Shawnee Mission Early Childhood Center (SMECEC)

6701 W. 83rd Street
Overland Park, KS 66204
913-993-2600

Principal: Carla Heintz
Grades Served: PreK
KSDE Bldg #: 8770

Feeder Pattern: District Center

Notable School Characteristics

- Early Childhood special education program for students with disabilities who receive their special education and related services in programs designed primarily for students with disabilities, and may be integrated with non-IEP peers at a ratio from 0% to no more than 50%
- Program serving early childhood students ages 3-5
- Peer Model Program for students ages 3-5
- Trauma Smart School
- The Parents as Teachers Program is located within the building.

KSDE Building Report Card

No building report card available

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Needs Analysis

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

Our teachers, students and families face a variety of barriers in ensuring student proficiency at SMECEC. Some of those barriers that we are working to overcome include the fact that a majority of our students have some identified special needs with various levels of severity and need a variety of support from a variety of resources. Access to these resources are often hard for our families to navigate on their own. Limited funding for special education and universal preK in order to provide additional fully inclusive preK programming, and difficulty hiring and retaining paraprofessionals to support the needs of all of the students alongside the teachers also presents a barrier for grade level proficiency.

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

Given an appropriate level of funding for both general education and special education, there are a number of budget actions we could take to remove some barriers. Some of them include:

- Increased salary to recruit and retain highly qualified certified and classified staff
- Full funding of special education and preschool programs from the state and federal levels
- Additional staff to meet the individual needs of our special education students and provide a more complete continuum of services and provide resources for the number of comprehensive evaluations necessary in early childhood
- A full time preK instructional coach to serve students both at the early childhood center and those preK classes throughout the district to support research based practices.
- Additional substitutes, including building substitutes, which would allow full coverage in classrooms at all times. It would also provide opportunities for staff at both the early childhood center and the elementary schools to observe students and work together to create the best placement as they transition into Kindergarten.
- A full time social worker at the Early Childhood Education center to meet the many and various needs of both our students and our families throughout the year.

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?

The ever changing population of students we serve, and the variety of abilities and disabilities of the students we serve, their age, and family involvement make it difficult to determine when all students will meet a singular level of proficiency.

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In addition, lack of constitutional funding of special education continues to impact our ability to fully meet the needs of our students in a variety of ways.

Fully funded universal pre K and early childhood special education programming will allow more students access to high quality, developmentally appropriate instruction at an early age which will increase state assessment scores in the assessed elementary grades.

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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.

Early childhood provides students an early start on their education. Universal funding for pre-kindergarten would go a long way in supporting the goal of kindergarten readiness, and ensuring that students are on-track for grade level proficiency. Such funding would also support providing equitable access to academic proficiency for all students, regardless of personal circumstances.

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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