



DATE: April 2026

TITLE: Academics and Administrative Services

TYPE: Information

PRESENTER(S): Katie Baskin, Executive Director of Academics and Administrative Services

BACKGROUND:

The Office of Teaching and Learning oversees curriculum, instruction, staff development, and Federal Title programs for the district.

The Human Resources Office is responsible for employee recruitment and orientation, contract negotiations for all bargaining units, employee relations, student and employee data practices, and staffing with building/program administrators.

Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment

- **Principal Professional Development:** Principals have been engaged in School Improvement Plan (SIP) work by closely examining each strategic priority. This process has included reflecting on the past year's progress, identifying areas of strength and need, and beginning to make decisions about upcoming learning priorities, implementation steps, and standard work. As part of this planning, principals are also determining which practices or initiatives should be phased out and how staff development time will be strategically allocated to support the most impactful work moving forward.
- **Leadership Professional Development:** On March 23rd all District Leadership Team members participated in a retreat to set the district's strategic initiatives and strategies to move the priorities forward. Their collaboration and focus will truly benefit our system and prepare their site teams to come together on June 2nd to take the strategic work further. On June 2nd, Site Leadership Teams from each building will work with their leaders to align professional development to the initiatives, develop communication plans for the work, and design evaluation methods to assess professional learning as well as effectiveness.
- **Teacher Mentorship:** Year 1 teachers met in the beginning of March with Sue Stark and Tom Compton to learn more about continuing contracts and the support available from both HR and the AEA. We also spent time reviewing how to renew their teaching license and how to track their CEU progress on the PELSB site. We talked about professional development opportunities to meet the requirements. Year 2 teachers met and we are continuing our conversation around differentiation strategies. This month we specifically focused on learning styles and preferences. Year 3 teachers met at Riverland Community College to learn more about the Adult Basic Ed Program and learning around higher ordered thinking routines.
- **Human Resources Dept. Audit Implementation:** Our Human Resources team continues to use exit surveys and optional exit interviews as meaningful opportunities to both celebrate the contributions of departing staff and reflect on ways to strengthen our system. The feedback gathered provides valuable insights that inform continuous improvement efforts, helping us better support current and future employees.

Packer Profile for all learners

- **Grow Your Own:**
 - This month the GYO Future Teacher Club visited Augsburg University and Concordia University in St. Paul to learn about their teacher education programs. Future trips are still planned this spring to visit the

University of Minnesota Twin Cities, Winona State, and St. Mary's. They are continuing to work on a project with Sumner Elementary for students to join lunch and recess time. They will do some specific training around PBIS practices and school routines before starting in some of these learning experiences. The GYO Future Teachers had a table at the AHS Career Fair promoting the teaching career and opportunities in education fields.

- The Future Teacher Scholarship has officially launched, with applications due March 31. Students who apply, qualify, and are selected may receive full coverage of tuition, room and board, and books. We anticipate awarding up to four scholarships in May.
- Packer Profile Implementation: The Packer Profile Task Force met to review visuals and implementation efforts for the Packer Profile and Career Pathways, including how this work was being shared across buildings. The group engaged in discussion around strengthening community involvement, increasing business and school connections, and exploring professional development opportunities that support staff in embedding career and real-world learning into instruction. Input was also gathered on the purpose and frequency of future advisory meetings to ensure the work remains impactful and aligned with district priorities.

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

- MTSS Implementation:
 - APS continues to strengthen its MTSS framework by refining contact log practices, ensuring clearer guidance on what information is documented and when through feedback from school leaders, coaches, and student support staff. District leaders are also reviewing MTSS alignment documents and SEL Inventory analyses to ensure systems accurately reflect building practices and support continuous improvement. Planning for 2026–27 is underway with expanded IST and SST meeting supports in EduClimber and early principal engagement to support smooth implementation. Recent District Leadership Team feedback shows meaningful growth in MTSS implementation across APS, and leaders are preparing to share these successes at both the district and school levels.
 - Austin Public Schools has been awarded multiple tutor positions for the 2026–2027 school year through its partnership with Ampact's Reading Corps and Math Corps programs. These positions will provide targeted literacy and math support for students across Banfield, Neveln, Southgate, and Sumner Elementary Schools, as well as IJ Holton Intermediate School. In total, the district will receive a combination of K–3 math tutors, reading tutors, and grades 4–8 math tutors to strengthen early learning and academic achievement. This award reflects a continued commitment to collaborative partnerships that directly support student success, with final implementation pending funding and agreement approval.
- EL Program Review: Our EL Team has completed annual ACCESS testing for our K-12 multilingual learners. The assessment results help drive our instructional next steps as we support our students in English language acquisition. Individual student test outcomes also inform course placement and service minutes based on our district Language Instruction Education Program (LIEP) plan.
- Math Program Review:
 - The secondary math programs continue their work with unpacking standards to have a better understanding of the changes in the new math standards. Preparations have also begun for members of the team to attend the state math conference.
 - Our K-6 instructional coaches will be engaged in shared learning around the new math standards as we attend professional development together in May. This is put on by the Minnesota Department of Education math team. This development will ensure we are ready to support teachers as we lead the learning work around math practices and standards that will begin in August.
- GT Program Review: Having had the opportunity to visit a class in the last couple of weeks, I am continually amazed by the great work of our teachers. They understand the needs of our advanced learners giving tools and prompts to help think critically and solve problems. We are fortunate to have programs in our buildings to support all learners. We are in the process of identifying students for advanced programming and Pi Academy for next year. Teachers have been working on aligning curriculum and resources across sites as well.
- SPED + Teaching and Learning Collaboration: Planning is underway as Special Education and Teaching & Learning will strengthen collaboration through shared instructional leadership focused on inclusive, high-quality core instruction. Teams will align coaching, professional learning, and instructional walkthroughs to ensure special

education services are integrated with Tier 1 practices and district curriculum. This partnership will support consistent expectations for instruction, progress monitoring, and access for all learners while building shared responsibility among leaders and staff.

Excellence in Resource Management

- Teaching and Learning:
 - We continue to make strong progress in our review and purchase of Project Lead the Way (PLTW) and Career & Technical Education (CTE) curriculum.
 - At IJ Holton, the PLTW team are currently reviewing course needs and identifying any updates required for the other PLTW offerings. PLTW courses continue to be a highlight for many IJ Holton students.
 - At the middle school and high school levels, teachers are reviewing curriculum options across their CTE pathways. Some courses are exploring updated curriculum and textbook resources, while others are focusing on equipment upgrades and alignment with current industry standards to strengthen workforce-readiness. Tech Services, Information Services and T&L have begun to have meetings with vendors to ensure compatibility and safety requirements.
 - As part of the READ Act requirement, the T&L team engaged in curriculum review alongside a team of teachers and administrators. This work has helped to prepare for the implementation of a 7-12 reading intervention program at our secondary sites. We are finalizing the purchase of the program and necessary professional development based on team feedback, research studies, and alignment to our proposed program models.