

November 2026

Oops! Did conferences sneak up on you? There's still time to sign up!



We are excited to meet with you during our Fall Parent-Teacher Conferences on **November 5 or November 12**.
Please use the link provided to sign up for a conference time. Be sure to register with your child's homeroom teacher. If you are unsure who your child's homeroom teacher is, please ask your child

or contact the school office for assistance. Our office staff is happy to help with scheduling and teacher information.
Please note: You will need to change the calendar view to **November** to see the available conference times.

We look forward to meeting with you and partnering in your child's success!
IJ Holton Office
(507) 460-1525

CLICK HERE: To sign up for parent/teacher conferences.

Principal's Corner - Mr. Schara



Holton families,

This month we have parent teacher conferences on November 5th and 12th from 3:40pm-7:40pm. Conferences are a wonderful way for parents to have a “face to face” opportunity to discuss their child’s first few months of school. For our 5th grade families, Holton is a very new experience. The school day is longer, we offer more exploratory classes, and the grading system is different. For your 6th grade families, preparing your child for Ellis is one of our goals.
We certainly have information prepared to share with you during conferences. However, conferences are for YOU. So, if you have questions about anything, please bring those with you so we can make sure to address them. In addition, know that if you have a conflict with your conference time, you can always call us, and your child’s teacher can contact you at another time and share information over the phone or set up a different day to meet after school.
A few things for you to be aware of are; make sure your contact information is correct on our Infinite Campus system, be aware of your child’s attendance and make sure we have correctly documented it correctly (excused, unexcused, medical etc.).
Overall, we have had an incredible start to the 2026/27 school year. We look forward to working with you throughout the year and we are always available for questions or concerns.

Thank you for your support,

Sincerely,
Mr. Schara
Principal

PDF **Standard Response Protocol Parent Handout** Download 286.8 KB

Mr. Malo's Shout Out



Dear Families,

Thank you for your continued partnership and support. The school year has started off well, and we're excited to share a few updates as we move into the second quarter.

Important Announcements

- Sixth-grade Nature Center field trip: Sixth graders will begin their trips in groups of two classes.
- Family conferences: Conferences will be held on November 5 and November 12, from 3:40–7:40 p.m. Please be sure to sign up.
- Veterans Day: On November 11, we honor and thank all veterans. Veterans who have RSVP'd will be warmly welcomed at the Veterans Breakfast and assembly at IJ.
- Thanksgiving Break: Thanksgiving Break is coming up at the end of the month. Please keep the school calendar handy as you plan.

Celebrations and Seasonal Reminders

We had a wonderful first quarter and are well on our way through the second. As the weather gets colder, please send your child in a jacket for Movement Break. Thank you for helping students stay comfortable and ready to participate.

Staying Connected

We are well into the school year. Please talk with your children about what is happening at school and what they are learning. It is also helpful to review class expectations together. Thank you for all you do to work with us and communicate with us; we truly value your support.

We appreciate all that you do for our school community. We look forward to continuing this partnership and sharing many more successes with you.

With gratitude,
Mr. Malo

Mr. Brown's Corner: Important Information

Hello Holton Families-



Here's hoping that I am finding all of you well rested with your extra hour of sleep from over the weekend. It was nice having some sunlight while driving to school this morning. Of course, I wouldn't be me if I didn't mention our Vikings, Golden Gophers, Wild, and Timberwolves with big victories this month. Bring on November!

Let's begin with a look back. We had a lot of fun in October. The Snake Discovery Center came for a visit last month and showed us snakes from around Minnesota. We had students able to see and learn about several different snakes and lizards. Some students even got an up close and personal view and got to hold and touch them. It was extremely cool. To make it even better, our students were an amazing audience. The other big event we had was our first dance of the year. I hope your child made the choice to go. It was so much fun! We had 250-300 kids dancing, laughing, hanging out with their friends, and eating—oh, so much eating! Our dances are always some of the highlights of the year!

In November, we keep the fun rolling. We have another exciting PBIS Celebration planned. We have our 6th graders taking field trips to the JC Hormel Nature Center. Conferences are planned for the 5th and the 12th. Let's not forget, we also have Thanksgiving coming up. November is going to fly by.

Many of you have seen me outside in the mornings, greeting our students. For many reasons, it is one of the highlights of my day, something I look forward to every morning. However, it is also the most terrifying part of my day. Every day without fail, I am convinced that this is the day that one of our students gets hit getting out of their car. PLEASE, ONLY DROP YOUR CHILD OFF AT THE CURB ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE ROAD!! Having them get out in the left lane puts them at great danger of getting hit. I recognize how busy that drop off lane gets but attempting to avoid it or speed things up at the risk of your child's safety is not worth the risk. In addition, stopping in the left lane backs up all the traffic and adds to the slow drop-off times. Please respect the other drivers.

With that in mind, we are also seeing in increase in students using electric scooters. If you choose to send your child on an electric scooter, please make sure they know how to do it safely. We are seeing far too many of our students zipping in and out of cars or not paying attention to their surroundings at all. It is truly terrifying to witness. Also, anything with wheels (Bikes, skateboards, scooters, etc.) MUST be walked while on campus. Your child and every other child in the building is our top priority.

At IJ Holton, we encourage our students to be Respectful, Responsible, Safe, and to Do Their Best! If at any time you have any questions or concerns, please email me david.brown@austin.k12.mn.us or call me at 460-1525. Enjoy the beautiful changing of the seasons!

David Brown
IJ Holton Dean of Students

Message From The Counselors

Dear Students and Families,

As we move through the school year, November is a great time to check in on academic progress, build positive habits, and make sure students have the support they need to succeed. The IJ Holton and Ellis Counseling Department is here to support students both academically and personally. Check out this month's tips, reminders, and celebrations!

Check Your Parent and Student Portal

Students and families should regularly check the **parent and student portals** to monitor grades, attendance, and overall academic progress.

Checking the portal together can help families:

- Identify classes where a student may need additional support.
- Monitor grades and progress throughout the quarter.
- Address attendance concerns early.
- Celebrate improvements and academic accomplishments!

A quick check once or twice a week can make a big difference.

If you have any problems logging in, please contact portal@austin.k12.mn.us

Communication Is Key!

Students do not have to navigate challenges alone. If a student is struggling with an assignment, a class, a friendship, or something outside of school, reaching out to a trusted adult is an important first step.

Students and families are encouraged to email teachers or the school counselor when concerns arise. Asking questions early can help us work together to find solutions and provide support before a concern grows.

Remember: asking for help is a sign of strength!

November Is National Youth Homelessness Awareness Month

November is a time to raise awareness about youth homelessness and the challenges some students and families experience when they do not have stable housing.

Housing insecurity can affect a student's attendance, concentration, academic performance, and overall well-being. Sometimes, these challenges are not immediately visible to others.

At IJ Holton and Ellis, we want every student to feel safe, supported, and connected to school. If your family is experiencing housing instability or you are concerned about a student who may need support, please reach out to the school counselor.

School staff can help connect students and families with appropriate school and community resources. **You do not have to face these challenges alone, and asking for support is nothing to be ashamed of.**

A Final Note

As we head into November, remember that academic success is a team effort. Students, families, teachers, and counselors all play an important role in helping students thrive. Keep communicating, stay organized, celebrate progress, and reach out whenever support is needed.

Wishing all our IJ Holton and Ellis students and families a wonderful November!

Zack Langreck (5th grade)
Kayla Dickman (6th grade)
Kirstin Norby (7th grade)
Lea Oelfke (8th grade)

Message from the office

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I can't believe we're already talking about winter weather... wasn't it just summer? Minnesota has a way of keeping us on our toes!
As colder weather approaches, please make sure your child is prepared for changing temperatures by dressing in layers and bringing appropriate winter gear, including a coat, hat, mittens or gloves, and boots. Students do go outside for recess and other outdoor activities.
If the outside air temperature is below **0°F** or the wind chill is -10°F or lower, students will have indoor recess. Otherwise, students will be outside enjoying some fresh air, so please ensure they are dressed appropriately for winter weather.
This is also a good time for a friendly reminder that our school doors do not open until 7:45 a.m. Staff are not on duty before that time. If your child arrives early, they will need to wait outside until the building opens, so please make sure they are dressed for whatever Mother Nature decides to send our way that morning. In Minnesota, that could be anything from a light frost to a face-full of winter!

We kindly ask that you plan ahead when scheduling appointments for your child during the school day. To help us ensure a smooth and timely dismissal, please notify the office in advance, enter absence online and arrive with enough time to allow for your child to be called from class.
Your cooperation helps minimize disruptions to learning and ensures your child is ready when you arrive. Thank you for your continued support!

📞 **Keep Emergency Contacts Up to Date!**
To help us ensure your child's safety, please take a moment to review and update your emergency contact information. If your phone number, address, or emergency contacts have changed recently, let us know as soon as possible. Accurate contact details help us reach you quickly in case of illness, injury, or other urgent situations.
You can update your information by logging into the parent portal. portal@austin.k12.mn.us

Thank you for your cooperation and continued support.

Best Regards,
I.J. Holton Office

Strategic Priorities

Priority One: Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment:

- Our "first 20 days" was implanted well with supports.
- Talking Points has been a valuable addition to our communication capabilities.
- Our Crisis team had its first meeting in October. We review drills, events and major discipline issues.
- We have started our work on the Cardiac Response Plan

- We have an administrative assistant track attendance more intensively than before and share information with counselors and administration.

Priority Two: Packer Profile for all learners:

- Our new Magic of Electrons class is going well. Mr. Weichman attended training over the summer to be prepared. Walk-throughs have verified the student engagement, which is very high.
- We are working with our building leadership team to identify artifacts that students can eventually add to their Packer Portfolio.

Priority Three: District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners:

- We have two building leadership meetings every month. One to discuss building climate, the other to work on our Site Plan for next year.
- Our schedule adjustments for PLC time have been very successful. Teachers now have time to have meaningful conversations about student data.
- We now have monthly student attendance meetings. Our admin. assistant for attendance shares information and helps us address any parent communication issues we may have around attendance.
- We will have PD in November on High Impact Teaching Strategies as well as other excellent learning opportunities for teachers.
- Interventions are going well and our data meetings fuel the discussions and specific interventions used.
- Teachers are continuing to improve their BARR meetings which fuel our MTSS process.

Priority Four: Excellence in resource management:

- Purchasing school supplies for all students so they are ready at the beginning of the year has gone well.

BARR UPDATE

IJ Holton Families,

U-Time lessons happen every Thursday at IJ Holton. The summaries of the November lessons for each grade level are below. The U-Time lessons take about 30 minutes and focus on building a connected community, setting goals, building communication skills, student strengths & assets, grief & loss/stress management, bullying, problem-solving, and students' dreams for their future. The teacher acts as a facilitator and often participates right along with the students so that students can get to know them better too.

Sincerely,

Karen Dunbar, IJ Holton & Ellis BARR Coordinator
karen.dunbar@austin.k12.mn.us

BARR Strategies

Focus on the **whole student**.

Provide **professional development** for teachers, counselors, and administration.
Use BARR's **U-Time Curriculum** to foster a climate for learning.
Create a **cohort** of students.
Hold **regular meetings** of the cohort teacher teams.
Conduct **community connect meetings**.
Engage **families** in student learning.
Engage **administrators**.

U-Time Sessions
11/5/26
Grade 5 DOn't quIT Students reflect on personal goals and the process of achieving them. They do this through watching an inspirational video, participating in a class discussion, and creating their own "DOn't quIT" handout.
Grade 6 Rainbow in the Clouds Students will recognize the individuals who provide support and kindness to them when they are going through challenges. They watch a video about this topic and create a class rainbow.

11/12/26
Grade 5 Together We Can Build Something Extraordinary The purpose of this lesson is to help students understand that accomplishing extraordinary things requires a variety of skills, talents, and strengths. Students work in small groups to brainstorm about places that need a team for things to go well.

Grade 6 Mix-It-Moment Students are given the opportunity to build relationships with their classmates and build conversation skills.

11/19/26
Grade 5 Let's Listen Students recognize the skills and behaviors of a good listener. They play a game called "telephone" that teaches them how a message can be misunderstood when it is shared and re-shared by many people. Students have time to reflect and write or draw about how they plan to improve their listening skills and behaviors.
Grade 6 I Am Students will have the opportunity to reflect on and share their family traditions and customs. They create "I Am" statements and later share them with a classmate.

Important Dates to Remember

- **11/2:** Art Club Team B Pink
- **11/3:** PD Day - No School for Students
- **11/5:** Nature Center (Christianson & Sorenson)
- **11/5:** Conferences
- **11/6:** Nature Center (Braaten & Drescher)
- **11/9:** Nature Center (Hastings & Lage)
- **11/9:** Art Club - Team A Yellow
- **11/10:** Nature Center (Shaefer & Holets)
- **11/11:** Nature Center (Hofbauer & Kline)
- **11/11:** Veterans Day Celebration
- **11/12:** Nature Center (Brolsma & Holtz)

- **11/12:** Conferences
- **11/16:** Art Club Team B Pink
- **11/20:** Art Club Team B Pink
- **11/21**: Craft Show at Holton
- **11/23:** Art Club Team A Yellow
- **11/25-11/27 -** Holiday Break



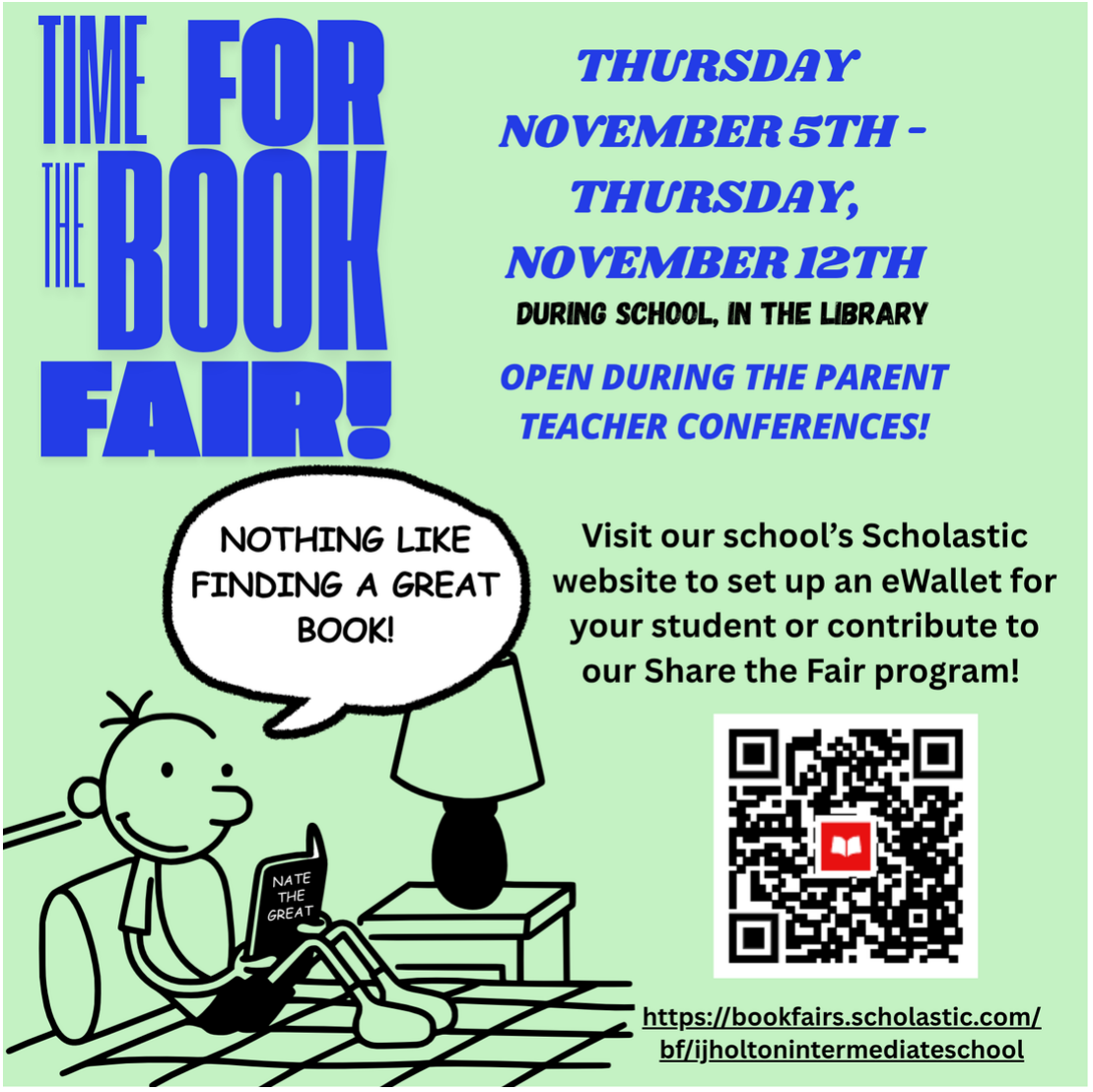
Parent Awareness: IJ Holton Lockdown Drill Dates



IJ Holton Lockdown Drill Dates

app.smore.com

🎉 Chapter One Starts With You! Support IJ Holton's Book Fair



Honoring Our Heroes: Veterans Day Breakfast & Assembly; RSVP needed to join us!



🎁 The Christmas Shoppe You've Been Waiting For!



Consistent Attendance Matters!



At Austin Public Schools, we know that showing up matters. Consistent attendance is one of the clearest predictors of a student's success, not only in the classroom, but in life after graduation. Students who attend school regularly are more likely to achieve academically, graduate on time, and find success in college, careers, or both.

Strong attendance also tells us something important: it reflects how connected students and families/caregivers feel to their school community. When attendance drops, whether for specific groups or across the district, it often signals challenges we can help address, including school climate and engagement, as well as social, emotional, or family barriers.

That's why we're focused on building schools where students want to be. Through strong instruction, supportive relationships, and programs that care for the whole child, Austin Public Schools is working to ensure every student feels welcome, supported, and ready to learn each day. When students feel that connection, they show up, and when they show up, they succeed.
Please watch our new video about the importance of attendance.

Please watch our new video about the importance of attendance.
English: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p6QScFl1yD0

Spanish: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UN2NBvMfdZw

What Parents Need to Know About Cell Phones at IJ Holton (Open PDF)

PDF **K-8 Cell Phone Procedures** Download 1.5 MB





REMOTE LEARNING DAYS

In the event of an unscheduled school closure, valuable instructional time can be lost, often resulting in the need to make up missed school days. Remote Learning Days allow us to take advantage of today's digital resources to maintain continuity of learning, minimize disruptions to instruction, and provide students with meaningful educational opportunities beyond the traditional classroom setting.

Enclosed is a link that can be used in the event of inclement weather or an emergency school closure. By keeping this link readily available, you will have quick and convenient access to information and learning resources for all schools at your fingertips.

AUSTIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
INSPIRE • EMPOWER • ACCELERATE

Remote Learning Days - Austin Public Schools | Inspire. Empower. Accelerate.

Remote Learning Days - Our mission at Austin Public Schools is to Inspire, Empower, and Accelerate as we prepare learners to make a difference in the world.

austin.k12.mn.us

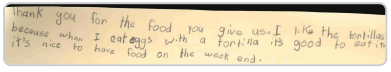
Tis the Season order your Holton fan apparel NOW!



Click Here to Order Your Fan Gear

If you are in need of extra food, we can help!





Backpack Program

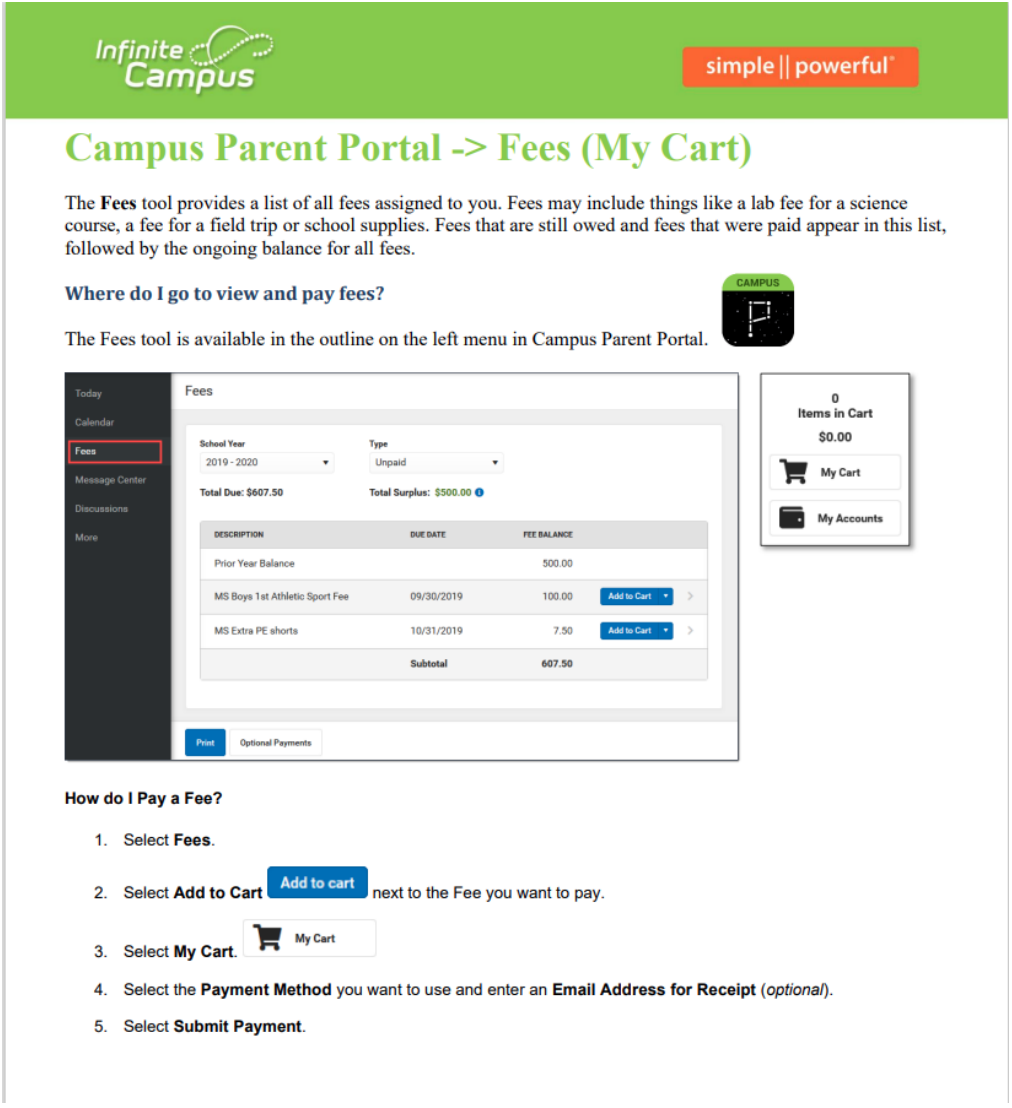
Enrollment for the Backpack Program during the 2026-27 is now open, please click the button above to register for the program.

uwmower.org

DO

Pay Fees

Please see below if you want to pay your fees online. You may always pay at the school with check/cash/or credit card also.



Infinite Campus

simple || powerful

Campus Parent Portal -> Fees (My Cart)

The **Fees** tool provides a list of all fees assigned to you. Fees may include things like a lab fee for a science course, a fee for a field trip or school supplies. Fees that are still owed and fees that were paid appear in this list, followed by the ongoing balance for all fees.

Where do I go to view and pay fees?

The Fees tool is available in the outline on the left menu in Campus Parent Portal.

How do I Pay a Fee?

1. Select **Fees**.
2. Select **Add to Cart** next to the Fee you want to pay.
3. Select **My Cart**.
4. Select the **Payment Method** you want to use and enter an **Email Address for Receipt** (*optional*).
5. Select **Submit Payment**.

Athletics

Sports Information from EMS Athletic Director

Parents and Students:

Please see the athletic options for our winter sports seasons. Several opportunities are open at Ellis as well as AHS for our student athletes. Registrations will open on various dates and will only be open for two weeks. We will be opening up a winter weightlifting option as well - more information to come!

Just a reminder - prior to registration, sports physicals must be turned in to the Ellis office. They can be dropped off or emailed to nicole.murphy@austin.k12.mn.us
Registration options will NOT show up in the Portal until the physical is entered.
If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Nichelle Gabrielson, Middle School Athletic Director



🎉 Ready to Dance? The Ellis Dance Team Wants You!

2026-2027

Join the Ellis Dance Team!

EDT HUH!

Open to:

- All genders and skill levels
- 6th - 8th Graders
- Anyone who wants to have fun, try new things and make memories!



Why Join Us?

- Opportunity to learn a spooky routine, gain new skills & compete against other teams
- Make lifelong memories with friends, gain confidence & learn leadership skills
- Be part of an innovative, creative & dynamic team that pushes you to be the best you can be

Season Starts 11/16/26 - Ends 2/6/27
Practice: M/F 3:30-5:30, Tu/Th 3:30-5, No Wednesdays

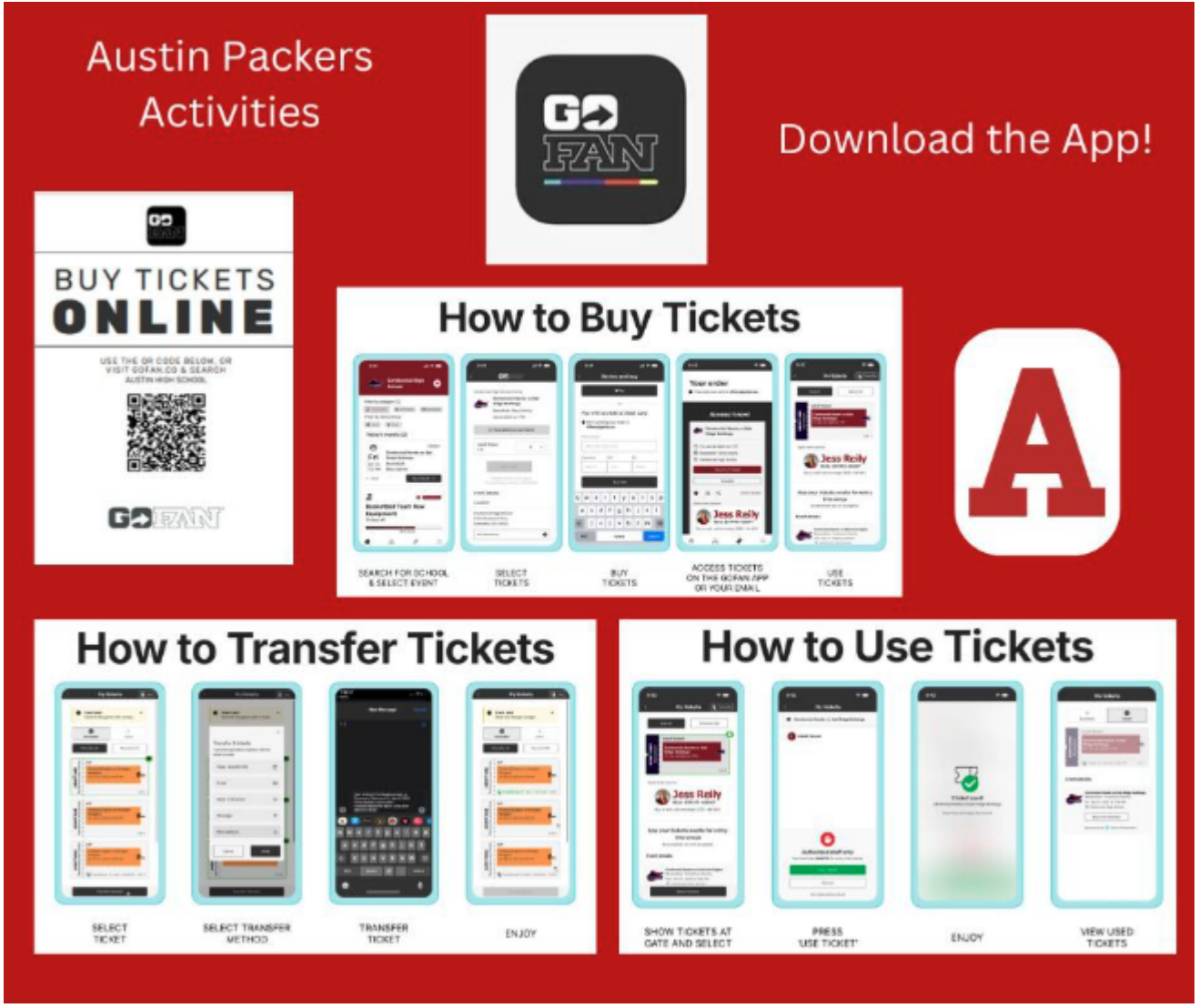
Contact the Coaches:

Maggie Chidester:
maggiechide004@gmail.com

McKenzie Beckel
beckelkenzie7@gmail.com

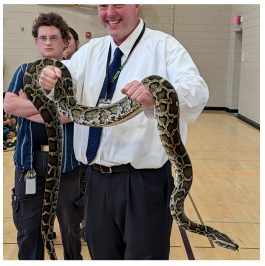
Registration Open 11/1

- **Log in to Campus Parent Portal:** Navigate to the **School Store** to complete the athletic registration.
- **Sports Physical:** Ensure your student has a current sports physical form on file with the school.

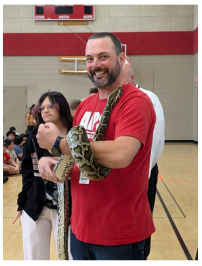














IJ Holton Intermediate School

https://holton.austin.k12.mn.us

Principal: Dewey Schara
Assistant Principal: Kane Malo
Dean of Students - Dave Brown

Principal's Administrative Assistant: Karla Dooley

1800 4th Ave SE
Austin, MN 55912
507-460-1525

School Hours:
7:45 AM - 4:00 PM (Mon-Thursday)
7:45 AM-3:00 PM (Fri)