



# Sixtimes

The Official Newsletter of Special School District No. 6



FALL 2021

Inside this edition: Hollywood Homecoming, In-Person Learning, Career and College Readiness National Marketing Campaign, and more SSPPS news.



## SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT TO INCREASE LEARNING AND SUCCESS

### A STAGGERED START

South St. Paul Schools are excited to be back to in-person learning for the start of the 2021-22 school year. A staggered start to the year made it easier for staff to connect with families before the school year began. The first day of school was pushed back one day for Grades 1-5, 6, 9, and new SSPPS students, while Kindergarten, grades 7, 9, and 10-12 were pushed back two days. This allowed an extra connection day and longer meetings. Longer meeting times meant more time for teachers and families to discuss the year prior and address any of the student's needs. Realizing how challenging last school year was, it was important to take extra time and meet with each student and family individually to hear their experiences from last year and learn how we could best support them as we transitioned back to full in-person learning.



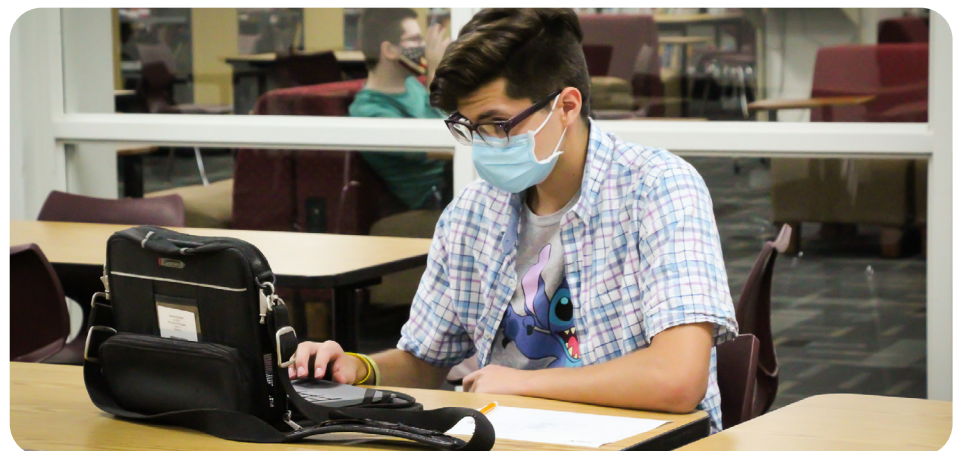
### CLOSING THE GAP WITH "WHAT I NEED WEDNESDAY"

New this school year at the secondary building is "W.I.N (What I Need) Wednesday." On the identified W.I.N Wednesdays, all students are welcome to attend class in-person, but those with a C- or less in any class will be required to attend in-person. Teachers and support staff are using W.I.N. Wednesdays to offer an added layer of one-on-one support for struggling students. Teachers also have additional collaboration time on these Wednesdays to work together to create a larger safety net for students. Students who are not required to attend still have assignments to work on during the day. The incentive is, they choose whether they want to complete their tasks in school or at home. Middle School students are required to attend Wednesday, but the day is shortened and begins at 9:30 am. Busing, breakfast, and lunch are offered for students every Wednesday.



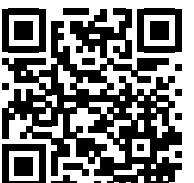
### BACK TO SCHOOL HEALTH AND SAFETY

SSPPS is committed to keeping students and staff safe while attending school and events in our buildings. Throughout the summer, district leaders developed the health and safety protocols for the 2021-22 school year using guidance set forth by the Minnesota Department of Education and the Minnesota Department of Health. With SSPPS requiring face coverings for all people over the age of 2, guidance says that only students and staff that test positive for COVID must quarantine. This change in guidance from last year, helps limit the amount of learning disruptions for the students who are close contacts to someone testing positive for COVID. As another layer of prevention, SSPPS also used federal funding to have air filtration improvements made on all district buildings. Scan the code to the right to view the full list of health and safety protocols and frequently asked questions.



### FLEX LEARNING FOR EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

New this year, SSPPS will utilize technology put in place during the 2020-21 school year to keep students learning during emergency closings. Each school and grade will have flexible learning plans that are a combination of at-home work and virtual class time. School staff have been preparing these flexible learning plans in the event of inclement weather, loss of power, water main breaks, or any other emergency situation that may close our district buildings. On weather closing days, the Flexible Learning plan for grades 7-12 fulfills legislative "E-Learning Day" requirements allowing these days to be counted for funding and does not add days to the academic calendar. Details of the flexible learning plans as well as the various ways SSPPS uses to communicate an emergency closing with families, can be found on the district's website under the Newsroom Tab and then Emergency School Closing. You can also scan the QR code to take you to the emergency closing site.



STAY CONNECTED!





# A MESSAGE FROM SUPERINTENDENT DAVE WEBB

## ONCE A PACKER, ALWAYS A PACKER

At their October 11th meeting, the SSPPS School Board accepted my letter of retirement, effective June 30, 2022. It was important to submit my letter early to allow the SSP School Board enough time to run an effective search process that will engage the staff and SSP school community in helping select the next superintendent of SSPPS. I'm confident our board will choose an outstanding leader to serve our students, staff, and school community well.

During my time with SSP, we have accomplished great things together. I never look at leadership as what "I do", but more like what "we do". Everything is a team effort that involves all of us working towards the greater good from the students and families to each and every community and staff member like our cooks, custodians, teachers, support staff, coaches, etc.

- Career Pathway Offerings: A partnership with TriDistrict Community Education to offer career and college readiness to 11th and 12th grade students.
- 1:1 Technology: All students have access to an electronic device to advance their learning.
- Birth-to-8 Collaborative: An emphasis on early learning to help all students be prepared and ready for the next stages of their education.
- Equity Program Development: A commitment to ensuring students equal access to academics, student services, and activities.

While I look forward to spending more time with my family and all that retirement has to offer, it truly has been an honor to serve such a wonderful school district and I will cherish my time working with you as your Superintendent.

## GO PACKERS!!



Dr. Dave Webb  
Superintendent of Schools

*Dr. Webb*  
Follow Dr. Webb on Twitter  
@SSP\_Super



# HOLLYWOOD HOMECOMING!

A SUCCESSFUL 2021 HOMECOMING WEEK HAS COME AND GONE IN SSP. THE WEEK WAS FILLED WITH SPIRIT WEAR, ROYALTY, AND A LOT OF FUN!

## SPIRIT WEEK

SSP students in grades K-12 showed their school spirit all week with dress up days! The high school student council also hosted the annual backyard games and coronation.

## SECONDARY STUDENTS:

**MONDAY:** Class color day

**TUESDAY:** Vacation day

**WEDNESDAY:** College day

**THURSDAY:** Bitmoji day

**FRIDAY:** PACKER PRIDE!

## ELEMENTARY STUDENTS:

**MONDAY:** College/Jersey day

**TUESDAY:** Mismatch day

**WEDNESDAY:** Class color day

**THURSDAY:** Dress your best

**FRIDAY:** PACKER PRIDE!



## HOMECOMING ROYALS

Lilie R.  
Steven I.

Duffani G.  
Ella R.

## HOMECOMING COURT

Breylee B.  
Betty B.  
Rylee C.  
Andrew D.  
Alonzo D.  
Aselya G.  
Ryan H.  
Hafit H.

Josie K.  
Noah N.  
Ikechukwu N.  
Rita O.  
Gabrielle O.  
Molly S.  
Alex T.  
Ngoc T.



## MNDOT DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

South St. Paul Schools is the recipient of a MnDOT Demonstration Project. What is a demonstration project? It's a short-term, low cost, and temporary roadway project to promote and advance walking and biking safety. The district will be working with MnDOT, ALTA planning, and community partners to evaluate possible infrastructure improvements before potentially investing in permanent changes.

The application for this demonstration project highlights areas near Kaposia Education Center:

- Intersections of concern — 7th/Dale, 5th/Dale, 7th/Spruce and 5th/Spruce
- High traffic speeds
- Pedestrian safety and limited infrastructure (sidewalks, bump outs, stop signs, stop lights, etc)
- Open to community input on how to best utilize this project to support SRTS efforts in SSP

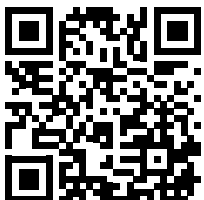
The planning stages are currently underway and any needed installation for the project will happen in the spring of 2022. Data will be collected as MnDOT evaluates the success of the demonstration project. This data will be used to decide if any permanent changes need to be made.



## THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT/ESSER FUNDING

On Thursday, March 11, 2021, the American Rescue Plan (ARP) ACT was signed into law bringing \$1.3 billion to school districts across Minnesota. These funds, also known as ESSER funds, are provided to help districts safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools and address the impact of the coronavirus pandemic in our students.

SSPPS was allocated a one-time ESSER funding of \$3.8 million to be spent over a three-year period. In order to prioritize investments that will not incur ongoing costs beyond the three-year period. SSPPS will engage with students, staff, families and the SSP community to help develop a plan for utilizing these one-time funds to support the greatest academic, behavioral and social/emotional needs of our students as a result of the COVID pandemic. Scan the QR code to see how you can be involved in the decision making process.



## DAVID R. METZEN SCHOLARSHIP HALL DEDICATION

The South St. Paul Educational Foundation is proud to announce the naming of the SSP Secondary Cafeteria as The David R. Metzen Scholarship Hall.

David R. Metzen graduated from South St. Paul High School in 1960 and received his degrees at the University of Minnesota. He returned to South St. Paul as a Principal and became the Superintendent from 1982 to 2000.

During Dave's tenure, he expanded the classroom experience to accommodate different learning styles

by adding The Alternative Learning Center, The International Baccalaureate Programme, and a partnership with the Dakota County Technical College.



Under his leadership, The South St. Paul Educational Foundation was established. This Foundation has funded education initiatives in classrooms and provided a broad scholarship program

to help students achieve their goals. The SSP Educational Foundation, in partnership with SSPPS, is dedicating the cafeteria to Metzen to commemorate his accomplishments in South St. Paul.

## WALKING SCHOOL BUS

In support of Minnesota's Climate Week, September 20-24, Kaposia Elementary hosted a Walking School Bus. The Walking School Bus provides students with an opportunity to walk safely to school while also being good stewards of our earth. Staff volunteers walked with the students while teaching them about walking and traffic safety.



## MIDDLE SCHOOL SCIENTISTS PLANT POLLINATOR GARDEN

As part of a SHIP (Statewide Health Improvement Plan) Grant, seventh grade students planted a pollinator garden outside of Central Square Community Center. The project is a win for the environment and gave the students a hands-on biology experience.







**South St. Paul Public Schools**  
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South St. Paul, MN 55075  
sspps.org

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ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
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SOUTH ST. PAUL,  
MN

Postal Box Patron  
South St. Paul, MN 55075

**WORK FOR SOUTH ST. PAUL SCHOOLS!**

SSPPS is always looking for great people to join our team.  
We have openings for:

- Substitute Teachers
- Custodians
- Nutrition Services

Scan to view  
our current job  
opportunities



*Follow our journey on social media:*

- |  |                |                   |
|--|----------------|-------------------|
|  | <b>/SSPPS6</b> | <b>#SSPpride</b>  |
|  | <b>@SSPPS6</b> | <b>#SSPcares</b>  |
|  | <b>@SSPPS6</b> | <b>#SSPlearns</b> |

**SSP COMMUNITY EDUCATION  
AT CENTRAL SQUARE**

SSP Community Education is excited to be housed at Central Square Community Center. This fall brought many programs to the building including: youth enrichment offering arts & crafts and recreation courses; adult enrichment offering money & finance, and fitness courses; and the SSP Senior Center.



Be on the lookout for the winter/spring catalog in your mailbox in the coming weeks. Here's a peek at some of the courses in the next catalog.

**YOUTH ENRICHMENT**

- Youth Gymnastics
- Computer Coding Championship
- Build Your Own Birdhouse
- Arts and Craft Classes
- Babysitter and Infant CPR Training
- Guitar and Piano Lessons

**55+ PROGRAMMING**

- Senior Center
- Card Games
- Arts & Crafts
- Food Social Gatherings
- Out to Lunch
- Social Trips
- Fix-it Clinics
- Driver Discount Programs
- Senior Fitness Classes

**ADULT EDUCATION & ENRICHMENT**

- GED preparation
- Basic Skills Courses
- English Language Learning
- Fitness Classes
- Lap Swimming



CENTRAL SQUARE  
COMMUNITY CENTER

**ADULT BASIC EDUCATION (ABE)  
IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO LEARN!**



We caught up with recent SSP ABE grad, Kelly Simien, to hear how having her GED has impacted her life.

**WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO PURSUE YOUR GED?**

Many reasons. I knew in order to get a better paying job that I needed to have it.

**WHAT BROUGHT YOU TO SSP FOR YOUR GED?**

I'm from SSP and I heard they had an adult program. I explored other adult education opportunities and took the GED pretest, but had trouble with the math section. I knew I wasn't going to be able to learn the material on my own and needed classroom help. I remember seeing that South St. Paul Schools had an adult education program and looked into it. It's free and I was able to take classes around my current schedule which made it easier for me to attend.

**WHAT DID YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT ABE CLASSES?**

The people at SSP Community Education. They were always welcoming and helpful. My ABE teacher was great. She went above and beyond to give me one on one personal time, which really helped me understand the material. She also gave me some great advice when it came time to take the exam that really helped me with my time management. Using those skills I was able to answer every question to the best of my ability.

**HOW HAS HAVING YOUR GED HELPED YOU?**

I recently began working as a dispatcher for a transportation company. I am now at a higher paying job that I know I wouldn't have gotten without my GED. I really like what I am doing and feel confident I'll be able to keep moving up.

**WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR ANYONE CONSIDERING GOING BACK TO SCHOOL FOR THEIR GED?**

Explore all of your options and just know that the sky's the limit. You really can do anything you put your mind to no matter where you are in life. Keep going, it's worth it and ask for help when you need it. You don't have to have all the answers so don't stress if you struggle with one small section.

Adult Basic Education (ABE) in South St. Paul is offered through South St. Paul Community Education at Central Square Community Center. Scan the QR code to get started on your journey.

