

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

This year brought new and exciting changes to South St. Paul Public Schools. We heard our students, staff, and families when they told us what their Desired Daily Experiences are. Inside this SixTimes is a look at some of the ways we are enhancing students’ experiences and building our future leaders.

- Sunrise on New SSPPS Curriculum**
With the sunset of the International Baccalaureate Primary and Middle Years Programs (PYP/MYP) this school year, district leaders are exploring new curriculum. Inside is a look at steps being taken to design and implement what this will look like.
- New Courses for SSPPS Students**
Read more about the new learning opportunities offered in our classrooms: band in the elementary schools, and trades classes for students to learn practical life skills in high school.
- Safety and Security**
We have expanded on our work around school safety and security through training and partnerships with the “I Love You Guys” Foundation and local law enforcement. Inside learn more about the work being done to ensure our students and staff have a safe and effective learning and work environment.



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South St. Paul Public Schools Community Newsletter

SIXTIMES

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WORK FOR SSPPS!
SSPPS is looking for great people to join our team. We’re always hiring part-time, full-time, and seasonal employees with flexible day and evening hours. Scan the QR code or visit the [Human Resources webpage](#) to view current openings.



LEA LOS SIXTIMES EN ESPAÑOL
Escanear aquí para leer una versión digital del Boletín Sixtimes de SSPPS en español. [Clic Aquí.](#)



PACKER PRIDE FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Packer pride is more than our K-12 schools, it’s our whole community. As a Special School District in the State of Minnesota, our school district boundaries and city limits are nearly the same. We take pride in being a large part of our local community and in sharing our resources.

Inside this Edition of the SixTimes learn more about:

- Free and reduced-priced food resources
- Free classes for families with new babies
- Informational programming for aging adults
- Social/Enrichment opportunities for ages 55+
- Free adult education classes
- Free classes for English learners
- How our students are giving back
- Ways you can be involved in our school community

#PackerPride

A NOTE FROM SUPERINTENDENT ZAMBRENO

The 2023-24 school year is off and running and I am so incredibly proud of all the great work going on in our special school district. As I walk through our halls and classrooms each day, there is so much to be proud of.

Our students are amazing! They are engaging, leading and playing critical roles in improving the overall experience in our schools and SSP community.

Last year, we set out a vision to create the Desired Daily Experience (DDE) for students, families, and staff. We engaged with our stakeholders to hear first-hand about their hopes and dreams for our district. A common theme we heard across all groups was a desire to be seen, heard, and valued within a safe and supportive environment. There was also a desire to expand the types of academic programming and support systems within SSPPS. We continue to take steps in our Pathway to Packer Promise that is guiding our work to implement the necessary systems to help us learn, grow, and deliver the experiences our students, families, and staff desire.



Dr. Brian Zambreno
SSPPS Superintendent

We also take pride in serving our entire SSP community. Not only do we serve our preschool through grade 12 students and families, our team works hard to ensure all SSP community members have access to a variety of programming opportunities, experiences, and important resources. Be sure to check out the inside of this SixTimes or our district website to learn about our community resources and involvement.

I am truly proud to be part of such a caring and committed district that seeks to support our entire community. I’m also very thankful for the strong support our district receives from our families and the broader South St. Paul community.

I hope you enjoy this issue of the SixTimes that helps us showcase and celebrate some of the amazing things our students and staff are doing each and every day.

SIXTIMES

FALL 2023

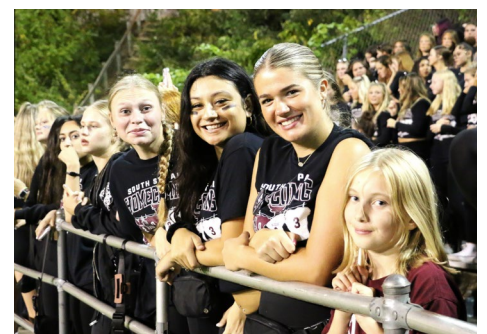


THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT SIX



BUILDING LEADERS AND RAISING STUDENT VOICES

IGNITING A PASSION IN EVERY LEARNER TO INQUIRE, CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVE, AND ENGAGE IN POSITIVELY CHANGING OUR WORLD



STUDENT LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL AGES

ALLOWING SPACES FOR OUR STUDENTS' VOICES TO BE HEARD AND CREATING OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD THEIR LEADERSHIP SKILLS ARE CRITICAL COMPONENTS OF OUR WORK AS EDUCATORS

STUDENT SCHOOL BOARD REPRESENTATIVES

The South St. Paul School Board welcomed two South St. Paul High School students to the Board for the 2023-24 school year. Renata A. (grade 12) and Luis R. (grade 11), attend all school board meetings this school year to give a student perspective on current issues and share student experiences. The School Board and district leaders have made it a priority to increase opportunities to include student voices in their work. Following an application and interview process each spring, two 11th or 12th grade students will be chosen to serve for the following school year.

HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

The High School Principal Advisory Council is a diverse group of students, nominated by teachers, that work alongside Principal Ochocki to help shape the experience for all of our students at South St. Paul High School.



STUDENT LEADERS IN OUR SCHOOLS

These student leaders represent their school and are involved in planning events, promoting school spirit, and community outreach projects.



HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT COUNCIL

Student leaders in grades 9-12



MIDDLE SCHOOL WEB LEADERS

Student leaders in grade 8



LINCOLN STUDENT AMBASSADORS

Student leaders in grades 4 and 5 at Lincoln



KAPOSIA CODE KEEPERS

Student leaders in grades 4 and 5 at Kaposia

STUDENT AFFINITY GROUPS

The Affinity Groups at SSP Secondary provide groups of students with an opportunity to connect with other like-minded individuals. It also plays a critical role in ensuring an inclusive environment where all individuals are seen, heard, valued and empowered to succeed.

AFFINITY GROUPS

- Black Pride Organization (BPO)
- Comunidad de Latinos Unidos (CDLU)
- Sexuality and Gender Awareness (SAGA)
- Women's Society

SUPERINTENDENT STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Superintendent Student Advisory Council is a unique opportunity for Superintendent Zambreno and other district leaders to engage in meaningful dialogue with a diverse team of student voices in grades 4, 7, and 11. The students, nominated by their teacher and principal, meet as a large group two times per year as well as two additional times at their individual schools. This engagement plays a critical role in improving the overall experiences in our schools through two-way communication between our students and district leaders.



STAY CONNECTED!



NEW THIS SCHOOL YEAR

A PEEK INSIDE A FEW OF THE NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS THIS SCHOOL YEAR

INTRODUCTION TO TRADES FOR GRADES 9 & 10

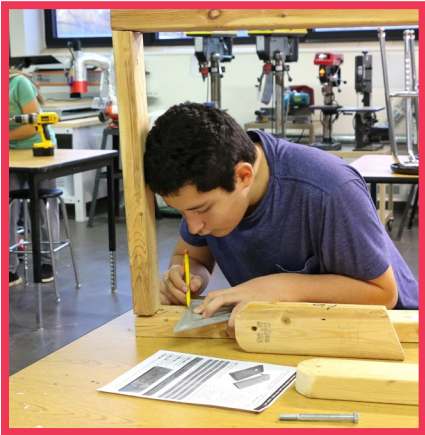
New this year, students in grades 9 and 10 are enjoying a class with a hands-on learning experience that is also building some important life skills. In the “Art of the Trades” class, students are applying their math knowledge with some basic carpentry skills to build cornhole boards. Students will then paint, stencil and lacquer the cornhole boards to be sold in an auction to school booster clubs or other organizations.

The students are also investing in their school by designing and building things like heavy duty shelves for our science classrooms or theater sets for the recent fall musical, the Wizard of Oz.

To help our students continue building on what they are learning, they will take a field trip to the “Constructing our Future” event in St. Paul. There they will participate in hands-on demos and speak with professionals from various trade organizations that will help students begin thinking about what they might want to pursue after high school.

“This course gives kids a chance to get hands-on tool experience that they may not have had the opportunity to learn elsewhere. Practicing these life skills in a safe space, even if they don’t use them in future classes or careers, helps them build confidence.”
- Graham Judd, Art of the Trades Teacher

“It feels pretty good knowing that you built something that somebody will be able to use.”
- Adam, Grade 10



5TH GRADE BAND EXPLORATION

New this year at the elementary schools, all 5th grade students at both Lincoln Center Elementary and Kaposia Education Center are being introduced to band. The students spend one month on each of the different instruments including:

- Trumpet
- Trombone
- Clarinet
- Flute

They learn how the instrument makes sounds and basic notes. This introduction to band gives students wanting to continue with band in middle and high school an opportunity to try different instruments and see what they like playing best.

“I really like band, it’s been fun learning more instruments than just the recorders we’ve played before.”
- Margo, Lincoln Center

I really love band in music class. I wish we could learn more instruments than just four.
- Cameron, Kaposia Education Center

The clarinet is harder than I thought it would be, but band is still really fun.
- Brookston, Lincoln Center



INSIDE OUR CLASSROOMS



IB Physics Rocket Launch

IB Physics students built rockets this fall and launched them on the football practice field. They’re experiencing first hand: Newton’s three laws of motion, the concept of momentum, and the kinematics equation of motion.



Secondary Students Read at Elementary Schools

Student leaders at the secondary building visited both elementary schools this fall to read to classrooms. They read Hispanic themed stories in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month.



Middle School Scientists

7th grade scientists practiced their observation skills using fish. Working in pairs they took turns changing the fish’s environment. With each change to the environment in their bowl, they observed how the fish reacted.



Hands-On STEAM Learning

Lincoln Center students had an in-school “field trip” by Mobile Ed Productions. They spent time at each station doing interactive, hands-on STEAM experiments like pedaling to generate energy and excavating fossils.

SAFETY AND SECURITY IN OUR SCHOOLS

South St. Paul Public Schools (SSPPS) is committed to the safety of every student, staff member, and person who enters our buildings. District and school leaders partner with local law enforcement and other agencies to plan, prepare, and implement a safe and supportive learning environment, Using Standard Response Protocols (SRP) from the “I Love You Guys” Foundation, students and staff are trained annually on the five components of the SRP.



HOLD - A Hold is called to keep a hallway or certain area of the building clear.



SECURE - A Secure is called when there is a danger outside of the building.



LOCKDOWN - “Locks, Lights, Out of Sight.” A Lockdown is called when there is something dangerous inside of the building.



EVACUATE - There may be times when we need to evacuate the building to ensure the safety of our students and staff.



SHELTER - A shelter is called when specific protective actions are needed based on a threat or hazard such as tornadoes or severe weather.

COMMUNICATION

SSPPS places a high value on the connections we have with students, families, and the community. While the district strives to be proactive, accurate, and timely in communication with families and our greater SSP community, there may be times when circumstances dictate longer notification or response times. There may also be certain information that the district is unable to share due to data privacy reasons.

We ask that our community is mindful of what they are posting on social media until the district has had a chance to gather all the facts and alert families with the accurate information. Often, inaccurate information that is posted on social media can lead to additional stress, anxiety, and frustration. The safety of our students and staff are the district’s number one priority and we are committed to keeping our lines of communication open with our families and greater SSP community.



Scan the QR code or visit the [Safety and Security webpage](#) to learn more about these updated Safety and Security Measures.



ACADEMIC ADVISORY GROUP AND THE SUNRISE OF NEW SSPPS CURRICULUM

This fall South St. Paul Public Schools (SSPPS) launched a new Academic Advisory committee structure as a critical piece of our work in sunseting the district’s International Baccalaureate Primary and Middle Years Programs (PYP/MYP) at the end of this school year. It is also an important component for the review and exploration of our entire K-12 academic framework. Last fall we started this process by engaging with our students, staff, and families to learn their [Desired Experience](#) is at SSPPS. As we promised last spring, our committees, comprised of staff, students, and families bring more stakeholder involvement to this work. These committees will continue to engage on things like the inventory and assessment of our current academic model. They will also provide valuable input and feedback on the future design and implementation of our academic programming. We are excited to continue partnering in delivering a high quality educational experience for all our students here at South St. Paul Public Schools. Here’s a look at the process underway to sunrise our new academic programming as we sunset the PYP and MYP.

STEP 1: STAKEHOLDER INPUT

- In 2022-23 we gathered family, staff, and student input about their Desired Daily Experiences
- Surveyed community to learn what they would like to see in our schools

STEP 2: INPUT AND FEEDBACK GROUPS

- Teacher Advisory Group formed to conduct inventory and provide input and feedback on the design and implementation of our academic programming
- Parent Advisory Group provides feedback on our academic programming ideas

STEP 3: INTERVIEWS

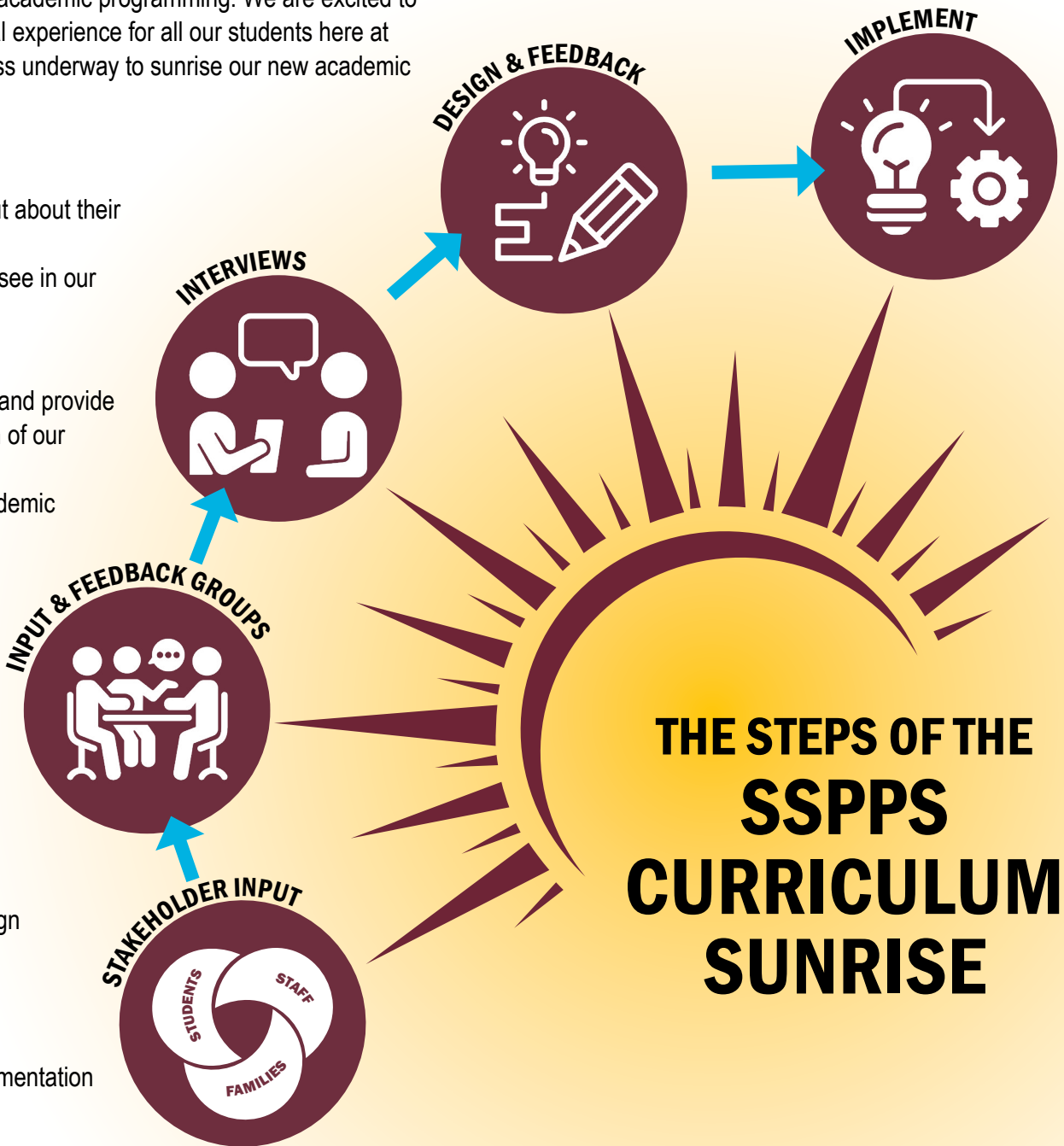
- Interviews with students about their experiences and learning

STEP 4: DESIGN & FEEDBACK

- Leaders and Teacher Advisory develop recommendations for new SSPPS academic programming
- School Building Leadership Teams provide feedback on academic design ideas
- Family Advisory provides feedback on academic design ideas

STEP 5: IMPLEMENT

- Academic design decision is made
- Teacher Advisory provides input & feedback on implementation plan for fall 2024



PACKER PRIDE

FOR OUR ENTIRE SSP COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

As a Special School District in the State of Minnesota, South St. Paul Public School's district boundaries and city limits are nearly the same. We take pride in being a large part of our local community and in sharing our resources. SSPPS partners with a variety of organizations to provide resources to all SSP community members. Here are a few of those opportunities:

- **FREE TAKE 'N BAKE MEALS:** Free take 'n bake meals prepared by local restaurants are available to all residents. Meals are available at Central Square each week from Monday afternoon through Saturday while supplies last.
- **OPEN DOOR PANTRY:** Free groceries for all residents, 3rd Wednesday of every month at Kaposia Education Center from 4:00-6:00 pm: December 20, January 17, February 21, March 20, April 17, and May 15.
- **FARE FOR ALL:** Discounted groceries, Fare For All happens one Tuesday of every month at Central Square from 4:00-6:00 pm: December 19, January 23, February 20, March 19, April 23, and May 21.
- **EVERY MEAL:** Free meals placed discretely in student's backpacks on Friday to help cover the weekend food gap. Both Lincoln and Kaposia are sponsored by local organizations. Families at either school can apply through their school's secretary.



VISITING OUR COMMUNITY

GREAT HALLOWEEN GET TOGETHER

The SSPPS School Board and Community Education team were at the SSP Great Halloween Get Together to meet members of our community.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

The Community Education team was at On the Road Again and the farmer's market this past fall/summer to share all the opportunities available to all community members.

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

School Board Members and school leaders visit our communities every year on National Night Out. We enjoy meeting our community in their neighborhoods and being a part of the gatherings.

JOIN IN OUR PACKER PRIDE!

If you would like a free Packer Pride sign for your yard, stop by any of our district buildings to pick one up!

A special thanks to the SSP Educational Foundation for their sponsorship of the signs.



STUDENTS GIVING BACK

HOCKEY TEAM VOLUNTEERS

The boys and girls hockey teams volunteered their time at the Annual Taco Feed Fundraiser to benefit the South St. Paul Fill the Backpack Campaign which benefits students in need of school supplies.

KAPOSIA KIDS FIGHTING CANCER

Kaposia students are honoring their friend, Germier, who passed away from cancer, by raising money to fight cancer. Last school year the group raised money to purchase Ninja Warrior equipment for the gymnasium. This year, they are using the equipment to host Fight Cancer Like a Ninja Warrior Nights. Money raised benefits a current staff or community member fighting cancer or goes to cancer research.

FOOTBALL TEAM GIVING BACK

40 members of the South St. Paul Football team landscaped areas around Grand Avenue Hill and part of Concord Exchange over the summer. This winter, they are volunteering with the South St. Paul Lions Club to unload Christmas Trees at their tree lot to be sold. The Lions Club uses the funds to give back to our community and schools.

LINCOLN STUDENTS CELEBRATE WITH OUR COMMUNITY

Lincoln Center Student Ambassadors walked to the John Carroll Building after school this fall to celebrate fall with the residents. They played games, ate with the residents, and provided company. The John Carroll Building is one of SSP's Senior Designation Public Housing Units.

OUR NEWEST PACKERS

COMMUNITY BABY SHOWER

The SSP Early Learning Program hosted a free baby shower for families expecting a baby or with a baby up to one year of age. Attendees received a free gift basket and were connected with local resources.

NEWEST PACKER WELCOME!

The SSP Early Learning team is excited to begin visiting our Packer families with new babies to deliver a Newest Packer Welcome Basket. The baskets will have books, information, and a Packer onesie!

HELP ME GROW (BIRTH-3)

Help Me Grow is a free program for families to have their children ages birth-3 screened for important developmental milestones. Children not meeting milestones qualify for FREE in-home help.

EARLY CHILDHOOD FAMILY EDUCATION

SSP Early Learning offers classes for children and families to learn and play together. ECCE classes are free for children under 1-year of age, other class fees are on a sliding scale. To learn more about class opportunities and register visit earlylearning.sspps.org or scan the QR code.



GET INVOLVED

Stakeholder involvement is a critical component in meeting the needs of our students, staff, and families. There are many ways anyone in our community can become involved. Below are a few ways we are looking for community involvement.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Volunteers needed for Adult Education as tutors
- Volunteers for classroom and project support
- Read across SSP- read to elementary classes once per month

Visit www.sspps.org/get-involved or scan the QR code above to learn more about these opportunities.



FAMILY INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- School Year Calendar Committee
- Family Academic Advisory Committee
- Technology Committee
- Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA) and Advisory Groups
- Special Education Advisory Group



COMMUNITY EDUCATION

AT CENTRAL SQUARE COMMUNITY CENTER



SENIOR CENTER



The South St. Paul Senior Center provides opportunities for socialization, recreation, education, and health to residents age 55 and up.

FREE SENIOR SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Daily activities are offered in the areas of food socials, card games, arts and crafts, and fitness.

FREE SENIOR INFORMATION SEMINARS

Each month features a variety of information seminars for aging adults. Topics include things such as: Medicare, Dementia, Wills and Trusts, Social Security, Taxes, and Retirement. Most classes and seminars are free for Senior Center members.

You can find a full list of programming and schedules at: communityed.sspps.org/programs/55-programming, scan the QR code above, or call 651-306-3632.

ENTERTAINMENT

Each month features a trip to local performances or shows, local tours, or a multi-day trip out of town. Transportation, food, entertainment, and lodging (when applicable) are covered in the registration fee.

SENIOR FITNESS

Central Square offers fitness classes designed for ages 55+ and works with Silver Sneakers and Silver & Fit Medicare programs.

ADULT ENRICHMENT



ADULT ENRICHMENT

Adult Enrichment from Community Ed offers classes and activities for adults ages 15 and up based on the needs and interests of community members.

Enrichment Classes are offered in the areas of:

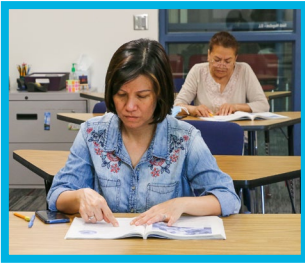
- Health and Wellness
- Arts and Crafts
- Fitness
- Dancing
- Culinary Arts
- Financial Planning and Literacy

You can find a full list of programming and schedules at: communityed.sspps.org/programs/adult-enrichment, scan the QR code above, or call 651-306-3632.

ADULT EDUCATION

All adult education classes through South Suburban Adult Basic Education are FREE. Classes are offered during the day, evening, and online.

- English Learners
- GED/Academic Skills
- Healthcare Career Prep
- Work/Career Readiness Skills
- Online GED
- College Placement Prep
- Digital Literacy



YOUTH ENRICHMENT



GYMNASTICS

SSPPS Community Education runs the gymnastics program at Central Square. Classes are offered for all skill levels from ages 18 months-14 years.

Due to the popularity and growth in the program, we are excited to introduce a Pre-Team this year.

- Gymnasts ages 7-14
- Learning routines on all events: Bars, Floor, Beam, and Vault
- Preparing to compete at local competitions this spring

SWIMMING LESSONS

Swimming lessons are back at Central Square Community Center! SSPPS Community Education offers the following opportunities:

- Lessons begin at age 6 months with parent/guardian
- Ages 3 and older without parent/guardian
- All skill levels from beginners to stroke development

YOUTH ENRICHMENT

A variety of other enrichment opportunities are available for youth from hobbies to life skill development. Some of the courses offered are:

- Driver's Education
- Babysitter's Training
- CPR for Youth
- ACT Prep
- Sports and Recreation
- Culinary Skills
- Performing Arts
- Kids' Choice After School Care

You can find a full list of programming and schedules at: communityed.sspps.org/programs/youth-enrichment, scan the QR code above, or call 651-306-3632.

All of these opportunities and more are listed in the Community Education and Early Learning Program Catalog. Look for the Winter/Spring edition in your mailboxes in December. Visit communityed.sspps.org for the most up-to-date information on programming and schedules.

