



WORLD'S BEST **WORKFORCE**



AUSTIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
INSPIRE • EMPOWER • ACCELERATE

The World's Best Workforce bill, passed in 2013, strives to ensure every school district in the state is making strides to increase student performance.

The World's Best Workforce Committee was established in Austin Public Schools to provide parents and community members' involvement and input regarding school programs and curricular offerings. The committee comprises parents, community members, staff, teachers, administrators, and school board members.

Each district in Minnesota must develop the World's Best Workforce plan that addresses the following five goals.

- All children are ready for school.
- All third graders can read at grade level.
**Due to legislative changes, third grade reading is no longer a WBWF goal area as of the 2023–24 school year*
- All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.
- All students are ready for career and college.
- All students graduate from high school.

This document reports on our progress as we strive to meet the goals outlined in the World's Best Workforce legislation. Our report provides stakeholders with updates in curriculum, instruction, and student achievement within the district. The plan's content aligns with current district initiatives, including the district strategic roadmap, district literacy plan, integration plan, Title I, II, and III plans, and site and department improvement plans. A summary of progress during the 2022-23 school year and an overview of the World's Best Workforce Plan for the 2023-2024 school year is included.

Sincerely,

Katie Baskin, Executive Director of Academics and Administrative Services

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APS Strategic Plan

On April 11, 2022, after several months of work with staff and community members, the Austin School Board approved a new strategic plan. Our work will center on how students experience their education at Austin Public Schools. A big part of this process was thinking about the daily desired experience for our students, teachers, staff, and parents. We asked some big questions, including what our stakeholders want to experience in our district, how can we better serve our students, staff, and parents, and what defines a successful Austin Public Schools graduate. Here is what was shared with us:

Students:

- I am supported and challenged in my learning and believe I will be successful
- I feel that school is safe, and that school is challenging and fun
- I am an engaged learner at school and in our community

Staff:

- I am seen, valued, and respected for who I am and the work I do
- I receive the support and resources to do my job well, so I am able to create a healthy and safe learning environment
- I work in a district that is willing to adapt and change when necessary to best meet the needs of all students

Parents:

- I am part of my child's education and feel welcomed, valued, and respected as a family
- My child enjoys coming to school and is safe, included, and respected, so they are learning every day
- I am engaged in a partnership with my child's school, so I know what to do to help my child continue to grow and learn

District Mission (*Our core purpose*):

Inspire. Empower. Accelerate.

District Vision (*What we intend to create*):

Preparing all learners to make a difference in the world.

Core Values (*Drivers of our words and actions*):

Responsible: demonstrates accountability to self and others

Resilient: develops perseverance and self-confidence

Learner: challenges self to think critically

Communicator: listens actively and shares learning and experiences

Contributor: engages as a productive member of the community and global society

Strategic Directions (*drivers of our continuous improvement*):

- A. Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment
- B. Packer Profile for all students
- C. District-wide multi-tiered systems of supports for all learners
- D. Excellence in resource management

Section 1: WBWF Goals and Actions for Instruction and Student Achievement

The Austin Public Schools (APS) strategic priorities and strategies aligned to these strategic priorities provide director and focus for APS to address the WBWF goal areas. APS utilizes the Teamworks International process for strategic planning. This process allows APS to identify strategies under three different stages: learning work, implementation work, and standard work. All professional development activities and district budget strategies align to support the strategic priorities in working towards the WBWF goal areas.

Goal Area 1: All children are ready for school.

Review of School Year 2022-23	Plan for School Year 2023-24
<p>Goal for 2022-23 Increase the percentage of students entering kindergarten who meet benchmark as measured by Star360 Early Literacy from 40.1% in 2022 to 42.1% in 2023.</p>	<p>Goal for 2023-24 Increase the percentage of students entering kindergarten who meet benchmark as measured by Star360 Early Literacy from 33.2% in 2023 to 37.1% in 2023.</p>
<p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with students and families from B to 5 and with all organizations that serve children. • Preschool collaborative • Early childhood screening efforts and child find • <i>Aligning our pre-school program with our Kindergarten expectations</i> • <i>Ensuring vertical alignment through PLC work</i> 	<p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority A: Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Instructional Coaching aligned to literacy professional development planning ○ ECSE/Preschool Model Shift • Strategic Priority B: Packer Profile for all learners. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Scope and Sequence Alignment and Implementation for Ready to Advance/TS Gold ○ Developmentally appropriate practices with play through learning • Strategic Priority C: District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Program wide implementation of district-wide multi-tiered systems of supports ○ Align literacy, phonemic awareness, and phonics instruction with best practices ○ Cohesive data gathering tools with PK-4 in APS (EC-SWIS) ○ Pyramid model implementation and coaching across early childhood programs ○ Early childhood screening for all students prior to kindergarten • Strategic Priority D: Excellence in resources management. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Focus on enrollment capture strategies beginning with ECSE classes, screening, and preschool

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ VPK and Pathways Scholarship funding recipients from MDE for no cost preschool experience for most students enrolled in APS preschool
<p>Progress</p> <p>2018: 39.2% (FASTBridge earlyReading) 2019: 46.9% (FASTBridge earlyReading) 2020: 38.8% (FASTBridge earlyReading) 2021: 40.4% (FASTBridge earlyReading) 2022: 40.1% (Star360 EarlyLiteracy) 2023: 33.2% (Star360 EarlyLiteracy)</p>	

Goal Area 2: All third graders can read at grade level

**Due to legislative changes, third grade reading is no longer a WBWF goal area as of the 2023–24 school year*

Review of School Year 2022-23	Plan for School Year 2023-24
<p>Goal for 2022-23</p> <p>Increase the percentage of students 3rd Grade students proficient on the MCA Reading assessment from 33.7% in 2022 to 36.3% in 2023.</p>	<p>Goal for 2023-24</p> <p>Increase the percentage of 3rd Grade students proficient on the MCA Reading assessment from 35.3% in 2023 to 37.4% in 2024.</p>
<p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work on K-5 reading ● Star360 Curriculum Based Measures for fluency and diagnostic ● Star Reading Computer Adaptive Test for Comprehension ● Multitiered System of Supports ● <i>Aligning our proficiency benchmark scores to College and Career Readiness</i> ● <i>Communicating clear proficiency benchmarks for end of year proficiency</i> ● <i>Creating an instructional framework that outlines instructional expectations</i> ● <i>Creating clear and focused End of Year Expectations</i> ● <i>Developing a data infrastructure so teachers have easy access to the data they need to make instructional decisions</i> 	<p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strategic Priority A: Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Instructional Coaching Cycles focused on literacy instruction professional learning for staff ○ Implementation of behavior interventionists to support students in classrooms ● Strategic Priority B: Packer Profile for all learners. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Application planning for the Packer Profile K-4. Alignment of core values to strengthen meaningful learning experiences. ● Strategic Priority C: District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ PLC’s focus on literacy alignment, standards analysis, and phonics instruction ○ School MTSS teams focus of data literacy and implementation of Tier I and II curricular alignment ○ PBIS Implementation – SWIS data implementation and analysis ○ LETRS training for SPED staff and phonics professional learning for all K-4 staff

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority D: Excellence in resources management. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Evaluate curriculum and purchase resources for teachers that align to the Science of Reading. ○ Professional development for staff in alignment with the READ Act.
<p>Progress</p> <p>2018: 47.2%</p> <p>2019: 42.9%</p> <p>2020: N/A - COVID</p> <p>2021: 32.4%</p> <p>2022: 33.7%</p> <p>2023: 35.3%</p>	

Goal Area 3: All racial and economic gaps between students are closed.

Review of School Year 2022-23	Plan for School Year 2023-24
<p>Goal #1 for 2022-23 We will increase the number of special education students who meet or exceed proficiency in Reading by 5% or more, as measured by the 2023 MCA Reading test, going from 15.0% to 20.0%.</p> <p>Goal #2 for 2022-23 We will increase the proficiency of each of the following subgroups of students by 5% or more as measured by the 2023 MCA Reading and Math test.</p>	<p>Goal #1 for 2023-24 We will increase the number of special education students who meet or exceed proficiency in Reading by 5% or more, as measured by the 2024 MCA Reading test, going from 17.8% to 22.8%.</p> <p>Goal #2 for 2023-24 We will increase the proficiency of each of the following subgroups of students by 5% or more as measured by the 2024 MCA Reading and Math test.</p>
<p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young Scholars • Project E3 • Success Coaches • Site Equity Teams • <i>Working to ensure ALL students are being taught grade-level standards and are assessed on those standards</i> • <i>English Language Learner teacher working with any students whose first language is not English</i> • <i>Personalized Learning Plan for our most at-risk learners</i> • <i>Ensuring teachers have the data they need to make instructional decisions for all subgroups of students</i> 	<p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority A: Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Instructional Coaching focused on math and literacy instruction ○ Focus on AVID instructional strategies 7-12 ○ Teacher mentorship program realigned to district instructional model – focused on engagement and equity • Strategic Priority B: Packer Profile for all learners. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pathways to community engage for extended school year programming ○ Work to build more diverse extension opportunities for students – Project E3, Young Scholars • Strategic Priority C: District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Professional development for all staff in best practice SIOP strategies

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ School MTSS teams focus of data literacy and implementation of Tier I and II curricular alignment ○ Focused instructional model for extended day programming ○ Early Warning System implementation for intervention design ● Strategic Priority D: Excellence in resources management. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enrollment strategies to support our families with socio-economic needs
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Progress

Goal #1 Progress:

2018: 22.1% Proficiency on Reading
2019: 21.8% Proficiency on Reading
2020: N/A - COVID
2021: 18.0% Proficiency on Reading
2022: 15.0% Proficiency on Reading
2023: 17.8% Proficiency on Reading

Goal #2 Progress:

F/RL Reading Results

2018: 35.3% Proficiency on Reading
2019: 32.9% Proficiency on Reading
2020: N/A - COVID
2021: 25.1% Proficiency on Reading
2022: 24.9% Proficiency on Reading
2023: 28.4% Proficiency on Reading

F/RL Math Results

2018: 33.1% Proficiency on Math
2019: 25.2% Proficiency on Math
2020: N/A - COVID
2021: 13.8% Proficiency on Math
2022: 16.6% Proficiency on Math
2023: 19.0% Proficiency on Math

Minority Groups (Students of Color) Reading Results

2018: 35.5% Proficiency on Reading
2019: 32.5% Proficiency on Reading
2020: N/A - COVID
2021: 26.8% Proficiency on Reading
2022: 27.1% Proficiency on Reading
2023: 27.4% Proficiency on Reading

Goal Area 4: All students are ready for career and college.

Review of School Year 2022-23	Plan for School Year 2023-24
<p>Goal for 2022-23 By the spring of 2022, 17% of all students assessed will have met CCR benchmarks in all four subject areas as measured by 2022 ACT, going from 14% to 17%.</p>	<p>Goal for 2023-24 By the spring of 2024, 19% of all students assessed will have met CCR benchmarks in all four subject areas as measured by 2024 ACT, going from 16% to 19%.</p>
<p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AVID • REACH • Step Up • On Track Work Experience Lab • Wallin Scholarships • ACT for all • Be Your Best • Cycles for Success • <i>Creation of student portfolios that outline a students' College and Career Readiness</i> • <i>Continuing our efforts to develop online and blended courses to meet the needs of all students</i> • <i>Providing opportunities for our students to learn 21st-century skills that prepare them for our future</i> • <i>Increasing AP, College Now and PSEO opportunities for students</i> • <i>Finding more opportunities for outside internships</i> 	<p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority A: Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Grow Your Own program development with all stake holders ○ AVID programming and strategies for the acceleration of learners ○ REACH programming for students • Strategic Priority B: Packer Profile for all learners. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Focus on meaningful learning experiences in development of the Packer Profile ○ Engage community partners to provide experiences for our students and staff in careers ○ Internship and work-experience opportunities for students ○ Direct Admissions collaboration with the Office of Higher Education • Strategic Priority C: District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Providing students opportunities to engage in and extend their learning in a college-going environment ○ Developing course pathways aligned to areas of student interest and accelerating post-secondary pathways within the school system. ○ Community partnerships to support students • Strategic Priority D: Excellence in resources management. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure staff have the resources they need to align strategic priorities
<p>Progress 2018: 18% meet in all 4 areas 2019: 21% meet in all 4 areas 2020: 16% meet in all 4 areas 2021: 14% meet in all 4 areas 2022: 14% meet in all 4 areas 2023: 16% meet in all 4 areas 2024: TBA (October 2024)</p>	

Goal Area 5: All students graduate from high school.

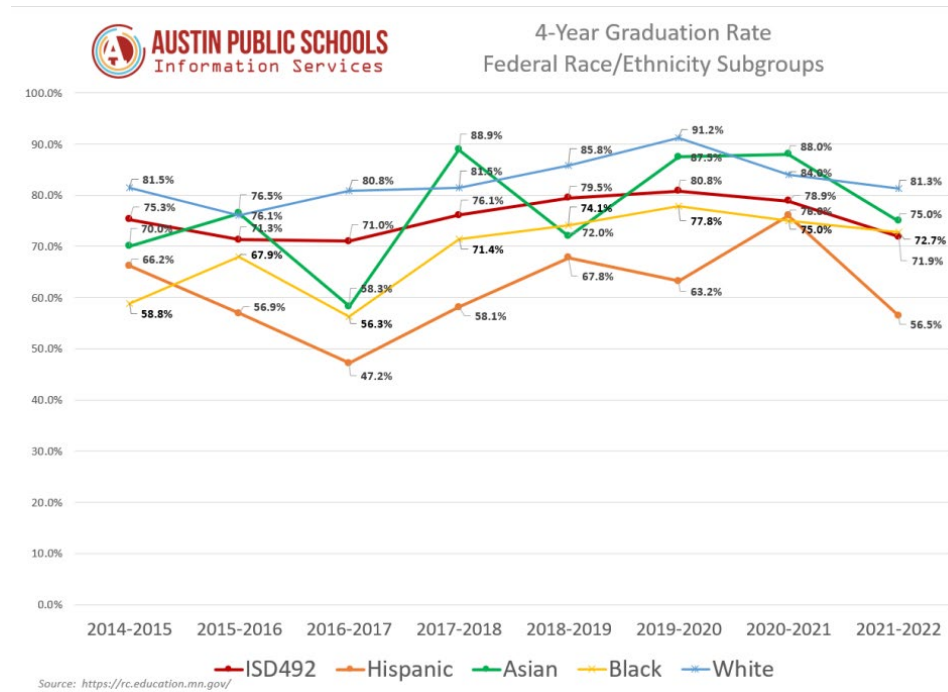
Review of School Year 2022-23	Plan for School Year 2023-24
<p>Goal for 2022-23 Maintain at or above 80% of eligible Austin Public School students will receive a diploma from Austin Public Schools as measured by the 2022 Graduation.</p>	<p>Goal for 2023-24 Maintain at or above 80% of eligible Austin Public School students will receive a diploma from Austin Public Schools as measured by the 2023 Graduation.</p>
<p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AVID • REACH • ALC • <i>Ensuring we have opportunities for ALL students to be successful in Austin Public Schools</i> 	<p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority A: Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strengths Education work for staff ○ Instructional coaching focused on literacy and curriculum implementation at 7-12 • Strategic Priority B: Packer Profile for all learners. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ K-12 focus on the Packer Profile integration and application within the content while connecting with community. • Strategic Priority C: District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ BARR Implementation at AHS ○ PBIS focus on SEL and support of students needs ○ AOA alignment to career interests and post-AHS experiences. • Strategic Priority D: Excellence in resources management. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Resources aligned to AOA and AHS strategic initiatives to meet student need
<p>Progress 2017: 71.0% 2018: 76.1% 2019: 79.5% 2020: 80.8% 2021: 78.9% 2022: 71.9% 2023: TBD March 2024</p>	

Achievement and Integration

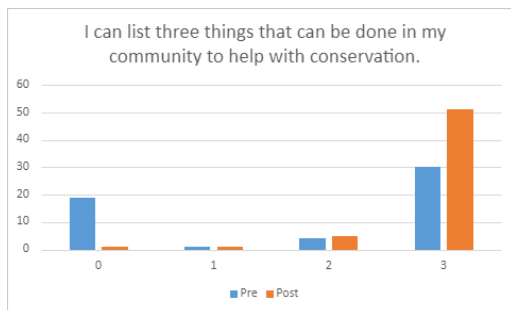
The purpose of the Achievement and Integration (A&I) for Minnesota program is to pursue racial and economic integration, increase student achievement, create equitable educational opportunities, and reduce academic disparities based on students' diverse racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds in Minnesota public schools.

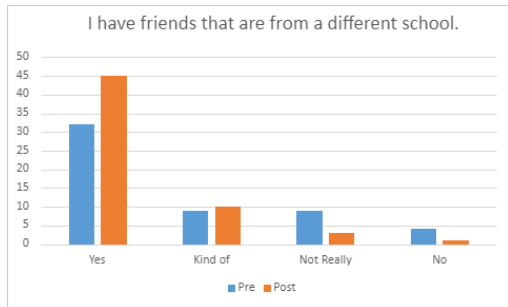
- [Read Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.861.](#)
- [Read Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.862.](#)
- Read Minnesota Rules, parts 3535.0100 to 3535.0180 of the [School Desegregation/Integration rules](#)

Goal 1: The graduation rate for Hispanic students in Austin Public Schools will increase from 59.2% in 2018 to 65% in 2023



Goal 2: Alliance for Educational Equity students participating in integration programs will self-report an increase in their level of comfort with initiating and maintaining positive relationships with students different from themselves (racially/ethnically diverse, socioeconomically) from an average comfort determined by a pre-survey in 2020 to an average comfort level of 4 out of 5 on a 5-point Likert scale, by the end of 2022-23 school year.





Goal 3: Teacher Equity: Austin Public Schools students’ access to effective educators trained in culturally responsive leadership will increase from 82 trained staff in March 2020 to 275 trained staff by 2023.

- Baseline: 82 staff
- 2020-2021: 125 total staff
- 2021-2022: 195 total staff
- 2022-2023: 271 total staff

Goal 4: RIS Goal: The disparity between non-white student enrollment at Sumner elementary (87.5%) and the average non-white student enrollment in grade-alike buildings in Austin Public Schools (54.8%) is 32.7%. This enrollment disparity will be reduced to 20% by 2023

- Actual Data 2022-2023
Sumner: 87.1%
APS grade-alike buildings: 51.4%
Disparity: 35.7%

The Achievement Integration goals for the 2024-2026 plan are as follows:

- **Goal 1:** The percentage of students able to identify career pathways related to the integrated STEM enrichment activities they are participating in will increase from a baseline of 0% in 2023-2024 to 90% in 2025-26.
- **Goal 2:** The graduation rate for Black/African American students in Austin Public Schools will increase from 75.0% in 2021 to ≥ 80.0% in 2026.
- **Goal 3:** Student responses to Minnesota Student Survey questions assessing teacher/student relationships will increase to reflect 90% or higher rate of students responding agree/strongly agree. (See KIPs for baseline data regarding specific questions.)
- **RIS Goal 1 (Sumner Elementary):** The disparity between non-white student enrollment at Sumner elementary (90.6%) and the average non-white student enrollment in grade-alike buildings in Austin public schools (57.1%) is 33.5%. This enrollment disparity will be reduced to 17% by 2026.
- **RIS Goal 2:** The Student Growth Percentile (SGP) measure for Hispanic students at Sumner Elementary on the STAR Reading Assessment from fall to spring will increase from 47.9% in Spring 2022 to ≥ 50.0% in Spring 2026.
- **RIS Goal 3:** Students at Sumner Elementary will have access to educators trained in culturally competent instructional practices through ongoing professional development initiatives to ensure that at least 95% of staff have been trained in culturally responsive practices.

Section II: Assessing and Evaluating Student Progress

Student progress toward meeting state and local academic standards are done through the examination of student data during data meetings and at the individual classroom level. Corresponding adjustments in curriculum and instruction are made as well as intervention necessary are implemented.

Assessment is an ongoing process which includes screening, progress monitoring and diagnostic assessments.

Standardized assessments such as the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment-III (MCA-III), Pre-ACT assessment, and ACT assessments, are administered yearly. The MCA-III assessments are administered to students in reading (grades 3-8, 10), mathematics (grades 3-8, 11) and science (grades 5, 8 & 10) in the spring. The Pre-ACT is administered in reading, math, English, and science to students in grade 10, and the ACT is administered to students in grades 11-12. Data from these assessments are used to determine if students are on-track to develop the skills necessary to succeed in entry-level college courses by the time they leave high school.

District wide benchmark screening assessments are given three times yearly. All students in kindergarten through grade 8 are assessed in September, January and May using Star Reading and Math Assessments.

Curriculum-based assessments (i.e. common summative and formative assessments) are administered to assess students' growth toward local, state, and national standards in grades K-12. These assessments are aligned to the standards and data is used to make instructional decisions. Likewise, data is used to determine whether students have acquired the knowledge and skills to be on-track to meet grade level student achievement benchmarks.

Based on student data, more diagnostic assessment is sometimes necessary. Some students whose assessment data shows them to be at-risk for reading difficulty are assessed individually with the PRESS Inventory, or STAR Assessment to determine appropriate intervention placement and instruction.

All students who are receiving strategic (Tier II) or intensive (Tier III) interventions are progress monitored at least every two weeks, often weekly. The type of progress monitoring tool depends on the type of intervention the student is receiving. There are standard protocols for administering each of these progress monitoring assessments. Progress monitoring data are reviewed at least every six weeks, often more frequently, to determine the next steps in serving students. Some students may no longer need intervention, need a change in intervention, or be making expected growth with it. Teachers use this data alongside classroom measures to support changes to services.

	PreK	KG	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Teaching Strategies Gold	●●●													
STAR CBM: Letter Sounds		●●												
STAR CBM: Phoneme Segmentation		●●	●●											
STAR CBM: Expressive Nonsense Words			●●●	●●										
STAR CBM: Passage Oral Reading			●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●
STAR Early Literacy [Ⓢ]		●●●	●●●											
STAR Reading [Ⓢ]			●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●
STAR Math [Ⓢ]			●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●
STAR CBM-P.M. Tools Reading/Mathematics		●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●			
CogAT: Cognitive Abilities Test			●			●		●						
ACCESS for EL's [Ⓢ]		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
MCA & MTAS: [Ⓢ] Reading					+	+	+	+	+	+		+		
MCA & MTAS: [Ⓢ] Mathematics					+	+	+	+	+				+	
MCA & MTAS: [Ⓢ] Science							+			+		←+	+	
NAEP* (National Assessment of Ed Programs)						●				●				●
ACT [Ⓢ]													●	

- + - Required for federal and state accountability. Developed and administered by the state of MN (includes MCA's and SpEd Assessments).
- - Required for English Learners for federal Title III accountability. Used as exit criterion for state funding.
- - Denotes universal test administrations that occur multiple times per year (Fall, Winter, Spring).
- - Denotes targeted (specific students) test administrations that occur multiple times per year (Fall, Winter, Spring).
- * - Not required annually, but through specific selection processes.

v.2023.07.25

APS Grade Level Student Achievement Benchmarks

The Austin Public School District has established a system of benchmark target scores which link local assessments to predicted achievement on statewide assessments as well as college and career readiness. The charts below provide a consistent set of target scores for student performance across measures and time.

Table 2. Star Reading and Star Math Unified score equivalents for each MCA-III achievement level range

Star Reading Unified cut-score equivalents				
Grade	Does Not Meet	Partially Meets	Meets	Exceeds
3	< 950	950 – 982	983 – 1047	≥ 1048
4	< 982	982 – 1021	1022 – 1078	≥ 1079
5	< 997	997 – 1037	1038 – 1100	≥ 1101
6	< 1033	1033 – 1068	1069 – 1124	≥ 1125
7	< 1062	1062 – 1093	1094 – 1146	≥ 1147
8	< 1077	1077 – 1108	1109 – 1164	≥ 1165
Star Math Unified cut-score equivalents				
Grade	Does Not Meet	Partially Meets	Meets	Exceeds
3	< 939	939 – 972	973 – 1022	≥ 1023
4	< 984	984 – 1015	1016 – 1065	≥ 1066
5	< 1024	1024 – 1072	1073 – 1120	≥ 1121
6	< 1048	1048 – 1092	1093 – 1141	≥ 1142
7	< 1062	1062 – 1117	1118 – 1155	≥ 1156
8	< 1076	1076 – 1126	1127 – 1162	≥ 1163

Section III. Assessing and Evaluating Curriculum and Instruction

Program Review and Curriculum Improvement

The Program Review and Continuous Curriculum Improvement Cycles are designed to review curricular/program areas and provide continuous improvement for teaching and learning in Austin Public Schools with input from a variety of stakeholders including, staff, administration, students, families, school board, and community. In response to staff feedback, specific processes, schedule and clear articulation of curriculum review was imperative for all staff to know what is on the horizon while ensuring our recourses and curriculum were having the desired outcomes for our students.

The Curriculum and Program review system is divided into 2 cycles, a formal program review cycle and an implementation/continuous improvement cycle. These cycles are based on years and the curriculum purchase cycle but can be adjusted on need if a curricular areas/programs is not meeting their intended outcomes, if there is a MN standards revision, or a change in MN assessments.

The Continuous Curriculum Improvement Cycle consists of an ongoing process of implementation evaluation and consideration of whether the program is meeting intended outcomes. Departments will work through this model of continuous improvement throughout their curriculum and instruction cycle.

1. Program Installation-1st year of implementation
2. Early Program Implementation
3. Full Program Implementation
4. Program Sustainability-Program implementation is considered standard work

Curriculum Review, Selection, and Implementation

APS employs a comprehensive system to periodically review and evaluate the effectiveness of all district curriculum and instruction. The primary goal is to develop and guaranteed and viable curriculum. This is one in which the agreed upon essential content and skills are covered within adequate instructional time. The review involves teacher collaboration, parent/community input, reflective inquiry, and decision making based on best practices, current research, district data, and state/federal mandates.

The following process occurs over a 2-4 year process within a content area:

Phase/Timeline	Team Members	Process
Program Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&L 	<p align="center">Graduation Requirements and Staffing</p> <p>Gather graduation requirements, staff allocations, and licensing information.</p>
Program Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&L • Instructional Coach • Department Chair • Building Admin 	<p align="center">Curriculum Adoption and Implementation</p> <p>Review the stages of the curriculum adoption process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum Evaluation • Design • Purchase • Implementation • Sustainment
Program Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&L • Instructional Coach • Department Members 	<p align="center">Course Overview</p> <p>Review courses offered including course description, materials used, instructional time, and students who take the course.</p>
Program Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Information Services • T&L • Instructional Coach • Department Members 	<p align="center">Changes in Programming</p> <p>Review changes in your program since you last adopted curriculum. This may include changes in standards, co-teaching, new course offerings, etc.</p>
Program Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&L • Instructional Coach • Department Members 	<p align="center">Data Presentation</p> <p>Presentation on district demographic data and academic performance.</p>
Program Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&L • Instructional Coach • Department Members 	<p align="center">Instructional Frameworks, Practices, and Strategies</p> <p>Review and discuss instructional practices including reading, writing, assessment, and collaboration.</p>
Program Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&L • Instructional Coach • Department Members 	<p align="center">Stakeholder Feedback</p> <p>Gather information from students about their learning experience in the content area.</p> <p>Gather input from the World Best Workforce about learning experience in the content area.</p>
Program Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&L • Instructional Coach • Department Members 	<p align="center">Current Literature and Research</p> <p>Read and discuss current research in equity and the content area.</p>
Program Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&L • Instructional Coach • Department Members 	<p align="center">Standards Review and Alignment</p> <p>Review the standards and benchmarks.</p> <p>Write I can statements to clearly articulate what students need to be able to know and do.</p> <p>Align standards and benchmarks to units of study.</p>
Program Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&L 	<p align="center">Guiding Change</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional Coach • Tech Integrationist • Department Chair • Department Members • Building Admin • Tech Services • Info Services 	Review and determine current context (all the work up to this point), desired results, and unacceptable means that need to be considered as we review and purchase curriculum.
Program Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&L • Instructional Coach • Tech Integrationist • Department Chair • Department Members • Building Admin • Business Office 	<p style="text-align: center;">Curriculum and Materials to Consider</p> <p>List curriculum that we would like to review in the process including information from other districts and links to the materials.</p> <p>Engage the business office in a conversation about using Spend Bridge for cost effective purchasing.</p>
Program Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&L • Tech Services • Info Services • Building Admin 	<p style="text-align: center;">Curriculum Review</p> <p>Vet resources using Ed Reports, What Works Clearinghouse and other resources.</p> <p>Determine if the curriculum technology is compliant with the district.</p> <p>Make recommendations for products to be reviewed.</p> <p>Engage business office and Spend Bridge in selection/purchase conversations.</p>
Program Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&L • Instructional Coach • Tech Integrationist • Department Chair • Department Members • Building Admin • Tech Services • Info Services • Business Office 	<p style="text-align: center;">Curriculum Presentations</p> <p>Schedule presentations</p> <p>Debrief the presentations and make recommendations for moving forward.</p> <p>Possible unit or lesson pilots of the curriculum.</p> <p>Engage business office and Spend Bridge in selection/purchase conversations.</p>
Program Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&L 	<p style="text-align: center;">World's Best Workforce</p> <p>Review information about the curriculum presentations, gather feedback, and share next steps.</p>
Implementation Plan and Purchase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&L • Instructional Coach • Tech Integrationist • Department Chair • Building Admin • Tech Services • Info Services • Business Office 	<p style="text-align: center;">Selection and Purchase</p> <p>Engage business office and Spend Bridge in selection/purchase conversations.</p> <p>Determine which curriculum will be purchased and the number of materials.</p> <p>Finalize purchase agreements.</p>

		<p>Determine technology needs, apps, programs etc. that need to be added to the computer image or software center.</p> <p>Update budget worksheet to track expenses.</p>
Implementation Plan and Purchase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&L • Instructional Coach • Tech Integrationist • Department Chair • Department Members • Building Admin 	<p>Professional Development and Curriculum Writing</p> <p>Determine content specific professional development needs and schedule time.</p> <p>Departments may request district curriculum writing time/funds. Use linked forms.</p> <p>Completed curriculum writing should be turned into the principal and T&L. Work completed will be added to the T&L curriculum website.</p>
Implementation Plan and Purchase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&L • Instructional Coach • Tech Integrationist • Department Chair • Department Members • Building Admin 	<p>Collect Old Materials</p> <p>Collect and box up all old materials. Including the inventory list to see if any materials can be sold.</p> <p>Determine what existing or old technology will not be needed or used. Work with tech integrationist to remove these items from the image or software center.</p>
Early Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&L • Instructional Coach • Tech Integrationist • Department Chair • Department Members • Building Admin 	<p>Unit Planning</p> <p>Unit planning may include developing scope and sequence, standards and benchmark alignment, and unit planning. Complete documents will be added to the T&L curriculum website.</p>
Early Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&L • Instructional Coach • Tech Integrationist • Department Chair • Department Members • Building Admin 	<p>Curriculum Implementation</p> <p>Write, update, and reflect on unit plans. What is working, what needs to be adjusted? How do you know?</p> <p>Develop common formative and summative assessments.</p> <p>Identify and align resources – core and supplemental intervention.</p> <p>Identify outcomes to measure curriculum, instruction, and program effectiveness. What data will be collected?</p>
Full Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&L • Instructional Coach • Tech Integrationist • Department Chair • Department Members • Building Admin 	<p>Implementation</p> <p>Review data and monitor progress of curriculum, instruction, and program effectiveness data.</p> <p>What does the data tell us? What adjustments might need to be made (instructional approaches, professional development, resources)?</p> <p>Identify any professional development needs and schedule.</p>
Sustainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&L 	<p>Sustainment</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional Coach • Tech Integrationist • Department Chair • Department Members • Building Admin 	<p>Review data and monitor progress of curriculum, instruction, and program effectiveness data.</p> <p>What does the data tell us? What adjustments might need to be made (instructional approaches, professional development, resources)?</p> <p>Identify any professional development needs and schedule.</p>
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Selection of Instructional Materials

Austin Public Schools have policies and procedures for the selection of textbooks and other curriculum materials. This process includes regular feedback and guidance from the World’s Best Workforce to gather input and direction within the selection process. The school board recognizes differences of opinion on the part of some members of the school district community relating to certain areas of the instruction program. Interested persons may request an opportunity to review materials and submit a request for reconsideration of the use of certain textbooks or instructional materials. Contact the Office of Teaching and Learning at 507-460-1912 for more information.

Principal and Teacher Evaluation Process

APS has a comprehensive principal and teacher evaluation system as a part of the continuous improvement model.

The purpose of the teacher evaluation system is to foster teacher growth, articulate expectations, assess performance in the instructional domain, and develop staff to ensure high levels of learning for all students. The evaluation system includes an individual growth and development plan with annual goal setting, peer review, and formal evaluation. Professional development through PLC’s and instructional coaching provides teachers with training in the instructional model and support implementing high impact instructional strategies.

The purpose of the principal evaluation system is to continue development for principals in the five domains of leadership and ensure the APS excels at the highest level. The Superintendent evaluates principals on school performance data, state and school performance measures, and progress in their site improvement plan processes.

IV. Strategies for Improving Instruction and Curriculum

APS Staff Development Goals

The WBWF is charged with reviewing the district operational plan that drives each site improvement plans which articulate the aligned professional development goals for APS. Ultimately, professional development is intended to improve instruction and ultimately student achievement. The district operational plan consists of learning work and implementation work that are the “doing” tasks driving professional development across the system. Learning Work are the items members of the system will learn about over the course of the year to determine if they are aligned with the strategic priorities for implementation. Implementation Work Change Readiness and Management are those elements that will prepare the system to change course and are moving from learning to action. Professional learning occurs throughout the implementation process to work towards standard.

Below are the Strategic Directions and Staff Development / Professional Learning:

- Strategic Direction A: Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment
 - Learning Work – Professional Learning
 - Onboarding and support programs for all staff (teachers, paras, food service, admin, etc)
 - Recruitment and retention of staff of color
 - Staff engagement/satisfaction survey—to also give metric for strengths implementation
 - Instructional Coaching Cycles
 - Staff evaluation processes linked to new strategic plan and core values
 - Implementation Work Change Readiness and Management – Professional Learning
 - Instructional Coaching – Literacy and Math instruction
 - Strengths Education work for staff
 - Teacher Mentorship design and implementation
 - Human Resources practices and procedures aligned to Core Values for teachers
- Strategic Direction B: Packer Profile for all students
 - Learning Work Professional Learning
 - 5-12 Meaningful Learning Experiences
 - Core Values relationships with meaningful learning
 - Beyond the Bell – pathways to community, summer programming, afterschool experiences
 - What does the PP mean for K-4?
 - Implementation Work Change Readiness and Management – Professional Learning
 - 5-12 Pathway considerations and work toward articulation
 - 9-12 Packer Portfolio development
 - APS Instructional model and Packer Profile
- Strategic Direction C: District-wide multi-tiered systems of supports for all learners
 - Learning Work Professional Learning
 - Effective Tier 1 Instruction
 - Phonics instruction
 - 5-12 Writing Instructional Framework
 - Grading and Reporting – Weights and K-12 system of G and R teaching
 - Restorative Practices Training
 - BARR for 9-12—learning work for staff
 - Implementation Work Change Readiness and Management – Professional Learning
 - MTSS School Team – PLC’s Initial Implementation – common structure throughout the district. PLC+ Model to focus Tier 1 Instruction - continuous curriculum improvement
 - Literacy Curriculum Alignment - T1, T2 and T3

- Effective Tier 1 Instruction
- K-4 Phonics Instruction
- 5-12 Writing Instructional Framework
- Advanced Academics – MTSS implications for practice
- Math Programming – course alignment, standards articulation
- Grading and Reporting – Retakes and work completion timelines
- PBIS Implementation and SWIS implementation for buildings new to PBIS
- ADSIS Behavior Interventionists K-4
- LETRS Professional Learning Integration cohort 1 (Elem SPED teachers) Units 5-8
- Early Warning System
- Strategic Direction D: Excellence in resource management
 - Learning Work Professional Learning
 - Enrollment Capture – School of Choice
 - Technology Inventory Management
 - PTA Resource Alignment
 - Implementation Work Change Readiness and Management – Professional Learning
 - Enrollment Capture Strategies
 - Technology Inventory Management
 - PTA Resource Alignment
 - Enrollment Capture Strategies
 - Technology Inventory Management
 - Facilities Planning
 - Insurance Committee implementation
 - Staffing Model Transparency
 - School Fees alignment at PreK-4

Teaching and Learning Instructional Model

Guided by stakeholder feedback from our Teaching and Learning Analysis as well as the Desired Daily Experience stakeholder feedback guided by strategic planning, the Austin Public Schools Instructional Model was reconstructed to illuminate the values, beliefs and needs to support the cohesion of teaching and learning across the district.

The 4 elements at the center of the model are identified by stakeholders as both wants and needs for our teaching and learning focus.

- **Engagement** describes the attention, curiosity, interests, optimism and passion that both students and staff want from their interactions in the learning environment.
- **Environment** includes a safe and supportive space where teaching, learning and movement are of importance and attended to in all forms and functions.
- **Equity** includes four dimensions (Access, Achievement, Identity and Power) as powerful levers for creating caring, just, inclusive and healthy communities that support all individuals in reaching their fullest potential.
- **Evidence** provides information for teachers and students to focus their teaching and learning to improve student understanding and tailor teaching strategies to accelerate student achievement.

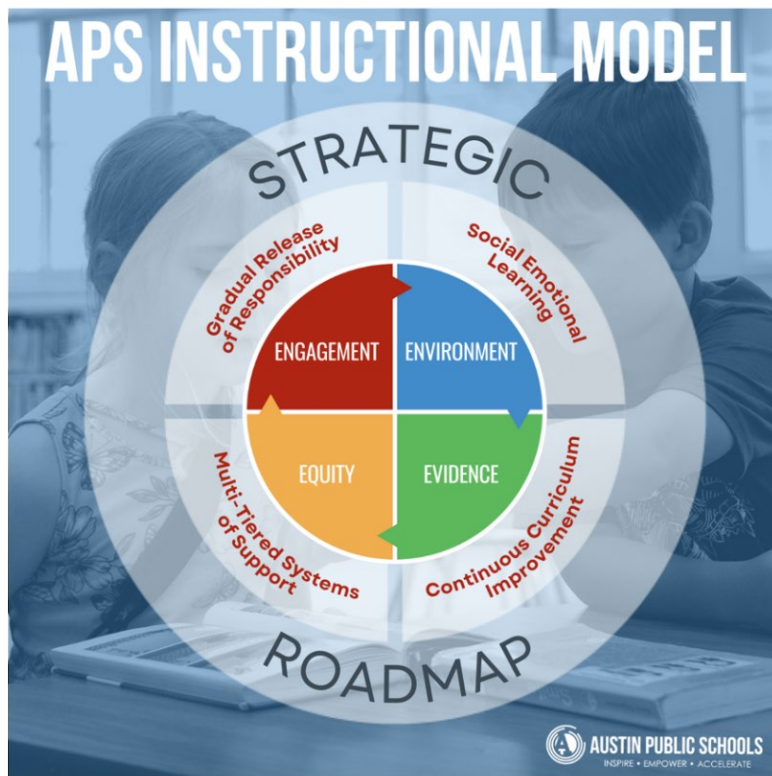
In each of these elements, APS will focus on 4 educational frameworks to guide teaching and learning decision-making and strategy development. All practices intersect with the 4 elements at the center of our model and will be guided by the APS Strategic Roadmap as we progress in the learning and implementation work.

Gradual Release of Responsibility – and instructional model that shifts the cognitive work slowly and intentionally from the teacher to the student.

Social Emotional Learning – a process of acquiring knowledge, skills and attitudes to develop healthy identities, achieve goals, and establish relationships.

Continuous Curriculum Improvement – an ongoing process of curriculum implementation where teachers review unit design, assessments, and student data.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports – a proactive approach to ensuring all students have access to high-quality instruction and interventions to meet their needs.



Continuous Improvement Elements

The Continuous Curriculum Improvement Cycle consists of an ongoing process of implementation evaluation and consideration of whether the program is meeting intended outcomes. Within the phases cycle of implementation, continuous improvement and design of the curriculum occurs through the following elements:

- ❖ Standards Alignment
 - It is important the curriculum is aligned to standards down to the benchmark level to ensure that students can access the content and skills outlined in those standards.
- ❖ Scope and Sequence / Pacing
 - An overview of the key concepts or units addressed in a program is essential to progress students with content.
- ❖ Teacher Does / Student Does (Look fors and Implementation Expectations)
 - Clear statements that describe an observable teaching or learning behavior, strategy, outcome product or procedure. These behaviors guide implementation and delivery expectations for the curriculum system.
- ❖ Unit Plan Development using Backwards Planning
 - Backwards Planning: An instructional planning approach where students intimately understand the curriculum that starts with the end goal, then works backward to plan lessons and experiences.
 - Unit Plan: A purposeful, clear, articulation of what will be taught, the purpose of the content, the strategies and assessments utilized, and learning experience students will engage in. Unit Plans are often developed during early program implementation when staff have taken an initial run at the curriculum to develop it further.
- ❖ PLC's
 - PLC's grounded in four cross-cutting themes—a focus on equity of access and opportunity, high expectations for all students, a commitment to building individual self-efficacy and the collective efficacy of the professional learning community and effective team activation and facilitation to move from discussion to action. The PLC framework supports educators in considering five essential questions as they work together to improve student learning:
 - Where are we going?
 - Where are we now?
 - How do we move learning forward?
 - What did we learn today?
 - Who benefited and who did not benefit?

Annual Budget

General fund dollars are allocated to support the strategic plan. Site and district professional development dollars support the strategies identified. Working in collaboration with Title I, II, III and IV, Achievement and Integration Grant, and District Staff Development funds, a budget is formulated to support the implementation of the teaching and learning framework and strategic plan striving to achieve the goals in the district strategic priorities and the World's Best Workforce plan.

Section V: Meeting the Academic Needs of High Performing Students

At Austin Public Schools, our mission is to Inspire, Empower, and Accelerate every one of our learners. The Gifted Services for Talent Development program works to support that mission by recognizing and challenging intellectually gifted and academically talented learners to meet individual academic and affective learning needs.

At Austin Public Schools, our vision is to prepare all learners to make a difference in the world. The Gifted Services for Talent Development program supports that vision by working to be a leader in providing a rigorous continuum of services for intellectually gifted and academically talented learners and a resource to districts and stakeholders, being the catalyst that will challenge and develop tenacious learners and the staff who persevere to serve them.

Our district model for instruction is based on a multi-tiered system of supports. All students receive standards-based core instruction in their classrooms. Teachers differentiate instruction to meet the needs within their classrooms. Tier 2 is designed to give additional targeted instruction for students who need enrichment interventions. Examples of this include pull-out/push-in groups that work on math, reading, or critical thinking skills. There are a few students who need something different than grade-level curriculum. In these cases, a team collaborates to develop an appropriate plan for the student.

Early Entrance to Kindergarten

The school board will allow early school entrance and grade acceleration. The following steps will be followed prior to the school district's decision regarding each individual student case. Students who have met the criteria set by the Austin Public Schools will be allowed to enter kindergarten early. The decision made by the administration shall be final.

1. The parent initiates the request with the elementary principal in whose attendance area the child resides. All requests should be submitted by April 1. Parents will be notified regarding the dispensation of the request no later than June 15.
2. The building principal will arrange a pre-assessment interview involving himself/herself, the central office designee, the parent, and a kindergarten teacher. The primary purpose of the interview is to assemble data on the child such as the child's birth date, preschool experiences, and any other information which might be needed in order to arrive at an eventual decision.
3. The parents may be asked to provide a psychologist's recommendation based on achievement and ability testing. The parents are responsible for all costs incurred to secure the recommendation.
4. After the parent has submitted the necessary data to the building principal, the principal, teacher, and central office designee will meet to determine the findings of the collected data and to make a decision regarding the request for early entrance.
5. The building principal and central office designee will then meet with the parent and relate their decision.

OR

6. The child does not meet the age requirement for kindergarten but has transferred from a state in which he/she did meet the age requirements and was previously enrolled. The parent will need to provide verification of enrollment from the previous district.

Grade Acceleration

Students who have met the criteria set by the Austin Public Schools will be allowed to accelerate.

It is the procedure of the Austin Public Schools to allow grade acceleration providing that the elementary and middle school student meets the following criteria:

1. The parent initiates the request with the building principal in whose attendance area the child resides. All requests should be submitted by April 1. Parents will be notified regarding the dispensation of the request no later than June 15.
2. The building principal will arrange a meeting with himself/herself, the parent, the student's teacher(s), the central office designee and, if applicable, the building principal of the next level.
3. The purpose of the meeting will be to gather data regarding the student's current achievement and abilities. It may be necessary to request further testing in order to make a decision. If that is the case, the parent is responsible for any costs incurred in this process.
4. After all necessary data has been collected the building principal, teacher(s), and the central office designee will make a decision as to whether the student shall be accelerated. The building principal is responsible for communicating the decision to the parent.
5. If the student meets the criteria set by the district, it will be necessary for the student to demonstrate competencies of the grade level(s) that will be missed.