

Washoe County School District

Smithridge S.T.E.M. Academy

2025-2026 School Improvement Plan

Classification: 2 Star School

Title I, TSI

Mission Statement

Educating our community of learners by providing an academic foundation where all can find success through collaboration and STEM.

Demographics & Performance Information

Nevada Report Card

In compliance with federal and state law, Nevada's K-12 Accountability Portal provides detailed information about each school's student and staff demographics and school performance rating, a star-rating system based on the Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF). You can find our School Rating Report at (Add a link to the school's School Rating Report.)

[SMITHRIDGE S.T.E.M. ACADEMY - Nevada Accountability Portal \(nv.gov\)](#)

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Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Student Success

Student Success Areas of Strength

Smithridge Elementary demonstrated exceptional growth and achievement across multiple indicators of student success during the 2024–25 school year. Most notably, over 65% of English Learners met Adequate Growth Percentile (AGP) targets on the WIDA assessment—the highest percentage among all elementary schools in the Washoe County School District.

The school also showed remarkable academic gains on the iReady end-of-year assessments. Smithridge ranked second in the district for K–5 reading growth and sixth in math, reflecting the effectiveness of instructional strategies and student engagement. Schoolwide iReady diagnostic data showed significant progress: in math, students at grade level increased from 6% in the fall to 55% in the spring, while reading increased from 12% to 53% during the same period. Kindergarten outcomes were especially strong, with 84% on grade level in reading and 76% in math—the most outstanding results the school has ever achieved.

Efforts to improve attendance were also successful, reducing chronic absenteeism from 23% to 16%, ensuring more students were consistently present and learning.

Beyond academics, Smithridge students excelled in enrichment and engagement. The 3rd–5th grade robotics team actively competed in regional LEGO STEM competitions, and every student participated in outdoor learning opportunities in the school garden, supporting hands-on learning and environmental literacy.

Student Success Areas for Growth

While Smithridge Elementary made significant strides in student achievement, key areas of growth remain, particularly in upper-grade academic performance.

Students in 4th and 5th grade continue to struggle with meeting grade-level expectations, especially in English Language Arts and writing. End-of-year iReady data shows that only 32% of 5th graders and 40% of 4th graders were on grade level in reading. Writing remains a challenge, with many students requiring additional support to produce grade-level written responses and compositions.

Math performance in upper grades also indicates a need for continued instructional focus. On the iReady end-of-year assessment, 48% of 4th graders and 44% of 5th graders were on grade level in math, which is below the school’s overall math growth trend.

In addition, science proficiency at the 5th grade level remains critically low, with typically only 0–2 students demonstrating proficiency on the SBAC Science assessment in recent years. This underscores a need to strengthen science instruction, content integration, and exposure to scientific practices throughout the grade levels, especially as students approach the end of elementary school.

Student Success Equity Resource Supports

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
English Learners	Acquire English language skills quickly enough to support students engaging in grade level content and learning.	Providing language rich classrooms that support language acquisition and transferring those skills to academic areas in the classroom. Professional learning for teachers must continue supporting this work to ensure all teachers have the skills and tools necessary to support EL students.
Foster/Homeless	Moving frequently and often to areas not close to campus provide transportation issues. Students in this group have our highest rate of absenteeism.	Social worker and counselor work closely with families to communicate available community resources and supports.
Free and Reduced Lunch	Smithridge receives 100% title 1 funding due to our FRL rate, therefore this is the entire campus. Limited access to academic supports outside of school contribute to below grade level performance	Ensure tier 1 instruction is of the highest quality in all classrooms, provide opportunities for students build background though experiences.
Migrant/Title1-C Eligible	n/a	
Racial/Ethnic Minorities	80% of Smithridge is Hispanic which can present barriers within the greater school system.	Align Smithridge resources and family engagement strategies to meet the specific needs of the local community.
Students with IEPs	Participating in grade level academics and social activities.	Ensure special education teachers are collaborating with general education teachers to align interventions and accommodations to grade level content.

Problem Statements Identifying Student Success Needs

Problem Statement 1 (Prioritized): 4th and 5th grade students at Smithridge Elementary are not meeting grade-level expectations in reading, with only 40% of 4th graders and 32% of 5th graders on grade level according to the iReady end-of-year assessment.

Critical Root Cause: Students in upper grades lack consistent exposure to complex texts and high-quality writing instruction. Instructional time is often focused on foundational skills rather than grade-level standards, and there are gaps in Tier 1 instructional alignment and writing across content areas.

Adult Learning Culture

Adult Learning Culture Areas of Strength

Smithridge Elementary has built a strong professional learning culture focused on collaboration and instructional growth. All certified staff successfully completed Year 2 of the LETRS program, deepening their understanding of the science of reading. Teachers engaged in regular grade-level collaboration, using iReady tools such as standard mastery assessments and ELA lesson plans to inform instruction. In grades 3–5, biweekly planning sessions focused on aligning lessons with SBAC rigor and developing common formative assessments. Additionally, staff received targeted professional development on graphic organizers to support student learning across all content areas.

Adult Learning Culture Areas for Growth

While collaboration among staff has increased, the quality of instruction remains inconsistent across classrooms. Variations in teaching experience and in the ability to implement high-impact strategies contribute to uneven instructional delivery. Additionally, differences in how teachers allocate time during instructional blocks—such as varying emphasis on vocabulary versus comprehension within the ELA block—may be impacting student outcomes. A more unified approach to instructional planning and execution is needed to ensure all students receive consistent, high-quality instruction.

Adult Learning Culture Equity Resource Supports

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
English Learners	A lack of clear, accessible explanations hinders instruction and learning.	Train teachers to utilize GLAD strategies, and scaffold students to understanding tier 1 and 2 vocabulary.
Foster/Homeless	Students are chronically absent	Teachers provide access to missed instruction via electronic versions of curriculum. Teachers meet 1:1 with the student upon returning to create a plan to catch the student up on missed learning.
Free and Reduced Lunch	Students lack background knowledge to connect with new learning in the classroom.	Ensure teacher collaboration time includes planning for activities and lessons that support building students background knowledge around relevant topics to access new information with understanding.
Migrant/Title1-C Eligible	n/a	

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
Racial/Ethnic Minorities	meeting the needs of students from diverse cultural backgrounds	Provide professional development on community building
Students with IEPs	General education lessons may not reflect needed scaffolds or supports for clarity.	Embed visual aids and guided practice explicitly tied to IEP accommodations and goals.

Problem Statements Identifying Adult Learning Culture Needs

Problem Statement 1 (Prioritized): Teachers are unaware of how varied the delivery of instruction is between classrooms in the same grade level.

Critical Root Cause: The lack of ability to observe each other teach, on a regular basis.

Connectedness

Connectedness Areas of Strength

- **Adult Support:** 80% of students reported feeling supported by adults at school, higher than both the district (69%) and elementary school averages (78%). Students particularly noted that teachers care about them and notice when they are absent.
- **Participation:** 84% of students participated in extracurricular activities, exceeding the district (78%) and school-level average (74%). Students felt there were many opportunities to be involved in clubs and activities.
- **Student Engagement:** 69% of students reported positive engagement, above the district average (56%). A strong majority (87%) said they are happy to be at school, and 83% felt they are part of the school community.
- **Social Awareness:** 74% of students showed strength in understanding others' feelings and perspectives, on par with the district and higher than the school-level average.
- **Adult Respect:** 78% of students reported being treated fairly and with respect by adults, again higher than the district average (69%).

Connectedness Areas for Growth

- **Self-Management & SEL Skills:** Ratings for self-management of emotions (40%), schoolwork (50%), and goals (49%) were all significantly below district and school-level averages. Many students reported difficulty staying calm, being patient, or finishing challenging tasks.
- **Responsible Decision-Making:** Only 48% of students reported ease in making responsible decisions, well below the elementary (63%) and district (75%) averages.
- **Bullying & Victimization:** Only 47% of students had favorable views of how bullying is addressed, and 50% reported being victims of physical or verbal aggression during the school year—both below district and school averages.
- **Safety Perception:** Overall safety was rated at 69%, with restroom safety being notably low (55% favorable). Some students reported staying home because they didn't feel safe.
- **Student Respect:** Only 59% felt that students respect one another, with significant numbers reporting that rules are not consistently followed or that students do not treat staff with respect.

Connectedness Equity Resource Supports

Student Group	Challenge	Solution
English Learners	Lower self-confidence and SEL scores (e.g., responsible decision-making at 48%, self-awareness at 53%) may impact participation and academic risk-taking.	Increase culturally relevant SEL lessons and language scaffolds in SEL instruction. Pair EL students with peer mentors and build trust through adult check-ins.
Foster/Homeless	Only 69% of students report feeling safe at school; inconsistent adult support reported by some students.	Prioritize counselor check-ins and safe space access. Track absenteeism closely and assign staff liaisons for consistent relationship-building.
Free and Reduced Lunch	Low scores in emotional self-management (40%) and schoolwork management (50%) suggest difficulty with self-regulation and sustained academic engagement.	Incorporate executive functioning strategies into instruction. Provide structured tutoring and adult mentoring to boost engagement and academic confidence.
Migrant/Title1-C Eligible	Student respect reported at 59% (below district average); 41% of students report others don't follow rules or treat staff respectfully.	Implement restorative practices schoolwide. Offer implicit bias and culturally responsive PD for staff. Highlight student voices in school decisions
Racial/Ethnic Minorities	Student respect reported at 59% (below district average); 41% of students report others don't follow rules or treat staff respectfully.	Implement restorative practices schoolwide. Offer implicit bias and culturally responsive PD for staff. Highlight student voices in school decisions.
Students with IEPs	Low SEL scores across all areas, especially self-management (40%) and responsible decision-making (48%), indicate challenges in emotional regulation.	Embed SEL goals into IEPs. Provide regular emotional check-ins and increase collaboration between general and special education staff for consistent support.

Problem Statements Identifying Connectedness Needs

Problem Statement 1 (Prioritized): Students at Smithridge Elementary, particularly those from historically underserved groups, report inconsistent feelings of safety, respect, and emotional support, which negatively impacts their sense of belonging and connectedness at school. This is reflected in lower scores in student respect (59%), emotional self-management (40%), and responsible decision-making (48%).

Critical Root Cause: There is inconsistent implementation of schoolwide social-emotional learning (SEL) and behavior expectations, leading to varied student experiences with peer interactions, adult relationships, and emotional support. Limited SEL integration into daily instruction, combined with differences in staff capacity to deliver culturally responsive and inclusive practices, contributes to gaps in students' sense of belonging and school connectedness.

Priority Problem Statements

Problem Statement 1: 4th and 5th grade students at Smithridge Elementary are not meeting grade-level expectations in reading, with only 40% of 4th graders and 32% of 5th graders on grade level according to the iReady end-of-year assessment.

Critical Root Cause 1: Students in upper grades lack consistent exposure to complex texts and high-quality writing instruction. Instructional time is often focused on foundational skills rather than grade-level standards, and there are gaps in Tier 1 instructional alignment and writing across content areas.

Problem Statement 1 Areas: Student Success

Problem Statement 2: Teachers are unaware of how varied the delivery of instruction is between classrooms in the same grade level.

Critical Root Cause 2: The lack of ability to observe each other teach, on a regular basis.

Problem Statement 2 Areas: Adult Learning Culture

Problem Statement 3: Students at Smithridge Elementary, particularly those from historically underserved groups, report inconsistent feelings of safety, respect, and emotional support, which negatively impacts their sense of belonging and connectedness at school. This is reflected in lower scores in student respect (59%), emotional self-management (40%), and responsible decision-making (48%).

Critical Root Cause 3: There is inconsistent implementation of schoolwide social-emotional learning (SEL) and behavior expectations, leading to varied student experiences with peer interactions, adult relationships, and emotional support. Limited SEL integration into daily instruction, combined with differences in staff capacity to deliver culturally responsive and inclusive practices, contributes to gaps in students' sense of belonging and school connectedness.

Problem Statement 3 Areas: Connectedness

Comprehensive Needs Assessment Data Documentation

The following data were used to verify the comprehensive needs assessment analysis:

Student Success

- End-of-Unit Assessments
- Local benchmark, common assessments, diagnostic assessments, or interim assessments data
- Smarter Balanced (SBAC)
- Student Climate Survey, Student Voice
- Tier I Instructional Materials Assessments
- WIDA ACCESS for ELLs
- Other
 - iReady

Adult Learning Culture

- Administrator evaluation
- Evaluation(s) of professional development implementation and impact
- Lesson Plans
- Professional learning communities (PLC) data/agenda/notes
- School leadership data
- Staff surveys and/or other feedback
- Student Climate Survey
- Teacher evaluation
- Walk-through data

Connectedness

- Attendance
- Community surveys and/or other feedback
- Demographic data
- Social Emotional Learning Data

Inquiry Areas

Inquiry Area 1: Student Success

SMART Goal 1: By May 2026, the percentage of 4th and 5th grade students at Smithridge Elementary performing on or above grade level in reading, as measured by the iReady End-of-Year Diagnostic, will increase by at least 15 percentage points--from 32% to 47% in 5th grade and from 40% to 55% in 4th grade--through implementation of structured Tier 1 ELA instruction, common formative assessments aligned to SBAC rigor, and targeted small-group interventions.

Aligns with District Goal

Formative Measures: iReady, common formative assessments aligned to SBAC item analysis, SBAC performance data

Improvement Strategy 1 Details				Status Checks																		
Improvement Strategy 1: PLC <table><tr><th>Action #</th><th>Actions for Implementation</th><th>Person(s) Responsible</th><th>Timeline</th></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>common planning time for PLC's to meet to plan and collaborate</td><td>administration and leadership team</td><td>All school year</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>classroom observations to provide feedback on the implementation of high-yield instructional strategies aligned to the science of reading.</td><td>administration</td><td>All school year</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>review of lesson plans with specific feedback provided</td><td>administration</td><td>All school year</td></tr></table> Position Responsible: administration and teachers Resources Needed: time for meetings, access to state standards and SBAC planning materials Evidence Level Level 2: Moderate: PLC Problem Statements/Critical Root Cause: Student Success 1				Action #	Actions for Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	1	common planning time for PLC's to meet to plan and collaborate	administration and leadership team	All school year	2	classroom observations to provide feedback on the implementation of high-yield instructional strategies aligned to the science of reading.	administration	All school year	3	review of lesson plans with specific feedback provided	administration	All school year	Status Check		
				Action #	Actions for Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline															
				1	common planning time for PLC's to meet to plan and collaborate	administration and leadership team	All school year															
				2	classroom observations to provide feedback on the implementation of high-yield instructional strategies aligned to the science of reading.	administration	All school year															
3	review of lesson plans with specific feedback provided	administration	All school year																			
Nov	Feb	May																				
No review	No review	No review																				

SMART Goal 1 Problem Statements:

Student Success

Problem Statement 1: 4th and 5th grade students at Smithridge Elementary are not meeting grade-level expectations in reading, with only 40% of 4th graders and 32% of 5th graders on grade level according to the iReady end-of-year assessment. **Critical Root Cause:** Students in upper grades lack consistent exposure to complex texts and high-quality writing instruction. Instructional time is often focused on foundational skills rather than grade-level standards, and there are gaps in Tier 1 instructional alignment and writing across content areas.

Inquiry Area 2: Adult Learning Culture

SMART Goal 1: By May 2026, 100% of grade-level teams at Smithridge Elementary will implement a common instructional framework for the ELA block--150 minutes in primary grades (K-2) and 120 minutes in upper grades (3-5)--that integrates the five pillars of the Science of Reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) and the additional pillar of writing. Implementation will be evidenced through weekly collaborative planning notes, instructional walkthroughs, and student work analysis, ensuring consistency in instructional practice and alignment to evidence-based literacy instruction across all classrooms.

Aligns with District Goal

Formative Measures: classroom observations both informal and formal, master schedule protecting the blocks of time including allocation of minutes for each pillar, grade level planning agendas and note takers.

Improvement Strategy 1 Details					Status Checks		
Improvement Strategy 1: PBIS/i-Ready					Status Check		
					Nov	Feb	May
					No review	No review	No review
Action #	Actions for Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline				
1	create an incentive program for students to complete their weekly lesson goals within iReady, with daily time allocated in the master schedule	admin and teachers	all school year				
2	Consistent ELA blocks with science of reading pillars, across grade levels, based on guidelines in the master schedule	admin and teachers	all school year				
3	Formal and information observations of ELA blocks to provide specific feedback to teachers regarding implementation of the master schedule and alignment to the science of reading.	admin and teachers	all school year				
Position Responsible: Administration and teachers Resources Needed: Time protected in the schedule for planning. Teachers maximizing their instructional time provided in the master schedule for the ELA block. Evidence Level Level 2: Moderate: PBIS Level 3: Promising: i-Ready Problem Statements/Critical Root Cause: Adult Learning Culture 1							

SMART Goal 1 Problem Statements:

Adult Learning Culture

Problem Statement 1: Teachers are unaware of how varied the delivery of instruction is between classrooms in the same grade level. **Critical Root Cause:** The lack of ability to observe each other teach, on a regular basis.

Inquiry Area 3: Connectedness

SMART Goal 1: By May 2026, Smithridge will increase the 5th grade student climate data collection on SEL skills: self-management of emotion, from 40% to 60%.

Aligns with District Goal

Formative Measures: student climate survey, pre and post survey's administered by the counseling team.

Improvement Strategy 1 Details				Status Checks		
Improvement Strategy 1: SEL instruction in all classrooms				Status Check		
				Nov	Feb	May
				No review	No review	No review
Action #	Actions for Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline			
1	Each classroom begins the day with an SEL activity	Teachers	all school year			
2	Counseling team provides a class guidance lesson focusing on SEL	Counselor and social worker	once per month, each classroom			
3	Provide SEL professional development for staff	Counselors and administration	once per month during monthly staff meeting			
Position Responsible: All staff						
Resources Needed: SEL professional development lessons aligned to CASEL, monthly staff meeting, grade level SEL curriculums to use for morning lessons.						
Evidence Level Level 2: Moderate: SEL						
Problem Statements/Critical Root Cause: Connectedness 1						

SMART Goal 1 Problem Statements:

Connectedness
Problem Statement 1: Students at Smithridge Elementary, particularly those from historically underserved groups, report inconsistent feelings of safety, respect, and emotional support, which negatively impacts their sense of belonging and connectedness at school. This is reflected in lower scores in student respect (59%), emotional self-management (40%), and responsible decision-making (48%). Critical Root Cause: There is inconsistent implementation of schoolwide social-emotional learning (SEL) and behavior expectations, leading to varied student experiences with peer interactions, adult relationships, and emotional support. Limited SEL integration into daily instruction, combined with differences in staff capacity to deliver culturally responsive and inclusive practices, contributes to gaps in students' sense of belonging and school connectedness.

Schoolwide and Targeted Assistance Title I Elements

1.1: Comprehensive Needs Assessment

For all Title 1 Elements, please see addendum.

Community Outreach Activities

Activity	Date	Lesson Learned
Meet the teachers BBQ	August 6, 2025	
Family STEM evening	September 16, 2025	
Día de Los Muertos	November 5, 2025	
Family bingo night	February 10, 2025	
Family skate night	March 3, 2026	
Spring carnival	May 27, 2026	