

*Together We Are Stronger.*



# **STEVENSON HIGH SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT**

**2020 | 2021**



## Board of Education

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For more than 20 years, I have had the privilege of serving on Stevenson High School’s Board of Education. While challenging, this past academic year was also one of the most rewarding because of the combined contributions and efforts of our students and parents, the Stevenson teachers and staff, and the broader Stevenson community. We have once again seen why the support of our entire school community is critical to Stevenson’s successful teaching and learning experience. I thank all of you!

Consistent communication is key to engaging our community, and one of the things we have heard over the last year is the desire for increased communications from the school district. The Board has taken that feedback to heart. We have enhanced access to our Board meetings and minutes and regularly share key takeaways in the Minuteman newsletter. We are also posting more information for the community on the Board’s webpage. You may view these resources anytime on our website.

Building on that effort, we are incredibly proud to reintroduce the school district’s Annual Report. We hope it strengthens your connection to our school community, no matter if you are a student, parent, faculty/staff member or friendly neighbor.

Sincerely,

Steve Frost  
President of the Board



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As I reflect back on the 2020-2021 academic year, I find myself continually returning to the same feeling of overwhelming gratitude that has sustained me through this unprecedented time. Gratitude to our faculty and staff for their unshakeable dedication to our students. Gratitude to our families for their grace and flexibility in the face of change and uncertainty. And above all, gratitude for our students, who continue to show their commitment to themselves, others and their learning.

In that spirit of gratitude, I’m excited to share this year’s Stevenson High School Annual Report, which narrates our school community’s achievements and highlights from last year. As you peruse these pages, my hope is that the annual report gives our community a glimpse of how utterly inspiring our students, faculty and staff are.

Lastly, as a member of our larger school community, your enthusiastic support of our students does not go unnoticed. Truly, we are stronger together. Thank you for your ongoing support of our school community.

Sincerely,

Eric Twadell  
Superintendent

Our tradition of sustained excellence has been built upon our commitment to continuous improvement and lifelong learning. This vision statement reflects what we hope to become as a school community. It is our vision for the future.

CURRICULUM

In order to ensure “Success for Every Student,” we will implement a guaranteed, viable and rigorous curriculum that meets the evolving needs of our students while prioritizing active engagement and reflective problem-solving. Our curriculum will encourage students to scrutinize evidence of their learning, challenge their thinking, and forge new understandings. We will help students gain confidence, discover their talents, and develop the skills they need to succeed in life.

EQUITY, ACCESS, AND INCLUSIVITY

In order to ensure “Success for Every Student,” we will recognize every student as a valued individual. Students will learn in a safe, inclusive space, where they are taught to understand the value of their own experiences in relation to other, diverse perspectives. We will be relentless in removing barriers to full equity, access, and inclusivity in our curricular and co-curricular programming. We will establish high academic and behavioral expectations, and we will provide students with the supports required to help them meet or exceed those expectations.

CULTURE FOR LEARNING

In order to ensure “Success for Every Student,” all decision-making processes will be based on the best interests of our students and their learning. We will promote social-emotional learning and a healthy life balance for all students as we nurture continuous improvement and growth in their curricular and co-curricular experiences. We will encourage students to set attainable and aspirational goals, learn the value of hard work and dedication, and embrace the challenges and opportunities they will experience in high school and beyond.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY

In order to ensure “Success for Every Student,” we will sustain a culture focused on learning, collaboration, and results. Our culture of continuous improvement will be driven by collective inquiry, innovative instructional practices, and learning-centered assessment and grading practices. We will implement impactful intervention strategies that provide students with more time and support when needed in order to ensure learning and achievement. As a model Professional Learning Community, we will participate in state, national, and global initiatives focused on improving educational outcomes.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In order to ensure “Success for Every Student,” we will actively engage and support the Stevenson H.S. community. We value and respect our community’s diverse perspectives, and will provide opportunities for parents and others to inform and support the vision and values of our school. We will forge collaborative partnerships with those who share expertise, providing authentic and innovative student-learning experiences. We are committed to utilizing our resources and facilities to develop and implement educational and recreational opportunities as we work to connect the community and school.





## ★ COMMITMENT TO SELF

Pursue a balanced high school experience.

Foster responsible, healthy and ethical decision-making skills.

Develop a sense of resilience and self-awareness.

Demonstrate self-empowered and life-ready skills.

## ★ COMMITMENT TO OTHERS

Celebrate, honor, and respect diverse people and perspectives.

Develop a sense of empathy for those around them.

Serve local, national, and global communities.

Engage in civic duties and responsibilities.

## ★ COMMITMENT TO LEARNING

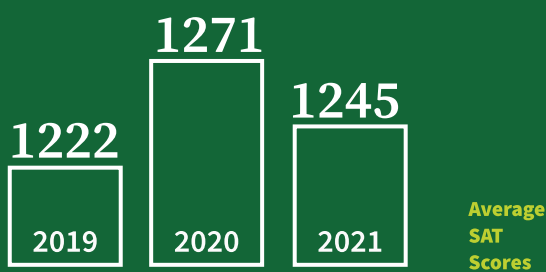
Strive for continuous improvement.

Foster a curious, creative, and innovative mind.

Sustain a growth mindset when facing new challenges.

Develop problem-solving and reflective skills.

Collaborate with and learn from others.



92%

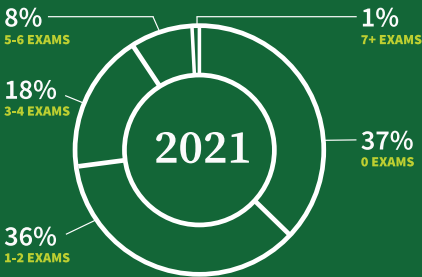
Percentage of graduating seniors in 2021 graduated with at least one college-level experience, defined as AP classes, articulated credit and dual credit classes. **Of these seniors:**

- 84%** completed at least 1 AP class
- 27%** completed at least one articulated credit
- 50%** completed at least one dual credit course

\* Research has shown that high school students with college-level experiences are more likely to succeed in college and graduate in a timely manner.

# Students Defining Success

Number of AP exams taken by all students, consistent from previous years





**Our ever-evolving teaching and learning experience — designed to help students develop their talents and the skills they need to succeed — is an essential part of the vision of who we hope to become as a school organization.**

We closely monitor students’ academic achievement in several key areas as a way to assess those skills: standardized test scores, grade distributions and college-level experiences.

Owing to our students’ resilience through the pandemic, academic achievement during the 2020-2021 school year stayed fairly consistent.

The average SAT score in 2020 and 2021 surpassed the average score in 2019 and far exceeded average scores at the

state and national level in 2021. Grade distributions also remained consistent throughout the pandemic.

Additionally, the number of college-level experiences\* (defined as AP classes, articulated credit and dual credit courses) taken by graduates inched up in 2021. Research has shown that high school students with college-level experiences are more likely to succeed in college and graduate in a timely manner.

For more information about student achievement at Stevenson High School, please visit us at [d125.org/achievement](https://d125.org/achievement).



2,120

Number of students who participated in athletics and intramural sports

42

Number of sports teams, including co-ed athletic opportunities for students with disabilities

154

Number of co-curricular and intramural opportunities

# Students Exploring at Stevenson



Percentage of students who participated in at least one student activity or event



Six teams placed in the Top 5 at the IHSA State Championship in their sport



**At Stevenson, we believe the teaching and learning experience would not be complete without a rich co-curricular program that supports students’ physical, social and emotional growth beyond the classroom setting.**

We also believe that, despite the size of our campus, every student should feel a sense of belonging in our school community. Student involvement through our Student Activities and Athletics divisions are an active testament to those beliefs.

Over the years, our robust club and athletic offerings have been shaped in such a way that students can customize their co-curricular experience to their unique interests and passions.

While the pandemic hampered participation in in-person co-curricular activities, a large majority of students remained active by either participating in sports or club activities.

Student-leaders used creative solutions to help students stay connected to each other and the larger community through virtual meetings as well as service projects. Additionally, student-athletes continued to compete at high levels, despite challenges imposed by the pandemic.





# Connecting with Students



71%

Percentage of students who feel a sense of belonging in their classroom, which is benchmarked near the 99th percentile of high schools nationwide

87%

Percentage of student-athletes who completed the Student Voice Survey feel a strong connection to their coach



**Social-emotional learning (SEL) is a vital component of students’ experiences at Stevenson High School, as it views relationships, self- and social-awareness, and responsible decision-making as part of learning.**

SEL is integrated throughout the entire school community, with an emphasis on students’ social skills growth, academic successes and emotional wellness.

The pandemic highlighted the need for social connection as part of the learning process and, while efforts to lead out SEL were limited during that time, our teachers and staff were proactive in using SEL strategies and practices in their learning spaces throughout the 2020-2021 school year. SEL professional development was primarily facilitated online with many parts of the school community; however, many teachers collaborated

with their teams and divisions to implement practices that supported student engagement based on current research and our own data.

Results from Student Voice Surveys, conducted in the fall of 2021 to assess social-emotional growth, suggest that students are reaping the fruits of that labor. Overall, students feel a strong sense of belonging — a key SEL indicator that measures how much students feel they are valued members of the community — inside and outside of the classroom.



STRESS



MOVEMENT



MINDSET

THE WELLNESS INITIATIVE

The Wellness Initiative will focus on five pillars to support “whole” student wellness. The initiative, which is still being developed, will be integrated into the teaching and learning experience here at Stevenson High School.



SLEEP



NUTRITION

Focus  
on  
Student  
Wellness



## **While the world continues to grapple with a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic, another crisis has been looming long before COVID-19: the growing mental health crisis among children and adolescents.**

The pandemic has exacerbated the issue, with more recent research showing rates of depression and anxiety have doubled since the spring of 2020.

As educators, we are called to acknowledge the importance of mental health on our students' learning and development and arm them with the tools they need to prioritize their overall well-being. Our answer to that call is the Stevenson Wellness Initiative.

Building on the district's strong social emotional programming, the Wellness Initiative will sharpen its focus on supporting students' "whole" (mental and physical) well-being through curricular and co-curricular education that integrates wellness principles and habits. In carrying out this work, the Wellness Initiative aims to give students the tools they need to self-regulate their mental and physical wellness beyond their high school experience.



13

Number of student groups that participated in the school's first-ever Anti-Racism and Inclusivity Week

Three

Number of divisions that have begun the process of implementing a culturally responsive approach to instruction (World Language, Communication Arts and Social Studies)

# Diversity at Stevenson



Percentage of faculty and staff who participate in Equity, Race and Diversity learning cohorts

Six

Number of equity-minded and affinity co-curricular clubs





**Research on race in the classroom makes one thing plainly clear: Student belonging has a positive impact on a student’s academic performance and overall well-being.**

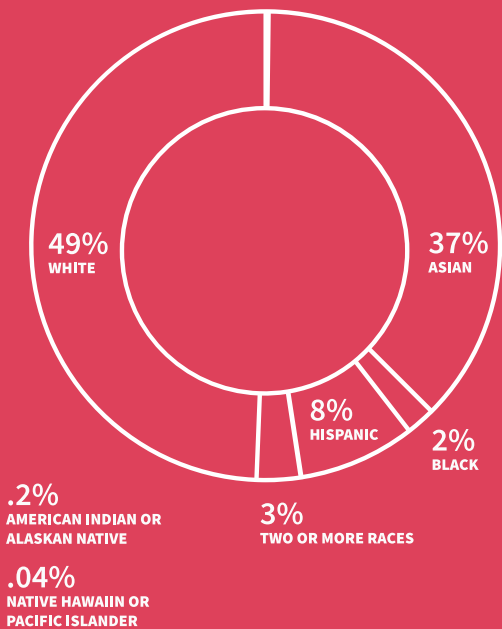
Despite the challenges of the pandemic, students, families, faculty and staff have never been more engaged with the important work of ensuring that every student feels a sense of inclusion, belonging and dignity.

During the 2020-2021 school year, students found innovative ways to celebrate diversity and create spaces to have courageous conversations about race. Perhaps most notably, the school hosted its first-ever Anti-Racism and Inclusivity Week. Throughout the week, student-leaders created opportunities

for their fellow students to learn, discuss and reflect on the equity issues we face today.

The department also works closely with faculty and staff to create a more culturally responsive learning experience for students, whether they are in the classroom or on the field. We also have record numbers of faculty and staff engaged in a three-year learning cycle that focuses on frameworks of thinking and teaching that promote equity, including training on implicit bias and cultural competency.

For more information about equity, access and inclusivity at Stevenson High School, please visit us at [d125.org/equity](https://d125.org/equity).



# Spanish, Mandarin & Russian

Top 3 languages spoken in the homes of our Stevenson families

Number of languages spoken by our Stevenson families **57**

**4.6%** Percentage of students that identify as English Learners (ELs)



**In a world that is becoming increasingly diverse, we view diversity as an asset to be recognized and celebrated and aim to ensure full inclusion of all our students.**

Family engagement is at the heart of this important work, which lives primarily through Bilingual Parent Advisory Committees made up of parents and guardians of EL students that speak a specific language. Currently, there is a BPAC that represents the interests of our Spanish-speaking students and parents. Future plans include modeling this approach for Russian and Chinese families in the near future.

The EL support team also continues to interface regularly with Student Services to ensure EL families maintain a meaningful connection to their students' learning journey and take advantage of academic or counseling support, when necessary.



117

Number of focused 30-minute discussions on how Stevenson families can best support student success

FIVE

Number of focused virtual evening discussions with wellness professionals on supporting student wellness and academic success

62

Number of virtual evening discussions with nationally recognized authors, including experts on remote learning and college admissions

# Connecting with our Community at Stevenson



**Stevenson views students’ families as vital partners to student success. Family engagement is a product of collaboration that focuses on supporting students’ academic success as well as their mental, social and emotional wellness.**

The pandemic, and its impact on student learning, posed an even more urgent need for family engagement. While COVID-19 limited how we could safely connect with families, we used virtual tools to create accessible programming and increase opportunities for connection between families and educators throughout the 2020-21 school year.

The family engagement team is deeply integrated with Student Services as a way to ensure consistent and aligned support of students through their Student Support Teams. The team’s collaborations extend beyond campus, working with key partners such as the Family Action Network to offer families access to nationally recognized experts on a range of timely topics related to teenage development.

For more information about family engagement at Stevenson High School, please visit us at **[d125.org/family-engagement](https://d125.org/family-engagement)**.





The second addition to our East Building is being constructed primarily with physical wellness in mind. Our hope is to offer a wellness club experience where students can enjoy a wide variety of physical activities all day, every day.

25,000

Square footage of turf students can use for exercise, athletic practice or co-curricular activities

Nine

Office spaces to enhance student access to our East Student Services team

90

Number of exercise machines, including treadmills and ellipticals

60

Additional meters of running track

PICTURE THIS:



STATE-OF-THE-ART  
EQUIPMENT



FLEXIBLE  
HOURS



ATHLETIC  
TRAINING



TEAM  
PRACTICES



HEALTHY  
LIFESTYLE



**In order to ensure success for every student, we must be forward-thinking in not just how we shape the curricular and co-curricular experience but the physical spaces in which these experiences happen as well.**

With enrollment projected to rise to nearly 4,900 students by 2030, our current facilities and construction plan is designed to support “the whole student” by creating spaces that meet their academic, physical and social-emotional needs.

The current 106,300-square-foot project will expand the school’s existing 870,000-square-foot footprint and will include state-of-the-art fitness equipment space for physical welfare classes and student use before and after

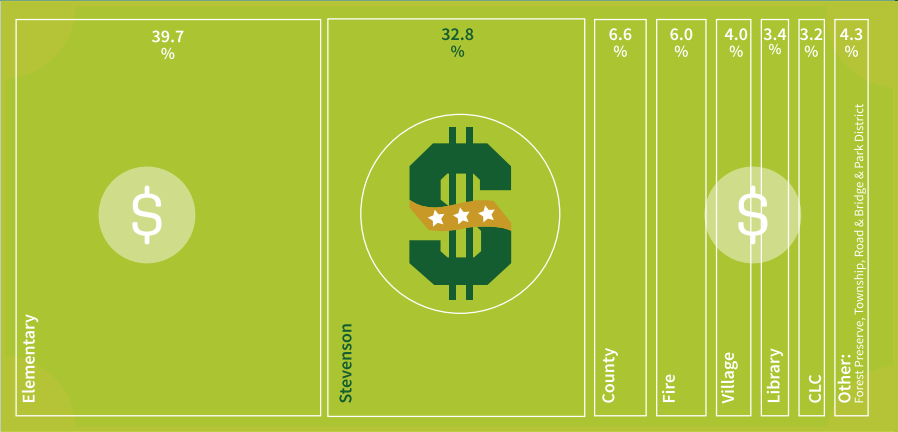
the school day and the weekends. In addition, the space may also be used for athletic practices and athletic training. The cost for this project will be covered by the district’s fund balance and the issuance of working cash bonds.

As we look toward the future, most of our construction projects are focused on repairs and maintenance so as to minimize the risk of bigger, more costly facilities needs down the road.

For more information about the East Building addition at Stevenson High School, please visit us at **[d125.org/campus-improvement](https://d125.org/campus-improvement)**.

## Your Taxpayer Dollars at Work

A breakdown of how your tax dollars are allocated, if your property tax bill was scaled down to a dollar.



## Bang for Your Buck

Our average spend per student for FY 2021-2022, also known as our operating expense per-pupil (OEPP).

D207	Maine Township High School	\$20,269
D211	Township High School District 211	\$20,362
D214	Township High School District 214	\$20,985
D202	Evanston Township High School	\$21,728
D125	Adlai E. Stevenson High School	\$22,464
D128	Community High School District 128	\$24,065
D225	Northfield Township High School	\$24,457
D203	New Trier Township High School	\$25,978
D115	Lake Forest Community High School	\$27,043
D113	Township High School District 113	\$27,663
D219	Niles Township High School 219	\$29,059

## Adapting Our Accounting Approach

Last fall, the Board approved a change in the district’s accounting method. The district’s previous method (cash basis) required us to record in the current year as revenue all amounts received during the year, including property taxes earmarked for the following year. Treating next year’s property taxes as revenue in the earlier year overstates

the earlier year’s fund balances. For this reason, the newly adopted method (a modified accrual method) is preferred by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board and credit rating agencies. Additionally, virtually all neighboring school districts use the modified accrual method.

With the change, the district remains financially stable with cash reserves to cover about 40% of our operating budget, per our board policy, which is aligned with state and financial advisor recommendations.



**As a public school district that is financially supported by our community, we fully recognize and embrace the responsibility we have to be good stewards of our financial resources.**

We believe we have answered the call to that responsibility: For 15 straight years, we have received top tier “Recognition” status for financial excellence by the Illinois State Board of Education and recently received a AAA credit rating by Standard and Poor’s for our ability to meet our financial obligations.

We are committed to continuing this tradition of financial excellence without compromising the quality and integrity of the teaching and learning experience at Stevenson.

For more information about district finances at Stevenson High School, please visit us at **[d125.org/district-finances](https://d125.org/district-finances)**. To stay in touch, subscribe to our Minuteman newsletter at **[d125.org/about/shs-communications](https://d125.org/about/shs-communications)**.





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