

# SIX TIMES

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 6

SPRING ISSUE | JUNE 2016



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Minnesota's First K-12  
IB World Schools District

South St. Paul  
Public Schools





# GET TO KNOW SSPPS | FUN FACTS



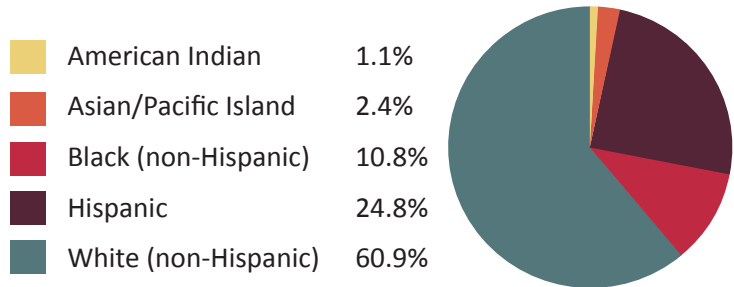
## Did you know?

South St. Paul Public School and the City of South St. Paul's boundaries are nearly the same.

Student Enrollment 2015-16	
Early Learning	184
Lincoln Center Elementary (K-5)	912
Kaposia Education Center (K-5)	772
Secondary Building (6-12)	1689
Community Learning Center (9-12)	71
Online Academy	25

South St. Paul Teacher Profile	
Master's Degrees	62.5%
Fewer than 3 years experience	15.2%
More than 10 years experience	50.2%
Meeting federal "Highly Qualified" requirements	100%

District Demographic Information 2015-16	
Total Enrollment	3653
Students who live outside of SSP boundaries	21%
Students eligible for free/reduced meal	48%
K-12 students in Special Education	16%
English Language Learners	16%



## School Finance

South St. Paul Public Schools receives \$466 less per student than the average of all schools in Dakota County, and ranks at the bottom of all eight Dakota County schools for funding per student.

Operating Levy Revenue	
South St. Paul Public Schools	\$541 per student
Dakota County Schools Average	\$1,007 per student

### District Honors and Recognitions

- Minnesota's First K-12 IB World Schools District
- News Week Ranking #2 Best High School in MN
- SSP Preschool earns 4-star Parent Aware
- 2016 MDE School Finance Award Recipient

## Reflecting Learning Skills, Interests and Passion

### Primary Years Program (PYP) Exhibition

In the final year of elementary school, students complete a project called the Exhibition. This project is meant to highlight the skills students have learned during their PYP experience. This spring, 5th graders at Lincoln Center Elementary and Kaposia Education Center presented their research and solutions in topic such as stress management, refugees, health and foods, sports safety and injuries, homelessness, virus prevention, equality, and many other interesting topics.

### Middle Years Program (MYP) Personal Project Fair

The 10th grade Personal Project is a significant body of work produced over an extended period of time. It holds a very important place in the IB program; therefore, it is a requirement for all 10th graders to complete the Personal Project at South St. Paul High School. The Personal Project, which is an exploration of a personal passion rather than a topic that someone else requires, serves as the culmination of the student's experiences in the Middle Years Program.



### District Program Highlights

#### World Languages

Both elementary schools offer Spanish to students in grades K-5. World language courses are offered to our Secondary students with the opportunity to learn Chinese, French or Spanish.

#### STEM Initiative: Project Lead The Way

Courses in grades 6-12 focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) through the implementation of the Project Lead the Way curriculum.

Rather than be passive recipients of information in a question-and-answer, right-or-wrong learning environment, South St. Paul students learn to apply what they know, identify a problem, find unique solutions, and lead their own learning.

#### AVID

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) teaches students in grades 3-6 fundamental learning, study and academic behavioral skills. The program places special emphasis on growing writing, critical thinking, teamwork, organization and reading skills.

#### Innovative Technology

A 1:1 digital device initiative allows students in grades 6-12 anywhere, anytime access to a digital device, and students in PreK-5 extensive access to learning devices. Smartboards are installed in every classroom district-wide.

#### 2-Year A.A. Degree

Through our partnership with Inver Hills Community College, South St. Paul students can graduate from high school with an Associate in Arts degree without ever stepping foot on a college campus or paying for a college class.

### International Baccalaureate at South St. Paul Schools

South St. Paul Public Schools became the first school district in the State of Minnesota to have a comprehensive K-12 International Baccalaureate (IB) Program.

**The IB Primary Years Program (PYP)** is designed for all students in grades K-5. The program focuses on the development of the whole child as an inquirer, both inside and outside of a classroom setting.

**The IB Middle Years Program (MYP)** serves all students in grades 6-10, and it focuses on providing a framework for academic challenge and life skills.

**The IB Diploma Program (DP)** is a rigorous academic program for students in grades 11-12. It focuses on creativity, innovation, self-discipline and the ability to function as part of a team.

Enrollment in Advanced Courses	2014	2015
IB Diploma Program Candidates	20	23
IB Honors Candidates	8	13
A.A. Degree Candidates	7	10
Students taking at least one IB Course	163	217





This year, the South St. Paul Educational Foundation awarded a total of \$340,150 scholarships to 132 seniors

## Kelton Holsen Wins National Merit® Scholarship

South St. Paul Senior, Kelton Holsen, has been selected as a winner of a National Merit® \$2,500 Scholarship.

The National Merit Scholarship Program is an academic competition for recognition and scholarships. High school students enter the National Merit Program by taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) - a test which serves as an initial screen of approximately 1.5 million entrants each year.

## Section 4A Academic Champions

Congratulations to the Packer Boys' Hockey team and Girls' Gymnastics team for being named Section 4A Academic Champions.

The Boys' Hockey team has an overall GPA of 3.83 and the Girls' Gymnastics team has an overall GPA of 3.61.

## Minnesota Principal of the Year



Mr. Chuck Ochocki was selected by the Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principal (MASSP) as the 2015 Minnesota Middle Level Principal of the Year.

This program recognizes outstanding middle level and high school principals who have succeeded in providing high-quality learning opportunities for students as well as demonstrating exemplary contributions to the profession.



## Lincoln Center JEDIs Raised Over \$11,000 for Special Olympics

The JEDI (Justice, Equity, Dignity, & Inclusion) group from Lincoln Center Elementary successfully raised over \$11,000 to support Special Olympics Minnesota this year!

JEDI is a service group at Lincoln Center Elementary that provides students with leadership and service-learning opportunities. This is the fourth year that the group has participated in the plunge to show their continued support for the Special Olympics community.

## IB students strive to be:

**Inquirers, Knowledgeable, Thinkers, Communicators, Principled, Caring, Open-minded, Risk-takers, Balanced and Reflective.**



## Mrs. Applequist Receives 2016 Silver Apple Award



Congratulations to Mrs. Brenda Applequist, third grade teacher at Lincoln Center Elementary, for receiving the 2016 Roxanne Bliss Silver Apple Award. Mrs. Applequist was nominated by Isabelle Anderson.

This award is established by Don Bliss '50 in honor of his wife, Roxanne Waldhauser Bliss '51 to encourage students to appreciate educators/support staff who are especially important to them. Each year, students nominate a teacher or other employee at South St. Paul schools who made a significant difference in their lives.

## Passionate Learners, Positively Changing Our World

### District Mission (our core purpose)

Ignite a passion in every learner to inquire, continuously improve and engage in positively changing our world.

### Our Vision (what we intend to create)

By 2020, we will...

- Prepare each and every student for their next step
- Provide high quality, individualized programs, services and personalized learning for all ages and stages of a learner's life
- Build capacity in our learners to exemplify the IB Learner Profile
- Partner with our families and community to develop shared ownership of student outcomes and family learning needs
- Ensure students and families have reliable and regular access to technology for accelerated learning

### District Core Values (what drives our words and actions)

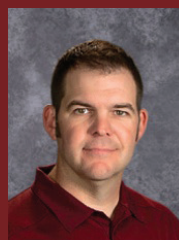
We strive to have compassion, equity, excellence, integrity, resilience and respect

## Packer's First Prep Bowl Appearance



Congratulations to the Packer Football team winning the Conference Championship and for its first Prep Bowl Appearance in the South St. Paul history.

## Class 4A Coach of the Year



Congratulations to Chad Sexauer for receiving the 2015 Class 4A Coach of the Year award by the Minnesota Football Coaches Association (MFCA).

Chad is the Director of Activities at the Secondary building and the head coach of the South St. Paul football team. This year, Chad led the Packers to the Prep Bowl for the first time in South St. Paul school history.

## Class 4AA Coach of the Year



Congratulations to Don Nihart for receiving the 2015 Class 4AA Section Coach of the Year award by the Minnesota Wrestling Coaches Association (MWCA). Don is the head coach of the Packer Wrestling team.

## Metro East Coach of the Year



Congratulations to Dan Cosgrove for receiving the 2016 Metro East Baseball Coach of the Year award. Dan is the head coach of the Packer Baseball team.



# A LOOK BACK TO 2015-16 | PRIDE, TRADITION, EXCELLENCE

The design of educational facilities has a profound impact on how students learn and teachers teach

South St. Paul Public Schools opened the 2015-16 school year with a Design Center which features Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM), a new 6th Grade Center, a redesigned Media Center, and an additional station in our Packer Activity Center (PAC).

## 6th Grade Center

We were excited to welcome 6th graders to the Secondary building this year. With this transition, students have access to:

- Content specialized teachers such as math, science, English and humanities
- World language opportunities
- Additional performing arts, activity and athletic offerings

## Media Center

The updated Media Center features flexible furniture and bookshelves with wheels to make this space adaptable for different learning styles.

## Design Center

The Design Center was designed as an interactive and collaborative instructional area where students can explore design-based thinking and problem solving curriculum. It is a series of instructional areas each different than a traditional classroom setting to allow a wide variety of exploration and learning styles.

It features a computer lab with higher powered CPU machines, an Application Lab for active hands-on design and creative testing, and a Fabrication Lab for heavier hands-on construction of design





# A LOOK BACK TO 2015-16 | PREPARING STUDENTS FOR SCHOOL SUCCESS

Research shows that children who master reading by third grade are more likely to succeed in school. Third grade is a critical year for young students. It is then that they start “reading to learn,” rather than “learning to read.”

It is critical to get our students off to a good start in preschool and the elementary grades in order to be ready for college and career.

## Helping Our Students Get a Head Start

Our schools have been partnering with the community to help our young learners be on track for school success.

Through our partnership with the City of South St. Paul, community members have volunteered to read to our young learners through programs like Read Across SSP.



The South St. Paul Community Preschool also partnered with the South St. Paul Public Library through *300 Books Before Kindergarten* to encourage preschoolers to read. Staff from the Public Library read to our preschool classes and hosted literacy events and activities for our families.

To encourage and support families to make reading a daily routine in their young learners' lives, South St. Paul teachers and the community of Luther Memorial Church donated over 700 books to the SSP Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE).



## Governor Visits Kaposia's Preschool

In March, we welcomed Governor Mark Dayton and a number of other dignitaries to visit our Preschool classrooms at Kaposia Education Center for discussion about the importance of early education and expanding opportunities for all children.

## Implementing AVID with IB for School Success

AVID teaches students fundamental *skills* to promote academic success, self-efficacy, and self-advocacy as they begin their educational journey. It serves as a great support to students in IB schools to be able to access the deep thinking, knowledge and caring expected by IB's rigorous curriculum.

The IB framework shares this commitment of providing students with necessary skills, but is more robust and comprehensive; the PYP and MYP are also committed to helping students acquire essential knowledge, develop conceptual understanding, demonstrate positive attitudes and take responsible action.

For instance, students have been staying organized with the help of their AVID binder and agenda. These organizational skills are imbedded within the PYP *Self-Management Skills*. Students are also making their thinking visible using AVID two- and three-column notes. These note-taking skills are imbedded within the PYP *Research Skills*.

South St. Paul schools currently implements AVID in grades 4 and 5 district-wide. With the great benefits shown through the program, the District will be expanding AVID to grades 3 and 6 next school year.



# Summer Learning Programs

## Kindergarten Camp

August 15 - August 18, 2016  
9:00 - 11:30 AM

## Summer Learning Academy for Incoming Grades 1-5

July 11 - August 11, 2016  
8:45 AM - 12:45 PM  
Monday through Thursday

## Packer Preview for Incoming 6th Graders

July 11 - July 21, 2016  
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
Monday through Thursday

Please visit [www.sspps.org](http://www.sspps.org) for more information on these programs and other summer learning opportunities.

## South St. Paul Public Schools

### District Office

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## A LOOK AHEAD TO 2016-17

### Free Food for Families

South St. Paul Public Schools (SSPPS) is proud to offer two food resources for families:

#### Summer 2016 | SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

Free breakfast and lunch will be served at each school building at SSP from June 15 through August 11, 2016. Summer meals are available at no cost to all children under 18 years and younger in the community. Adults may purchase a breakfast for \$2.15 and a lunch meal for \$3.80. More details can be found on the Nutrition Services webpage at [www.sspps.org](http://www.sspps.org).



#### Fall 2016 | FOOD + YOU

SSPPS is partnering with Second Harvest to provide a 13-pound box of free food each month to interested families at Lincoln Center Elementary and Kaposia Education Center. These Food+You boxes contain healthy dry foods such as vegetables, soup, juice, pasta, cereal and more. *More details will be shared in August.*



These opportunities are one way SSPPS helps families stretch their food dollars and ensure their children are well-fed and ready to learn.

### 1:1 Learning Devices for All Students in Grades 6-12

One of our vision in the Strategic Roadmap is to ensure students and families have reliable and regular access to technology for accelerated learning.

In the fall of 2016, SSPPS will be providing 1:1 learning devices to all students in grades 6-12. Students will have Google Chromebooks for use at home and school.

