

DATE: February 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.
 - Activities: Last month was the January grind for Winter Activities. Our teams are in the back half of their seasons, with post season starting for Winter Sports while we are prepping for Spring Activities Registrations. Some highlights:
 - Successful Paint the Packers Pink district wide event organized by AHS Student Council
 - DECA Districts saw 18 kids qualify for state DECA in March
 - Winter sports are entering the post season
 - Spring Sports Registration is OPEN
 - Summer planning for ETS is in progress
 - AHS Student Council is hosting the Spring SED Conference. Looking to secure dates that work for the majority of the SE area councils
 - We have met with our Student Leadership twice this year and look forward to working with them again this month. We have reviewed topics such as improving communication to students and listening to feedback on activities and culture at AHS from the students' perspective.
 - Our Building Response Team leaders have been evaluating current procedures and making improvements with our team. The team will meet next week.

- Packer Profile for all learners
 - Registration and four-year academic plans have been completed. This new process has gone really well.
 - We have created a Portfolio tab in Infinite Campus to track student progress. Starting next year, students must have a completed portfolio to graduate.
 - We put together a letter of intent for the Pitch Competition at Southeast Service, centered around enhancing career pathway exploration by providing more job shadow opportunities for our students (Packer Partners). We made it to the top 5 and will be doing our "pitch" on February 11th during the STEM Educator Forum! Pretty exciting news, and it will be even more exciting if we are awarded \$10,000 for the project!

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

9th Grade Credit Attainment Through the BARR Program

Over the four-year period from 2022–2023 to 2025–2026, 9th grade credit attainment rates among students in the BARR (Building Assets, Reducing Risks) program have shown remarkable and consistent growth. Starting at 84.9% in the 2022–2023 academic year, the credit attainment rate increased to 87.3% in 2023–2024, then rose further to 90.2% in 2024–2025. By the 2025–2026 school year, the rate had climbed substantially to 93.8%.

These increases translate to year-over-year gains of 2.4 percentage points, 2.9 percentage points, and 3.6 percentage points, respectively. Overall, there was an 8.9 percentage point increase over the four years. This positive trajectory highlights the effectiveness of the BARR program's support structures in ensuring more students earn the credits they need to progress through high school. Achieving a 93.8% credit attainment rate means that nearly all 9th grade students are now on track, which greatly reduces the risk of academic setbacks and future dropout. These results underscore the power of focused interventions like BARR to drive student achievement and signal the potential benefits of adopting similar approaches in other educational settings.

MTSS Attendance Committee Report Overview: The MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports) Attendance Committee has played an increasingly vital role in addressing student attendance issues, truancy, tardiness, and the broader well-being of our high school students (grades 9-12). The committee meets multiple times per week to review cases, identify trends, and coordinate interventions.

Attendance Committee Membership & Operations: Key members of the attendance committee include Angie Taylor and Julie Hale. This core team dedicates significant time each week to analyzing attendance records, identifying students who are truant, and developing action plans to address chronic absenteeism. The team's work is

proactive and collaborative, ensuring that findings and trends are consistently updated and shared with teachers to keep everyone informed and responsive.

Family Outreach: In addition to the core committee, Mr. Hines and Mr. Schwab have been working diligently to reach out to families of students who are consistently struggling to get to class on time. Their focus is on reducing tardies campus-wide. Through direct communication, support, and partnership with families, they aim to break patterns of lateness and foster a culture of punctuality.

PLC & BARR Team Collaborations: Attendance is a regular and prominent topic in Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings, where faculty discuss ongoing concerns, share strategies, and monitor progress. Recently, these conversations have expanded to address not only academic engagement but also the social and emotional challenges that affect attendance.

Current Challenges & Student Well-Being: A notable challenge faced this year is a new sense of fear and anxiety among many of our students due to the current climate, which has contributed to increased absenteeism and raised concerns regarding student mental health. The attendance committee acknowledges that supporting students now requires a greater focus on their holistic needs, including providing access to mental health resources and safe avenues for discussing their anxieties.

We have been working together with Teaching and Learning to provide all students with the reading assessment CAPTI. We have looked at the data to review who needs further interventions to support them in reading. Next steps will be to decide what intervention the high school will be using and how it will fit into next year's schedule.

BARR

2022 – 2023 CA 84.9

2023-2024 87.3

24-25 90.2

25-26 93.8

Activities: We continue to do weekly grade checks, Packer Study Table 2x/weekly for the remainder of Winter Season. The Spring Sports Head Coaching staff is hired, and we are working on filling in a few assistant coaches vacancies for the Spring. Next steps are working with Corey Haugen on data pulls to measure the success of study table for those student athletes who need it.

- Excellence in resource management.
 - We have seen a significant increase in credit attainment over the past few years. Semester one data:
 - 2023-2024 84.2%
 - 2024-2025 87.7%

- 2025-2026 88.7%
- Scheduling is complete and we are now working on creating a schedule for the 2026-2027 school year.
- Activities: MSHSL Form A and B funds have been received to help supplement any financial hardships for students who want to be involved in Activities and to also provide financial support for a Summer Coach's Retreat this Summer. Grant Funding has come in from the MN Vikings for start up of Girls Flag Football this Spring. Summer ETS planning is well under way. We are looking at possible outlets to help drive down the out of pocket cost for athletes.

Newsletter: [Link to February Newsletter](#)

Austin Online Academy/Austin ALC :

- Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.
 - Last month, Jessica Stanley (AOA Teacher and AOA/ALC Instructional Coach), Jessica Cabeen, and Aaron Salasek from the Office of Higher Education Presented a session at the MSBA Conference on Direct Admission. The presentation was well received, with positive feedback highlighting the work occurring in Austin Public Schools to support students in their next steps after high school. Particular notes were shared in regard to the high percent of students in alternative programming qualifying for Direct Admissions.
- Packer Profile for all learners.
 - AOA and ALC teachers participated in a professional development session in January focused on using the Packer Profile tab in Infinite Campus. This tool will allow students and families to track progress toward completion of the Packer Portfolio, which will be a graduation requirement beginning next year.
- District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.
 - Our BARR teams were observed by our BARR coach this month. Feedback was positive and encouraging, as the work within our alternative programs continues to show growth in student achievement, including improved grades and attendance.
- Excellence in resource management.
 - The start of second-semester credit recovery resulted in the addition of an extra section and teacher. Thank you to Leslie Leffers for supporting this work this semester. Enrollment for Summer School Credit Recovery will open in March, along with Summer Acceleration programming. More details will be shared next month.

Ellis Middle School:

- Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.
 - Attendance has been a concern lately with the impact of various social issues affecting our families. We work individually with families to try and meet their needs.
 - Our BARR programming is in the second year and our feedback from the BARR coach continues to improve.
 - On 1/15/26, Nichelle Gabrielson and Karen Dunbar presented at the **MSBA 2026 Leadership Conference** on the strategic integration of MTSS and BARR. Overview of the presentation: Because the BARR (Building Assets Reducing Risks) model closely aligns with the MnMTSS (Minnesota Multi-Tiered System of Supports) framework, integrating the two has been seamless. This presentation highlighted how their intersection supports a school-wide strength-based, student approach through regular team meetings, data-driven decision-making practices, family engagement, and multi-layered support systems. The handout and presentation are attached.
 - On 1/19, I collected feedback from staff about the **integration of BARR & MTSS**. 27 staff members responded to the survey. 100% of staff members see their connection to the MTSS process through BARR through their participation in one or more of the BARR teams. As far as their understanding of the integration of MTSS and BARR, 4% rate their understanding as excellent, 59% rate their understanding as good, 33% rate their understanding as fair, and 4% rate their understanding as poor.
 - One data point that we are tracking is the **failure rate** by quarter. In both first and second quarter, we are pleased to see a downward trend over the last 4 years.

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Quarter 1	11.5%	10.2%	11.10%	9.1%
Quarter 2	13.4%	16.6%	15.5%	11.4%

- We have had some heating issues in the Gymnasium; we have set up temporary heating to keep the gyms usable. That part of the building is original and the blower is broken and parts must be manufactured as they are no longer being made.
- Packer Profile for all learners.

- We are working with Emily Hoveland, the Packer Profile Coordinator, to implement two major initiatives next year: A career project and an Eagle Bluff trip for our students.
- District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.
 - Next year we are required to provide reading interventions to all students who qualify. We are in the planning stages to address the requirements. We are working with AHS to have as much continuity as possible 7-12.
 - We will be offering a new class next year: Digital Music. This class meets the Arts requirements.
 - We are currently comparing our fall and winter STARR assessment data to make instructional changes.
- Excellence in resource management.
 - We are on track with our budgeting for the year. Departments have until April 1st to make any necessary purchases.
 - Our monthly meetings with the finance, food service and buildings, and grounds departments have helped us better address concerns in a timely manner.

Newsletter: <https://app.smores.com/n/v3epn>

IJ Holton Intermediate School:

- Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.
 - Our BARR work continues to grow. We are getting great feedback from our BARR coach with areas to grow in. For the first year of implementation, I am very pleased.
 - One of the BARR strategies is to **engage families** in student learning. IJ Holton staff work to reach out to families to share what is happening in the classroom. When we meet in teams, we recognize that working together with families is the best way to ensure a successful learning environment for our students. IJ Holton hosted two successful Bingo Nights for families on 1/13 and 1/27; there were approximate 130 participants (44 families), 7 staff members, and 10 AHS volunteers.
 - Another BARR strategy encourages us to focus on the **whole student**. We do this at all of our team meetings (small block, big block, and community connect) by starting with strengths, moving on to student connections to school & interests, followed by what we have noticed about the student during U-Time lessons. Then, we move into looking at data involving academics, behavior, and social/emotional needs to complete the student review. During these student reviews, it is evident that our teachers know their

students well and remain positive & solution-focused when working to address needs.

- On 1/19, I collected feedback from staff about the **integration of BARR & MTSS**. 35 staff members responded to the survey. 97% of staff members see their connection to the MTSS process through BARR through their participation in one or more of the BARR teams. As far as their understanding of the integration of MTSS and BARR, 0% rate their understanding as excellent, 60% rate their understanding as good, 34% rate their understanding as fair, and 6% rate their understanding as poor.
- We continue to navigate the effects of social issues on school as they affect our students and families. We handle concerns on an individual basis and try our best to work with families to meet their needs. However, we are seeing attendance issues.
- We continue to improve the building with safety updates like the intercom, window coverings, and door maintenance.
- Due to weather-related school cancellations, we missed one of our school dances. We are trying to re-schedule.
- Packer Profile for all learners.
 - We have been researching and choosing a new Project Lead the Way class to replace Green Architecture. We will share our choice at the CACR meeting next week.
 - We are working directly with Emily Hoveland, Packer Profile Coordinator, from AHS to evaluate student work to go into the Packer Portfolio.
- District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.
 - Our weekly PLC's have been focusing on incorporating reading interventions in both 6th and 5th grades.
 - Corey Haugen shared our math and reading data with us last week. We are seeing good signs of growth and as our PLC's develop and can adapt to their data we should see further gains.
 - The positive BARR impact on our MTSS process has brought sincere teacher voice into the process. We are able, with good data, to have meaningful conversations about individual and groups of students.
 - We are working with social studies and science to ensure we are covering standards adequately with a reduction in time for each.
- Excellence in resource management.
 - Our monthly meetings with the finance, food service and buildings and grounds departments have helped us better address concerns in a timelier manner.

- We are on track with our budget adjustments for the move from departments to an elementary schedule. We no longer have department budgets but rather subject specific budgets.

Newsletter: <https://app.smore.com/n/gqf8v>

Banfield Elementary School:

- Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.
 - Site Leadership Team members participated in Strengths training on January 19th with other leaders in the district. As we look towards our next PD day on February 1st, all staff and Site Leadership Team members will be attending another seminar regarding leveraging our Strengths at school.
 - As we start to plan for the 26-27 school year, our Site Leadership team spent time in January diving into this priority and making suggestions for the upcoming year.
- Packer Profile for all learners.
 - Each grade has spent time identifying artifacts that they are documenting in SeeSaw. Below is each grade's plan for their artifacts.

Kindergarten

Math: write numbers 0-50

Reading: identify letter sounds

Writing: complete a sentence stem with a matching picture

1st Grade

Math: Writing numbers to 20 Writing number to 120

Reading: Read a text at child's level Read a text at child's level

Writing: Sample from Unit 1 Sample from Unit 8

2nd Grade

Math: 5 minute timed test. Subtraction facts 0-18

Reading: Read a text at child's level

Writing: Completed a fall writing with provided prompts

3rd Grade

Fall – November

Reading - Animal Research or opinion writing – read and take a picture writing project

Math – math facts test +, -, x or division

Winter – February

Reading – writing project – read and record

Math – math facts test +, -, x or division

Spring – April/May

Reading – writing project – read and record

Math – math facts test +, -, x or division

4th Grade

Math: multiplication check (50 questions)

Reading: Library Book Check...Take a picture of a page from your library book and read it aloud.

Writing: Journal...Take a picture of your journal entry and read it aloud.

- District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.
 - Classroom teachers continue to dive into Freckle and Lalilo to learn how these tools can help support individual learners, along with making differentiation easier for the teachers.
 - Staff spent two days after school diving into their student's benchmark data and adjust small group instruction to meet their student's needs.
 - Each week staff participate in Professional Learning Communities (PLC) on Wednesdays. This is a time to look at student data, adjust instruction and share instructional strategies.
- Excellence in resource management.
 - We are grateful for the additional funds that were collected during the Walkathon fundraiser. These funds will go towards supporting our PBIS programming and future building wide celebrations.

Newsletter: <https://app.smores.com/n/vm0tf-banfield-banner>

Neveln Elementary School:

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

Staff Professional Development January 19th

- Neveln staff participated in a January Professional Development Day focused on data analysis for math, reading, attendance and social emotional support.
- Neveln staff analyzed winter data, regrouped students for targeted instruction, and engaged in Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) training with Mr. Kossoris to strengthen proactive behavior practices.
- Neveln's second- and third-grade students performed wonderfully at the winter concert showing off their talents to the special guests that attended the show.
- Our Winter Parent Event is scheduled for Thursday, February 26th from 4:00 – 5:30 at Neveln. The theme of the event is Literacy, and we have many fun activities planned. We hope to see you there!

Attendance

- Strong attendance continues to be celebrated, reinforcing student confidence, engagement, and positive habits. We are celebrating 89 students with perfect attendance for the month of January

PBIS

- Neveln Knights exceeded the *Paint the Town Pink* fundraising goal, supporting cancer research. We are proud of the generous donations for a good cause.
- Students will celebrate with a trip to the Packer Dome on Friday, February 13.

- Packer Profile for all learners.

See Saw

- Neveln staff continue to use Seesaw to showcase student learning in reading and math.
- All classrooms have uploaded learning artifacts, with grade-level expectations guiding what is collected.
- Artifacts highlight student growth, effort, and reflection, providing families meaningful insight into learning progress.

Real-World Connections to Future Careers

- During January PD, staff collaborated to brainstorm ways to elevate the Packer Profile through career exploration at Neveln. Ideas include Career Day, Career Fairs, career-focused library books, community guest speakers, virtual field trips, and local career-focused field experiences.
- District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.

Targeted Academic & Program Supports

- Teachers made summer school recommendations based on winter benchmark data.
- Recommendations were communicated to families through email, phone calls, and in-person meetings.

Attendance

Week of January 5 - January 9 - 89.78% (240 perfect attendance)

Week of January 12 - January 16 - 83.90% (184 perfect attendance)

Week of January 19 - January 23 - 88.31% (256 perfect attendance)

Week of January 26 - January 30 - 90.48% (237 perfect attendance)

Overall Attendance Rate for January 5 - January 30 - 88.11% (89 perfect attendance)

- Excellence in resource management.

As part of our ongoing commitment to thoughtful planning, we are beginning preparations for the **2026–27 school year**. In the coming months, we will 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.

Newsletter: <https://app.smores.com/n/39r5ek>

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.

Last week we participated in the Paint the Town Pink events and raised almost \$900 for cancer research. Due to their amazing fundraising, Mr. Gus participated in the Polar Plunge! We are proud of our GREAT Gators and their work supporting finding a cure.

We will also be having 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 "Perseverance." 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 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.

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.

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

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

The leadership team is responsible for developing the Site Improvement Plan by analyzing schoolwide data, identifying priority areas, and setting measurable goals. They determine how time, staffing, and resources should be allocated to address those needs, ensuring that supports are aligned with the plan's objectives. Their role includes monitoring progress, adjusting strategies as necessary, and coordinating efforts across teams to maintain a focused and coherent improvement process.

This team is one piece of our MTSS framework that is being used district wide to continue to provide the best supports we can for the students that walk through our doors.

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: <https://app.smores.com/n/trmn6>

Sumner Elementary School:

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

We look forward to hosting our Winter Family Focus Group on **February 24th from 3:00–4:00 PM**. During this time, we will explore topics including **Positive Behavior Interventions, Healthy Screen Time Habits, and Consistent Attendance**. We value these opportunities to partner with families and work together to best support our students.

Additionally, I am so happy to share that our **second and third graders performed wonderfully at our winter concert**. Although the concert was rescheduled due to inclement weather, the Sumner gym was still packed, and our students were proud to sing and perform for their loved ones.

- **Packer Profile for all learners.**

Teachers are utilizing the Freckle and Lalilo applications to provide adaptive, targeted instructional practice in math and reading. These platforms are implemented during independent practice within the small-group instructional block. Moving forward, teachers are encouraged to assign specific standards aligned to identified student needs. In addition to supporting differentiated instruction, these tools provide real-time data, immediate feedback, and ongoing progress monitoring between benchmark assessments, allowing teachers to adjust instruction responsively and efficiently.

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

Following winter benchmark assessments, teachers reviewed and refined SMART goals to adjust classwide interventions. Grade-level teams analyzed focus skills and are intentionally monitoring student progress and differentiating instruction to strengthen these skills, ensuring students are on track to meet grade-level expectations in the spring.

- **Excellence in resource management.**

The transition to onboard an additional second-grade classroom has gone smoothly. Families were welcomed to an Open House, providing an opportunity to meet their child's new teacher and visit the classroom.

Newsletter: <https://app.smore.com/n/p6hwy>

Community Learning Center:

- Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.
 - The District Wellness Committee continues to provide weekly Wellness Moments for all district staff based on the work of Amit Sood. In addition, they have quarterly tips for Wellness called "Packers Pause" in prominent staff locations promoting quick and easy ways to support your well-being both in and out of work.
 - Early Childhood programs celebrated our paras and assistants last month. These amazing educators are integral to the work we do in supporting students.
- Packer Profile for all learners.
 - Community Education Enrichment continues to offer opportunities for adults and youth. Highlights include the More Than Pink Primer, Backyard Bunkers, and a Thrift Shop Hop. Register for opportunities [here](#).
- District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.
 - Some early childhood and ABE teachers took part in a visual phonics training this month. The integration of visual, physical, and auditory

practices involved with visual phonics make this a powerful tool for anyone learning the English language.

- Early Childhood hosted conferences on February 5 and 6th and enjoyed sharing all the amazing progress with families.
 - ABE had training with a Burlington rep on how to improve our use of data with our Burlington Curriculum.
 - Early Childhood had training (funded by a grant from SMIF) to support their use of our required assessment tool, TS Gold. Teachers learned a lot of new tricks to using data to modify their instruction.
 - Early childhood is also piloting an early childhood universal screening tool myIGDI's. The verdict so far is that this will be an excellent tool to support strong Tier One instruction with our students.
 - Our ABE students have the opportunity to work in online platforms when they are not at school. This year they have completed three times as many hours away from class than this same time last year. Our students are amazing.
- Excellence in resource management.
 - Early Childhood programs in APS have been awarded a \$15,000 grant from SMIF for professional development and materials to support our use of the Handwriting Without Tears program. Thanks to Amy Goette for writing this grant for us!

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