

# Shawnee Mission Northwest High School

12701 W. 67th Street  
Shawnee, KS 66216  
913-993-7200

Principal: Lisa Gruman  
Grades Served: 9-12  
KSDE Bldg #: 8890

Feeder Pattern: Broken Arrow, Mill Creek, Ray  
Marsh, Rhein Benninghoven, Shawano  
Elementary Schools, Trailridge MS and SM  
Northwest HS



## Notable School Characteristics

- Comprehensive high school serving students in grades 9 through 12
- Recognized as a Blue Ribbon School in 2001
- International Baccalaureate school since 2008
- College credit opportunities for students including twenty Advanced Placement course offerings and comparable concurrent enrollment options with neighboring colleges, in addition to our International Baccalaureate diploma and certificate programs.
- Compete in the Sunflower 6A League, the largest classification in Kansas.
- Focus on the learning and growth of each individual student with a variety of programs in place to ensure ALL of our students are college and career ready with the interpersonal skills for life success.
- Commitment to creating a school culture where all students belong and feel valued
- Commitment to create opportunities for students to earn a Market Value Asset
- Center-based programs

## KSDE Building Report Card

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.

A strength of Northwest is our community of teachers, students and families who each contribute a valued perspective within our classrooms and activities. While we learn from one another as we share our gifts and talents, we must also acknowledge that we face a number of challenges in ensuring students achieve grade level proficiency on assessments. Some of those challenges for Shawnee Mission Northwest include:

- Students with chronic absenteeism continue to need additional support to attend school regularly. The root cause of the absences varies greatly, ranging from anxiety and mental health needs to maintaining a full time work schedule while attending school. Students in our ELL programs and students receiving free or reduced lunch support have the highest rates of chronic absenteeism reflected in our data.
- Students with specialized and individualized education needs, including serving as a center-based program for Social Emotional Resource for SMSD students with emotional and behavioral support needs.
- Students have a wide range of skills and continue to demonstrate gaps in learning that need to be addressed.
- Students learning English as a second language face a broader skill gap to attain grade level proficiency at the high school level. Grade level proficiency on the KAP for ELA requires they build eleven years of skills after as few as two years of education within our school. Many of our students in our ELL program are students with limited and interrupted formal education experiences. Some students have not been in school since early elementary grades. Our data reflects the challenges
- Students that have a prior history of trauma. Trauma impacts students from all socioeconomic and racial or ethnic backgrounds. Supporting students affected by trauma requires specialized training for staff and skilled support from social workers, counselors, and administrators. Progress is most effective when partnering with community organizations to provide a

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continuum of social-emotional support, yet those services are often understaffed or under-supported to meet all needs.

- Lack of or limited access to community health services and mental health services to provide necessary care for students to be ready to engage in academic studies.
- Difficulty in retaining and attracting highly qualified teachers and counselors. Due to the complex nature of educating the whole student, our teachers and counselors at the high school level provide challenging academic experiences while serving as trusted adults to support social and emotional needs. They serve many roles and meet the needs of so many diverse students, often at the expense of their own self-care and/or personal budget.
- Difficulty attracting staff in roles such as educational aides in our ELL program, who provide integral support in building students skills and confidence.
- Students may struggle to recognize the value of one assessment at a given moment in time rather than a comprehensive assessment plan.

### 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 Shawnee Mission Northwest could take to remove some barriers. Some of them include:

- Lower teacher-student ratio or increase the base at-risk weighting ratio to provide for highly effective intervention structures within our RTI programming. Allows for lower class sizes in courses where the intervention supports are provided. These intervention structures are essential for course programming to ensure success for our most at-risk learners and enrichment for our most advanced learners. Adjusting current staffing allocation allows us to provide these supports while maintaining reasonable class sizes across all courses and content.
- Maintain math staff previously allocated from ESSER funds to continue to address learning loss among all students and opportunity gaps reflected in our data among identified student groups.
- Maintain competitive salaries of teachers and support staff to retain and attract high quality teachers.
- Funding to provide more intensive social emotional and programming supports for identified groups within school to reduce rates of chronic absenteeism.
- Time for teacher teams to meet within our Professional Learning Communities to deeply explore student achievement data and determine appropriate, researched based interventions for students identified as below grade level proficiency.
- Maintain building substitutes to ensure quality instruction when staff need to be absent.

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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.

The staff at Shawnee Mission Northwest is committed to continuous professional growth and learning as we strive to improve how we serve our students and our community. We are building systems of support for our students through our Response to Intervention efforts and will continue to work together as a Professional Learning Community to focus on student achievement. Our work focuses on a variety of assessments and data, both internal and external, to determine student growth and progress. As an International Baccalaureate school, we recognize the value of both curriculum based authentic assessment in addition to the external assessments. A comprehensive profile of the student’s individual growth, both academic and social-emotional, is most beneficial to inform our work. As we monitor our students’ growth, we learn more about the daily changes many of them face. These factors such as trauma, mental or physical health needs, or financial needs impact school attendance and have a direct impact on student achievement. The issues impacting our students at the high school level developed over several years and will need consistent, dedicated funding and services to address. This would include a dedicated and consistent commitment to funding building staff at a level to ensure retention and balanced workload. Mitigating these factors requires concerted resources beyond what is currently available. One primary example is the need to fully fund special education to provide students the necessary support to thrive and close that opportunity gap. Given adequate resources with long-term funding to support our students, our goal would be to decrease the percent of students scoring at level one by 3% per year.

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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.

Shawnee Mission Northwest high school has an impressive academic track record and involved student body. The school reports struggling to support students with specialized learning needs, such as English Language Learners or students with special education needs. This budget focuses additional resources including ELL teachers and special education staff. SMSD has also repeatedly reviewed and revised the salary schedule for classified employees following the recent spike in staff shortages, but can only support competitive recruitment and retention at Shawnee Mission Northwest and similar schools to the extent of budget constraints.

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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