

SIX TIMES

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 6

WELCOME TO THE 2017-18 SCHOOL YEAR | FALL 2017



Join us in our social circles!



Minnesota's First K-12
IB World Schools District

South St. Paul
Public Schools



WELCOME TO THE 2017-18 SCHOOL YEAR!



MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



DAVE WEBB, ED.D.
Superintendent of Schools

We had a great first month with lots of positive energy throughout each of our sites. However, this great start didn't come without the dedication of many to make this happen. Our staff worked hard all summer preparing to instill the mission of South St. Paul Public Schools, which is to *ignite a passion in every learner, to inquire, continuously improve, and engage in positively changing our world.*

Our teachers were sharpening their instruction strategies and enhancing their classrooms to ensure effective learning environments for all students. Our leadership team was driven to hire the best staff and worked hard to create a number of opportunities that will support our students and their families. For example:

- We partnered with Second Harvest Heartland to provide free food each month to any interested family at Kaposia, Lincoln Center, and SSP Secondary, with no income guidelines or registration required.
- Our district received a grant from the Minnesota Department of Education to fund free preschool for more than 200 four-year-olds at Lincoln Center and Kaposia.
- We celebrated the grand opening of our Family Education Center which will serve as the home to our early learning programs.

- We continue to build on our College and Career Readiness program to prepare each and every student for their next step. We will do this through high quality, individualized programs, services and personalized learning for all ages and stages of a learner's life.

Our District is committed to providing a positive, safe, and effective learning environment for all students and staff. Although our commitment hasn't wavered, the challenge to continue providing the support and opportunities has become increasingly challenging.

This summer, the South St. Paul School Board voted unanimously to place two school funding requests before residents on a November 7 ballot. I encourage you to read through our newsletter to learn the facts about why the school board felt it was critical now to ask for our voters' support.

We believe that Strong Schools = Strong Communities. South St. Paul's city and school district boundaries are nearly the same, fostering a feeling of family, with opportunities for parent and community involvement. It is our goal to continue creating partnerships and opportunities to grow both our schools and our community.

I look forward to celebrating all of our successes with you in the days and months ahead. Have a great school year!

GRAND OPENING OF **THE FAMILY EDUCATION CENTER**



Welcome to the new South St. Paul Family Education Center located at 104 Fifth Avenue South (also known as the former Pro Pharmacy space). This is a one stop shop for all early learning programs at South St. Paul, including Early Childhood and Family Education (ECFE) program, early childhood screening, and preschool registration.

The Family Education Center features ECFE classrooms designed to stimulate growth and inspire learning in our young learners. Materials are kept at their level to encourage children to explore the space and choose activities that appeal to them. A muscle room is also available for children to climb, jump, crawl and dance, all in a safe supervised environment.

Stop by our new space to meet our amazing early learning staff and learn more about the early learning programs we have to offer!

Thanks to our community's support of a 2013 bond request, we were able to leave a leased space and purchase this building – saving us money and providing a permanent home for our youngest learners.

FREE PRESCHOOL **FOR ALL 4-YEAR-OLDS**

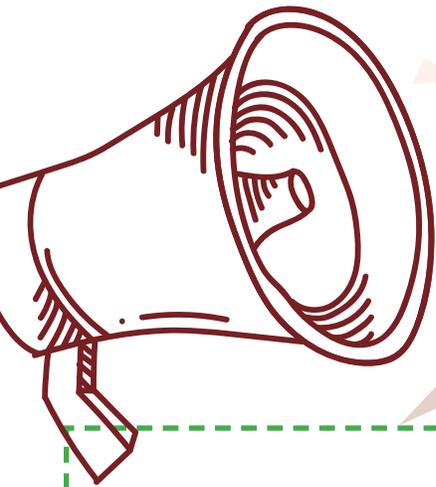
The Minnesota Department of Education announced that Lincoln Center Elementary will receive state funding to provide FREE “Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten” classes for nearly 100 four-year old children. This is on top of the state funding provided last year, and again this year, for more than 100 four-year olds to attend pre-kindergarten classes at Kaposia Education Center.

As a result, more than 200 South St. Paul four-year olds can now attend preschool half-day (AM or PM), Monday-Friday at no charge to their families at either Lincoln Center or Kaposia.

Voluntary pre-kindergarten funding was established by Governor Dayton and the 2016 Minnesota Legislature to provide high-quality early learning programming to prepare children for success when they enter kindergarten.



Research shows that children who receive a quality early childhood experience are more likely to succeed in school. And since South St. Paul has the highest level of poverty in Dakota County, the state funding for these classes is especially needed.



PACKER PRIDE!

LYNSEE MATTSON NAMED 2018 MAFCS TEACHER OF THE YEAR

South St. Paul Secondary teacher Lynsee Mattson has been awarded the **Minnesota Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (MAFCS) Teacher of the Year for 2018!**

Lynsee also received the New Achiever Award from MAFCS last spring. She has been an active member of MAFCS and this is her third year as a FACS teacher at South St. Paul Secondary.

Lynsee is an outstanding leader in Family and Consumer Sciences in the classroom and at the state level. As a leader in the state, Lynsee will be presenting at many professional events including the MAFCS Conference in Rochester, Minnesota, the AAFCS Conference in Georgia, and the MN State Fair.

Congratulations Lynsee!

SSP SENIORS DRAFTED FOR CHS INTERNSHIPS

We are excited to announce that seniors Jon Sanchez and Luis Bueno have earned a year-long internship with CHS, a leading global agribusiness, through the SSPPS TriDistrict Career and College Readiness (CCR) program and Genesys Works.

Genesys Works is a non-profit social enterprise with a goal to assist in diversifying the IT industry. Jon and Luis successfully completed the summer training program, and they were chosen to be placed into paid, year-long internships.

Congratulations Jon and Luis!

ADAM CAHN NAMED NATIONAL MERIT SEMIFINALIST

South St. Paul senior, Adam Cahn, has been named National Merit Semifinalist by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.

Semifinalists are determined by students' scores on the 2016 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. About 1.6 million high school juniors nationwide took the test last year. Adam is among the less than one percent who has made it to the semifinalist round. As a semifinalist, Adam will now have the opportunity to advance in the competition for some 7,500 National Merit Scholarship awards.

FREE FOOD FOR OUR FAMILIES

SSPPS is partnering with Second Harvest Heartland to provide free food each month to interested families at our schools, with no income guidelines or registration required. This *Food + You* program was very successful at Lincoln Center Elementary and Kaposia Education Center last year. This year, Second Harvest is extending the program to South St. Paul Secondary. There will be monthly school-wide distributions at Lincoln Center, Kaposia and the Secondary building.

Visit www.sspps.org/foodcalendar to access food distribution dates and locations.



REFERENDUM FACTS

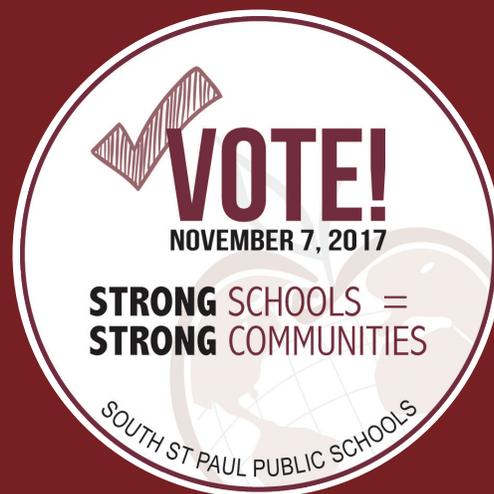
After years of cutting budgets, a history of inadequate state funding for our schools and months of analyzing district finances, the South St. Paul School Board voted unanimously to put two school funding requests before residents on a Tuesday, November 7, 2017 ballot.

STRONG SCHOOLS = STRONG COMMUNITIES

- ▶ We are committed to making decisions that strengthen our schools, our students and our staff. Our vision is to prepare each and every student for their next step.
- ▶ Schools directly affect a community's vitality and home resale values.
- ▶ The more attractive a community is, the more likely people are to live, work and shop there.

REFERENDUM INFORMATION SESSION

Wednesday, October 11, 6:30 PM
Secondary Building Media Center
700 North Second Street



THE PROPOSAL

QUESTION 1

would **increase the district's operating levy** to help the district retain quality teaching staff, fund programs to help students who struggle academically, operate the schools and minimize future budget cuts.

- ▶ SSPPS would receive additional annual revenue of \$1.3 million.
- ▶ While that would not cover the entire 2018-19 projected budget deficit, it would help the district protect critical educational programs and staff while keeping the tax impact low for homeowners.

QUESTION 2

would **renew the district's technology levy** to help fund technology for teaching and learning by keeping computers up-to-date, giving students exposure and access to technology tools and providing teachers with technology training.

- ▶ Because this would renew an existing levy, there would be no tax impact.

A 2017 COMMUNITY SURVEY FOUND THAT:



93% agree that maintaining strong schools builds strong communities



Two-thirds or more are supportive of district efforts to keep computers up-to-date, give students exposure and access to technology tools and provide teachers with technology training



Two-thirds or more are supportive of increased funding to:

- help students who struggle academically
- minimize future budget cuts
- retain quality teaching staff
- focus on personalized learning

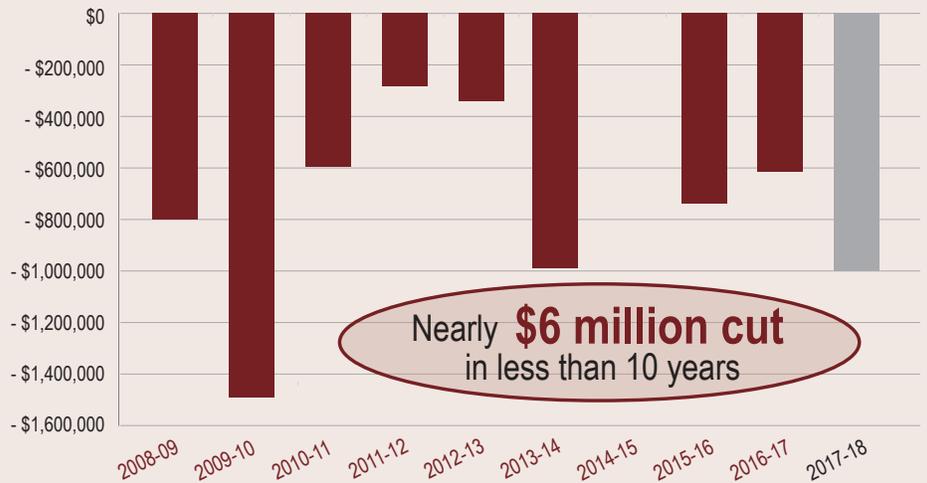
QUICK FUNDING FACTS

- If state funding had kept up with inflation since 2003, South St. Paul Public Schools (SSPPS) would have received an additional \$5 million last year to spend on students' educational needs.
- In the past ten years, SSPPS has cut:
 - kindergarten assistants
 - teachers
 - custodians
 - support & administrative staff
 - school supplies
 - curriculum

The district has also increased activities fees to help balance costs.

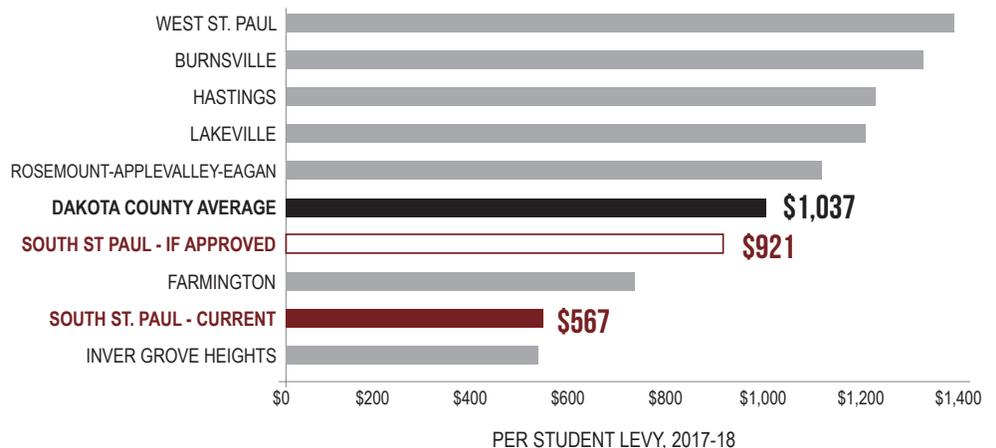
- The last time SSPPS voters approved an operating levy increase was 2009.

SOUTH ST. PAUL BUDGET REDUCTION HISTORY



- SSPPS has cut nearly \$6 million in less than ten years, and recently approved cutting \$1 million more for 2017-18.

DAKOTA COUNTY SCHOOLS OPERATING LEVY COMPARISON



- SSPPS currently receives \$470 less in per-student voter-approved funding than the average of all Dakota County school districts; our local education funding is among the lowest in the county.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN?

IF VOTERS **APPROVE QUESTION ONE**, FUNDS WILL:

- Maintain support for struggling learners
- Help maintain class sizes
- Maintain student programs/services, activities, athletics and arts programs
- Minimize (but not eliminate) future cuts

IF VOTERS **APPROVE QUESTION TWO**, FUNDS WOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPORT:

- Technology support staff
- Personal computer devices for student learning
- Computer purchases for teachers and staff
- Infrastructure
- Wireless networks

IF VOTERS **DO NOT APPROVE QUESTION ONE**, WE WOULD:

- Face a \$1.7M deficit in 2018-19 and more in future years
- Increase class sizes
- Eliminate teaching and teaching support positions
- Reduce building support positions such as clerical and custodial
- Decrease support for struggling learners
- Eliminate student programs/services, activities, athletics and arts programs

IF VOTERS **DO NOT APPROVE QUESTION TWO**, WE WOULD FACE:

- A longer replacement cycle for all technology related equipment, leaving students and teachers with outdated or unworkable equipment
- A reduction in technology support staff
- No dedicated funding source for technology, equipment, and purchases

TAX IMPACT

Ballot Question	Monthly Tax Impact*
Q1: Increase operating funds	\$11.67
Q2: Renew technology levy	\$0
Total of Q1 and Q2	\$11.67

**If voters approve both requests, taxes on the average district home (\$178,000 value home) would increase less than \$12 per month.*



VOTING INFORMATION

Polls will be open from 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM on Tuesday, November 7, 2017. Absentee ballots will be available starting September 22.

Questions about where to vote?

Call (651) 457-9465 or visit www.mnvotes.org to find your polling location.

LEARN MORE



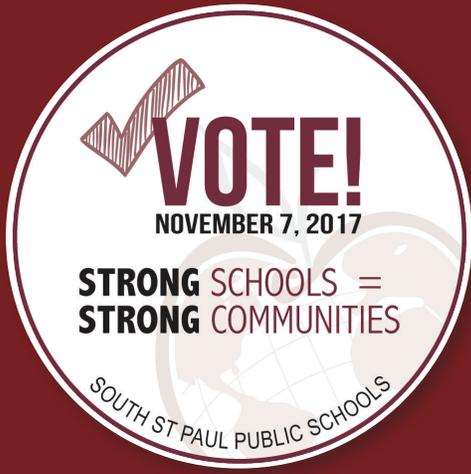
Visit www.sspps.org/referendum



Call (651) 552-5575



Email referendum@sspps.org



REFERENDUM INFORMATION SESSION

Wednesday, October 11, 6:30 PM
Secondary Building Media Center
700 North Second Street

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HOMECOMING WEEK!



MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

Class Color Day
Homecoming Powder Puff Football Game
Soccer: Boys' & Girls' Varsity Game
Tennis: Girls' Varsity Match

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

Hawaii Day
Tennis: Girls' Varsity Match
Swimming & Diving: Girls' Varsity Match

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

Favorite TV Show Day

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

College Day
Coronation of Homecoming Court
Cross Country: Varsity Invitational
Soccer: Boys' & Girls' Varsity Game
Tennis: Girls' Varsity Match
Volleyball: Girls' Varsity Game
Swimming & Diving: Girls' Varsity Match

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

Packer Pride Day!
Pep Fest
Hall of Fame Induction
Football: Varsity Game

#SSPPRIDE

WWW.SSPPS.ORG/ACTIVITIES-SCHEDULE