

# Santa Fe Trail Elementary

7100 Lamar  
Overland Park, KS 66204  
913-993-5000

Principal: Kristal Leiker  
Grades Served: PreK-6  
KSDE Bldg #: 8846

Feeder Pattern: Hocker Grove MS & SM  
North HS



## Notable School Characteristics

- Comprehensive school serving students in grades PreK-6
- Special Education High Incidence Centralized Support Program
- North Area Gifted Education Program
- Strong Community and Family Support
- High Staff Retention

## KSDE Building Report Card

[Santa Fe Trail Elementary Building Report Card](#)

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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.

## 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 Santa Fe Trail include, but are not limited to:

- High levels of students facing trauma
- Lack of special education funding
- Additional staff to efficiently meet academic and social emotional needs
- Shared housing and multi-generational households
- Limited access to community health services and mental health services
- Need for additional staff to support student behavioral needs
- Additional classroom space to accommodate hands on learning with a taller fence outside

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:

- Maintain full-time instructional coach after loss of ESSER funds
- Maintaining building substitute after loss of ESSER funding
- Maintain low teacher/student ratio for great individualized instruction
- New facility to support collaborative learning as well as support the centralized program
- Increased salary to recruit and retain highly qualified certified and classified staff
- Full-time behavioral support teacher
- Additional staff members hired to meet the individual learning and SEL needs of all students especially for students in specialized program
- Increased funding and time for PLCs to meet
- Additional administrative support
- Increase paraeducator support in special education classrooms

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- Increased funding to expand extended school year and summer school programming for students

## 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.

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:

- 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.
- 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, Santa Fe Trail 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.
- Ever-changing population of students bringing varying degrees of cognitive abilities, school readiness, disabilities, and behavioral challenges preclude us from being able to guarantee a date when all students will meet a singular level of proficiency.
- With the addition of the open boundary statute, it will make it even more difficult to identify a time when grade level proficiency for all would be achievable.

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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.

Santa Fe Trail hosts a centralized special education low incidence program for the district, and is impacted by the failure of the state to fully fund special education. Yet, the percentage of Santa Fe Trail 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, both Math and ELA state assessment improved in Spring 2023. School staff continue to focus on culture, creating meaningful relationships, and developing effective Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to increase student performance. Santa Fe Trail is 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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