



# SSPPS

## DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

### August 4, 2025



#### Educational Benefits Applications Help Determine State Funding for SSPPS

While all students will receive one free breakfast and lunch each day through the Free School Meals for Kids legislation, SSPPS still needs you to complete or opt out of the 2025-26 Educational Benefits Application. Completed applications determine how much funding your child's school receives from the state for educational programs and other supports. In addition, qualifying families may be eligible for a variety of discounts including athletic and activity fees. Visit our website at [www.sspps.org/departments/nutrition](http://www.sspps.org/departments/nutrition) and click on the Educational Benefits tab to complete your application and view other discounts available to qualifying families.

Completing an Educational Benefits Application is easy, confidential and can be done one of three ways:

- **Online:** Complete an application online at [www.schoolcafe.com](http://www.schoolcafe.com); or
- **Mail or Drop off:** Complete the enclosed application and mail or drop off at the SSPPS District Office (104 - 5th Avenue South); or
- **Back to School Events:** Return completed Educational Benefits Application during the Student/Family Connection Days for your school. See important dates below for Back-to-School Events.



#### Annual Requirement: Verify Your Contact Information with our Census Update

We are asking all SSPPS families to complete an annual census in [Infinite Campus](#). You MUST complete this before your students' homeroom teacher or schedule will be available. Beginning today (August 4), once you log into Campus, you'll be prompted to complete your Online Registration. This is NOT a new enrollment, instead it is a place to verify your information is correct for the upcoming school year. The annual census ensures the district has the correct information for each student and family for the upcoming school year.

##### When completing the census you will be asked to:

- Review and update emergency contact information to ensure you receive important messages, including winter weather closures, delays and other important communications from the school and district.
- Select your Home Language Preference to specify the language you prefer to receive your school communication.

If your information is up-to-date the census will only take a few minutes. If you are unsure of how to complete the census, more information and instructions can be found on the [SSPPS website](#).

## SCHOOL BOARD MEETING UPDATE

#### Refreshing Our Look, Honoring Our Tradition

South St. Paul Public Schools is in the process of a brand refresh to better reflect who we are today, and where we're headed in the future. At their meeting on Monday, July 28, School Board members reviewed and shared their feedback on the refreshed working drafts of logos and color palette.

This update includes refreshed logos, colors, fonts, and messaging that align with our new Strategic Plan and the values of our community. We've gathered input from staff, students, families, and community members to help guide this work and ensure our updated brand feels welcoming, inclusive, and true to SSPPS.

We're keeping the heart of our identity—our maroon color, the bull mascot, and the "South St. Paul Packers" name, while making improvements to readability, consistency, and accessibility. These updates will help ensure our materials are easier to read, meet accessibility standards (like color contrast for those with visual impairments), and create a more unified look across everything from websites and signage to spirit wear and school forms. It's about helping everyone in our community feel seen, included, and connected.

A new tagline, **Engage. Educate. Empower.**, will also help communicate our mission across all platforms.

You'll start seeing updates this fall in digital spaces like our website, social media, and printed materials, with physical updates rolling out gradually over time.

Thank you for being part of the South St. Paul story. We're excited to move forward together, with pride in our past and excitement for what's ahead.

## IMPORTANT ITEMS FROM PAST NEWSLETTERS

#### Transportation Planning for 2025-26 School Year

Help us prepare for the upcoming school year by completing the [transportation survey to accept or decline](#). District-Provided transportation for your student. Eligibility is based on distance from school (1.0+ miles for elementary, 1.5+ miles for secondary). Not sure if you qualify? Check the [interactive map](#) or contact our transportation office at [eryan@sspps.org](mailto:eryan@sspps.org).

Families not eligible may request Pay-to-Ride service, offered by Safe-Way Bus Company on a first-come, first-served basis. [Join the waitlist for the Secondary here](#). Then fill out the [request form](#) and complete the registration in advance. Space is limited and may not be confirmed until October 1 or later. Families will be notified if a spot becomes available.

#### No Shots, No School

Minnesota law ([early learning, K-12](#)) requires students to be vaccinated or have an exemption on file before starting school. In particular, students going into Pre-Kindergarten or Kindergarten need to have their immunization record on file and students going into 7th and 12th may need new or booster vaccinations.

If you need help obtaining immunizations for your student:

- [HealthPartners' No Shots, No School](#) program has free immunizations for children
- [Dakota County Health](#) also offers free vaccinations for uninsured families

Upcoming Free Vaccinations Clinics in SSP:

- August 20, 2025 3-5 pm at Kaposia Education Center
- August 28, 2025 3-6 pm at SSP Secondary

[Visit the website for more information](#). When completed, send your updated immunization records to your student's school nurse:

- Grades PreK-5: [kayla.rogers@sspps.org](mailto:kayla.rogers@sspps.org)
- Grades 6-12: [jhove@sspps.org](mailto:jhove@sspps.org)

## Back-to-School Checklist

- Complete [Educational Benefits form](#)
- Review [Safety and Security Procedures](#)
- Save the back-to-school dates (below)
- Download the [printable academic calendar](#)
- Review [Handbooks](#)
- If applicable, [accept or decline transportation](#)
- If applicable, fill out [transportation pay-to-ride form](#)
- If applicable (grades PreK/K, 7, and 12), send in updated immunization form
- Download [HELPme App](#)
- Activate [ParentSquare account](#) when prompted and download the app

## Important Back-to-School Dates

#### First Days of School

- Grades 1-5, 6, 9, and 12: Tuesday, September 2, 2025
- Grades Kindergarten, 7-8, and 10-11: Wednesday, September 3, 2025
- Preschool: Thursday, September 4, 2025

#### Secondary Packer Essentials Days

Students will pick up schedules and locker information, can meet with the nurse and turn in immunization forms, setup educational benefits with nutrition services, and have their school photo taken at this open house event.

- Thursday, August 14 and Monday, August 18
- 12:00-3:00 pm and 4:00-7:00 pm

#### Secondary Family Connect Days (6-12)

On August 25, teachers will send an invitation to families inviting them to select and sign up for a connection time during the following dates/times:

- Wednesday, August 27 (2:30-6:00 pm)
- Friday, August 29 (9:00 am-1:00 pm)

#### CLC Family Connect Day

- Wednesday, August 27
- 2:30-6:00 pm

#### Elementary Family Connection Day and Kids' Choice Open House

Lincoln Center and Kaposia

- Thursday, August 28
- 10:00 am - 6:00 pm

#### Kindergarten Family Connection Day

Tuesday, September 2

- Lincoln: 7:30 am-3:30 pm
- Kaposia: 8:00 am-4:00 pm

#### Preschool Parent Meeting & Orientation

Lincoln Center and Kaposia

- September 3-6

#### Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) Open House

- Wednesday, September 3
- 5:30-7:00 pm

[View the full District Calendar](#)