Perhaps the greatest lesson I’ve learned these past nine months of living and working in the Shawnee Mission School District (SMSD) is that we are a wonderful community with much to celebrate. We are a community that works from our strengths to optimistically plan for an even better future. This is the spirit in which SMSD approached strategic planning this year. As we’ve worked through the strategic planning process, we have joined hands across our diversity to develop a road map for the future. That map, still under construction, is detailed in this edition of Inside SMSD, and on our web site at www.smsd.org.

Our SMSD strategic planning process places a clear and ever-present focus on students and their learning. It also speaks to the important roles and responsibilities we have as adults to support students in developing the academic and interpersonal skills foundational to their life success. Collaboration by the Steering Committee, which identified beliefs, mission, parameters, objectives and strategies for the Strategic Plan, clearly defines the big picture of our work ahead.

Central to the plan is the identification of three measurable objectives. The objectives focus our work on student learning and life-readiness outcomes. Action Teams will use the lens of their individual strategy to define and build the action plans that support achieving the objectives. The culmination of these efforts will be presented to the Steering Committee in June. The Steering Committee then makes its recommendations to the Superintendent. The superintendent presents the final plan to the Board of Education at their June 24th meeting for approval.

As we approach the final days of school, there is much to celebrate. In touring classrooms across the district I’ve seen countless examples of engaged learners and talented, compassionate educators working together. Every day is full of opportunities for our students. By working hard and growing together, we have the opportunity to help every learner reach their full potential. It is this team approach that helps all our students, including members of the class of 2019, be success-ready graduates.

Dr. Mike Fulton
Foundation Hosts Fall Breakfast Celebrating the District’s 50th Milestone

The community will celebrate the school district’s legacy of excellence at this year’s Shawnee Mission Education Foundation Fall Breakfast at 7 a.m. on Thursday, September 5, 2019.

Shawnee Mission schools have a rich history, with some approaching their centennial or bicentennial year. This fall commemorates the year all schools in the Shawnee Mission School District unified, July 1, 2019, is the 50th anniversary of the formation of Unified School District #512.

Breakfast attendees will celebrate the district and Foundation as they continue to challenge today’s learners and inspire tomorrow’s leaders.

“We are very excited to honor this milestone at the breakfast,” said Kimberly Hinkle, Shawnee Mission Education Foundation executive director said. “We look forward to welcoming community members, corporate partners, and alumni to kick-off this significant celebration.”

Shawnee Mission Education Foundation Fall Breakfast
Thursday, September 5, 2019 at 7 a.m., Overland Park Convention Center, 6000 College Boulevard, Overland Park, KS 66211

For table and ticket reservations, please contact the Foundation at www.smef.org
Building the Future Together

Our community is taking steps toward creating what the future of learning will look like in the Shawnee Mission School District (SMSD), through the development of a new Strategic Plan. The district has a remarkable history of achievement and success. This legacy gives the district the opportunity to plan strategically to design a system of schools that prepares students for their futures.

“We are looking to create a Shawnee Mission School District that builds on the past to create an even better future for each one of our students,” Superintendent Dr. Mike Fulton said.

As community members engage in this process, one common question they are asking is, “What are the skills the current first-graders, members of the class of 2030, will need to be a success-ready graduate?”

“In our fast-changing world, it is difficult to fully envision what the world will look like when our students graduate from high school,” Fulton said. “Yet, it is our community’s responsibility to ensure they have the foundation they need for their life’s journey. We care about our students and their success. That deep sense of caring is core to our mission of ensuring every child graduates from the Shawnee Mission School District ready for personal life success.”

The excellence the district is striving to achieve for all students is represented by the image of the North Star, a symbol of what we are all aspiring to develop—a school system which meets the needs of all students and supports their individual success.

The Shawnee Mission School Board voted unanimously in December to fund a strategic planning process for the remainder of the 2018-19 school year. The Shawnee Mission Education Foundation is partnering with the district to provide fundraising support for the Strategic Planning process. Since the Board’s approval, thousands of individuals in the Shawnee Mission School District community have engaged in the process of creating a school system that meets the needs of each and every student.

Strategic Planning Kickoff at Shawnee Mission West High School.

Community Input is Essential

In February, district patrons began to participate in some of the first conversations to develop the Strategic Plan. Community members, administrators, staff, students, and parents took part in an Awareness Kickoff. Community members were also invited to join the conversation online by providing input through the online platform, Thoughtexchange.

“The most important thing I would like for people to know is how powerful each individual’s voice is, how important the future for our students is, and that we are making sure we design a Strategic Plan that is going to get us to the North Star, and not just keeping the status quo,” said Dr. Michelle Hubbard, associate superintendent of leadership and learning.

Input from the Kickoff and the Thoughtexchange conversation was compiled and presented to a 30-member Steering Committee, made up of a broad range of individuals from across the Shawnee Mission School District community. They bring a diverse background to their work, including experience inside and outside education, and reflect the district’s demographic profile.

In late February, the Steering Committee met for two-and-a-half days to create a draft strategic planning document which includes a mission statement, beliefs, strategies, objectives, and parameters for the district strategic planning process. (See page 8.)

Harmony Bailey, a Shawnee Mission Northwest freshman and Steering Committee member, was pleased with the process. After it ended, she said: “I think we really have some good ideas to build a great future for the SMSD and I’m excited for what the future holds in the district.”

The Process Continues

The draft Strategic Planning document will guide the rest of the Strategic Planning process and, once finalized and adopted by the Board of Education, will guide the entire district moving forward.

“The Steering Committee did a phenomenal job of creating a draft of a document that will guide us as we continue this planning work and into the future,” Fulton said. “Strong strategic plans don’t sit on a shelf. They live in our heart—every day that we go about the work of not only engaging in school and learning with students, but also in the way we choose to interact with each other as a community.”

The Steering Committee will reconvene this spring to continue their work and hear the progress of the Strategic Planning Action Teams.

Additional information about the Strategic Plan can be found on the district website at www.smsd.org/about/strategic-plan-2019-overview.
A group of second-grade students at Briarwood Elementary School refuses to wait for others to save the planet and are taking matters into their own hands. Wanting to encourage more students to help the planet, they launched a schoolwide awareness campaign: The Zero Food Waste Challenge. They researched food waste and how to prevent it and created a plan to track how much food waste was collected at school in one week. Then, they started an awareness campaign, giving presentations in every classroom at school, and sharing tips with their peers for how they can reduce food waste through composting and recycling.

By the end of their all-school, one-week challenge, all Briarwood students had prevented 62.8 additional pounds of food waste and $9 additional pounds of other types of waste from going to the landfill.

“We learned that we can help solve this problem at school every day,” proclaimed second-grader Lauren Boomer.

“And so can you!” It is efforts like these, led by students and staff across the district, that prompted the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 7 to recognize the Shawnee Mission School District (SMSD) for their exemplary efforts in composting and recycling. “The Shawnee Mission School District is serving as a leader and demonstrating to other school districts what is possible when schools embrace sustainability,” according to EPA Region 7 Administrator Jim Gulliford.

Even as the list of sustainability accolades grows, students and staff continue to find new ways to build upon their success, enhance sustainability efforts, and use their knowledge and skills to help the environment.

Food Recovery Challenge Awards
The EPA presented the district with an award and Christa McAuliffe Elementary won a national Food Recovery Challenge award for 2018. The recognition honors work across the district, which included thousands of students and staff members working together to accomplish a goal. Composting and recycling started as a grassroots effort in one elementary school in 2008. Now, all SMSD schools and the Center for Academic Achievement (CAA) participate. The Food Recovery Challenge award highlighted that in 2017, the district diverted more than 600,000 pounds of food and paper to compost.

Christa McAuliffe was the only school in the country to receive the national, data-driven EPA recognition in 2018. The school composted 11,875 pounds of food waste in 2017, an increase from 5,625 pounds of food waste from the prior year. Student and staff members were specifically recognized for their leadership in making this positive change.

Fifth-grader Madison Boyle, former student at Briarwood Elementary School, was among 22 students recognized for their leadership in sustainability efforts, including creating YouTube videos and giving school public service announcements. "You can help - how can you help?" Boyle says. "Lead your peers and your community to accomplish the next big goal."
Sixth-graders continue to promote zero food waste each morning during school announcements,” second-grade teacher Susan Cunningham said. “In addition, students throughout the school are more diligent about not wasting food and about recycling. The challenge brought us all together to achieve a goal.”

Briarwood students hope their PSA, which was shared on social media, will encourage students in other schools to compost and recycle, too. At the invitation of local city officials, Prairie Elementary students researched, wrote, and filmed PSAs to be shared with community members, in order to help improve curbside recycling practices. Students not only learned about the environment, but also received valuable experience through the process of creating their PSAs. They also learned how they can play a role in improving their community, according to their teacher, Laura Moore.

“It’s been a fun project, and it makes you feel like part of your community to work on a project like this,” noted sixth-grader Marie Ptacek. Through project-based learning and hands-on experiences, students gain a chance to see how they can improve the world around them.

Second-grade teacher Susan Cunningham is a big supporter of this type of learning. “Sometimes teachers make up problems to solve,” she said, “but already, we have so many we can work on solving together.”

As efforts to solve the problems of mitigating waste and cleaning up the environment have expanded across the district, so has the creation of spaces that allow students to see fruitful harvest of their environmentally friendly work.

Educational Gardens Grow

Across the district, the number of outdoor gardens and learning spaces continues to grow thanks to students and staff who have been building and planting. Currently, 80 percent of schools have outdoor gardens and learning spaces, giving students an opportunity to learn as they help grow and harvest vegetables from their school gardens.

“Gardens give students valuable experiential learning opportunities,” said Joan Leavens. “They provide hands-on learning that helps students understand food and how they can play a role in improving the world around them.”

One of the biggest educational gardens in the district is the 1.3-acre Broadmoor Urban Farm and Orchard at the CAA. The “living classroom” is maintained by and produces food used by student chefs in the district’s Culinary Arts and Hospitality Signature Program. In future phases, the garden will feature a greenhouse and an outdoor demonstration kitchen.

“We hope the farm will be educational for every part of our community and for our students to have an understanding of our food, and for our chefs to understand what it is they are cooking,” notes Robert Brassard, chef instructor. Last year, students helped grow about 3,000 pounds of food. Much of it was used in the Broadmoor Bistro student-run restaurant.

Baylee Harwick, a senior and Culinary Arts student from Shawnee Mission North, said she is glad to gain the experience of students and staff, her portion of the planet will surely be in even better shape this spring.

Student-run restaurant.

Career and College Ready: Students Explore Career Possibilities at All Ages

It is never too early for students to start looking toward the future in the Shawnee Mission School District. No longer limited to Career Day, the opportunity to explore the future is being provided to students of all ages throughout the school year.

Sharing a variety of careers and professions with elementary students is part of the curriculum for Laura Lavallee, an instructional coach at Tomahawk Elementary School. “Not only are educators teaching skills and strategies for a child’s successful future in the work force from day one of their educational career, we are committed to helping them learn about career options they may have never heard of or thought about,” Lavallee said.

Through research and exploration, interactive field trips and experiential learning opportunities, educators are helping students dream of their unlimited possibilities, which many have yet to discover.

Elementary Students Explore Colleges and Signature Programs

At Rosehill Elementary School, educators wanted students to explore their future options early, and so they hosted a College and Career Week. Students researched colleges and universities across the country, from the University of South Carolina to Stanford University. Their exploration also included field trips to local higher education institutions, including Johnson County Community College (JCCC) and the University of Kansas.

“It is important for elementary students to get exposed to careers and opportunities at an early age,” said Brandi Leggett, Rosehill instructional coach. “As students walked through junior college and four-year campuses, they became more excited. Their exploration is not locking them into a certain path, but instead showing them the purpose behind the things they are doing at school, which allows them to see there are countless opportunities out there.”

As part of their explorations Rosehill students identified their personal interest, and conducted research prior to taking a field trip to visit the Signature Programs at the Center for Academic & Career Achievement (CAA). The students toured programs in Animation and Design, Biotechnology, Culinary Arts and Hospitality, Engineering, and Medical Health Science, based on their individual interests.

“When I was reading in class, I learned that when blood custodian Chuck Weissmiller, and food service staff helped more students take ownership and contribute to improving efforts at Christa McAuliffe, according to principal Michael Orr.

Collaborative efforts like these are what have made so many schools in the district successful as they have adopted composting and recycling programs. The school is serving as a pilot school for U.S. Green Building Council’s Center for Green Schools. This led to students filming a Public Service Announcement, but also received valuable experience through the process of creating their PSAs. They also learned how they can play a role in improving their community, according to their teacher, Laura Moore.

“It’s been a fun project, and it makes you feel like part of your community to work on a project like this,” noted sixth-grader Marie Ptacek. Through project-based learning and hands-on experiences, students gain a chance to see how they can improve the world around them.

Second-grade teacher Susan Cunningham is a big supporter of this type of learning. “Sometimes teachers make up problems to solve,” she said, “but already, we have so many we can work on solving together.”

As efforts to solve the problems of mitigating waste and cleaning up the environment have expanded across the district, so has the creation of spaces that allow students to see fruitful harvest of their environmentally friendly work.

Educational Gardens Grow

Across the district, the number of outdoor gardens and learning spaces continues to grow thanks to students and staff who have been building and planting. Currently, 80 percent of schools have outdoor gardens and learning spaces, giving students an opportunity to learn as they help grow and harvest vegetables from their school gardens.

“Gardens give students valuable experiential learning opportunities,” said Joan Leavens. “They provide hands-on learning that helps students understand food and how they can play a role in improving the world around them.”

One of the biggest educational gardens in the district is the 1.3-acre Broadmoor Urban Farm and Orchard at the CAA. The “living classroom” is maintained by and produces food used by student chefs in the district’s Culinary Arts and Hospitality Signature Program. In future phases, the garden will feature a greenhouse and an outdoor demonstration kitchen.

“We hope the farm will be educational for every part of our community and for our students to have an understanding of our food, and for our chefs to understand what it is they are cooking,” notes Robert Brassard, chef instructor. Last year, students helped grow about 3,000 pounds of food. Much of it was used in the Broadmoor Bistro student-run restaurant.

Baylee Harwick, a senior and Culinary Arts student from Shawnee Mission North, said she is glad to gain the experience of students and staff, her portion of the planet will surely be in even better shape this spring.
Pumps and goes through your body, it travels back to your heart,” fourth-grader, Mbuyi Nzumba said. “Visiting the CAA was very helpful because I got to take my pulse and check the breathing rates of the dummy they use. I really enjoyed getting to actually do this.”

It is critical for elementary students to explore areas of interest, which can then be turned into potential career opportunities, according to Dr. Ryan Flurry, CAA principal. “Many of our students, even in high school, do not have a full appreciation for the college- and career-ready programs available to students. Connecting students early to the possibilities is the first step on the road to a successful high school experience.”

**Exploration for Secondary Students**

Whether students are certain about their path early on, or still exploring in middle and high school, they are encouraged to continue to look at possibilities for their future.

“I encourage students who have a passion to explore their career interest with us while they are in high school. College is expensive, and instead of spending $25,000 to explore a career interest, it’s helpful for them to take one of our many career courses now,” Flurry said.

High school exploratory classes are available at each home high school, the Center for Academic Achievement and the Career and Technical Campus.

Many classes in Shawnee Mission offer professional certifications for students who successfully complete the program. In Project Lead The Way (PLTW) Engineering, students can earn their Computer-Aided Design (CAD) certification. In Culinary and Hospitality Arts, students may earn ServSafe certification or the American Culinary Federation certification.

“These certifications can jump-start careers and are valued by employers,” Flurry said. “Our colleges and universities give students advanced standing credit towards their degree. Students can begin their college career with educational credits already earned or can be exempt from having to take certain basic college courses.”

This spring, high school students currently enrolled in the “Introduction to Public Safety” course were invited to an Open House at the Career and Technical Campus to explore opportunities in the Project Blue Eagle Fire Science Pathway. This program helps students explore their options in firefighting, law enforcement, and service as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT).

At the Open House, stations were offered to help students better understand the content in these courses. Current Project Blue Eagle students partnered with Lenexa firefighters to host the stations.

“Exploring these options in high school provides an advantage to their future planning following graduation,” Giarla said. “Having gained vital work experience, students now have the tools to bolster their resumes, applications and more.”

While figuring out what you want to be “when you grow up” may seem daunting and somewhat premature in elementary school, the benefits for a student finding their passion, or figuring out what they don’t enjoy, can be especially helpful. Students are selecting career-related courses as early as middle school. Completing introductory courses allows them to more deeply explore career fields in high school, resulting in students being more thoroughly prepared for career or post-secondary education. ●

**Pilot Program Features Internships**

Another career exploration opportunity launched this spring for high school students is the Jobs for America’s Graduates – Kansas (JAG-K) program at Shawnee Mission North. Juniors and seniors attend this class, where the curriculum includes topics like employability, leadership and community service. Shawnee Mission North is the first high school in Johnson County Community College (JCCC) in the afternoons during the spring semester. EMT certification is the pre-requisite for EMT training.

While figuring out what you want to be “when you grow up” may seem daunting and somewhat premature in elementary school, the benefits for a student finding their passion, or figuring out what they don’t enjoy, can be especially helpful. Students are selecting career-related courses as early as middle school. Completing introductory courses allows them to more deeply explore career fields in high school, resulting in students being more thoroughly prepared for career or post-secondary education. ●

**Summer Opportunities**

**Summer Enrichment**

Summer Enrichment gives students new learning and exploration opportunities. Classes feature art, music, technology, science, sports, theater and more, and are not based on the regular school curriculum.

**Who can attend?** Students in pre-kindergarten through seventh grade.

**Dates and Times:** Various dates and times in June for elementary and middle students. New Satellite Summer Enrichment at the Center for Academic Achievement is open to students throughout the semester.

**Apply by:** June 6 at 4 p.m.

**New Satellite Summer Enrichment at the Center for Academic Achievement**

Students explore Shawnee Mission Signature Programs like Animation, Biotechnology, Medical Health Science, Engineering, and Game Design.

**Who can attend?** Students currently in sixth, seventh and eighth grades.

**Apply by:** June 6 at 4 p.m.

**Summer Band Blast**

Who can attend? Current band students in grades five through eight are invited to stay in playing shape over the summer.

**Times and Dates:** Elementary Band: 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. on June 10-14 Middle School Band: 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. on June 17-21

**Apply by:** June 6 at 4 p.m.

**Students interact with live animals in the Summer Nature enrichment session.** ●

**Students at the CAA** by Chef Dallen, Shawnee Mission Northwest junior, demonstrates unrolling fire hoses at the Project Blue Eagle Open House.
Join Us at Summer Lunch Bunch!

Free meals for children, ages 1-18, will be offered at Summer Lunch Bunch at the locations below. Adults will be able to purchase a lunch for $4.25 (cash only).

Dates: June 3 – July 26, 2019 (closed July 4 & 5, 2019)
Times: 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Locations: Comanche Elementary School, 8200 Grant Avenue
Crestview Elementary School, 6101 Craig Street
Merriam Park Elementary School, 6100 Martin Street
Nienan Elementary School, 10917 W. 67th Street
Rosehill Elementary School, 9801 Rosehill Road
Shawanoe Elementary School, 11230 W. 75th Street

Summer Enrichment and Summer Academy
Dates: June 10-28 and July 8-26, 2019
Times: 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Locations: Indian Woods Middle School, 9700 Woodson Drive
Shawnee Mission Northwest High School
12701 W. 67th Street

Menus and more information about Summer Lunch Bunch will be posted at www.smsd.org/about/departments/food-service/Summer-lunch-bunch.

Research and Development Forum

The Research and Development (R&D) Forum is a districtwide showcase of student innovation and achievement. Throughout the event, students share projects and performances highlighting their work in science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEAM). The R&D Forum is free and open to the public. The event has been hosted for 57 years, with generous support from the Regnier family.

Save the Date:
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Saturday, May 4, 2019
Shawnee Mission West High School
8800 W. 86th Street, Overland Park KS 66212

For more information, including a schedule of events and performances, visit the R&D Forum website: smsd.org/academics/rd-forum.
Our team is cheering for your health.
We're here if you need us. Whether a common ailment or a complex medical condition, the team at AdventHealth Medical Group has you covered.
To make an appointment, visit AdventHealthMedicalGroup.com.

Formerly Shawnee Mission Primary Care