collaborative team and parent meetings to align efforts and reinforce a shared commitment to every student's progress
- **Semester 1 Data Summary**
  - Approximately **68 ninth-grade students** were successfully connected to one or more interventions, reflecting our team's commitment to early and proactive support.
  - Approximately **102 tenth-grade students** received targeted interventions, demonstrating the reach and responsiveness of our attendance support systems.
  - **60 truancy referrals** were processed across 9th and 10th grade, ensuring that students with the highest need were connected to the appropriate level of support and resources.
- Excellence in resource management.
- **Talking Points Data** – Communication with families
- **Staff direct messages** increased significantly from roughly 320 on December 4 to more than 740 by February 4, indicating higher collaboration and ongoing communication among employees.
- **Family messages** rose steadily as well, moving from just under 300 in early December to nearly 580 by early February, showing strengthened outreach and consistent interaction with our school community.
- **Staff announcements** remained stable, with a small increase in January before leveling back to approximately 30–40 messages in February.
- Together, these indicators show that our communication tools are being used more frequently and effectively, supporting timely information sharing and stronger relationships across the district.
- See graphic below:

## Messages sent over time



### Staff Handbook

We discontinued our initial plan to use an AI bot to create a more interactive Staff Handbook due to Microsoft licensing limitations. As an alternative, we consolidated more than 80 separate documents to develop a comprehensive new handbook. This resource will undergo continuous updates to ensure it meets staff needs and provides timely, relevant information. Below is the first draft of the revised Staff Handbook.

[Master Copy of AHS Handbook 1.1.pdf](#)

Newsletter: <https://app.smore.com/n/r06yq>

### Austin Online Academy/Austin ALC :

- Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.
  - This month has been full of learning and fun for our MAAP students. A major highlight was receiving our MAAP shirts, which helped students feel united and proud to represent the program. Academically, they learned about the banking system by exploring savings and checking accounts, practicing ledger entries, and writing sample checks. Students also enjoyed a visit from Hormel's Vice President of Engineering, who shared

career insights, hosted trivia, and handed out fun prizes before everyone enjoyed pizza together. Looking ahead, students will visit a local funeral home on March 24 to support a peer interested in becoming a funeral director, and on March 31 they will hold their first fundraiser at Pizza Ranch, with proceeds going toward hygiene products for the Packer Pantry and supplies for the local humane society.

- Packer Profile for all learners.  
AOA/ALC staff have been digging into the Portfolio requirements for next year's seniors and laying out a scope and sequence for the seminar courses. This work has been guided by the teachers as well as with support from Jane Carlson and Emily Hovland.
- District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.
  - ALC BARR has implemented a tiered attendance/tardy plan in partnership with families and students. This work is monitored weekly by the team and students as well as regular communication home to families. The work is helping all stakeholders recognize the importance of being at school and in class.
- Excellence in resource management.
  - Summer Programming Registration is kicking off this month for AOA Summer Acceleration. The website will be launching this week and families across the state can enroll in summer courses.
  - ALC Credit Recovery will be starting up enrollment this month as well. Jessica Stanley, Summer ALC Lead Teacher will be coordinating this work and stayed tuned for Summer Graduation date and time.

### **Ellis Middle School:**

- Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.
  - We will have our second student climate survey this month which teachers use to build goals for themselves to provide better support.
  - We had numerous students walk-out during the ICE protests. All things considered, we had a very safe process.
  - We are starting the process to design the schedule for next year. We will remain in a 7 period day with some streamlined elective offerings and one new class: Digital Music
- Packer Profile for all learners.
  - We are investigating ways to have our students participate in the Eagle Bluff ropes course.
  - We are also going to have a building wide career project next year.

- We are working through some issues with the YMCA van and transportation.
- District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.
  - Next year we are required to deliver reading interventions in grades 7-12. We are approaching this in two ways: first we are going to concentrate on vocabulary work in all classrooms 7-12; second we will have interventions offered in reading for all students identified with STAR data and our Capti tests. We are working closely with AHS to have an appropriate sequence of support in grades 7-12.
  - We are going to make some changes to our ALC/EXCELL program next year to focus on math intervention.
- Excellence in resource management.
  - Our department purchases are due by April 1st for next year. We are on track to meet that goal.

Newsletter: <https://app.smore.com/n/gt68b>

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

- Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.
  - During the ICE protests we had a total of 24 students exercise their right to participate. Our attendance procedure does not allow students to return to class after intentionally leaving school grounds during the school day. Unlike AHS, we do not have an open campus.
  - Our schedule for next year will be largely the same with some minor adjustments allowing for better special education and ELL teacher access to small group instruction.
  - Throughout the year we have made adjustments and tweaks to process' and procedures to accommodate our new schedule. We use teacher input from our Site Leadership meetings to make adjustments.
  - We are working with the YMCA and Palmer bus company to address concerns with transportation after school to the Y. The Y-van only holds 15 students and it's first come, first serve. The van drops the first load off then returns to our back parking lot for the remainder of the students. We have had some behavior issues during this time.
- Packer Profile for all learners.
  - We have selected a new course to replace Green Architecture in our PLTW offerings. The new class is called The Magic of Electricity.

- District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.
  - We are reviewing data from our ELL audit.
  - I am meeting individually with each CORE teacher to set academic goals for the remainder of the year.
  - Our weekly PLC's are going well. Administration is working on scheduling more time for PLCs so teachers can collaborate better.
  - We continue to coordinate our BARR work with our MTSS process to meet individual student needs.
  
- Excellence in resource management.
  - We are beginning staffing planning for next year and looking at teachers who have requested a move either in or out of the building.
  - Our budgets are all on track.

Newsletter: <https://app.smore.com/n/75jdh>

### **Banfield Elementary School:**

- Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.
  - In preparation for Teacher Appreciation Week, a survey will be shared with families to recognize and celebrate staff. A template is being created to organize submissions and distribute acknowledgments to teachers.
  - During our Strengths Monday session, staff engaged in whole-group reflection on how they have applied their strengths over the past two months.
  - The Staff Engagement Committee continues to excel in planning regular activities that foster connection, collaboration, and staff well-being.
  
- Packer Profile for all learners.
  - Staff have identified artifacts that students are uploading to SeeSaw to demonstrate their learning in the classroom. This process will expand next year to include contributions from non-classroom educators such as specialists, Multi-Language Learner staff, Special Education, and Reading Intervention.
  
- District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.
  - Professional development on Freckle and Lalilo has been met with strong interest and positive feedback from staff. These tools will be integrated into

- next year's professional development calendar as they play an important role in supporting individual student learning needs.
- A PLC Roles meeting brought together staff in similar positions to discuss successes, challenges, and share feedback. This collaboration supports the ongoing refinement and improvement of our PLC processes.
  - Excellence in resource management.
    - Teachers are submitting their final supply orders for the current school year.
    - Plans are underway to implement a standardized laptop setup for teachers, improving consistency and ensuring substitute teachers can more easily access classroom technology.
    - Collaboration continues with Buildings and Grounds to equip classrooms with sound systems and microphones, particularly in learning spaces that have not previously had this technology.

Newsletter: <https://app.smore.com/n/mnr8w>

### **Neveln Elementary School:**

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

We had an amazing **Vocabulary Parade** at Neveln! Our Neveln Knights proudly showcased their creativity by selecting a favorite word and designing a poster to display it. Some students added detailed illustrations to describe their word, while others went all out with costumes that truly brought their vocabulary to life! They went on a parade inside the building for other students to see.

Walking through the hallways and seeing students confidently share their scholarly words was a wonderful reminder of the strong learning culture we are building together.

### Family Literacy "Knight"

Thank you to all of the students and families who joined us for our Family Literacy "Knight" on Thursday, February 26th. It was such a joy to see families connecting with each other and spending meaningful time together.

- Packer Profile for all learners.

Our Kindergarten Knights had a wonderful time on their recent field trip to the Hormel Home! The students had the opportunity to learn about the rich history of the house and engage in hands-on activities. They explored quilt design and identified various shapes found throughout the Hormel Home, making the experience both educational and fun.

Neveln staff continue to use Seesaw as a platform to showcase student learning in reading and math. Students regularly upload learning artifacts that highlight their progress, effort, and growth over time.

These artifacts provide families with meaningful insight into their child's learning journey and strengthen the home-school connection. More importantly, they empower students to reflect on their work, recognize their growth, and take pride in their accomplishments.

By sharing their learning, our Neveln Knights are growing as Learners and Communicators — two important qualities of our Packer Profile.

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

At Neveln, we continue to emphasize the importance of consistent attendance and arriving to school on time at **8:00 AM**. Being here on time ensures that students don't miss out on crucial instruction and sets a positive tone for the rest of the day.

Our **attendance goal** this year is **90% overall**. Consistent attendance helps students stay engaged, build strong relationships, and achieve their personal best. Every day counts toward success!

### **Be On Time!**

The school bell rings at **8:00 AM** each morning. All of our **Neveln Knights** need to be **inside the building by this time** and ready to start the day.

We are proud to celebrate our students who have shown outstanding commitment to being at school **on time and all day, every day**:

**Week of February 2 - February 6 - 87.59%**

**Week of February 9 - February 13 - 92.38%**

**Week of February 16 - February 20 - 91.9%**

**Week of February 23 - February 27 - 92.32%**

**Overall Attendance Rate for February 2 - February 27 - 91% overall**

**Perfect Attendance** = On time and at school **all day** with **no early outs** for any reason.

- Excellence in resource management.

As part of our ongoing commitment to thoughtful and strategic planning, we are beginning preparations for the **2026–27 school year**. In the coming months, we will carefully review student enrollment data and begin making plans to ensure our staffing, programming, and resources are aligned to best meet the needs of our students. Careful planning allows us to use our resources responsibly while maintaining class size targets, targeted student supports, and high-quality learning experiences for all Neveln Knights. By analyzing enrollment trends and student needs early, we can proactively

design structures that support academic success, social-emotional growth, and strong classroom communities.

Newsletter:

<https://app.smore.com/n/1ky6dn>

### **Southgate Elementary School:**

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

Our Gators continue to earn Gator Tickets for being "Respectful, Responsible, Safe and Caring." For their next challenge, we will be celebrating with a staff "Hot Sauce Challenge!" which will occur next week.

We are earning GATOR Tickets for an all-school celebration at the Dome sometime in March to celebrate our entry into springtime and to honor all the hard work our students are doing.

Our kindness theme for this month is "Respect." We will have grade level assemblies at the start of the week to kick off three weeks of focus on these themes which will be linked to both personal and academic growth.

#### **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 foundational skills will use SeeSaw to start to create a portfolio of student work. Students will also have multiple opportunities for exposure to possible future career and educational choices.

Some of the work examples teachers have been planning on showcasing include student work on numerical recognition, reading passages and recording their progress, and writing samples from class assignments. All of these will serve as artifacts in the "Profile" for learners to reflect upon as they continue their educational journey.

At our next professional development day we will be working with Packer Profile staff from AHS to continue to help grow today's Gators into tomorrow's Packers!

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

We have 9 teacher leaders that make up the "School Leadership Team" here at Southgate that help drive the strategic direction of the building.

Our School Leadership Team is actively collaborating on the development of the 2026–2027 Site Improvement Plan. Through thoughtful reflection, data analysis, and team discussions, we are identifying key areas of growth and prioritizing meaningful professional development opportunities. This work is centered on strengthening instructional practices, supporting student achievement, and ensuring continuous improvement across our school community. We are excited about the focused direction this plan provides and the positive impact it will have on both staff and students.

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

Work has started at the district level reviewing building enrollment trends and staffing projections to anticipate potential openings and ensure appropriate coverage across grade levels and programs. This work includes collaborating with staff to identify needs, explore possible solutions, and plan for adjustments that support continuity of instruction. Through ongoing communication and problem-solving, the team works to maintain stable staffing that aligns with student enrollment and school priorities.

Newsletter: [Mar. 2026 - Gator Gazette](#)

#### **Sumner Elementary School:**

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

We have earned another schoolwide celebration! This means we have noticed 12,500 moments where our students were showing strong behavior by following the Sumner Cool Rules: Be Kind, Work Hard, No Excuses, and Choose Well. We enjoyed an incredible day at the dome to celebrate our school collectively earning 50 Starbucks! Our students set high expectations and work hard to achieve goals. We love to honor and notice the strong behavior our students show each day at school.

Feedback from the Sumner Team in February highlights a strong, intentional focus on creating defining moments for students, families, and staff. Staff are creating engaging learning experiences through music, art, competitions, centers, and student-led projects, along with programs such as Recorder Scouts and classroom celebrations. Teachers are also using STAR data conversations, progress monitoring, and targeted feedback to help students better understand themselves as learners and set goals for growth.

Celebrations of both effort and achievement remain a consistent strength, with progress graphing, hallway displays, and staff recognition reinforcing a culture where accomplishments are noticed and valued. At the same time, daily relational practices—greetings by name, check-ins, and collaborative PLC work—continue to strengthen a strong sense of belonging across the school

community. Overall, Sumner's intentional focus on engagement, reflection, celebration, and relationships is strengthening a school culture where meaningful moments happen every day and every learner feels supported to succeed.

- **Packer Profile for all learners.**

Our students continue to benefit from engaging, real-world learning experiences that extend classroom instruction and build early career awareness. These field trips are designed to spark curiosity, connect academics to authentic settings, and help students envision future pathways.

Kindergarten students recently visited the Hormel House, exploring quilt design and identifying geometric shapes throughout the historic home. This hands-on experience reinforced math and visual-spatial skills while introducing art, design, and local history.

Students in grades K–4 continue their annual visits to the local Nature Center, supporting science standards through environmental exploration and fostering interest in conservation-related careers.

Looking ahead, fourth grade students will travel to Minneapolis on March 19 to attend *Dinosaur World* at the Children's Theatre, strengthening literacy connections while exposing students to careers in the performing arts.

Together, these experiences reflect our commitment to meaningful learning beyond the classroom and to helping students see future possibilities.

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

Following our winter benchmark assessments, staff conducted a focused data review to identify targeted literacy needs and ensure instruction is responsive and precise. Teachers partnered with students to set individualized literacy goals for growth by the spring benchmark.

Students are actively tracking their progress, building ownership, motivation, and self-reflection. Teachers are using benchmark and formative data to differentiate instruction through flexible grouping, targeted small-group work, and skill-specific practice to accelerate learning for all students.

This ongoing cycle of data analysis, goal setting, progress monitoring, and differentiation reflects our strong commitment to meeting individual student needs and supporting literacy growth for every learner.

- **Excellence in resource management.**

Work is underway to review site enrollment patterns and staffing forecasts in order to anticipate potential vacancies and ensure appropriate coverage across grade levels and programs. This process includes ongoing collaboration with staff to identify emerging needs, consider possible solutions, and prepare for adjustments that preserve continuity of instruction.

Newsletter: <https://app.smore.com/n/5bv32>

### **Community Learning Center:**

- Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.
  - Preschool conferences held in February. Great opportunities to share student progress and build relationships with families.
  - Family and Children Together (FACT) event at the CLC in February was "A Carnival of Characters." Staff, parents and children dressed up as characters from children's books. We had pizza, cotton candy, lemonade, carnival games and a dance with books donated by The Next Chapter for prizes. We had 362 people attend this event. A good time was definitely had by all!
  - We have had a few mid-year resignations and transfers within APS and have been able to hire qualified candidates for these positions.
  
- Packer Profile for all learners.
  - We are reinvigorating our Community Education Advisory Council adding new members from the school district and the community. We are looking forward to doing good work with these partners.
  - Community Education Enrichment plans are in progress bringing back successful programs like More Than Pink and Beyond Blue.
  
- District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.
  - ABE Staff continue to find success in implementing the new curriculum, Burlington and accessing the tools to support student outcomes.
  - Early Childhood staff will have training on the use of SMART to support brain development in our early learners this month.
  - EC staff are continuing to learn how to effectively gather data and evaluate data using our TS Gold tool after PD in January through their independent and PLC work.
  - Our pilot of the MyIGDI's universal screener is in process in early childhood. We look forward to evaluating the data collected and determining next steps for our program.
  
- Excellence in resource management.
  - In collaboration with Buildings and Grounds and with many district partners, we are exploring software options to streamline facilities

scheduling in the district. We are grateful for the active engagement of employees from all over the district in this work.

- Presentation by the early childhood team to the community group COSA in March about the early childhood offerings available in Austin Public Schools.
- Working with the Minnesota Community Education Association to complete the Local Community Education Review (LCER) audit to determine where our program needs to move to improve our service to the district and community.

Newsletter: [February SMORE for the CLC](#)