

Shawnee Mission South High School

5800 W. 107th Street
Overland Park, KS 66207
913-993-7500

Principal: Dr. Todd Dain
Grades Served: 9-12
KSDE Bldg #: 8892

Feeder Pattern:

- Brookridge Elementary School
- Brookwood Elementary School
- John Diemer Elementary School
- Oak Park-Carpenter Elementary School
- Rosehill Elementary School
- Trailwood Elementary School
- Indian Woods Middle School



Notable School Characteristics

- Established 1966
- Comprehensive school serving students in grades 9-12
- AP Capstone School; AP scores consistently highest in the area; Overall AP Participation Rate 33% with 22% Free-Reduced AP enrollment; 89 AP Scholars in 2023.
- Diverse Population: Demographics - 34% Minority, 30% Economically Disadvantaged, 10% English Language Learners; 16% Students with Special needs
- U.S. News & World Report Silver Award School 2012-2023, Kansas Top 10 School.
- 61 KSHSAA State Championships
- Academic Decathlon State Champions 23 out of the last 26 years
- 92.0% Graduation Rate
- Host for District Post-High School Special Education Program
- Notable Alumni: Rob Riggle; David Dastmalchian; Rodney Peete; Tom Kane

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KSDE Building Report Card

[Shawnee Mission South Building Report Card](#)

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.

Our South teachers, students and families face a number of challenges in ensuring student proficiency on assessments. Some of those challenges for South High include:

- Rapidly increasing population of transient students
- Increased rates of student truancy and chronic absenteeism
- Students who do not speak English fluently
- Students arrive with below-grade level literacy skills
- Students with severe special needs
- Unfunded special education needs
- Increased number of students facing trauma
- Growing percentage of students living in poverty
- Increased levels of homeless students and families in foster care
- Limited access to community health services and mental health services

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

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

- Increase salary to recruit and retain highly qualified certified and classified staff
- Retain ESSER funded staffing positions with priority listed below:
 - Math teacher
 - RWL Counselor
 - Building substitute
- Hire additional ELL staff including ELL teacher and ELL instructional aide.
- Hire additional staff members to meet the individual learning and SEL needs of all students - classroom teachers, counselors, social workers, paraeducators, teacher aides, maintenance and custodial staff
- Increase paraeducator and teacher support in special education classrooms

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- Increase resources (funding, time, leadership) for PLCs to develop interventions for students in need
- Increase funding to expand extended school year and summer school programming for students.
- Maintain low teacher:student ratio for increased individualized instruction
- Provide additional resources to employ substitute teachers including building substitutes
- Increase funding to support capital improvements to the building/campus that was established in 1966.

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:

- Ever-changing population of students bringing a varying degree of cognitive abilities and disabilities which preclude us from being able to guarantee a date when all students will meet a singular level of 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, South 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 due to the 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.

Shawnee Mission South is home to the SMSD Post-High program, which focuses on the needs of special education students through the district who are post-secondary. Fully funded special education would allow for an enhanced investment in programs like Post-High. SMSD has 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 SM South 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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