

# SIX TIMES

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 6

SUMMER ISSUE | AUGUST 2015

Our Graduates Can  
Earn Three Diplomas

The District's  
Strategic Roadmap

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Join us in our social circles!



Minnesota's First K-12  
IB World Schools District

South St. Paul  
Public Schools







## Our Graduates Can Earn Three Diplomas

The Class of 2015 has taken another leap for the next generation of Packers. In July, 18 South St. Paul seniors received the full International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma along with a high school diploma.

Through the District's IB Diploma program and a partnership with Inver Hills Community College, South St. Paul students have the opportunity to take college-level courses without stepping foot on a college campus or paying for a college class.

**Congratulations to Maxwell Tetrick, the first senior at South St. Paul to graduate with three diplomas: high school diploma, IB diploma and a two-year Associate in Arts degree.** By completing all IB diploma requirements and taking additional classes, an IB diploma candidate has the opportunity earn an associate degree through Inver Hills Community College.

### Career and College Readiness

All students at South St. Paul are encouraged to participate in at least one IB course throughout their junior and senior years. The Class of 2015 has the highest number of IB Diploma candidates and recipients.

The number of SSP students enrolled in the IB diploma and an associate degree courses continue to grow as students choose to challenge themselves to take more rigorous classes.

Research shows that students who have taken IB diploma courses in high school are more likely to persist to complete college. IB diploma students are more academically adjusted to the rigor and expectations of college courses. These students are better able to cope with the heavy workload required in college honors courses than non-IB students.

# 63%

SSP students are enrolled in at least one IB diploma course

# 74%

SSP seniors pursue post-secondary education after high school

### Associate of Arts Degree Recipient

Maxwell Tetrick

### International Baccalaureate Diploma Recipients

Madalyn Elmquist

Taylor Freeman

Kathleen Jackson

Cecilia Kustritz

Abigail Miranda

Cristina Morelos-Quintero

Lee Nelson

Korey O'Donnell

Emily Roznowski

Laura Sunday

Kali Suchy

Rachel Tappe

Maxwell Tetrick

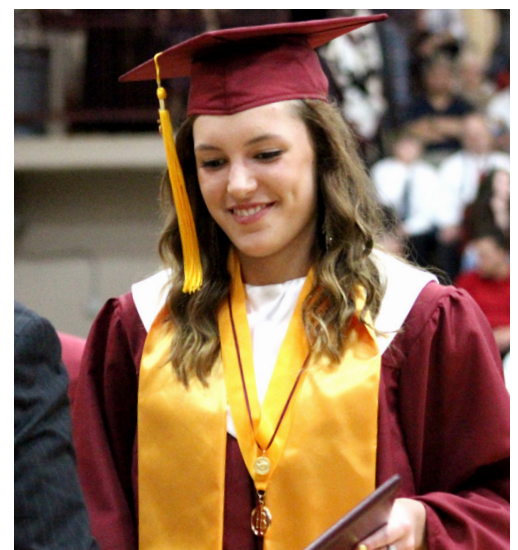
Shannon Troye

Parker Tveit

Shannon VanDusartz

Addam Velasco

Emily York





*Mr. Ochocki meets secondary students at the Summer Strength session*

## SSPPS Welcomes New Secondary/CLC Principal

SSPPS proudly announces the hiring of Chuck Ochocki as the new Principal for the Secondary Building and Community Learning Center. Beginning July 1, Chuck took over for former principal, Butch Moening, who retired after 12 years with the District.

Chuck began his career at South St. Paul where he served for 12 years as a Social Studies teacher, Diversity Coordinator, and Dean of Students for the district. Chuck left South St. Paul in 2008 to become the Assistant Principal of Stillwater Junior High where he served for two years and Principal for the last five years.

Chuck shared, "I am really excited about returning to Special School District No. 6. It is a fantastic school district located in an incredibly supportive community. Becoming the principal of South St. Paul Secondary Building and the Community Learning Center is a dream come true for me, I feel like I am coming home!"



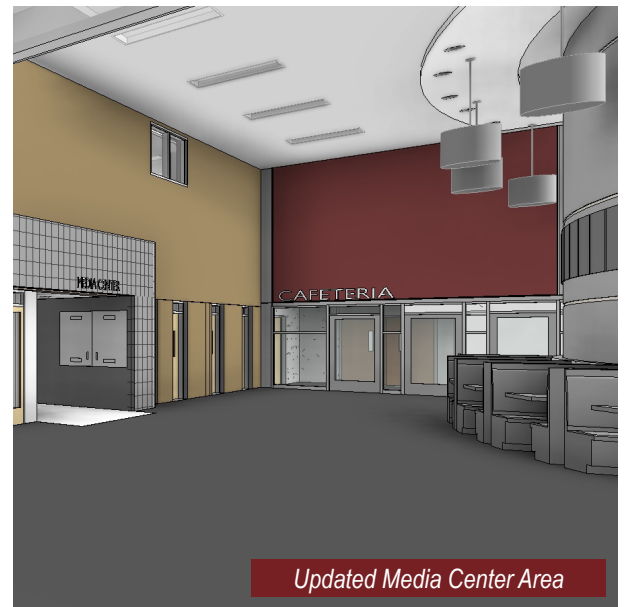
*6th Grade Center Classrooms*

## Construction Updates

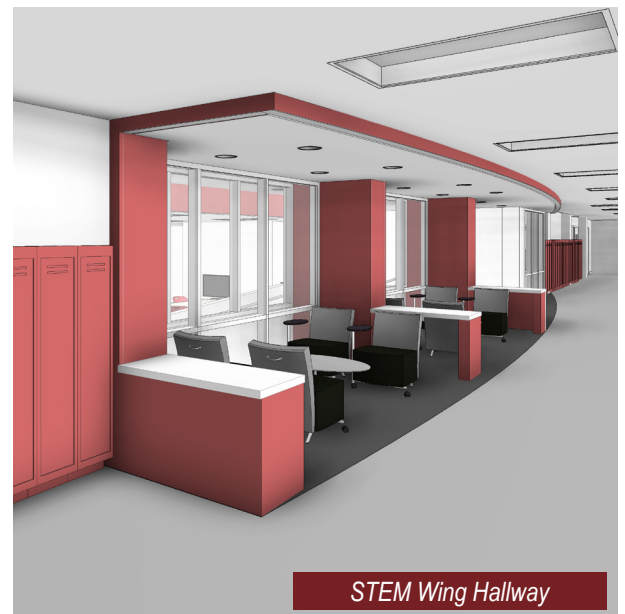
We are very excited about the new 6th Grade Center, STEM wing and an updated Media Center that will be available this fall.

The design of educational facilities has a profound impact upon how students learn and teachers teach. We are committed to providing the best facilities to help our students grow to their fullest potential.

All construction work is on schedule and students will be able to access classrooms and lockers during 6th and 7th grade Packer Preview.



*Updated Media Center Area*



*STEM Wing Hallway*





South St. Paul  
Public Schools



## OUR CORE VALUES

(what drives our words and actions)

### Compassion

Be kind, fair and just toward all people because of who we are

### Equity

Provide equal access to opportunities in academics, student services and activities

### Excellence

Strive for the/our best in all we do with high expectations for all

### Integrity

Do the right thing even when no one is watching, and keep our promises

### Resilience

Be able to bounce back from challenges and disappointments with confidence and hope

### Respect

Honor our similarities and differences in our assumptions, inquiries, words, and actions



## Minnesota's First K-12 IB World Schools District

### OUR 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

### OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS (how we will get there)

- Develop** systemic student support services in each school and classroom
- Promote** ownership of learning by students and staff through an engaging environment and professional development
- Secure, sustain and allocate** resources to meet student needs
- Strengthen** family connections and engagement
- Partner** with community and businesses to leverage local resources



# Priority Actions

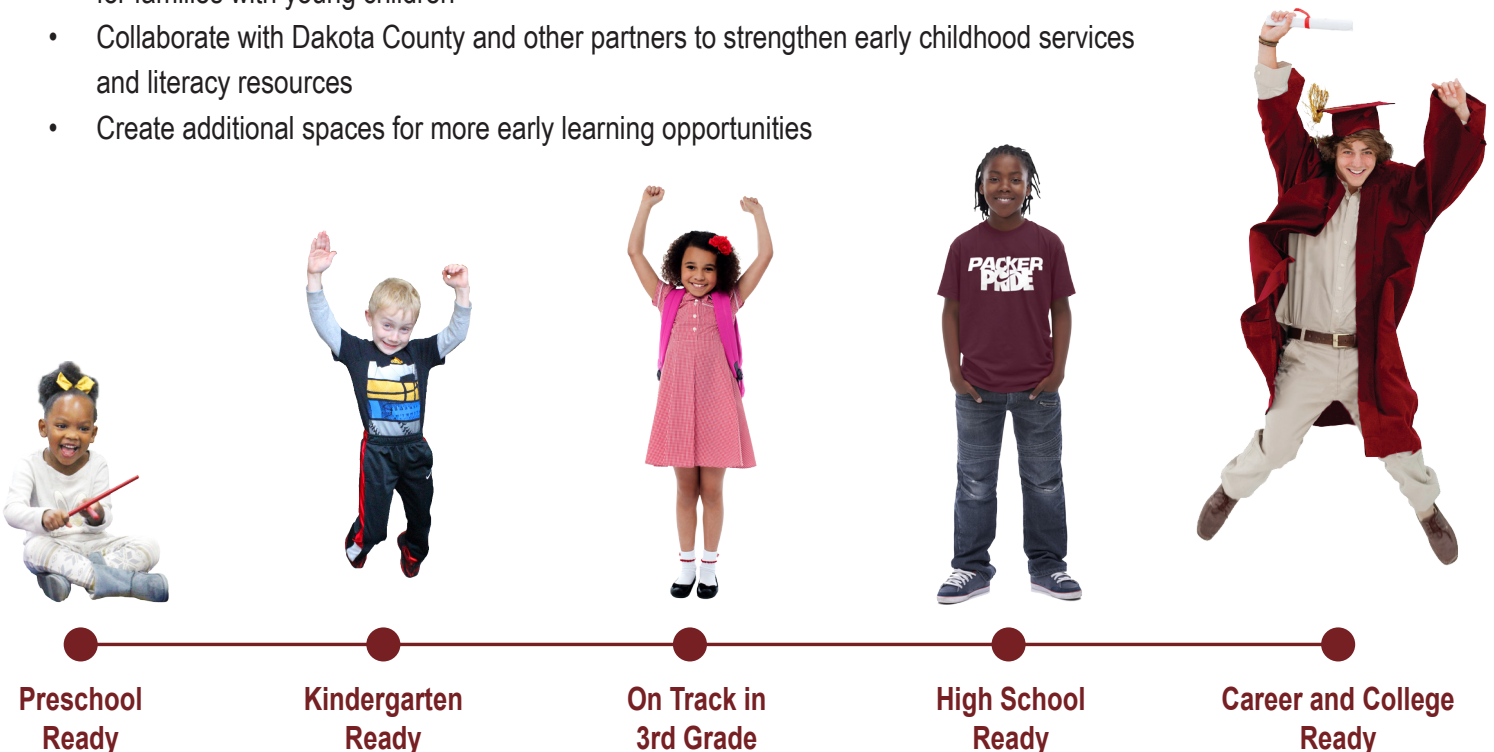
to prepare each and every student for their next step

**Our goal is to ensure success for all students at each grade level to prepare them for the career or college path of their choice. To achieve this, we will...**

- Integrate International Baccalaureate (IB) experiences into all aspects of the learning day
- Improve systemic student support services by creating dedicated teacher collaborative planning and training time during the school day
- Expand Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM) experiences for students at all levels, which includes implementation of the Project Lead the Way (PLTW) curriculum
- Increase access to digital learning resources district-wide
- Expand research-based strategies and curriculum to prepare all students for career and college success through Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)
- Secure funding to expand time and opportunities for student and staff learning
- Strengthen our co-curricular programming district-wide

**Kindergarten readiness is the foundation for all future success. To help our children be ready for kindergarten, we will...**

- Secure funding to provide preschool for qualifying families
- Provide developmental literacy coaches to conduct home visits to offer support, resources and training for families with young children
- Collaborate with Dakota County and other partners to strengthen early childhood services and literacy resources
- Create additional spaces for more early learning opportunities



# Community Survey Results Help in District Planning

Thanks to all the participants who took time to complete the survey that was mailed out to all district residents in June. Your input is very helpful for academic and financial planning for the district. Here are some survey highlights:

**77%**  of our community is satisfied or very satisfied with SSPPS

## Top areas our community feels the school district does well:

- **Preparing** students academically and for life after high school
- **Maintaining** decisions in the best interest of students
- **Providing** a welcoming environment
- **Building** pride in the community



our community's top  
**FUNDING  
PRIORITIES**

- Focused instruction in reading/literacy and math
- Provide support for struggling students
- Expand K-12 instruction in science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM)
- Develop student life and employability skills
- Maintain current class sizes and current class offerings



## Message from the Superintendent

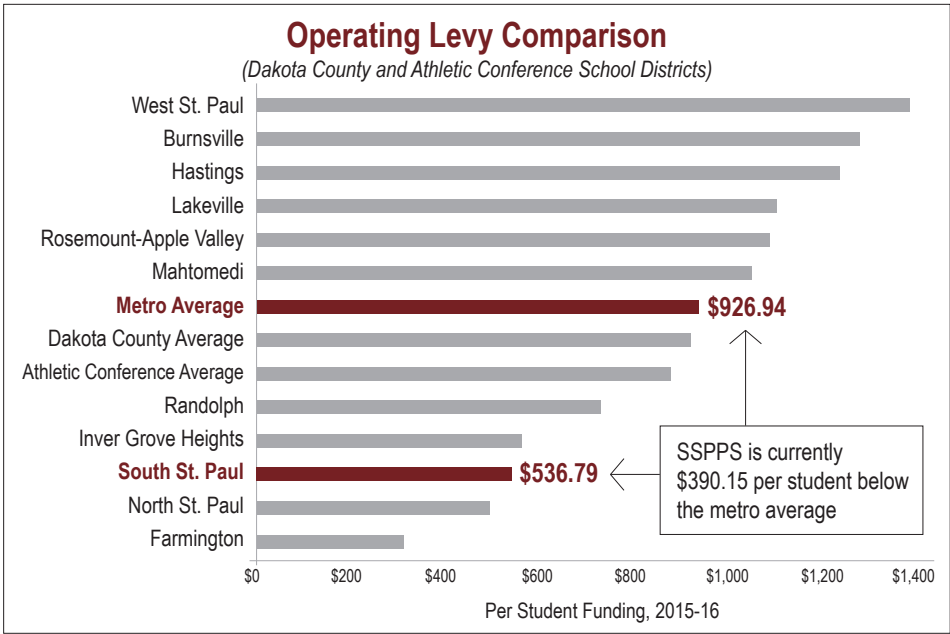


For the past several months, district leaders and the South St. Paul Board of Education have been analyzing our school district budget. With state funding that has not kept pace with inflation for more than a decade, there is increased pressure on our budget every year and our ability to maintain what we currently offer is at risk. The School Board continues to try to balance our educational needs and vision with what our community values and will support.

The Board faces a difficult decision as it considers placing a levy increase before resident voters on a November 3 ballot. We anticipate a decision by mid-August, and will continue to share information with the community through our district website, the District E-News and our SixTimes newsletter.

More information about our financial planning and the issues we face can be found on [www.sspps.org](http://www.sspps.org) under the Business Services Tab and then select the Financial Planning link.





### The School Budget Challenge

School districts receive the majority of their funding from the State. However, this funding has not kept up with inflation, putting severe financial strain on school districts across the state.

Minnesota law allows school districts to seek voter approval for additional operating revenue to help pay educational costs. Currently, SSPPS has a lower per student operating levy than most other school districts in the metro area, making it difficult to keep up with increasing educational costs.

The school board and district leadership have been discussing school funding to support the district's vision for the past several months and may bring a levy increase request to voters in November.

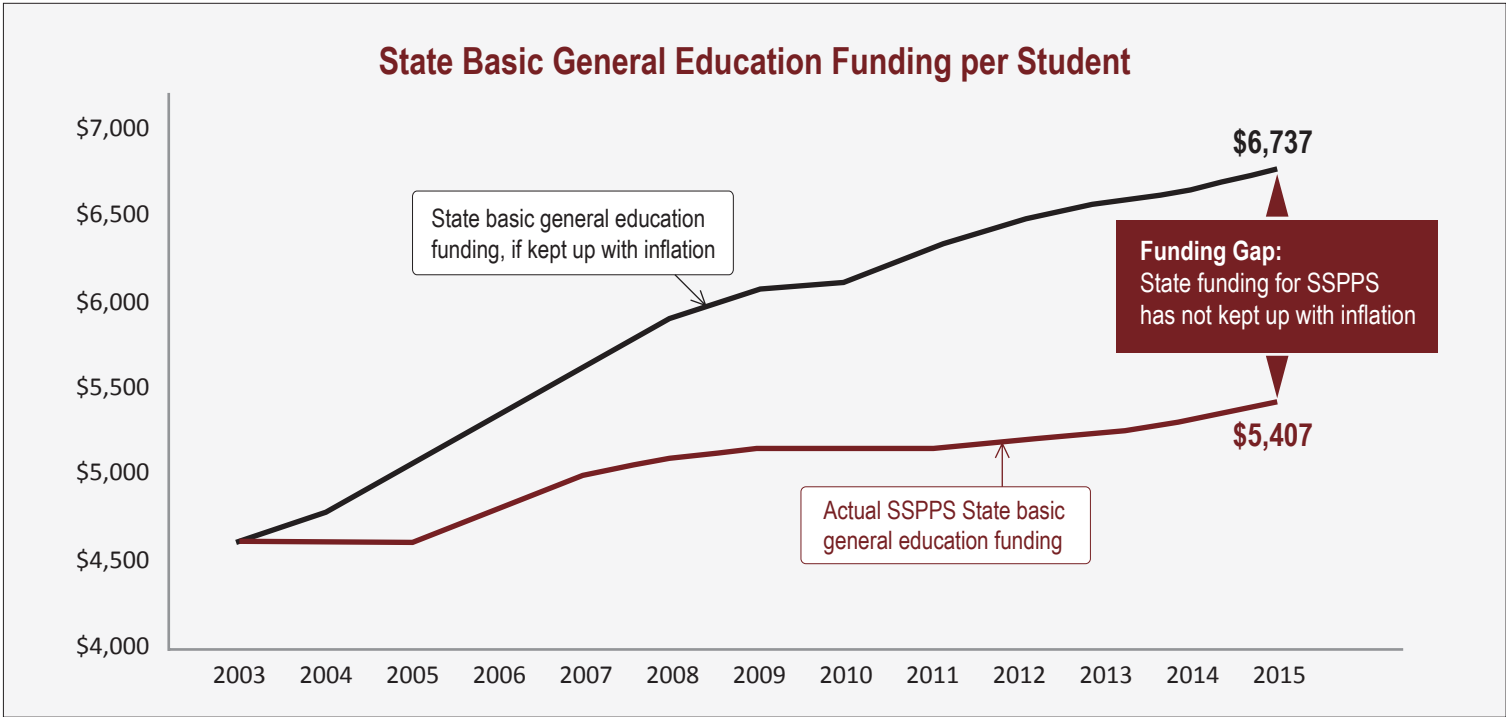
## Bonds are for Building; Levies are for Learning

In 2013, our community approved a bond referendum to fund facility improvements. These updates have helped to ensure safe and effective learning environments for our students including:

- Site improvements and facility maintenance
- Relieve overcrowding in our elementary schools to enhance programming
- Address district-wide safety/security needs
- Reduce our rental costs

Funds from bonds can only be used for construction/renovation of buildings, major repairs and land purchases. Levies pay for student learning and instructions.

The District is very grateful to have a supportive community that cares for our students' needs and shares our goals to ensure students are successful on each grade level.



## Important Dates

### Kindergarten

#### Camps

August 17 - 20

Lincoln Center:

8:30-11:00 AM

Kaposia:

9:00-11:30 AM

### Lincoln Center

#### Open House

Thursday,

September 3

4:00-6:00 PM

### Kaposia

#### Open House

Thursday,

September 3

4:30-6:30 PM

### Kindergarten

#### Conferences

September 8-9

8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

### 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

#### Packer Preview

August 10 - 14

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

### 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

#### Packer Preview

August 17 - 21

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

### Secondary

#### Registration

August 20 and 24

12:00-3:00 PM;

4:00-7:00 PM

### Grades 6-8

#### Open House

Wednesday,

September 2

6:00-8:00 PM

## South St. Paul Public Schools

### District Office

104-5th Avenue South

South Saint Paul, MN 55075

[www.sspps.org](http://www.sspps.org) | 651-457-9400

Email: [sspdirect@sspps.org](mailto:sspdirect@sspps.org)

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## Let's Get Ready for the 2015-16 School Year!

# 1

### First Day of School

Grades 1-12 start on Tuesday, Sept. 8

Kindergarten starts on Thursday, Sept. 10

Preschool/ECFE starts on Monday, Sept. 14

# 2

### New School Start-and-End Times

Secondary Building: 7:50 AM - 2:30 PM

Lincoln Center Elementary: 8:20 AM - 2:55 PM

Kaposia Education Center: 9:00 AM - 3:35 PM

# 3

### New Secondary Transportation Boundary

Secondary students who live **1.5 miles**, or more from their assigned school, are now eligible for District-provided transportation.

# 4

### Stay Connected!

Are you receiving automated phone calls from the district, but not receiving emails?

If so, please contact your school building to update your contact information.

## Are you all set for school?

Here's a checklist for you to get prepared before school starts:

- ✓ School Supplies
- ✓ School Calendars
- ✓ Student Immunization
- ✓ Transportation
- ✓ Parent/Student Handbooks
- ✓ Student Nutrition/ Meals
- ✓ Student Enrollment/ Registration
- ✓ Athletics & Activities
- ✓ District/School Newsletters
- ✓ Early Childhood Screening
- ✓ Smooth Transition into Secondary

## Transitioning to Secondary?

Join us at the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Packer Preview orientations from August 10 through 21!

These orientations are designed to help your student with the transition to the Secondary building and strengthen their social skills.

Your student will:

- Meet with W.E.B. leaders who will be working with your student throughout the year
- Learn about the Middle Years Program (MYP) curriculum
- Experience social opportunities to connect with staff and students

For more information, visit [www.sspps.org](http://www.sspps.org) for your school site's contact.