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School Board Report: January 2026

Impact of Students Not Reading at Grade Level

Reading proficiency is one of the strongest indicators of school success. When students are not reading at grade level, the effects extend beyond the English classroom and impact overall learning, behavior, and long-term outcomes. Below is a summary of the key concerns.

Academic Impact

- Reading is foundational for all subject areas. Struggling readers have difficulty accessing grade-level content in math, science, and social studies because they cannot independently comprehend complex texts.
- Gaps in vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension compound over time, making it **increasingly difficult** for students to catch up without targeted intervention.

Behavioral and Engagement Challenges

- Students who cannot read at grade level may experience frustration, avoidance behaviors, or withdrawal during literacy-based tasks.
- Low reading confidence can lead to decreased participation in class, inconsistent work completion, and higher levels of disengagement.

Social-Emotional Effects

- Struggling readers often feel embarrassed or self-conscious, especially when asked to read aloud or work independently.
- Difficulty with reading can lead to a decline in self-esteem, increased anxiety, and reduced motivation to learn.

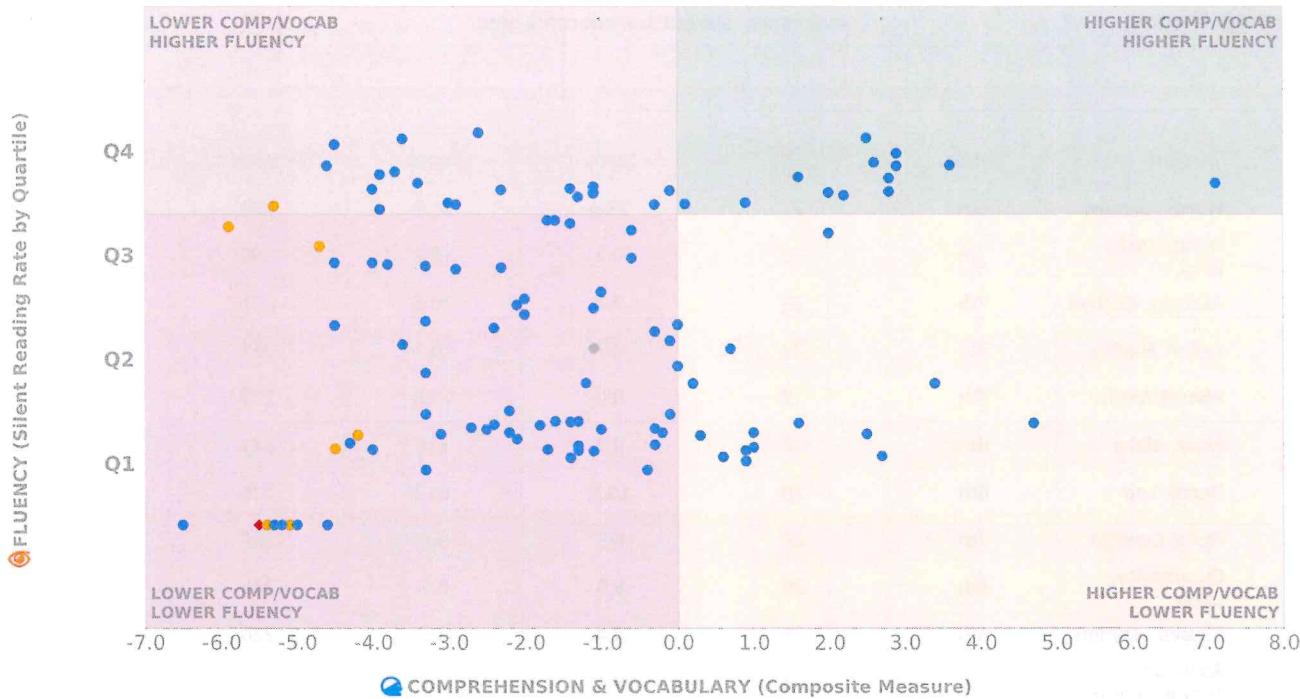
Long-Term Consequences

- Students who are not proficient readers by the end of 3rd grade are significantly more likely to face academic challenges in middle and high school.
- Beyond high school, reading proficiency affects employment opportunities, postsecondary success, military eligibility, and financial independence.

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District PIPESTONE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT 2689
 School PIPESTONE MIDDLE SCHOOL [rppipeston1]

Benchmark: 1

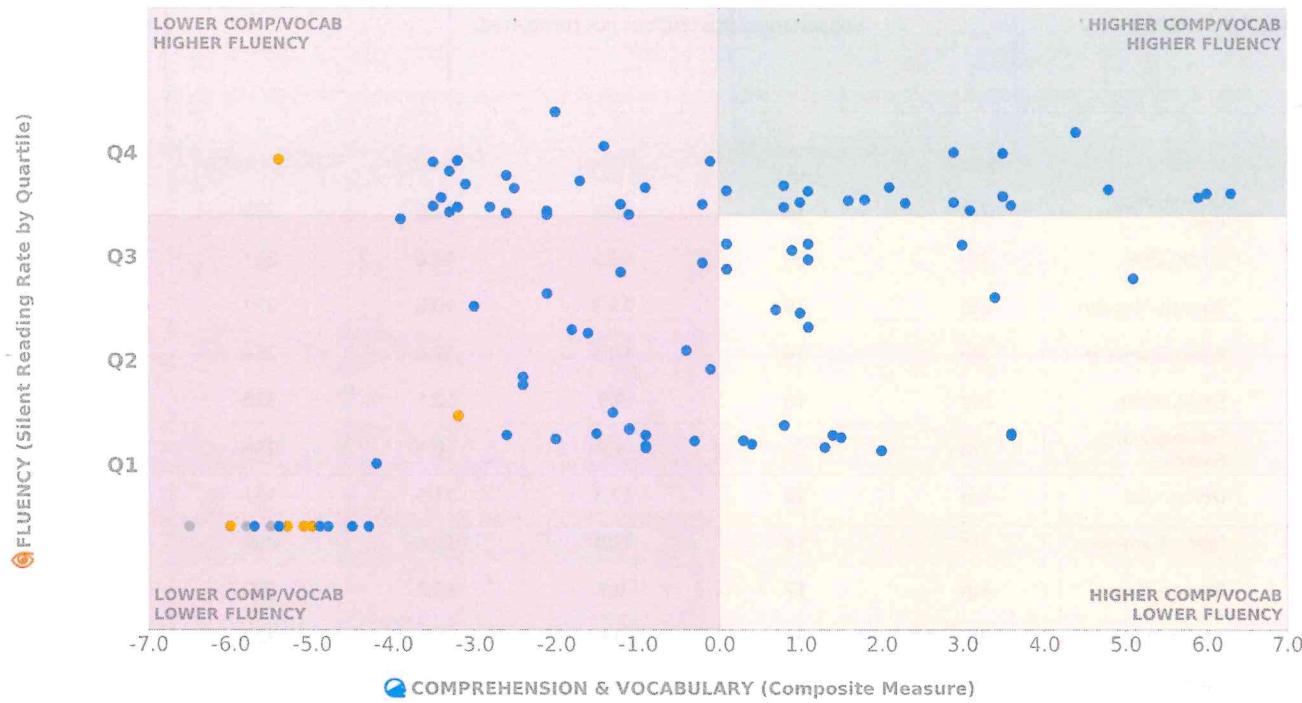


Summary

Diagnostic Profile	Primary Instructional Focus	Students
Higher Comp/Vocab - Higher Fluency	Enrichment	13 (6%)
Higher Comp/Vocab - Lower Fluency	Fluency/Efficiency Development	17 (8%)
Lower Comp/Vocab - Higher Fluency	Comprehension and Vocabulary Development	19 (9%)
Lower Comp/Vocab - Lower Fluency	Comprehension, Vocabulary and Fluency/Efficiency Development Intensive Comprehension and Vocabulary Development; Student may need teacher support.	56 (29%)
Borderline	Comprehension and/or Vocabulary levels indicate need for careful monitoring to ensure appropriate progress.	12 (6%)
Not Ready	Visual-Perceptual Skill Development and Vocabulary Development; Student may need foundational skill development and/or extra teacher support. Comprehension and/or Vocabulary levels indicate need for foundational skill development before beginning Reading (SeeReader) instruction.	7 (3%)
Questionable Results	Student scored notably low compared to previous InSight assessment.	1 (0%)

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Benchmark: 2



Summary

Diagnostic Profile	Primary Instructional Focus	Students
Higher Comp/Vocab - Higher Fluency	Enrichment	20 (10%)
Higher Comp/Vocab - Lower Fluency	Fluency/Efficiency Development	20 (10%)
Lower Comp/Vocab - Higher Fluency	Comprehension and Vocabulary Development	22 (11%)
Lower Comp/Vocab - Lower Fluency	Comprehension, Vocabulary and Fluency/Efficiency Development	30 (15%)
Borderline	Intensive Comprehension and Vocabulary Development; Student may need teacher support. Comprehension and/or Vocabulary levels indicate need for careful monitoring to ensure appropriate progress.	9 (4%)
Not Ready	Visual-Perceptual Skill Development and Vocabulary Development; Student may need foundational skill development and/or extra teacher support. Comprehension and/or Vocabulary levels indicate need for foundational skill development before beginning Reading (SeeReader) instruction.	4 (2%)
Questionable Results	Student scored notably low compared to previous InSight assessment.	4 (2%)

Narrative to accompany Reading Plus Scatterplots:

Benchmark 1: Reading Plus students took the initial assessment in September 2025. Each student was assessed and then a personalized plan is implemented within the Reading Plus program, including activities for fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary.

As a whole group, 17% of assessed students were considered “at grade level, close to grade level, and above grade level”. When students took the mid-year benchmark in January, results show improvement in reading. 33% of students were considered “at grade level, close to grade level, and above grade level”. This is an improvement, but it is NOT where we need to be. An average of “one year and seven months” growth has taken place during first semester, in just four and a half months. Additionally, this is in line with what we are seeing in terms of MCA proficiency data.

As you look at both scatterplots, you can see that the dots are moving from the left to the right in the second assessment. That is what we are looking for in terms of trends. The goal is to move to the right and up on the scatterplot. The third and final assessment will be taken in the spring.

Semester 1 Attendance Percentages:

High School	%
Sept. 2025	94.50%
Oct. 2025	94.70%
Nov. 2025	91.20%
Dec. 2025	92%
Jan. 2026	92.40%

Middle School	%
Sept. 2025	94%
Oct. 2025	95.4%
Nov. 2025	93%
Dec. 2025	93%
Jan. 2026	93%

The day of the week with the lowest attendance is **MONDAY**.

The day of the week with the highest attendance is **THURSDAY**.

All parents received an email reminder from me which outlined the importance of attendance at the beginning of January.

Regular school attendance is essential to student success. Students who attend consistently are more likely to keep up with instruction, maintain strong academic progress, and build the skills and habits needed for long-term success. Frequent absences, whether excused or unexcused, disrupt learning, widen achievement gaps, and increase the likelihood of falling behind in reading, math, and coursework completion. Consistent attendance also supports positive relationships with teachers and peers, stronger engagement in school, and improved social-emotional well-being. Encouraging regular attendance is one of the most impactful ways to support student growth and achievement.



Changes for PAS Graduation

**This email was sent to parents of ALC seniors in January.*

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We would like to inform you of an important update regarding graduation procedures for students enrolled in the Alternative Learning Center (ALC).

Beginning this school year, Pipestone students who graduate through the ALC will not participate in the physical graduation ceremony at Pipestone High School. Instead, the ALC will host its own graduation ceremony to celebrate and recognize the accomplishments of our students in a setting that reflects the unique support and structure of the ALC program. This is a change from previous years, and we want to communicate it clearly as we plan for the spring.

If you have any questions or would like additional clarification, please contact Mrs. Ortman at the school. We are happy to assist and provide more information as needed.

Thank you for your understanding and continued support.

Sincerely,

Sonja Ortman
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