

# THE DISTRICT DISPATCH

School News & Updates  
for the School District 197  
Community  
**Fall 2022**

## District at a Glance

**7+**

### Close-Knit Hometowns

Our school community includes families living in Eagan, Inver Grove Heights, Lilydale, Mendota, Mendota Heights, Sunfish Lake, West St. Paul, and other surrounding cities.

**9**

### Caring Schools and Programs

We have nine caring school communities serving students in E-12 and our Branch Out Transition Program for ages 18-21.

**5,000**

### Amazing Students

We feel privileged to welcome 5,000 students into our buildings every day, each of whom uniquely contributes to our district's diverse and vibrant learning community.

**900**

### Exceptional Employees

Our nearly 900 employees are dedicated to the success of our students.



*Two Rivers High School seniors welcome students on the first day of school.*

## From the Superintendent

We're back in the classrooms—and back to the most normal school year we've had in awhile. It has been exciting to see our students and families back in our schools, back to activities and community events, and back to fun. We're looking forward to a year of learning and growing together.

A big part of learning and growing together is community and family engagement. Research shows that when schools, families and communities work together to support learning, everyone benefits—students do better in school and in life, parents become empowered, teacher morale improves, schools get better and communities grow stronger.

In this issue of the District Dispatch, you'll find a number of ways the community has already come together to support our school community this year and how students and families can get involved. From school-based parent groups and advisory committees to clubs and activities for students—we have a number of ways for you and your family to “find your people,” share your talents and unique perspectives, and build a better future for our students.

My best wishes to the School District 197 community for a great fall. Together, we thrive.

Peter Olson-Skog  
Superintendent

**Nurture. Inspire. Prepare. Together, we thrive.**



# Back to School



Last month, we welcomed back our students, families, teachers, support staff, custodians, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, administrators and everyone who works hard to make our schools great!





# Celebrating Our Staff

Before the school year officially started, we celebrated our amazing district team at a welcome back celebration. More than 300 team members showed up on Warrior Field to connect with colleagues, enjoy ice cream, compete in a relay race, and more! Special thanks to South Robert Street Business Association for generously providing the funds to make the celebration happen.





# Building Community

The beginning of the school year has offered up so many ways for our students and families to connect and celebrate our school community. Here's a look at what we've been up to.



## Homecoming Parade

Students, staff and their families walked from Garlough to Two Rivers to showcase their student groups, clubs and activities.



## Future Warrior Day

Students from Two Rivers High School visited our elementary schools to share with our Future Warriors messages of teamwork and getting involved in the community.



# and Strong Schools



## Warrior 5K

The ISD 197 Educational Foundation presented the Warrior 5K Walk/Run to raise funds for schools in the district, primarily through teacher grants. This year, \$30,000 was raised with sponsorships and participant registrations!



## Warrior Rally

This fun, family-friendly event brought the entire school community together. The rally featured games, food trucks, tours of Two Rivers High School, and a chance for our youngest students to learn about all the great activities and club offerings at the high school.



# Ways to Get Involved

## For Families



### Advisory Committees

Serving on an advisory committee is a great way to share your talents and unique perspective. We have a wide variety of opportunities available—from the Equity Advisory Committee to the Early Learning Advisory Council—and would love to have you join us.

### School-based Parent Groups (PTA/PTO/Booster Clubs)

Each school in the district has a parent-led committee to advise the principal, organize community-building activities, raise funds for special initiatives, volunteer within the classroom, and more. And new this year—the Two Rivers Parent Connect Group! Contact your student's school for more information on becoming involved.

## For Students



### Athletics and Activities

School District 197 offers interscholastic programming that gives students the possibility to participate in a comprehensive selection of fall, winter, and spring competitive sports, along with an extensive program of extra-curricular activities.

### Clubs

Student clubs enrich the lives of our students. From Community Building Club and LiveGreen to Tech Warriors and WEB Leaders—there is a club for everyone.

*Do you or your student want to get involved? Visit our website at [isd197.org](http://isd197.org) to learn more.*

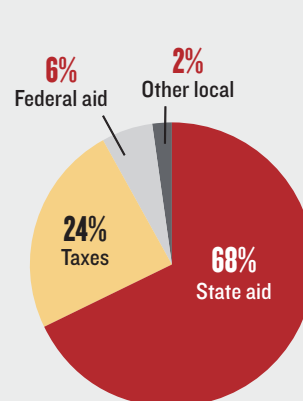
## State of the District: Did You Know?

Schools across Minnesota continue to experience some of the most uncertain times in recent history. The rate of inflation, up 8.3% from August of last year, has left schools dealing with tighter budgets as available funds haven't kept up with rising costs. Here are three things to know:

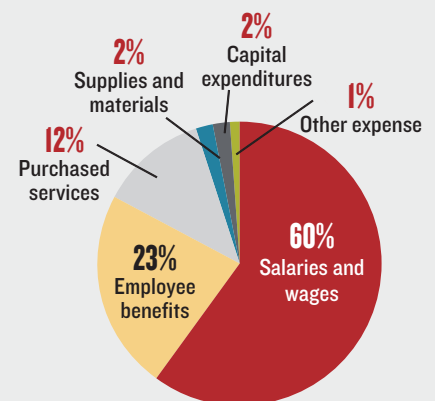
- According to data from the Minnesota Department of Education, there has been a sharp decline in aid once adjusted for inflation. State aid per student has declined by 20% in the past 20 years. In the absence of help from the state, school districts have turned to levies to support students and school programs.
- Additional funds received during the height of the COVID pandemic will be fully spent by the end of this school year.
- Per the Minnesota Department of Education, our district spent 36% less on administration and district support compared to Metro Area school districts. We use those saved dollars to provide even more direct support to students and teachers.

The success of our students is due to the work of our quality staff and support of our families and community. As a school district, we are thankful to have such commitment and support from our community.

### General Fund Revenue



### General Fund Expenses







# SHOWCASE 197

The elementary principals and kindergarten teachers from School District 197 are excited to meet you and tell you all about our five fabulous elementary schools. Mark your calendars for Showcase 197 events coming your way in November!

## Our Elementary Schools

- ➤ Garlough Environmental Magnet School**  
 1740 Charlton St., West St. Paul, MN 55118 • [garlough.isd197.org](http://garlough.isd197.org) • 651-403-8100  
 •• ➤ Wed. Nov. 16, 9 a.m. AND Thurs. Nov. 17, 6:30 p.m.
- ➤ Mendota Elementary School**  
 1979 Summit Ln., Mendota Heights, MN 55118 • [mendota.isd197.org](http://mendota.isd197.org) • 651-403-8000  
 •• ➤ Tues. Nov. 15, 9 a.m. AND Thurs. Nov. 17, 5:30 p.m.
- ➤ Moreland Arts & Health Sciences Magnet**  
 217 W. Moreland Ave., West St. Paul, MN 55118 • [moreland.isd197.org](http://moreland.isd197.org) • 651-403-7800  
 •• ➤ Mon. Nov. 14, 6:30 p.m. AND Fri. Nov. 18, 9 a.m.
- ➤ Pilot Knob STEM Magnet School**  
 1436 Lone Oak Rd., Eagan, MN 55121 • [pilotknob.isd197.org](http://pilotknob.isd197.org) • 651-403-7900  
 •• ➤ Mon. Nov. 14, 6:30 p.m. AND Fri. Nov. 18, 9 a.m.
- ➤ Somerset Elementary School**  
 1355 Dodd Rd., Mendota Heights, MN 55118 • [somerset.isd197.org](http://somerset.isd197.org) • 651-403-8200  
 •• ➤ Tues. Nov. 15, 6:30 p.m. AND Thurs. Nov. 17, 9 a.m.

## About Us

Our elementary students (kindergarten through grade 4) feel connected, trusted, and affirmed. Visit our website at [www.isd197.org](http://www.isd197.org) to learn about how our students learn in innovative environments that promote curiosity, creativity, and courageous action!



Visit the "Get to Know" pages on each school's website to learn more about our elementary schools



Fill out and return the enrollment paperwork you will receive by mail in December



Enrollment Questions?  
Call 651-403-7030

Kindergarten  
Enrollment Night:  
Thursday, Jan. 19,  
2023



**Nurture. Inspire. Prepare. Together, we thrive!**





West St. Paul + Mendota Heights + Eagan Area

1897 Delaware Ave.  
Mendota Heights, MN 55118  
[www.isd197.org](http://www.isd197.org)

# Stay Connected

School District 197 places a high value on the connections we have with students, families, and the community. We communicate in a wide variety of ways so that you can receive news and information that works best for you. Here's how to stay connected:



## **Website:**

Our main communication channel, including school calendars, Parent & Family Hub, school meal information, and more. Find us at [isd197.org](http://isd197.org).

## **Social Media Channels:**

Stay up to date on school happenings and important news.

Facebook: @District197

Instagram: @schooldistrict197

Twitter: @District197

## **Email:**

Don't miss our bi-weekly community newsletters, sent out every other Thursday during the school year; and School Board Meeting notes, sent out the Friday before the next meeting.

## **Peachjar:**

We distribute digital flyers directly to parents via Peachjar, an electronic flyer communication tool.



## **Join Us: Two Rivers High School Showcase**

You're invited to our Showcase 197 open house where seventh and eighth graders can learn all about the courses, programs, and activities available at Two Rivers High School!

Thursday, November 3, 2022

6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

1897 Delaware Avenue,  
Mendota Heights, MN 55118