



Sixtimes

The Official Newsletter of Special School District No. 6



SUMMER 2022

Inside this edition: 2022 Commencement highlights, District financial news, Silver Apple Award winners, Summer Learning highlights, and more SSPPS news.

DR. ZAMBRENO HIGHLIGHTS HIS FIRST 90 DAYS AS SUPERINTENDENT



Dr. Brian Zambreno

After 90 days as Superintendent of South St. Paul Public Schools, Dr. Zambreno highlights his first three months on the job. Speaking at the school board meeting, Monday, June 13th, Dr. Zambreno talks about what he has observed during his time visiting our schools and meeting with stakeholders, staff, and community members.

Phase I: Listen and Learn

The first part of Dr. Zambreno's entry plan was to get out to the SSPPS sites and hear from stakeholders about what's working and what they are concerned about. He highlights some of the strengths our district has that became apparent during his meetings. He also noted the opportunities for improvement and areas of concern he found during his conversations.

Strengths Dr. Zambreno Identified:

- **Packer Pride**, "I knew this was a proud town, but I will say the pride here is second to none. The sense of Packer pride transcends everything throughout the entire community."
- **Support for Schools**, "The community groups that I talked to are always involved and supportive at events for anything we may need."
- **Student Involvement**, "It's easy for students to be involved in multiple and a variety of extra-curricular activities. It's an advantage of our small district size, it creates a lot of opportunity for our kids."
- **Tri-District Partnership**, "We partner well with some of our neighbors which helps us create more opportunities for our students and community."
- **Focus on Individual Student Needs**, "At all levels we have a strong commitment to looking at our students as the individuals they are and what they need to be successful."
- **Committed & High Quality Staff**, "We have all of these opportunities for our kids to be involved and that requires committed staff to fill the roles necessary to make that happen."
- **Amazing Students**, "Our students are amazing with the curiosity and ingenuity they show at all levels."

Areas of Focus Dr. Zambreno Identified:

- **Culture and Climate**, "The reality is that the pandemic has had a tremendous impact on young people. The amount of trauma they've been through with the uncertainty of school and changes that took place."
- **Academic Programs & Systems**, "Academic achievement is a point of focus for us moving forward. It will be a high priority of mine."
- **Enrollment**, "That's something that's been heavily spoken of and people are passionate to understand. We are conducting studies and increasing enrollment will be a priority as we move forward."
- **Facilities**, "How do our facilities help us get to the outcomes we want around academics?"

Phase II: Analyze and Plan

In the second part of Dr. Zambreno's plan, he discusses the first steps to be taken in identifying and implementing needed changes. The leadership team and School Board have begun work on a long-term strategic plan. Within that plan, with help from outside companies, is a thorough look at SSPPS enrollment. Using census and other data points to dive deeper into enrollment numbers and see what changes could have an impact.

Another focus area of phase II is our Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). Dr. Zambreno says part of this plan is to take a close look at our academic programs and make sure the results the systems are designed to get are working. One of those will be social-emotional learning and how we can help our students develop restorative mindsets. The last piece to MTSS will be a look at equity. Dr. Zambreno says, "We can't be concerned about each and every individual without having an equity mindset and approach toward our work."

Funding and Facilities is the last part of phase II. Dr. Zambreno spoke about the financial cliff the schools will soon be facing and what we need to learn from the community. He spoke about a survey conducted by Morris Leatherman to randomly selected SSP residents to get a feel on where they might support the district in terms of operating dollars (highlights from the survey are highlighted on the back of this document). Also underway is a facility study to look at the health of our buildings. It also looks at how we use our facilities to make sure we are maximizing them in a way that is efficient and effective to the get outcomes we are looking for.



In closing, Dr. Zambreno says, "We have amazing students and amazing staff. What a great place to be. The Packer pride is felt within the community, I feel like I've won the lottery to get to be the Superintendent here. I look forward to partnering through the strategic planning process in the days, weeks, and months ahead to propel us toward a bright future. I've said it before, we might be small, but we're going to be mighty."

View Dr. Zambreno's Full Entry Plan by scanning the QR code to the left.



STAY CONNECTED!



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE SOUTH ST. PAUL GRADUATES

This spring, 176 students graduated from South St. Paul High School and the South St. Paul Community Learning Center. Ceremonies took place both Tuesday, June 7th and Thursday, June 9th, across the stage at the Secondary Building Auditorium and Thursday, students from both the High School and CLC had the opportunity to receive their diplomas at Ettinger Field.



BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 2022 BREAKFAST AND LUNCH ARE NO LONGER FREE

USDA funding for free school lunches expired at the end of the 2021-22 school year. Families will have to complete the educational benefits application to continue receiving free or reduced school lunches for the coming school year. All families in the district must complete the educational benefits application (or opt out), regardless of income or eligibility. Applications for Educational Benefits are approved annually. To ensure a smooth transition of benefits, you will need to reapply for 2022-23 before the school year begins. Completing or opting out of an application is easy and confidential.

Choose one of four easy ways to apply or opt out:

- Apply or Opt Out online at www.schoolcafe.com; or
- Download and print a paper application (scan QR code) to complete or opt out and then submit to your school; or
- Pick-up a paper application at your student's school; or
- Call our nutrition services office at (651) 457-9429 to complete your application over the phone



2022 SILVER APPLE AWARD WINNERS

Congratulations to this year's South St. Paul Educational Foundation Silver Apple Award winners! Students are invited to nominate a South St. Paul Schools staff member as someone who has made a positive impact on their life. This year, three SSPPS staff members were honored.

- Paulette Spafford, 1st grade teacher at Kaposia. Nominated by Elizabeth C. and Avery W.
- Kim Bauer, 2nd grade teacher at Lincoln. Nominated by Louisa S. and family and Addie R.
- Ricardo Rivera, Robotics/Trade Teacher at the Middle School. Nominated by Tomas O.

About the Silver Apple Award

Don Bliss, class of 1950, established the Silver Apple Award in honor of his wife, Roxanne Waldhauser Bliss, class of 1951. During his career as a U. S. West Executive, Don would ask other executives who were the most influential people in their lives. Almost always a teacher would be one of the top influences. Most often, we have become adults before we realize the importance of a special teacher or staff member who has had a lasting influence on our lives. This endowed award was established to encourage students to appreciate educators or support staff who are especially important to them.



KAPOSIA SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

SSPPS would like to hear from you about the demonstration projects recently installed on 1st Ave S at Dale St E and Spruce St E. Demonstration projects are temporary low-cost solutions to make walking and biking to school safer. This past spring, with the help of Dakota County Public Health, SSPPS installed temporary curb bump outs and poles at the intersections to make it easier for students and families crossing the street for school. After you visit the intersection please let us know your thoughts on how the solutions are working by filling out a brief survey. Scan the QR code to the right to be taken straight to the MnDOT online survey.



CLASS OF 2022!

and Thursday June 9th. Tuesday, students at the Community Learning Center walked Field. Congratulations to the class of 2022!



TRIDISTRICT CAPS SHOWCASE

11th and 12th grade Career and College Readiness students showed off their 2021-22 internship experience at the TriDistrict CAPS (Center for Advanced Professional Studies) Showcase. Students have spent the past year exploring their interests with hands-on, career opportunities in five different career pathways.



Want to get involved? TriDistrict CAPS is always looking for business partners to influence and help teach the next generation of employees.



WHAT IS TRIDISTRICT CAPS?

TriDistrict CAPS are profession-based learning courses that combine the workforce demands of our partners and the career aspirations of our students. By partnering as a TriDistrict, South St. Paul, Simley, and Two Rivers High Schools are able to combine resources and offer a wider range of opportunities. Students in the program can explore different careers and earn college credits, degrees, or job-ready certifications while in high school.

In SSP students can choose from five career pathways:

- Transportation Business and Technologies
- Healthcare and Medicine
- Business and Entrepreneurship
- Information Technology/Computer Science
- Urban Education

South St. Paul juniors and seniors for the 2022-23 school year who are interested in joining the CAPS program can talk to their counselor about enrolling, visit www.careercollegeready.org, or scan the QR code above.

2022-23 SUMMER LEARNING

PRESCHOOL SUMMER BLAST

Students in this year's PreK Summer Blast are going into Kindergarten for the 22-23 school year. They spent four days a week in class with breakfast and lunch included. Programming focused on making friends, school readiness, and STEM learning opportunities.



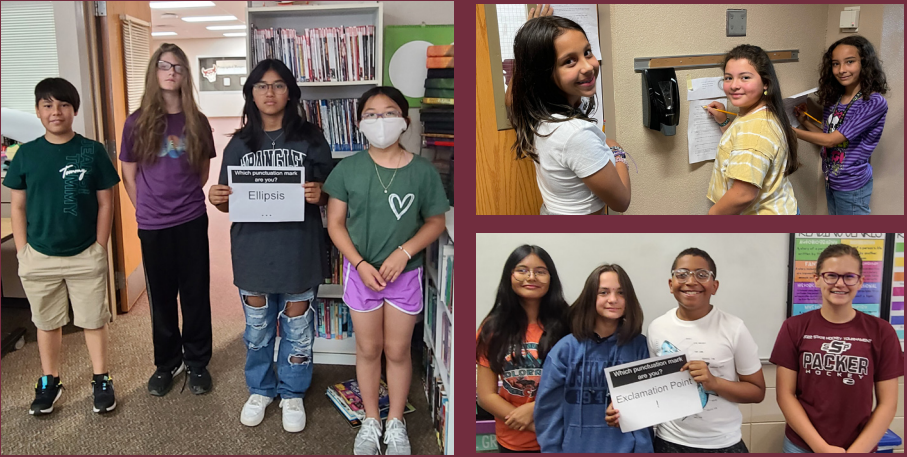
SUMMER LEARNING ACADEMY

Summer learning academy is an opportunity for students going into grades 1-5 at Lincoln Center or Kaposia to stay engaged during summer break. Students were in class for four hours a day, Monday-Thursday, breakfast and lunch included. The days were spent with hands-on learning experiences, STEM projects, and in-school and off-site field trips. The last day of class included popsicles and sprinklers!



PACKER PREVIEW

Packer Preview is for incoming 6th graders and is designed to help students learn how to "do middle school." Students practiced opening lockers, switching classrooms, and sample middle school lessons. They learned the Secondary building layout, became familiar with the cafeteria, and learned about the new programs they will be using in middle school.



MIDDLE SCHOOL SUMMER LEARNING ACADEMY

Middle school students going into 7th and 8th grade also spent two weeks studying three different subjects with hands-on experiences.

- Introduction to World War II/ Research
- Physics of Roller Coasters (trip to Valleyfair on the last day)
- Finding Pythagoras (Geometry, Math and Reasoning)

The last day included a trip to Valleyfair!



WWW.SPPS.ORG HAS A NEW LOOK!

TOOL BAR

- Enrollment links
- About Us/Academics: District information
- Newsroom: Headlines, Newsletters
- Departments: Summary/contact information of all SSPPS Departments

QUICK LINKS

- Campus Parent Portal
- Schoolology
- SchoolCafe
- SSP Tech Help
- Purchase SSPPS Tickets

RESOURCES

- Students/Family Links
- Community Support
- Technology Help
- Staff/Teacher Resources

2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR

- Handbooks
- Health & Safety
- School Supplies
- Links to other school year resources

DIRECT LINKS TO IMPORTANT ITEMS

- SchoolCafe- Lunch Menus
- District Newsletters
- PeachJar eFlyers
- District Calendar
- Staff Directory

¿HABLAS ESPAÑOL?

Es fácil traducir el sitio web www.sspps.org. Busque el icono de la bandera en la esquina inferior derecha de la página. Después de hacer clic en él, elija su idioma y el sitio web se traducirá automáticamente.



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Scan to view
our current job
opportunities

WORK FOR SOUTH ST. PAUL SCHOOLS!

SSPPS is always looking for great people to join our team.

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DISTRICT FINANCIAL UPDATE

Over the years, South St. Paul Public Schools (SSPPS) has been resourceful in creating partnerships for opportunities, creative in needed budget adjustments, and mindful of the financial capacity of our taxpayers. When the pandemic hit in the spring of 2020, it brought unprecedented changes to our society and educational system. In 2021, SSPPS was allocated one-time COVID relief funding to be spent over a 3-year period. It was meant to safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools, as well as address the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on our students. When these funds expire in 2024, SSPPS will experience a \$2.7 million funding shortfall. These funds have been critical in keeping the much-needed resources for our students and staff. The district is exploring funding options to help offset the significant financial shortfall that is being projected when the COVID relief funding expires.

DID YOU KNOW?

South St. Paul Public Schools has begun a strategic planning process that will engage students, staff, families, and community on creating a Desired Daily Experience for all the District stakeholders. Watch for more information in the coming months on how you can participate.

South St. Paul Public Schools Senior Center at Central Square has expanded opportunities. Visit our website at <https://communityed.sspps.org> and click on Senior Center for more information.

The District partners with Simley and Two Rivers High School to offer a Career and College Readiness programming. See page two of this issue for more information.

The vast majority of school districts – including South St. Paul Public Schools – rely on voter-approved operating levy funding to support student learning.

Out of 42 school districts in the metro area, South St. Paul Public Schools ranks 34th in the amount of voter approved operating levy funding.

South St. Paul Public Schools is \$789 per pupil below the metro average for all voter approved levies.

RUN FOR SOUTH ST. PAUL SCHOOL BOARD!

The filing period to run for Special School District No. 6 School Board is open! Anyone interested in running in the upcoming general election can file their candidacy at the South St. Paul City Hall. At the election, four members will be elected to the School Board for terms of four years each.

Filing period:
August 2, 2022 - August 16, 2022 at 5:00 pm

Location:
SSP City Hall
125 3rd Avenue North
South St. Paul, MN 55075

General Election:
Tuesday, November 8, 2022

A candidate for this office must be an eligible voter, must be 21 years of age or more on assuming office, must have been a resident of the School District from which the candidate seeks election for thirty (30) days before the general election, and must have no other affidavit on file for any other office at the same primary or general election. Scan the QR code to learn more!

