


## September, 2026

### A message from your principal...




**Dear Sumner Families,**
It is truly an honor to serve your children and partner with you in their learning journey. One of the greatest joys of my role is getting to know our students—their personalities, their strengths, and the dreams they carry with them each day. Building these relationships and creating a strong sense of belonging at Sumner is at the heart of everything we do.

We have had a terrific start to the school year! At Sumner, we place a high value on helping students not only grow academically but also thrive socially and emotionally. We are teaching our students how to manage big feelings, solve problems respectfully, and encourage one another to make strong choices. Below, you'll find more about PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) and the Zones of Regulation strategies we are using to support this growth. When children develop these skills, they are better equipped to succeed both in school and in life.

I hope to see you at our **Sumner Fall Family Event on September 3rd**—a wonderful time to celebrate and connect together. You are also warmly invited to join us in walking as a school community in the **Homecoming Parade on September 18th**. Both events are great opportunities to show our Sumner spirit and strengthen our sense of belonging.

**We value your voice!** To give families multiple chances to share their thoughts, we are sending out a short survey. Your ideas and feedback—shared anonymously—help us celebrate what's working well and identify ways we can continue to grow together.

September 2026 Family Feedback – Fill out form

We look forward to a wonderful year ahead filled with learning, growth, and connection. Thank you for entrusting us with your child—it is a privilege we hold close.

With gratitude,
**Mrs. Rollie**

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## Strategic Priorities Update

### 1. Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment.




At Sumner, we use **Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)** to intentionally teach, model, and celebrate positive behavior throughout our school. Just like academics, we believe strong social-emotional and behavioral skills are learned through teaching, practice, encouragement, and consistency.
Our students practice positive behavior in **every school environment**—classrooms, hallways, the cafeteria, bathrooms, buses, playground, and other shared spaces—through our four **Sumner Cool Rules**:
⭐ **Be Kind!**
⭐ **Work Hard!**
⭐ **No Excuses!**
⭐ **Choose Well!**
We make this learning fun and rewarding! Classrooms earn **tokens** when students demonstrate our Cool Rules and positive behavior. For every **10 tokens**, the classroom earns a **StarBuck**. When our entire Sumner School Family reaches **50 StarBucks**, we celebrate together with a special **schoolwide celebration!** 🎉
We are also incredibly proud that Sumner has been recognized as a **Minnesota Sustaining Exemplar PBIS School for the third year in a row!** This state recognition celebrates the commitment of our students, staff, and families to creating a positive school community where students feel supported, connected, and ready to learn.
**Together, we are growing great learners, great citizens, and a great school community!** ⭐

### 2. Packer Profile for all learners

Our school staff is excited to participate in a **Door Name Sign Pilot** that brings our district's **Packer Profile** to life! Each staff member's sign shares a little more about who they are—including their strengths, Packer Profile traits, past jobs and careers, childhood career aspirations, hobbies, favorite quotes, pets, and a photo.
These signs have quickly become more than just nameplates! They are sparking conversations, helping students discover shared interests and experiences with staff, introducing them to a variety of career pathways, and strengthening meaningful relationships throughout our school community.
We are also bringing the Packer Profile to life through **student learning portfolios in Seesaw**. Throughout the school year, families will see examples of their child's learning in **reading, writing, and math**, along with a **student strength artifact** that celebrates the unique strengths they bring to our school community. Students will also showcase **capstone projects in science, music, art, and physical education**.
Together, these experiences help us celebrate not only **what students are learning, but who they are becoming**. Seesaw provides families with a meaningful window into their child's learning

journey and a portfolio that captures the **growth, strengths, and accomplishments** they experience throughout the school year.

### 3. District-wide multi-tiered systems of support.

During the first month of school, our students complete **benchmark assessments**. The results from these assessments help us identify the instructional services and supports each student needs to be successful.
We are also excited to launch **Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)** this month. PLCs provide our staff with dedicated time to collaborate, analyze student learning, and design instruction that meets the needs of all learners. This work ensures that every student has the opportunity to grow and achieve at high levels.

### 4. Excellence in resource management.

Each morning from 7:45–8:00, students are able to access breakfast and enjoy it in their classrooms, helping them start the day ready to learn.
We continue to encourage families to support **All Day, Every Day** attendance. Research is clear—consistent attendance is one of the most important factors in ensuring student success.

To learn more about the Packer Profile and the district's long-term strategic plan, please visit AccelerateAustin.org.

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## Know




Austin's Sumner Elementary School has been named a 2026 Minnesota School of Excellence by the Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association. Sumner is the second Austin elementary school to receive the designation in as many years, a huge honor.

"This recognition reflects the incredible commitment of Sumner Elementary's educators, staff, students and families to continuous growth and excellence," said Michelle Krell, executive director of MESPA. "Schools of Excellence earn the recognition through thoughtful reflection, a willingness to learn and improve, and an unwavering focus on creating the best possible learning environment for every student. Sumner's commitment to inclusive practices, shared leadership and student success truly exemplifies what this program is all about."

“Being named a Minnesota School of Excellence is an outstanding recognition of the culture and commitment that Principal Jill Rollie and the Sumner team have built together,” said Superintendent Joey Page. “What stands out about Sumner is how intentionally they recognize the strengths of students and staff, value the diversity of their school community, and create opportunities for people throughout the building to lead. This recognition affirms that excellence is built through shared ownership, continuous improvement, and a belief in every learner's potential. I am incredibly proud of the entire Sumner community.”

MESPA's School of Excellence "status is given to a select group of Minnesota schools that sustained a one-to two-year commitment of research and self-reflection to improve their school. The peer-reviewed application is centered around six standards of effective schools."

Congratulations on this tremendous accomplishment!




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## Sumner Named Among America's Healthiest Schools 2026

Austin's Sumner Elementary School and the Community Learning Center have both been named among America's Healthiest Schools 2026 by the Alliance for a Healthier Generation.

Supported by Del Monte Foods, Kaiser Permanente, and Kohl's Cares, Healthier Generation's annual award program recognizes schools for implementing evidence-based policies and practices to support academic success and lifelong well-being. Schools are recognized in nine health-related topic areas.

"Being recognized as one of America's Healthiest Schools for Improving Nutrition and Food Access is a wonderful reflection of our commitment to supporting the whole child," said Sumner Elementary principal Jill Rollie. "We know students are better able to learn, grow, and thrive when their basic needs are met, and they have access to nutritious food and healthy choices. This recognition celebrates the collective efforts of our staff, families, and community partners who work together to ensure every student has the resources and support they need to be healthy, successful, and ready to learn."

Sumner was honored for "Improving Nutrition and Food Access" while the Community Learning Center was honored for "Cultivating Staff Well-Being".

"Our team at the CLC is thrilled to receive this recognition which reflects the supportive culture our team has built together," said Community Education Director Jen Lawhead. "Trust, belonging, and strengths-based collaboration create an environment where staff can grow and do their best work for students and families. That positive culture is especially important for our youngest learners as they build the foundation for lifelong learning."

“We are proud to celebrate Sumner Elementary and the Community Learning Center for earning this national recognition,” said Austin Superintendent Dr. Joey Page. “It highlights the intentional work happening in these school communities and reflects our district-wide commitment to creating environments where every student feels supported, healthy, and ready to learn. Congratulations to the staff, students, families/caregivers, and partners who contributed to this achievement.”

Alliance for a Healthier Generation is a leading national nonprofit dedicated to advancing equitable whole child health by creating healthier school environments. Since 2005, the organization has partnered with over 57,000 school communities across all 50 states, reaching more than 31.3 million young people. Learn more at HealthierGeneration.org.

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## Get Ready to WALK, MOVE & MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

We are excited to kick off our **Annual Austin Elementary Schools Walk-A-Thon on Wednesday, October 7!** This fun, school-wide event brings together students and families from **Banfield, Neveln, Southgate, and Sumner Elementary Schools** as we work toward a **district-wide fundraising goal of $40,000!**

The best part? **Every dollar raised goes directly back to our elementary students** and helps provide special extras throughout the school year, including **family engagement events, PBIS supplies and celebrations, outdoor learning opportunities, spirit wear, and more.**

How Can Your Family Help?

Getting involved is easy! We are using **Get Movin’ FundHub**, an online, mobile-friendly fundraising platform.

**Just follow these three simple steps:**

1. **Register or log in** to your parent dashboard and complete your child’s student webpage at www.getmovinfundhub.com. Our school identifier is **5d52d23dd9fc5**.
2. **Make an online donation** using the red “Donate” button.
3. **Share your child’s page** with friends and family! Consider sending 10–15 emails or text messages and sharing the fundraiser on social media.

Be sure to check the FundHub website for information about **prizes and incentives**!

Walk-A-Thon Day — Wednesday, October 7

Each elementary school will have an **All-School Walk**, followed by additional walking time with individual classes throughout the school day. Families are welcome and encouraged to join us for the all-school portion of the walk!

**All-School Walk Times:**

- **Southgate:** 8:15–8:55 a.m.
- **Banfield:** 9:10–9:50 a.m.
- **Sumner:** 10:00–10:30 a.m.
- **Neveln:** 1:40–2:10 p.m.

A Few Important Reminders

- **Online donations are preferred** and can be made through your child's fundraising webpage.
- Cash and check donations should be placed in an envelope and turned in to your child's teacher by **Tuesday, October 6**. Please make checks payable to **Austin Public Schools PTC** and include your child's name and teacher on the envelope.
- Check with your employer to see whether they offer a **matching gift program**!
- Interested in volunteering on Walk-A-Thon day? Volunteer sign-up information will be available under the **"Event Updates"** section of your school's fundraising website.

We can't wait to see our students **walking, moving, and working together** to make a difference across Austin Public Schools! Thank you for helping us make this year's Walk-A-Thon a fun and successful event for all of our elementary students.

**Questions?** Please contact your school principal or Noelle Day at nrday11@gmail.com.




## Food Allergies

**Peanuts, peanut products prohibited in classrooms**

Creating safe and supportive learning environments is a top priority in Austin Public Schools; foods with peanuts and tree nuts cannot be brought into classrooms. There are many students with life-threatening food allergies, and exposure to a peanut or tree nut product puts many students at risk of anaphylaxis. We need your help to keep everyone safe. Cafeterias have peanut-free tables in every school cafeteria to provide a safe dining experience.

- Do not send snacks that contain peanuts, almonds, cashews, hazelnuts, pistachios, or walnuts.

- Please read labels carefully to make sure that products are peanut- and nut-free. Products with labels that read “May contain traces of peanuts/nuts” or “Manufactured in a plant that processes peanuts/nut products” are not allowed in classrooms.

**Foods that cannot be in classrooms**

- Peanuts
- Tree nuts: almonds, cashews, hazelnuts, pecans, pistachios, walnuts, etc. For a list visit: Food Allergy Research
- Peanut butter or any nut butters
- Nut milk – almond milk,
- Nutella
- Pesto or nut-based spreads

** SunButter, a product made with sunflower seeds, is a safe substitute for peanut butter!*

**Peanut- and tree-nut-free snack & lunch ideas!**

- Fruits & vegetables: canned or fresh
- Fresh fruit: apples, bananas, peaches, pears, grapes, etc.
- Chopped fruit: watermelon, cantaloupe, pineapple, etc.
- Fruit cups: applesauce, pears, peaches, oranges, etc.
- Dried fruit: raisins, dried apricots, etc.
- Fresh vegetables: sliced cucumbers, carrots, sugar snap peas, sliced red pepper, grape tomatoes, etc.
- Cheese: string cheese, cheese slices, etc.
- Yogurt cup
- 100% fruit juice boxes

If you have further questions, please contact your school’s health office. You can view the Austin Student Student Wellness Policy 533 here.

**Allergies & Medical Conditions**

If your student needs special diet accommodations, please contact:

- Tanner Lange, Food & Nutrition Director, at 507-460-1921 or by email or
- Shaylie Meyer, RN/Licensed School Nurse, Supervisor of Health Services, at 507-460-1915 or by email.

**More resources:**

Special Diet Request Form

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## Birthday Treats

Individual classrooms will observe birthdays with special activities planned by teachers, such as allowing children to wear a "Birthday Hat" or by singing to them. If students choose to share a treat with the class on their birthday, food must be an individually wrapped and purchased treat that, in the interest of instructional time, can quickly be consumed. Examples of such treats are fruit snacks, individual packages of cookies or crackers, etc.… **Parents should contact the teacher to make them aware that they are sending a treat for the class.** Please do not distribute personal party invitations at school.

If you do not want your child to participate in birthday celebrations for personal or religious reasons your desires will be honored. Please contact the classroom teacher to discuss the activities in which your child should not participate, and to decide what he or she will do during these events.




### Example of a Snack that Meets Our Policy

Individually wrapped snacks that do not come from a shared package



### Example that Does Not Meet Our Policy

Package of Cupcakes from a Shared Container



### Call us with Questions!

If you aren't sure whether or snack will meet the policy or not, please feel free to call our office at 507-460-1100.

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## Milk Price for Cold Lunch Option




As you may of heard, all students in Minnesota are eligible to receive a hot lunch free of charge each and every day. We also know that some students choose to bring cold lunch.
The new legislation that was passed to enable all students to have a free hot lunch does not include milk for those taking cold lunch. If a student takes cold lunch, they will be charged $0.50 if they choose to take a milk with their cold lunch.
If you have any questions, please feel free to call Food Service at 507-460-1921.

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## Sumner Fall Family Night

We hope to see you this Thursday, September 3rd for our Fall Family event!




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## November Referendum




The Austin Public Schools have placed a $24.9 million bond referendum on the November 3 ballot.
The proposed funding would address identified facility needs across the District, including:

- Improving safety and security
- Increasing accessibility
- Addressing water infiltration
- Updating aging building systems and finishes
- Completing needed repairs to keep the Ellis Middle School pool operational

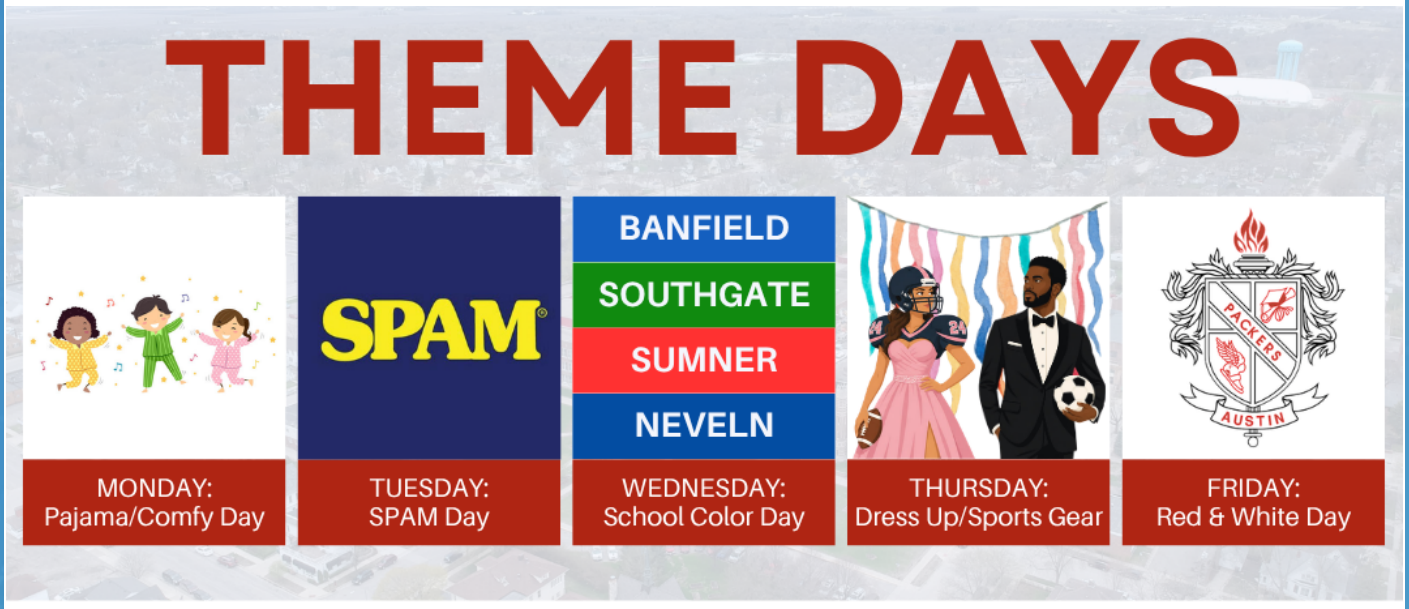
Community members are encouraged to learn more about the proposal, review project information, and submit questions through the District's referendum website. **#AustinPackers**

Learn more or submit a question:

https://www.austin.k12.mn.us/district-resources/referendum-2026

## Walk with Us in the Homecoming Parade on Friday, September 18th!

It's the most wonderful time... of the year! It is HOMECOMING! The parade will start at 4:00 PM and our students accompanied by an adult may walk with us in the parade. We will send communication at a later date of the parade route and where we will meet to walk together as Sumner School! It is sure to be a bright moment! More information to come!




HOMECOMING
September 14-19, 2026

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### Important Dates to Remember



**September 3rd - Welcome Family Night from 3:30-5:30 PM**
*Sumner Playground*

**Friday, September 18th - Picture Day**
*Sumner Elementary School*

**September 18th -Homecoming Parade at 4:00 PM**
*To be determined*

**October 7th- Annual Elementary District Walk-a-thon at 10:00 AM**
*Sumner Elementary School*

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## Do

### Volunteer Background Check Information

**Volunteering at Sumner**
We are so excited to welcome more parents and families back into the building as volunteers! Your time and presence make such a difference in our school community.
A **volunteer interest form** was recently sent home in your child's backpack—please take a moment to look it over and return it if you'd like to get involved.
To volunteer at Sumner, a **current background check** must be on file.

- If you're unsure whether your background check is up to date, simply call the Sumner office and we'll be happy to check for you.
- If you need to complete a new background check, the process is quick and easy online through the district website under the **"Parents"** dropdown menu. Please follow this link https://www.rhris.com/ApplyNowV3/ApplyNowV3.cfm?SiteID=5039S&PNbr=4&OriginalURL=

We truly value and appreciate the partnership of our families—thank you for considering this opportunity to support our students and staff!

**ONLINE APPLICATION**

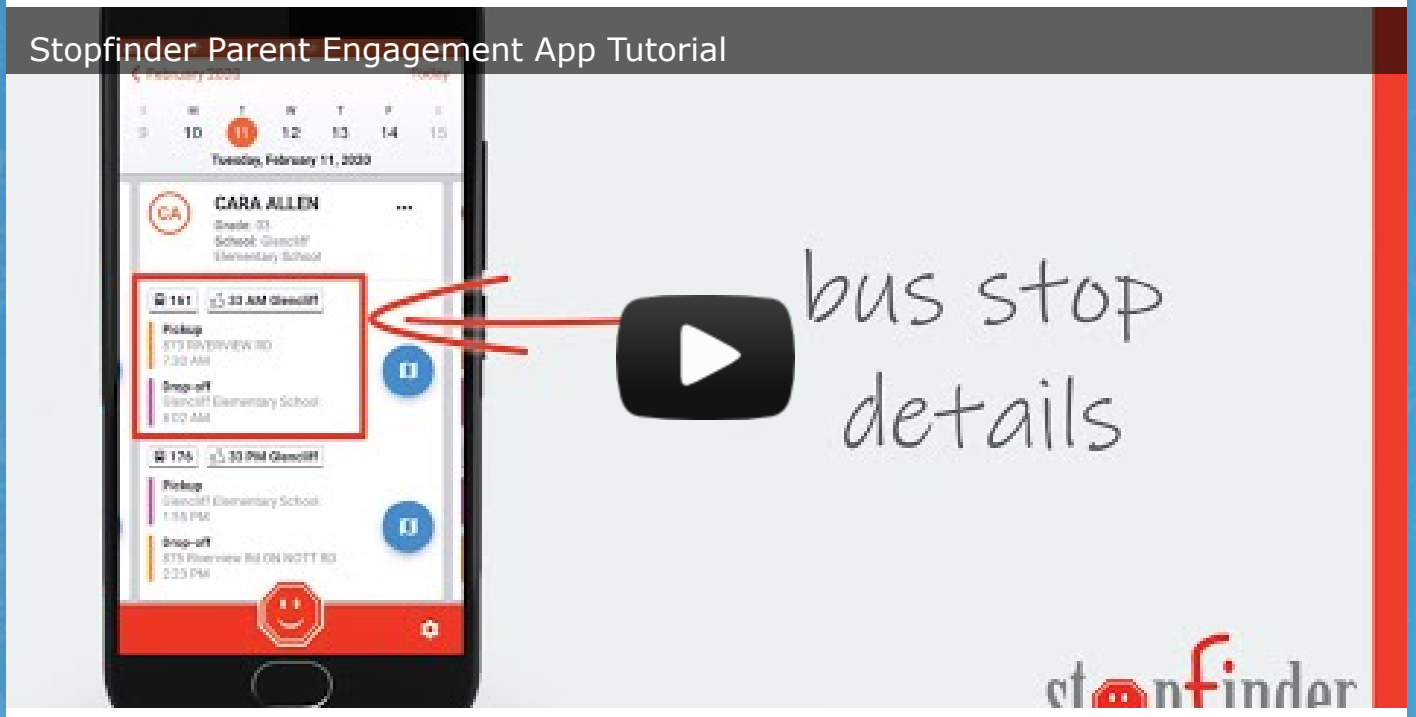
Welcome to the Austin Public Schools, ISD 492 online Release Authorization.

rhris.com

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## Stopfinder

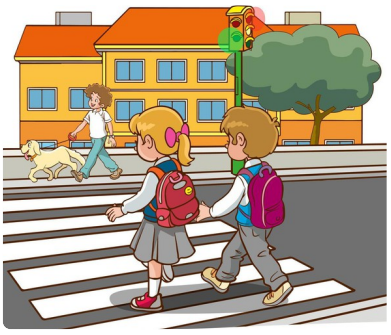
Stopfinder Parent Engagment Application offered by Palmer Bus Company allows you to track where your child is at on his/her bus journey.




PDF **STOPFINDER_QuickStartGuide_2024.08.pdf** Download 659.7 KB

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## Be safe, always use crosswalks



Austin Public School families,

My name is Officer Brian Blake. I am the school resource officer at Ellis Middle School and IJ Holton, Neveln and Southgate. I have been with the school system going on 8 years.

The first couple of days I've been directing and watching traffic at several schools as parents are dropping off their children and this has been going great. So, thank you!

Please, if you are dropping your children off have your children use the available crosswalks. If you are walking them, please use available crosswalks. Don't cut across the road. This is a safety issue, and I don't want a child to get hurt. So please remind your child before exiting the car to use the crosswalks and look both ways.
Sincerely

Officer Brian Blake
Austin Police Department
School Resource Officer

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## Share

### Sumner Playground

Our students love our playground! We love seeing children using our playground during school hours and outside of school of school hours. Please speak to your child about caring for our playground after school hours, if they come to play. Together we can keep our playground in good shape.




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### Zones of Regulation

We've been working hard with your child providing daily opportunities to identify how they feel throughout the day. Kids are just like us. They feel happy, sad, tired, frustrated, silly, excited, angry, worried, and so much more! What do they do when they have big feelings that can get in the way of doing their best work? We teach them coping strategies to safely work through those big feelings and keep doing their job of learning, playing, and growing at school.
**Stay tuned** for your own home Zones check-in with strategies you can use to help your child work through big feelings. We'll send home what you need, so you can practice at home! In the meantime, check out the video link below and tips for home to practice using Zones of Regulation!






## Help Us Calm Down Strategies for Children




1. Regularly practice using calm down strategies when your child is relaxed. Then they are more likely to try it when they really need it. Check out the ideas to the left!
2. Read a story and talk about how different characters are feeling. "What do you think he is feeling?" "Why is he feeling that way?" "How can you tell he is ____?" "Have you ever felt ____?" "What makes you feel that way?" "What should he do?" Don't pause too long on one page and only continue the discussion as long as your child shows an interest. *Your teacher can give you book ideas if you're looking for a specific emotion.*
3. Get the crayons or markers out and make a homemade "book" with your child drawing what they look like when they have different feelings. Add pictures of what makes them feel that way and what helps them feel better. Find your inner artist!
4. Take turns playing feelings charades and acting out different strategies to manage big feelings. Use your whole body to act it out while the other person guesses.
5. Label how you are feeling and what you are going to do about it. State how your child is feeling and how others are feeling. Encourage conversation about solutions.

## Is your child in the right car seat?

*We want our children to be as safe as possible while we're driving!* That means making sure our precious cargo is secured properly in the right car seat, booster seat or seat belt, appropriate for their age, size and maturity level.

CPS-Fact Sheet

**CPS-Fact Sheet**

We want our children to be as safe as possible while we're driving! That means making sure our precious cargo is secured properly in the right car seat, booster seat or seat belt, appropriate for their age, size and maturity level.

msc.minnesotasafetycouncil.org






## Sumner Staff Spotlight



### Ethan Blackmon-Reading Corps Tutor

**What is your favorite to learn about?**
My favorite subject to learn about is science - specifically space research & exploration.

**What is your favorite hobby outside of school?**
My favorite hobby outside of school is coaching talented people on how to play competitive videogames like "Overwatch."

**What are you most looking forward to this school year?**
This school year, I am most looking forward to finishing my series of short stories.

### Jasmine Garza- Math Corps Tutor

**What are you most looking forward to this school year?**
I'm looking forward to getting to know the students and staff, making new connections, and being part of the school community. I'm excited to learn from everyone and have a fun and successful school year!

**What is your favorite thing to learn about?**



I enjoy learning about history and different cultures. I think it's interesting to learn about different people, places, and how things have changed over time

**What is your favorite hobby outside of school?**
My favorite hobby outside of school is playing volleyball. I enjoy being active and spending time with others


**Sumner Elementary School**
https://sumner.austin.k12.mn.us

805 8th Avenue NW
Austin, MN 55912
507-460-1100


**School Hours:**
8:00AM - 2:30PM