

Fall Newsletter



Celebrating Achievements and Striving for Excellence in SPS

Salina Public Schools earned three prestigious Kansas Education Commissioner's Awards through the 2024 Kansans Can Star Recognition Program. The program acknowledges excellence in educational areas that Kansans value and that support the state's vision for education, "Kansas leads the world in the success of each student."

Social-Emotional Growth: Silver (improved from Copper in 2023)

The first area SPS is recognized for excelling in is Social-Emotional Growth. Social-emotional skills include self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship skills and responsible decision making. One of our goals in this area is to decrease chronic absenteeism.

We know that school attendance plays a critical role in students' chances of success in school, and in life. Chronically absent students struggle to keep up with what they are expected to learn and they often fall behind. Falling behind has serious consequences such as not graduating high school and struggling to find work to make ends meet. Chronic absenteeism at SPS, a district priority, has been reduced over the past three years. In 2023-24, it was reduced by 9.8%.



Kindergarten Readiness: Bronze (improved from Copper in 2023)



The second area SPS is recognized for excelling in is Kindergarten Readiness. Currently, five hundred thirteen (513) children are served through Headstart, USD 305 Preschool, Childcare and Parents as Teachers. Early childhood programs are critical, especially because 85% of brain development occurs by age three. Support for this development occurs in the school-based classrooms that are in every SPS elementary school. They serve at-risk, special education and Headstart eligible children.

Individual Plan of Study (IPS): Copper

The IPS, the third recognition, is a tailored education roadmap that aligns with a student's career goals and interests. Our goal is that every student know their own strengths, identify careers that would be a good fit, chart the educational path to a desired career and understand the financial impact of educational decisions.

Xello, part of the IPS, is an online program that provides an



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electronic portfolio and more. It provides career interest surveys, exploration of occupations and helps manage crucial information related to students' high school course plans as well as their postsecondary plans. An IPS is an important tool to help students and their parents/guardians map out the students' future.

Our district's growth in these areas is recognized as continuous improvement by the Kansas State Department of Education's program. As we look ahead, we will continue to build on our achievements and foster an environment where every student thrives. This will ensure SPS remains the leader in K-12 educational excellence in Salina.

