

# Rushton Elementary

2511 W 50th  
Westwood, KS 66205  
913-993-4900

Principal: Kristy Fornal  
Grades Served: K-6  
KSDE Bldg #: 8844  
Feeder Pattern: Hocker Grove MS, North HS



## Notable School Characteristics

- Comprehensive school serving students in grades K-6
- A celebrated diverse population
- Strong and collaborative community and school partnership
- Newly constructed building coming 2024 SY
- Highly qualified staff invested in Rushton students and families

## KSDE Building Report Card

[Rushton Elementary Building Report Card](#)

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## Needs Analysis

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

\*Grade level proficiency is defined by state law as scoring “above level 2” on state assessments, yet actual grade level performance is most closely related to state assessment scores above level 1.

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 Rushton Elementary include, but are not limited to:

- Lack of special education funding
- Lack or limited access to quality PreK programs
- Lack of or limited access to community health services and mental/behavioral health services
- Need for additional staff to address SEL, ELL and Reading/Math Interventions

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

Our students face a growing number of barriers to success and Rushton Elementary continually works to support them. Current budget constraints that impact our ability to successfully remove barriers for our students include:

- Increased salary to recruit and retain highly qualified certified and classified staff
- Additional staff members hired to meet the individual learning and Social Emotional Learning needs of all students -
  - SPED teachers and paras
  - ELL aides
  - Educational aides
- Increased funding for PreK
  - Rushton Elementary would benefit from an onsite Pre-K program to establish positive relationships with families and provide early intervention for students.

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 funding and time for Professional Learning Community teams to meet
- Increase paraeducator and teacher support in special education classrooms

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- Increase the number of Specialized teachers for student intervention for both academic, ELL and social emotional learning
- Continue to have a full-time Social Worker
- Continue to have a full-time Instructional Coach
- Continue to have a full-time building substitute teacher
- Continue with current class size guidelines to ensure more individualized attention for students and a more supportive learning environment.

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?

\*Again, state law defines grade level proficiency as scoring “above level 2” while actual grade level performance is most closely related to scores above level 1 on state assessments.

We measure growth each year and document in our Kansas Education Systems Accreditation (KESA) plans of success on a variety of student success factors. We emphasize growth for all students. 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. Such factors include:

- Lack of constitutional funding of special education continues to impact our ability to fully meet the needs of all students.
- While assessment scores are one measure, Rushton 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.
- Similar to how other professionals, such as doctors, lawyers, etc. cannot ensure 100% success due to a variety of obstacles, we will likely be unable to achieve 100% proficiency.
- An increased level of social emotional challenges and needs of students and families due to the continued impact of COVID.

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## Board Rationale/Comments

The Shawnee Mission School District maintains focus on its commitment to meeting aspirational state and district education goals for every student. The district continues to budget conservatively, working to limit central administrative costs to less than 5% of the total budget. Over the past several years, the district has focused on responding to challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, including learning recovery, an increase in chronic absenteeism, and an enhanced need for social and emotional support for students.

The district has used information from needs assessments conducted at each building to make focused staff allocations at the building level. These include specific needs identified by large numbers of schools, including additional teacher allocations to maintain lower class sizes at the elementary level, providing a building substitute at each building, increased paraprofessional/teacher support in special education classrooms, and higher salaries for both certified and classified staff. In addition, following a comprehensive analysis of student needs, the district continues 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 district was able to use additional state funding, (including an increase in the at-risk weighting and an increase to the base, along with a corresponding increase in the Local Option Budget) to add positions identified in individual building needs assessments across our 48 attendance centers/specialized programs. These positions include the following:

- 10 special education teachers, 5.25 para-educators, an autism coach, 2 speech language pathologists, an occupational therapist, 2 school psychologists, and 2 special education coordinators.
- 5 elementary interventionists
- An additional instructional coach for Horizons and for Early childhood
- 4 ELL teachers
- A teacher on assignment
- 3 floating nurses and
- 2 administrative interns

The district is also maintaining the following positions in the operating funds at least for one more year:

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- Elementary class size will remain at 22 for Kindergarten through 2nd grade and 25 for 3rd through 6th grades.
- Ten additional teachers at the secondary level to support learning recovery.
- At least one building sub at each building in the district.

The district will continue to analyze budget funds for the 2024-25 school year, in order to determine the ability to maintain the positions listed above 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.

The percentage of Rushton Elementary students performing at or above grade level on the Math and ELA state assessments (Levels 2, 3 or 4) has remained above state averages. While students experienced significant learning disruptions over the past few years, Math state assessment scores improved in Spring 2023. Rushton staff continue to focus on culture, creating meaningful relationships, and developing effective Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to increase student performance. School staff remain committed to the challenge of providing all students with the social-emotional support they need to facilitate learning growth.

In addition, the district will continue to support increased professional learning opportunities for all teachers, with a focus on Professional Learning Communities and 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.

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