



SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT

Spring 2022

Executive Summary

While the 2021-2022 school year continued to provide unique challenges related to COVID-19, the school district moved forward with the work of the strategic plan making progress across all five strategy areas. Many dedicated team members and community volunteers put forth their time and effort to serve on subcommittees. The beliefs, mission, and objectives of the strategic plan were at the forefront of the work. In order to maintain progress, these teams often had to be flexible in terms of meeting due to staffing and substitute availability constraints.

This report contains progress completed during 2021-2022, as well as a look ahead to next steps and what is coming up in 2022-2023.

The strategic plan, adopted in 2019, is focused on ensuring that every student will:

- achieve academic success through a challenging, personalized learning plan
- develop and utilize personal resilience while mastering essential competencies that lead to college and career readiness.
- develop interpersonal skills to be an engaged, empathetic member of the local and global community.

These objectives are being accomplished through the work of five strategies. An updated Gantt chart featuring progress on all initiatives of the strategic plan can be found [here](#).



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Teaching & Learning



Strategy Summary | Teaching & Learning

Strategy 1: We will reimagine teaching and learning to guarantee relevant opportunities for personalized learning experiences.

The focus of this strategy is on teaching and learning. In the area of relevant, engaging, and applied learning, strategic action team 1:3:4-5 met this school year to identify feedback structures and align grading practices. An outcome of this work was the creation of a definition of evidence-based grading, "Evidence-based grading is a feedback system that communicates students' level of understanding of essential learning targets based on an ongoing collection of multiple pieces of evidence as part of their personalized learning plan." A link to their working document can be found here. The team also created, administered, and reviewed feedback from a survey of parents regarding how the district shares information about the academic performance of students. The survey can be found here. Additionally, the team conducted research regarding effective grading and feedback practices, including reviewing what other districts have implemented along with the results of these practices.

Looking ahead to the 2022-2023 school year, this team will focus on developing and administering a survey for Shawnee Mission School District staff regarding grading practices. Focus will also be on clearly defining the purpose of report cards, grade books, and transcripts. Site visits will be planned to schools that have transitioned to new grading systems to inform the final development of a new grading system to be implemented in Shawnee Mission.

To support professional development around personalization of learning, the district has continued to provide professional learning opportunities throughout the school

year. The director of professional learning has provided cross departmental coordination in an effort to connect and maximize professional learning opportunities for team members. An exciting opportunity is coming up this summer to partner with Solution Tree to bring the Professional Learning Community (PLC) Institute to Shawnee Mission. More than 1,100 Shawnee Mission Team members will participate in training focused on professional learning communities and how to effectively utilize these structures and frameworks to improve and strengthen professional practices and ultimately student growth across the district.

The lack of substitute staffing during the 2021-2022 school year made bringing curriculum cadres together for regular meetings challenging. The cadres did meet on a limited basis outside the school day to continue their work related to essential competencies, instructional strategies, and common assessments.

Culture



Strategy Summary | Culture

Strategy 2: We will relentlessly create a fully unified, equitable, and inclusive culture.

This strategy, focused on developing a unified, equitable, and inclusive culture districtwide, continued to progress with a number of celebrations to be noted. In the area of policies, procedures, and practices, the Shawnee Mission Board of Education welcomed April Boyd-Noronha, the district's first African-American member, to the board. Mascot conversations led to the development and adoption of Board Policy ACA: School Mascots. In 2021-2022, four schools debuted newly selected mascots including: Shawnee Mission North Bison, Belinder Bears, Rushton Red-Tailed Hawks, and Shawanoe Bison. In Fall 2020, prior to the board policy adoption, Nieman named a new mascot, Nieman Foxes.

Regarding recruitment and hiring practices and procedures, the district's human resources team along with SMSD Recruit continued to develop relationships with colleges and universities to recruit and attract a diverse and inclusive pool of candidates to join the SMSD team. As part of the "Grow your Own" program, the district will build on the success of its Fort Hays State University/Special Education program, of which cohort 1 just finished with seven team members participating and earning a master's degree and a high incidence endorsement. In August 2022, the district will kick off cohort 2 continuing this partnership of investment in developing special educators within the Shawnee Mission School District. This partnership supports developing highly qualified staff members to serve our students with special needs, which often are areas that we are challenged to find a robust pool of candidates. In exchange for 90 percent tuition coverage, these team members who complete the program agree to teach for a minimum of five years in special education in Shawnee Mission.

The district's diversity, equity, and inclusion work through Corwin continued as Deep Equity practitioners continued their development and the Youth Equity Stewardship (YES!) program for students began. Sixty-six students and 13 staff members attended

five YES! Sessions in 2021-2022 and will complete three sessions in 2022-2023. In the coming school year, we will continue to transition the leadership/facilitation of our DEIB work to the approximately Shawnee Mission team members trained as Deep Equity Practitioners. These equity practitioners will work with the approximately 225 building-level trainers to continue to provide equity professional learning across the district. Shawnee Mission continued its participation in the Kansas City Equity in Schools cohort. A superintendent's advisory on diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) that includes high school students, teachers, parents, and community/organization members, continued to meet to provide feedback and discussion on DEIB-related issues. The inclusion of DEIB could be seen reflected in building goals, offerings during the district's instructional fair, and updated resource guidance, increasing diverse representation in literature. A district equity survey given to staff indicates positive shifts in providing spaces for essential conversations and the engagement of students in classrooms. Below are two comments that represent some of the feedback received:

- "Students have more of a voice and we work to repair damaged relationships when possible to build trust between students, staff and families."
- "We involve students more in the problem solving process regarding academics and behavior plans. Students have more of a voice and we work to repair damaged relationships when possible to build trust between students, staff and families."

The district continued implementation of Panorama to survey students in grades 3-12 related to social emotional learning. While the Panorama survey results for 2021-2022 showed slightly lower ratings, improvements were reflected in the district's discipline data indicating students are positively applying self-management skills within their daily interactions and experiences at school. In 2022-2023, increased communication about and engagement in the Panorama survey by students across the district will be a focus.

Quality Educators



Strategy Summary | Quality Educators

Strategy 3: We will create the climate to cultivate quality educators so they flourish in pursuit of our mission.

This strategy is focused on recruiting and developing quality educators. In relation to work environment, with the passage of the bond initiative, the district was able to successfully implement the second phase of moving secondary teachers to teaching five out of seven classes. A subcommittee continued to meet and discuss options for creating specific, guarded collaboration time for elementary and middle school teachers. The district “noticed” as part of negotiations elementary/middle school PLC time. Middle school late starts will begin in Fall 2022. At the elementary level, PLC groups will be able to select from options to meet for the PLC sessions. Through ESSER funds, elementary class sizes will continue to be reduced from 24 to 22 in grades K-2 and from 27 to 25 in grades 3-6.

To address wellness issues for employees, the wellness committee along with the human resources team continue to communicate and advertise opportunities for staff to engage in self-care and find work/life balance. The district’s 5K returned this spring for staff to enjoy with their families. Additionally, a new Employee Assistance Program (EAP) vendor, Curalinc, was selected through an RFP process and began serving employees in January 2022.

A strategic action committee met in 2021-2022 to focus on developing lab classrooms and implementing peer-to-peer modeling. The team completed a book study and read current research and case studies regarding lab classrooms in order to create a shared understanding. The team reviewed the purpose of lab classrooms and analyzed the concept specifically related to how they would achieve the mission set forth in the district’s strategic plan. The team connected with staff in the North Kansas City School District to learn about their experiences implementing lab classrooms and the various formats they tried in the process. A lab classroom method, peer learning lab model, was determined to best match the goals in Shawnee Mission, and the team drafted a purpose statement: The purpose of Lab Classrooms in SMSD is to provide a structure for collaborative, job-embedded professional learning that leverages collective teacher efficacy to improve student learning outcomes.

The following components were identified regarding the peer learning lab model:

- Voluntary groups of teachers
- Could include lists of topics to choose from based on building professional development goals (inquiry questions written by principal or BLT)
- Process would include: First step is to research the topic together; then observe in each other's classes, debrief, observe, etc.; and then reflect and share out after all observations are completed.

Looking ahead to 2022-2023, the next steps will be to determine what needs to be in place before pursuing lab classrooms on a system-wide level. Clearly defined purpose and functions of lab classrooms in Shawnee Mission based on the peer learning lab model will be developed. Collaboration with PDC will occur, and a timeline for implementation will be created.

Systems



Strategy Summary | Systems

Strategy 4: We will design systems that support our mission and beliefs.

The greatest focus in the area of developing systems within the district to support the achievement of the strategic plan mission and objectives, was related to furthering the work around Response to Intervention (RTI). An action team was convened to work on moving forward the goal of implementing a districtwide Response to Intervention system to ensure social-emotional and academic growth for all students to achieve personal excellence. During 2021-2022, the team specifically focused on developing a system of training that provides ongoing RTI professional development. In their work, this team identified what a system is/is not.

Develop a **SYSTEM** of training.

IS	IS NOT				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replicated across classrooms/buildings/ district Ongoing Data-driven Research-based/ Evidence-based Cyclical Job embedded Sustainable Collaborative District-wide Accountable Steps and procedures Both loose and tight 	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documented Expected Common understanding Fluid Proactive Purposeful Objective Differentiated Intentional Impactful Transferable Accessible Flexible within structure Consistent Organized </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One & done Isolated OPTIONAL 1 person leading Dependent on one One way Fragmented Only on paper </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporary A feeling or opinion Subjective Random Teacher dependent One size fits all Reactive </td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documented Expected Common understanding Fluid Proactive Purposeful Objective Differentiated Intentional Impactful Transferable Accessible Flexible within structure Consistent Organized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One & done Isolated OPTIONAL 1 person leading Dependent on one One way Fragmented Only on paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporary A feeling or opinion Subjective Random Teacher dependent One size fits all Reactive 	
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The team also focused on developing competencies and learning targets, which can be seen here:

1. Demonstrate understanding of the three tiers of an RTI system necessary to meet the academic and social-emotional needs of all our students. (9 Learning Targets)
2. Teacher Teams implement high-leverage team actions driven by the four PLC guiding questions through the Team Teaching-Assessing Cycle. (8 Learning

Targets)

3. Implement the structures of a comprehensive RTI system district-wide and ensure implementation of all tiers at all buildings including, (15 Learning Targets)
 - a. Universal Screening
 - b. Data-Informed Decision Making
 - c. Monitoring Progress
 - d. Collaborative Problem Solving

The RTI Self-Assessment document developed to address the learning target around clearly defined tiers of intervention and building responsibilities can be found [here](#). The RTI System of Training Competency/Learning Target spreadsheet developed by the team can be found [here](#).

In 2022-2023, the work will continue focused on refining the RTI system for accountability including developing a building structure to ensure implementation of all tiers. Additionally, a data management system that provides accessible student information year-to-year will also be identified. In 2020-2021, the [Response to Intervention Guidebook for Student Success](#) was developed. This document is designed to serve as a guidebook for building and district team members to utilize in support of best practice implementation for RTI across the district. To ensure successful implementation and support, it will be important to revisit some foundational items: ensuring each tier is clearly defined and research-based resources that meet the academic and social emotional needs of all students have been identified. Additionally, ensuring that benchmark assessments and progress monitoring tools for measuring student academic and social emotional growth are identified and implemented district wide.

Facilities



Strategy Summary | Facilities

Strategy 5: We will strategically focus resources to support state-of-the-art facilities to accomplish our beliefs, mission, and objectives.

Much of the work of this strategy is directly connected to the bond referendum approved by the community in January 2021. In 2021-2022, many projects were underway throughout the year including construction of a new Westwood View Elementary School. This project is ahead of schedule and will open for students and staff in August 2022. A three-story addition and restroom renovations were completed at Indian Woods Mission School. The commons area and restrooms at Shawnee Mission Northwest High School are being remodeled. Shawnee Mission North is receiving a weight room addition and restroom renovations. Across the district this summer, HVAC systems will be replaced at designated sites, playground renovations continue, furniture replacement projects are underway, and security camera, keyless entry and cabling upgrade projects are being completed. A complete listing of bond projects with timelines can be found [here](#).

Looking ahead to 2022-2023, the reconstructed John Diemer Elementary School will be completed and is scheduled to open for students and staff in January 2023. Pawnee Elementary School is also being rebuilt with an anticipated completion date of July 2023. Groundbreaking for the new Rushton Elementary School is scheduled for January 2023 (students from Rushton will attend at the original Westwood View site during construction). HVAC, playground, and furniture replacement projects will continue, and remodeling projects at Horizons, Westridge, Shawnee Mission East, and Shawnee Mission Early Childhood Education Center will be completed by the end of Summer 2023. A bond webpage can be found [here](#) with additional information.

Gantt Chart | Updated Spring 2022