Sunflower Elementary

8955 Loiret Blvd.
Lenexa, KS 66219
913-993-5400

Principal: Ryan Kalis
Grades Served: K-6
KSDE Bldg #: 8857

Feeder Pattern: Westridge MS & SM West HS

Notable School Characteristics

- Sunflower is a neighborhood school and has a strong PTA that supports staff, students and families.
- Sunflower is a comprehensive elementary school that serves students in grades K-6th.
- Sunflower has both a center-based SLC program that serves students with special needs as well as an SEEK Gifted program that serves all of the EL students in the West feeder pattern.
- Sunflower has continued to have assessment scores that are consistently above state levels and either at or above district levels.
- Sunflower has a high rate of teacher retention.
- Sunflower’s attendance rates have consistently been above state averages.
- Sunflower’s Vision:
  - Sunflower Elementary is a collaborative community where all students learn and grow.
- Sunflower’s Values:
  - Collaborative culture
  - Data-driven learning
  - Research-based effective practices
  - Establishing relationships through grace and accountability
  - Create an environment where all students learn and grow

Sec. 8. On and after July 1, 2021, K.S.A. 72-1163 is hereby amended to read as follows: 72-1163. (a) Each year the board of education of a school district shall conduct an assessment of the educational needs of each attendance center in the district. Information obtained from such needs-assessment shall be used by the board when preparing the budget of the school district to ensure improvement in student academic performance. The budget of the school district shall allocate sufficient moneys in a manner reasonably calculated such that all students may achieve the goal set forth in K.S.A. 72-3218(c), and amendments thereto. The board also shall prepare a summary of the budget for the school district. The budgets and summary shall be in the form prescribed by the director pursuant to K.S.A. 79-2926, and amendments thereto.
Sunflower’s Mission:
- Establishing relationships to know our students
- Use data to analyze learning and drive instruction
- Design effective lessons using research-based instructional practices
- Provide caring attention to support student’s social emotional competency
- Create a positive building culture

KSDE Building Report Card
Sunflower Elementary Building Report Card

Needs Analysis

What barriers must be overcome for each student to achieve grade level proficiency on assessments?

There are always a number of challenges that should be considered when evaluating student success in a district. Some of the key barriers that impact Sunflower Elementary include, but are not limited to:
- Lack of support staff to help with tiered instruction
- Students with severe special needs
- Lack of special education funding which includes a lack of special education staff
- Increasing levels of students facing trauma and/or mental health challenges
- Consistent instructional support for students identified as ELL
- When substitutes are not available to fill certified classroom positions, it requires us to use our instructional coach, reading specialist, innovation specialist, social worker, and principal which then takes away from intervention groups.

What budget actions should be taken to address and remove those barriers?

Our students face a growing number of barriers to success and Sunflower Elementary continually works to support them. Current budget constraints that impact our ability to successful remove barriers for our students include:
- Increased salary to recruit and retain highly qualified certified and classified staff

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SHAWNEE MISSION SCHOOL DISTRICT

School Needs Assessment for 2023-2024
• additional staff members hired to meet the individual learning and SEL needs of all students
• increased funding and time for PLCs to meet
• additional substitute teachers including building substitutes
• increase paraeducator and teacher support in special education classrooms
• increased funding to expand extended school year and summer school programming for students
• maintain low teacher ratio for better individualized instruction
• decrease the teacher to student ratio in our SLC specialized program
• Continue providing a full-time instructional coach to support staff. This individual is instrumental in helping to develop and implement learning systems and teacher’s capacity to respond to student need, providing professional learning opportunities that concentrate on curricular needs and understanding of priority standards, and supporting and retaining both new and veteran staff members.

How much time will it take for each student to achieve grade level proficiency on the state assessments if the budget actions would be implemented?

While our board of education, administration, teachers and classified staff work tirelessly to meet the academic and social emotional needs of all of our students, too many factors come into play that do not allow us to accurately assess when all students will be at a certain level. Some of those include:
• Ever-changing population of students bringing a varying degree of cognitive abilities and disabilities which preclude us from being able to guarantee a date when all students will meet a singular level of proficient
• Lack of constitutional funding of special education continues to impact our ability to full meet the needs of all students
• While assessment scores are one measure, Sunflower Elementary does not believe that students assessment scores should be the sole measure of student proficiency, especially when the assessment has zero impact on their future
• An increased level of social emotional challenges and needs of students due to the impact of COVID

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Board Rationale/Comments

The Shawnee Mission School District faces challenging budget needs given the commitment to meeting aspirational state and district education goals for every student. The district continues to work to limit central administrative costs to less than 5% of the total budget. Following an analysis of student needs, the district has worked to maintain in the district budget a full-time social worker position in every school, a full-time instructional coach in every school, and Real World Learning counselors at each of the five comprehensive high schools.

The following positions have been added to support buildings to better meet the needs of our 26,440 students: two (2) assistant principal positions at our larger middle schools; three (3) intervention specialists; two (2) Special Education instructional coaches; two (2) ELL teachers; six (6) additional teaching positions and thirty (30) paraprofessional positions. The district will continue to analyze budget funds for the 2024-25 school year, in order to determine the ability to maintain the following positions that were added with ESSER funding: additional support for nursing services; additional secondary math teachers; building substitutes for every building; and class-size reduction at the elementary level.

In addition, the district has increased professional learning opportunities for all teachers, including hosting a major conference on Professional Learning Communities and sending large numbers of staff to a conference on Response to Intervention. We will continue to prioritize equitable allocation of resources to create a welcoming and engaging learning experience for every student — facilitating personalized learning plans, targeting career and college readiness, with the interpersonal skills for life success.

Sunflower hosts a center-based SLC program that serves district students with special needs, and is impacted by the failure of the state to fully fund special education. Yet the percentage of students performing at Levels 2, 3 or 4 on the Kansas state assessments was above the state’s average consistently for the past four years, through 2022. Sunflower students have experienced significant trauma over the past few years and have yet to restore performance levels from June 2021 COVID declines. School staff continue to focus on culture, creating meaningful relationships, and developing effective Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to increase student performance. Sunflower staff is also committed to the challenges of providing all students with the social-emotional support they need to facilitate learning growth.

Our routine use of multiple measures to assess student growth, school climate and equitable practices will serve to inform the best use of finite resources looking ahead.

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