



SPECIALIZED FOR SUCCESS

2022-27 STRATEGIC PLAN





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SECTION 1

Introduction to SSD

A Message from the Superintendent

We Are Specialized for Success!



SSD initiated the development of the strategic plan and CSIP update in the 2020-21 school year, a period marked by significant change and upheaval in public education. The unprecedented challenges posed by the historic pandemic prompted schools to reassess priorities, acknowledge inequities, and engage in profound reflection on how they can fulfill the commitment to education for all.

The strategic plan and CSIP embody an efficient approach to equipping every individual in our District with the necessary tools to concentrate on our core mission of teaching and learning. This foundational work aligns all divisions, departments, schools, staff, and resources toward the common objective of ensuring every student realizes their full potential in life and learning.

Our aspiration is that it facilitates the future endeavors of our specialized staff, fostering meaningful change that contributes to more equitable learning and life outcomes for each student.

“This foundational work aligns all divisions, departments, schools, staff, and resources toward the common objective of ensuring every student realizes their full potential in life and learning.”

While we continue to make progress on our goals, we still have much work to do. I look forward to seeing SSD fully realize our mission and vision.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. Michael Maclin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Michael Maclin
Superintendent of Schools

Updated 01/2024

2025 Board of Education



Ms. Carmen Meeks
Board President
Subdistrict 1



Dr. Dan Cuneo
Vice President
Subdistrict 2



Dr. Yuval Asner
Director
Subdistrict 7



Ms. Erin Beaver
Director
Subdistrict 3



Ms. LaToya Nelson
Director
Subdistrict 4



Dr. Joe Sartorius
Director
Subdistrict 5



Ms. Joanne Soudah
Director
Subdistrict 6

Governance

Special School District is governed by both a Governing Council and a Board of Education. The Governing Council is a 22-member oversight board consisting of one Board member from each of St. Louis County's 22 public school districts. The Governing Council meets four times per year and reviews and approves the annual budget, strategic plan, and comprehensive school improvement plan. They also interview and appoint the seven members of SSD's Board of Education.

Every four years since 1998, the Governing Council appoints a Public Review Committee

(PRC) to conduct a thorough review of SSD, including the structure, governance, administration, financial management, delivery of services, cooperation with partner school districts, and advocacy for children with disabilities.

The Board of Education provides direct governance of the District. Meeting twice monthly, the Board sets direction, establishes policy, and ensures appropriate management and fiscal responsibility. The Board also hires and evaluates the Superintendent.

Mission, Vision, Values, and Strategic Priorities



MISSION
To support and empower students of all learning abilities to excel to their greatest potential.



VISION
All students realize their full potential in life and learning.





Everything we do revolves around our commitment to students and their success.



We work with parents, students, partner districts, and the community to benefit students.



Every student, regardless of learning ability or socioeconomic status, deserves access to the services they need to succeed.

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|
| STRATEGIC PRIORITIES |  Systems |  Resources |  Relational Communication |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data-based, standardized approach to instruction • Strategic approach to high-need districts • Strategic alignment within SSD • Systematized approach to facilities • Recruitment, onboarding, and retention of staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equitable distribution of resources • Awareness of all resources • Optimal use of all resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships with external and internal stakeholders • Inter-departmental communications • Family engagement |

About Special School District

At Special School District of St. Louis County, we **equip and empower** students of all learning abilities to excel to their **greatest potential**. We believe the student always comes first, recognizing the importance of each student's **unique needs** to realize a productive, independent, and fulfilling life.

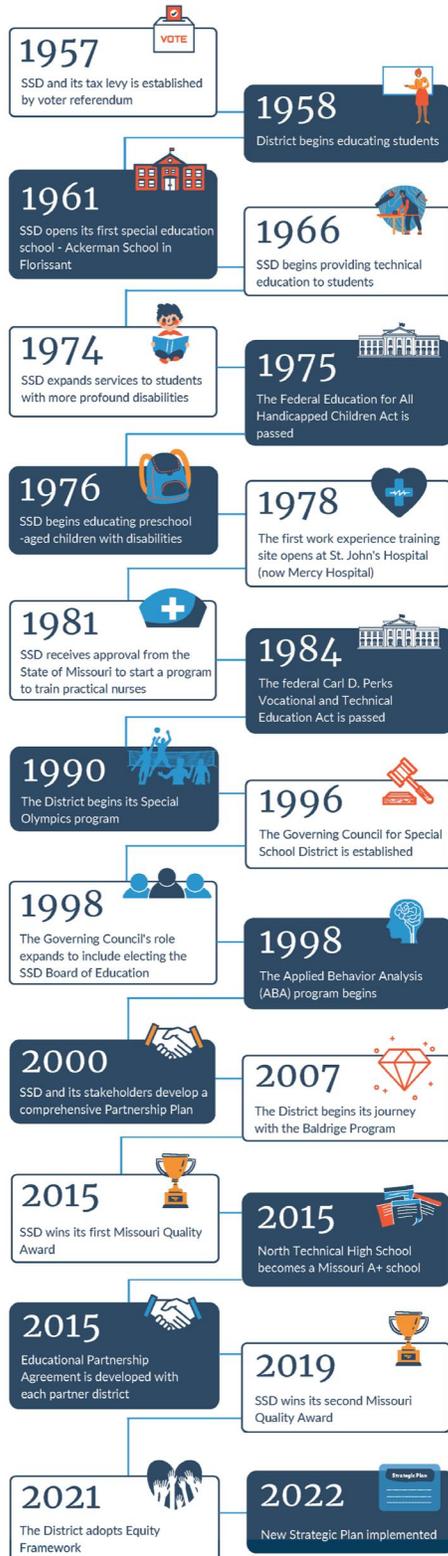
SSD provides special education services to students ages three through 21 in a variety of placements, which are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Services are based entirely on a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). Placements range from SSD teachers providing special education services in the student's home school and district (partner district) to students attending an SSD special education school or a private separate agency. Ninety-seven percent of students receiving

SSD services attend school in the school district where they live.

SSD also operates two career and technical high schools with 28 programs in a wide range of technical areas. Technical course offerings for students in grades 10-12 range from traditional technical fields, such as precision machining and construction, to emerging fields like network administration and health sciences.



SSD History



SSD, the largest specialized education provider in the state of Missouri, was established in 1957. The voters of St. Louis County approved a tax levy for its creation to support the educational needs of children with disabilities. The District grew in 1960 when voters approved a second levy to finance the construction of special education schools.

In 1965, an additional levy passed which allowed the District to become the career and technical education provider for all students in St. Louis County, in support of the Vocational Education Act. Additional levies were passed in 1970 to build more special education schools. In 1981, SSD took a major step in expanding its programs when it received approval from the State of Missouri to start a program to train practical nurses.

Today, SSD serves almost 22,000 students with disabilities in our SSD schools and 22 partner district classrooms, over 1,400 students in career and technical education, more than 900 students who attend private/parochial schools, and over 100 adult students working toward their practical nurse licensure.

SERVING ST. LOUIS COUNTY STUDENTS SINCE 1958 

Map of Special School District

- **Subdistrict 1**
Hazelwood | Jennings | Maplewood-Richmond Heights
- **Subdistrict 2**
Affton | Bayless | Hancock Place | Mehlville
- **Subdistrict 3**
Parkway
- **Subdistrict 4**
Ferguson-Florissant | Pattonville
Riverview Gardens
- **Subdistrict 5**
Brentwood | Kirkwood | Lindbergh
Valley Park | Webster Groves
- **Subdistrict 6**
Ladue | Normandy | Ritenour
University City
- **Subdistrict 7**
Clayton | Rockwood



Facts and Figures: SSD Students, Staff, and Schools

SSD AT A GLANCE



our students

- 805** Special Education
- 19,763** Partner Districts
- 1,013** Early Childhood
- 1,716** Career & Technical Education
- 1,021** SNAP_(avg)
- 800** Homebound (avg)
- 250** Courts (avg)

48%
Caucasian

37%
African-American

5%
Hispanic

6%
Multi-Race

2%
Asian

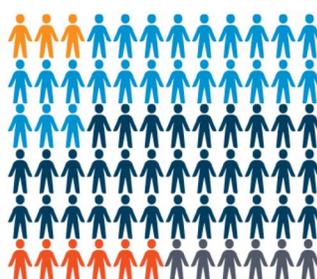
2%
Native American/
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander



our staff

- 370** Part-time staff
- 5,433** Full-time staff

- 78%** Hold Advanced Degrees
- 11** Average years of teaching experience



- 235** Administrative-level staff
- 1,995** Paraprofessional-level staff
- 2,793** Teacher-level staff
- 460** Operational staff
- 475** Other staff members

our schools



7 SSD schools and programs



2 Technical high schools



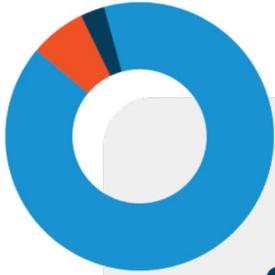
266 Partner district schools



22 Partner districts across St. Louis County

The above numbers are based on total enrollment and services for the entire school year 2025-26 and do not represent any one day of attendance.

Facts and Figures: SSD Students, Staff, and Schools



Students Served

- **SSD Schools**
805
- **Partner District Schools**
19,763
- **Technical Schools**
1,716

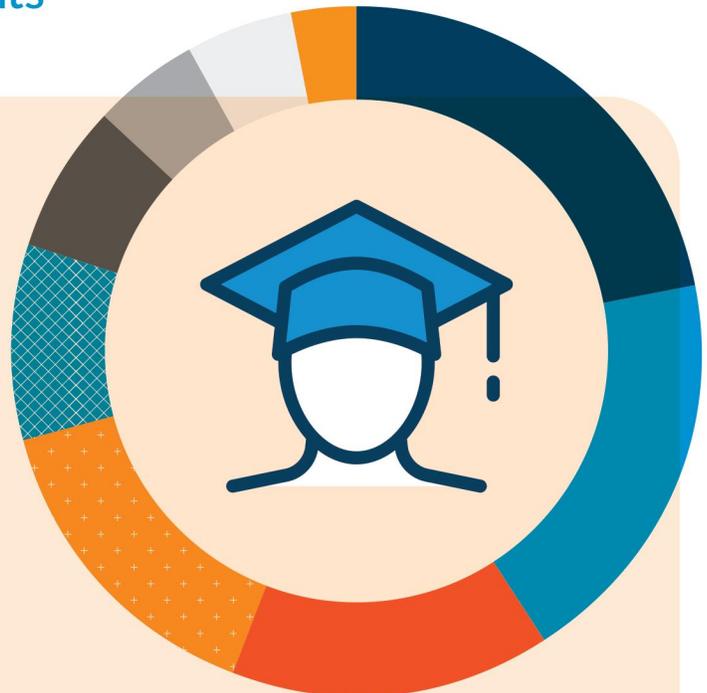
Transportation

- 287** Bus drivers
- 209** Bus monitors
- 352** Buses in fleet
- 256** Daily routes
- 2,107,599** Miles driven



SSD Special Education Students by Disability

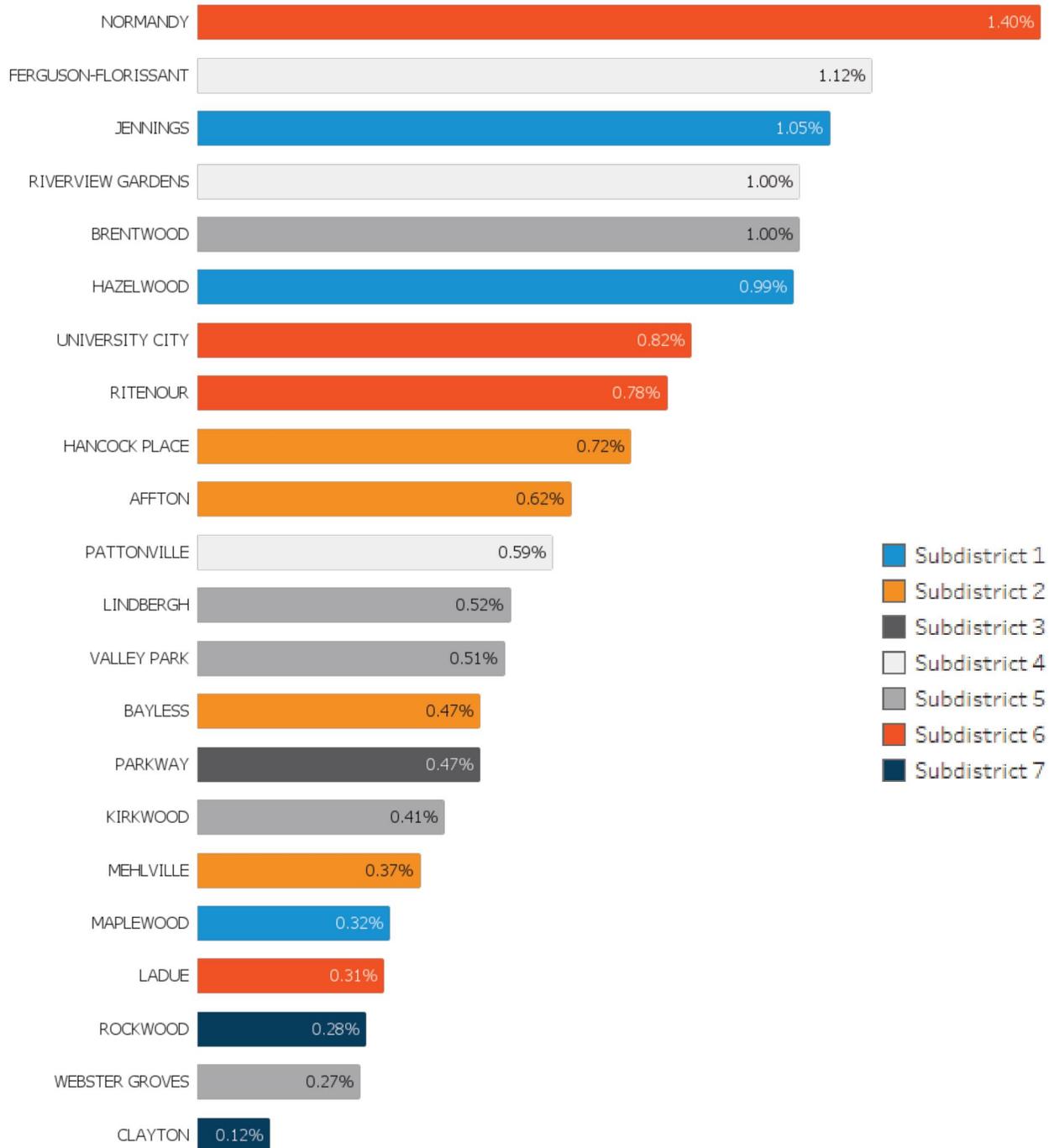
- **Other Health Impairment**
22%
- **Learning Disabilities**
19%
- **Speech Impairment**
14%
- **Autism**
18%
- **Emotional Disturbance**
7%
- **Intellectual Disability**
6%
- **Language Impairment**
5%
- **Young Child with Developmental Delay**
5%
- **Other**
4%



21,144 Students

Receiving Special Education Services

Percentage of Partner District K-12 Students Attending SSD Schools and Programs



Source: SSD separate site enrollment is based on preliminary 2024-25 December 1 count data from SSD's Phoenix student information database. Partner district enrollments used in the calculation were retrieved from the DESE comprehensive data site.

Snapshot of SSD Programs and Services



Early Childhood Special Education

For more than 30 years, SSD's Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) program has provided special education to children starting at the age of three and extending until they begin kindergarten.



1013
students



Serving
14 of 22
partner
districts



School-Aged Programs

Special education for school-aged (kindergarten through twelfth grade) students is provided by SSD in partner districts, our special education schools, our programs, and with the support of private agencies.



21,718
students



22 school districts
5 special
education schools
3 programs
13 service sites



Vocational Skills Program

The Vocational Skills Program (VSP) serves students who have completed four years of high school but require extended programming to develop the skills needed to move toward post-secondary goals and gain successful employment. Students in VSP are immersed in a business setting, allowing them to build general work behaviors and soft skills needed for entry-level employment.



216
students



30
sites



Special Non-Public Access Program

Through the District’s Special Non-Public Access Program (SNAP), SSD provides programming outside of school to children who are eligible for special education, but attend private, parochial, or home school.



Avg. 953 students

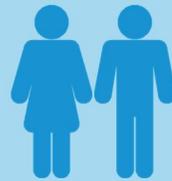


24 sites throughout St. Louis County



Homebound Instruction

SSD collaborates with our partner districts to provide Homebound Instruction and special education services to students throughout St. Louis County who are unable to access services in a school setting due to injury, illness, or medical condition.



Avg. 556 students



22 partner districts



Courts Program

Summit Academy, operated by SSD, provides instruction and the opportunity for students incarcerated at the St. Louis County Juvenile Detention Center to earn credits toward graduation. The program focuses on equipping students with the skills they need to successfully transition back to their home school and/or post-school life.



Avg. 45 students



1 Site location

Snapshot of SSD Programs and Services



Career and Technical Education

SSD offers the largest career and technical education (CTE) program in the State of Missouri. Our two CTE high schools provide relevant, high-quality instruction in a wide variety of career pathways. Programs are focused on developing real-world skills, providing hands-on experience, and connecting students to employers and mentors. Instructors are industry professionals with vast expertise and a keen interest in supporting upcoming generations as they explore the world of work. Acceptance is competitive and conducted through a rubric-scored process.



1,716
students



2 high schools
28 programs

Avg. 55% go to college

Avg. 35% join workforce



Adult Education Program

Applied Technology Services, SSD's adult education program, offers a 12-month Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN) program to individuals 18 years and older. Classes operate year-round and are offered at two sites in the St. Louis area, South Tech and North Tech high schools. Instructors are certified by DESE and hold a bachelor's degree in nursing and a current Missouri Registered Nurse (RN) license.



132 LPN
students/year



2 site
locations

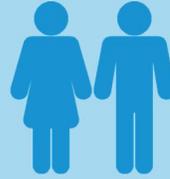
Program is approved by the Missouri State Board of Nursing and is accredited by DESE.

Support for Families



Audiology Services

SSD Audiology Services provides supports to all children in St. Louis County from early childhood to graduation or age 21 (whichever is first). Services include diagnostic hearing evaluation, amplification and assistive listening device evaluation, cochlear implant and hearing aid troubleshooting, and in services with students, families, and school staff regarding hearing loss and amplification.



7,234
students
served/year



3 site
locations



FACE

Formerly PEDA and Family Engagement

The Family and Community Engagement (FACE) program partners with families to support each student's academic, social, and emotional success. FACE staff provides direct support to families and the community through workshops, resources, referrals, consultation, a lending library, website resources, the Parent Leadership Institute, and Parent Mentor Outreach Ambassadors.



50+
workshops
offered annually



PAC

The District's Parent Advisory Council (PAC) is comprised of families who collaborate on improving the education, confidence, and social outcomes of each student served by SSD. The PAC consists of five parents or guardians (one member and four alternates) from each partner district and SSD special education school.



Established
in **1986**



9 meetings
per year

Strategic Plan vs. CSIP

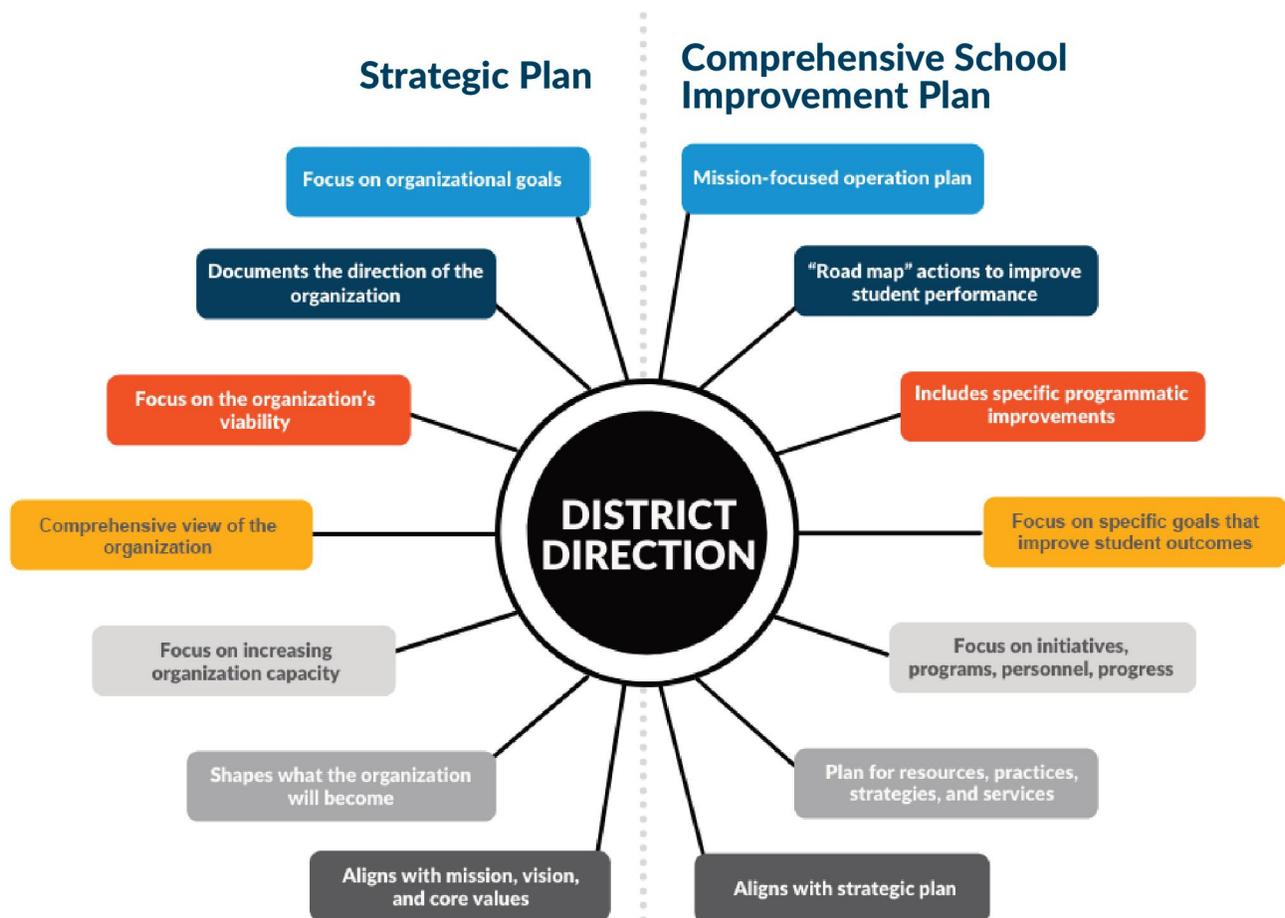
What is the difference between a strategic plan and a comprehensive school improvement plan (CSIP)?

The strategic plan is a long-range plan founded on the vision, mission, and core values of the District. It is more visionary than the improvement plan and focuses on long-term goals. The strategic plan provides direction for the improvement plan.

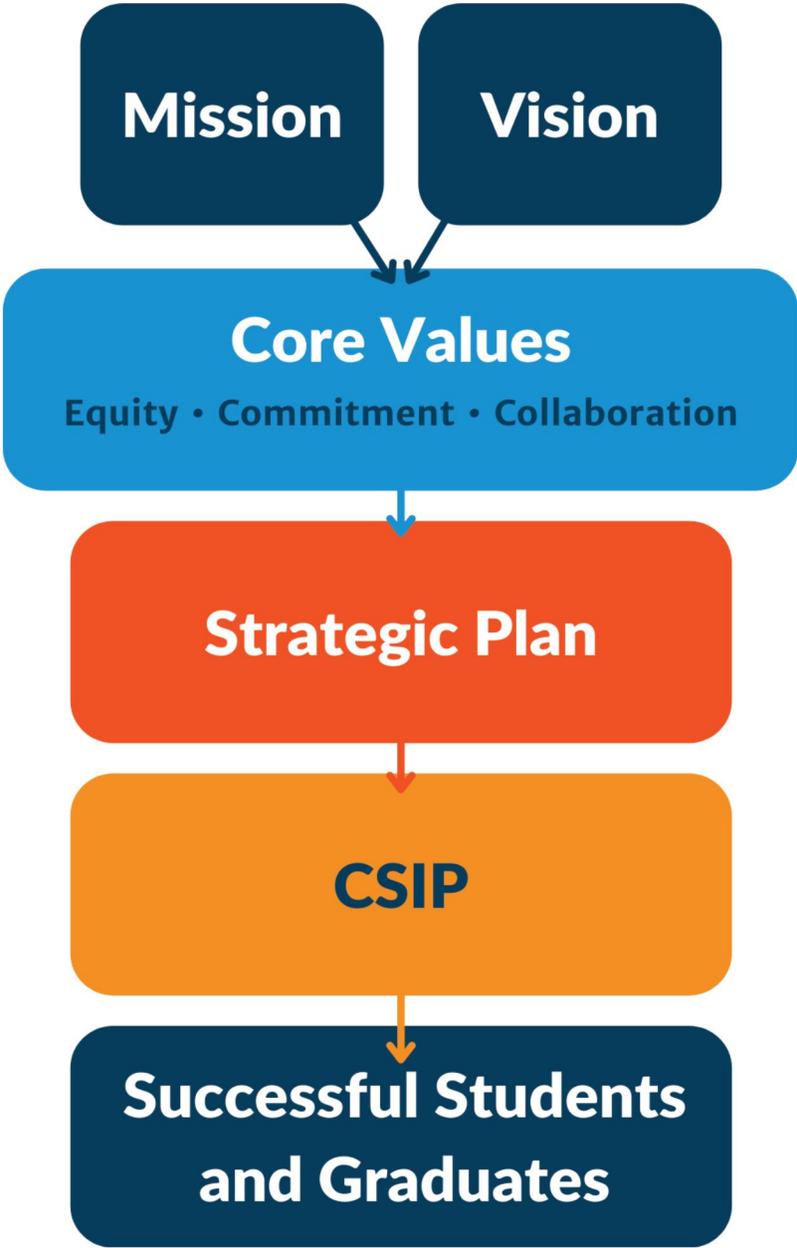
The CSIP defines the steps needed to achieve the strategic plan's long-term goals. It is more operational than visionary, and includes short-term goals, with detailed actions for each goal. The improvement plan's actions are evaluated more frequently than the

strategic plan and it is formatively reviewed and revised quarterly throughout the year.

The long-range strategic plan helps the District set visionary expectations and the annual improvement plan focuses on operations, making it possible to achieve those expectations. At the end of the year, both the strategic and improvement plans are evaluated for success. The strategic plan's evaluation is formative, while the improvement plan's evaluation is summative.



The strategic plan denotes overarching goals, but they are not the only goals being worked towards. There are many plans which are reviewed and revised annually, with goals and objectives guiding the work we do throughout the District, such as the District comprehensive improvement plan, school improvement plans, and the equity framework. Although there are three strategic priority areas that are part of the strategic plan, there are other areas, strategies, and objectives that are being considered and implemented concurrently to this guiding document.





SECTION 2

Strategic Plan

Planning for Success

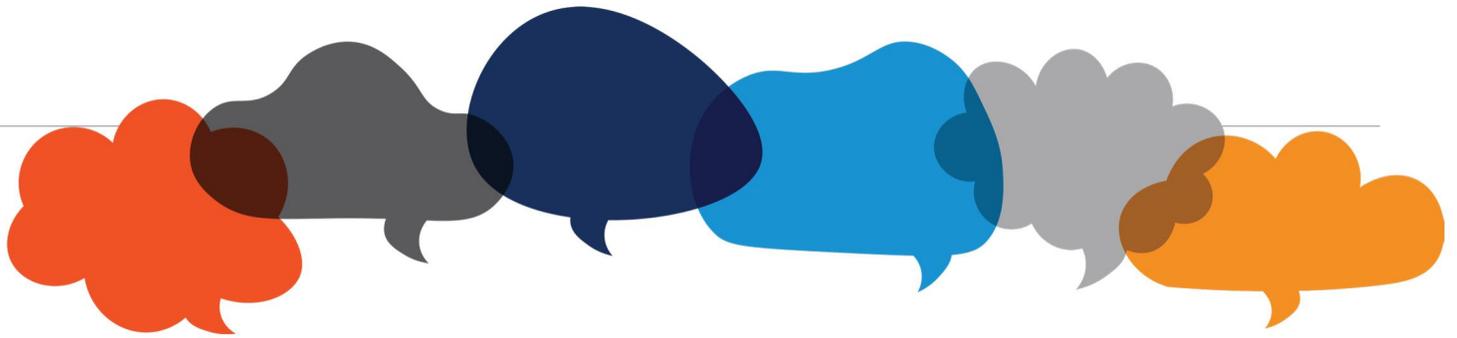
SSD developed the new strategic plan over the course of the 2020-21 school year. The Strategic Plan Steering Committee, comprised of parents/guardians, staff, and community members, conducted a detailed examination of external and internal factors impacting the District. Stakeholders from across St. Louis County participated in interviews and focus groups to provide their input, and analysis of the gathered information told us what our community valued, where we could improve, and what the District should focus on moving forward.

An extensive districtwide SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis was performed to create a framework for analyzing the District's areas for growth and improvement. The SWOT analysis provided a focus on SSD strengths while minimizing any threats and taking advantage of opportunities for maximum improvement. This comprehensive review of SSD resulted in a multi-year strategic plan that establishes

District priorities and outlines aligned goals and strategies. The new plan includes an updated mission, vision, and core values developed with stakeholder input and revised by our Board of Education. This plan affirms those values and ensures we will support and empower students of all learning abilities to excel to their greatest potential. Through revisions and additions, leadership will ensure the plan continues to fulfill its purpose of improving the District's capacity, quality, and sustainability.

The implementation of the new strategic plan begins with the leadership of the superintendent, followed by each school, as they annually develop and deploy school improvement plans that are aligned with the Board's goals. The strategic plan will guide the administration and staff of each school throughout the system in their work with students, parents, and the community as a whole.





External Factors

A review of SSD's external environment told us the following:

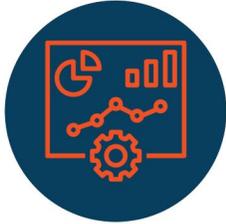
- St. Louis County's population, demographic factors, and economic conditions have been relatively stable.
- While overall public school enrollment in St. Louis County has been fairly consistent, different parts of the county have experienced some change. Districts in North County have seen slight enrollment drops, while districts in South County have seen slight enrollment increases.
- From 2016 to 2020, the count of children with disabilities in St. Louis County school districts increased by about 800 students.
- From 2017 to 2020, non-public school enrollment was fairly constant, as was the percentage of non-public school students identified as having a disability.
- The Missouri legislature has increased its support of charter and non-public schools in recent years.
- The Missouri State Board of Education has approved a new accreditation system that focuses on district processes and student outcomes.

Internal Considerations

A review of SSD's internal workings yielded the following key themes:

- SSD has a knowledgeable, skilled staff.
- SSD is fiscally sound.
- SSD facilities are sound and well-maintained.
- There is a lack of consistent, strategic, data-based planning and processes.
- There is a lack of clear communication among departments and with stakeholders.
- Staff is uncertain about the availability and sustainability of resources.
- The District must address issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Reporting Progress



The purpose of the strategic plan is to improve District performance, in both operations and instruction, in order to fulfill our mission. The District will measure performance in three ways: key performance indicators (KPIs), District report card, and balanced scorecard.

Key Performance Indicators

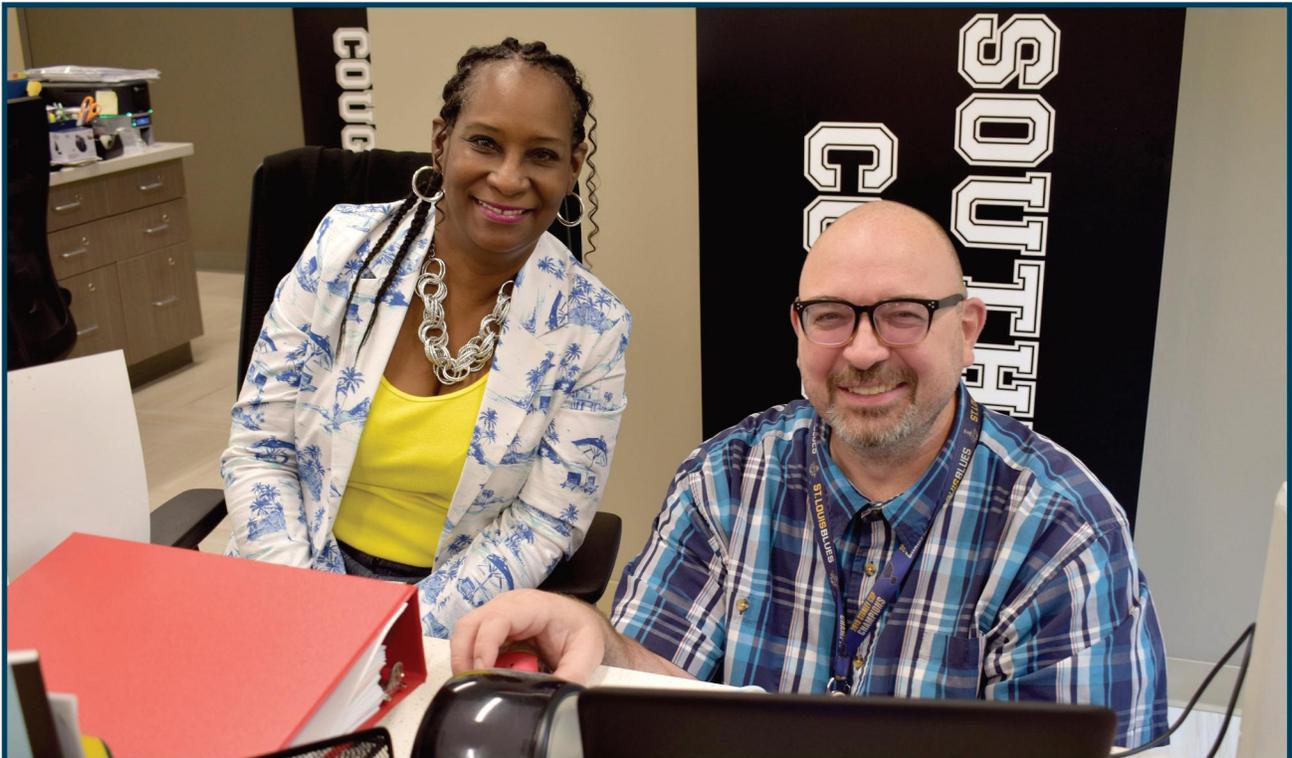
The purpose of a KPI is to show how well the organization or department is meeting its goals that are aligned with the District’s mission. It is intended to measure the most important things the department does and is based on results or outcomes.

Quarterly District Report Card

A District report card will show SSD’s performance on key metrics. It answers the question “what is happening now?” The report card will provide a quarterly detailed update so that the District can make adjustments to address areas of concern.

Annual Balanced Scorecard

A balanced scorecard is an annual view of District performance that balances operational factors with instructional ones. This allows judgments about how efficiently SSD is operating, as well as how effectively it is achieving desired results.







Special School District of St. Louis County, the largest specialized education provider in the state, equips and empowers students of all learning abilities to excel to their greatest potential. This is realized through an inclusive, collaborative approach, supported by our comprehensive resources and deep expertise - all of which is centered on each student's unique needs.

MISSION

To support and empower students of all learning abilities to excel to their greatest potential

VISION

All students realize their full potential in life and learning

CORE VALUES

- Equity
- Commitment
- Collaboration

Strategic Priorities

1 Strategic Priority 1: SYSTEMS



Goal and Strategies

Implement effective strategic, data-based systems that efficiently and equitably support instruction and operations.

Strategy 1

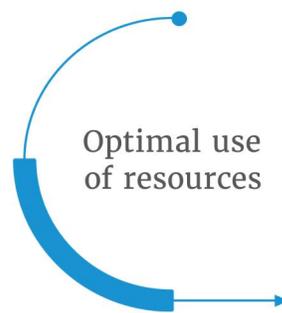
Develop administrators' skill sets for strategic priority setting for improved efficiency and effectiveness.

Strategy 2

Develop internal capacity for using data systems for gathering and analyzing data.

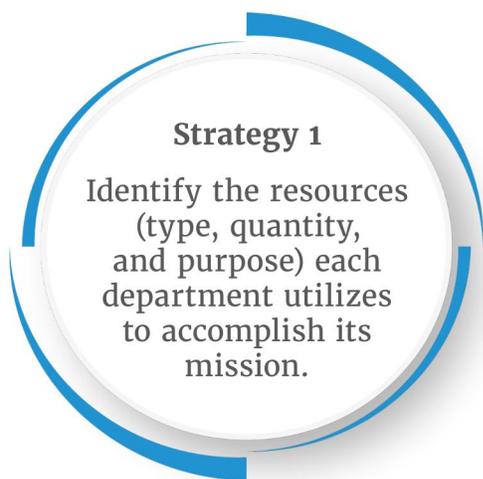
Strategic Priorities

2 Strategic Priority 2: RESOURCES



Goal and Strategies

Optimize resources to equitably support students to meet their greatest potential.



Strategic Priority 3: **RELATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS**

3

Relationships
with external
and internal
stakeholders

Inter-
departmental
communications

Family
engagement

Goal and Strategies

Create a multi-channel communication strategy that enables two-way communication and improves relationships across all stakeholder groups.

Strategy 1

Establish relationships with businesses, agencies, and other community stakeholders that will support student success.

Strategy 2

Engage with families.

Strategy 3

Establish communications systems among departments and with staff at all levels.

Strategic Planning Acknowledgments



As part of the Strategic Plan Steering Committee and Work Groups, the following individuals played an important role in developing the strategic plan. Their time and effort made its development possible.

Strategic Plan Steering Committee

Kevin Andert
Doug Austin
Dr. Paul Bauer
Dr. Mollie Bolton
Toby Clodfelter

Dr. Kelly Grigsby
Dr. Jeff Haug
Jennifer Henry
Dr. Michael Maclin
Chaketa Mack-Riddle

Wendi Pendergrass
Bridget Wildschuetz
Alan Wheat

Strategic Plan Work Groups

Facilities

Toby Clodfelter
Dr. Kelly Grigsby
Casey Schaefer
Jeff Sherrill
Niki Tedoni

Human Resources

Dan Kelly
Mitch Friehoff
Krista Koehler
Brian O'Connor

Finance

Dr. Jeff Haug
Shirley Moore
Sara Schaefer

Operations

Dennis Mix
Doug Austin
Carmen Harris
John Mueller
Kenny Mulder

Student Performance

Dr. Mollie Bolton
Kevin Andert
Clarence Hines
Dr. Michael Maclin
Tina Maksche
Alan Wheat

Communications

Jennifer Henry

SECTION 3

Comprehensive School Improvement Plan

Comprehensive School Improvement Plan Overview

SSD’s comprehensive school improvement plan (CSIP) directs the overall improvement of its educational programs and services in support of student achievement. The plan is written in accordance with guidelines from Missouri’s Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and Missouri statute (RsMo 162.856) and was approved by the SSD Board of Education on May 24, 2022, and the Governing Council on June 7, 2022.

The CSIP will be implemented concurrently with the five-year strategic plan, which is focused on the operational supports and processes underpinning the provision of quality educational programs.

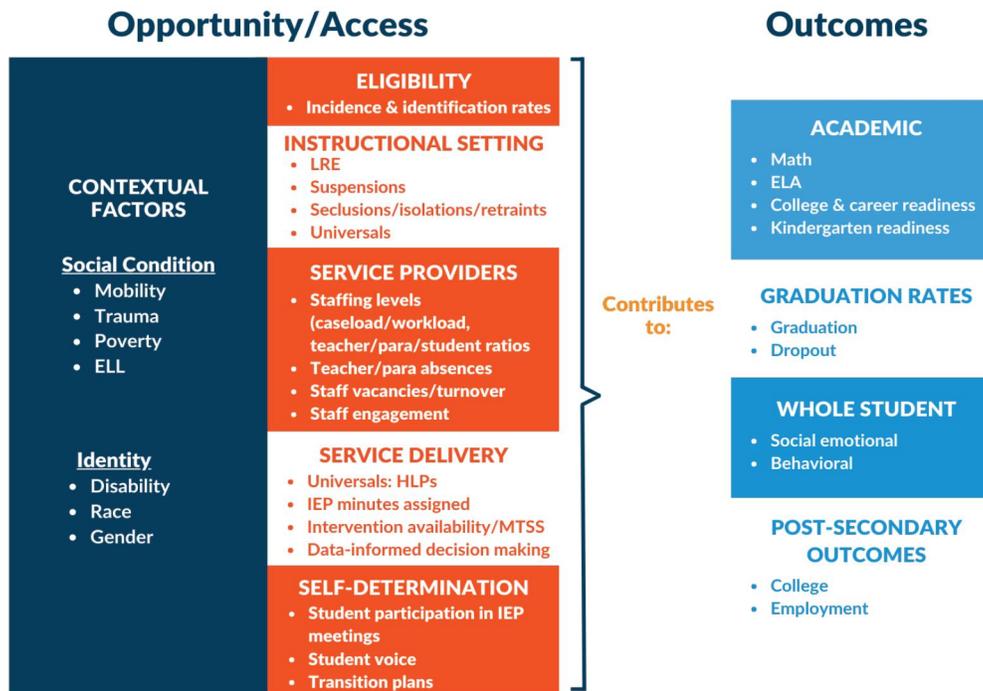
Planning Process

The 2022–27 CSIP was developed using the Strategic and Responsive Solutions (SRS) Protocol^[1], a districtwide project planning

framework. This approach facilitated identifying areas of concern, understanding the associated underlying issues and creating a road map of the work that needs to be done to improve student outcomes.

Planning through an Equity Lens

All planning activities were structured through an equity lens by making direct connections between the strength of student outcomes (i.e., social-emotional-behavioral, academic, graduation, and post-secondary) as compared to their level of access to services, supports, and opportunities. In addition, student identity (i.e., race, gender, type of disability) and the social conditions students are exposed to (i.e., poverty, mobility, trauma, English language learner) were considered to identify disproportionate outcomes which point to bias, inequities, and systems that are unresponsive to the needs of all students.





Data and Research Review

The CSIP Planning Committee engaged in a multi-session data and research walk, which was structured to make connections between particular categories of outcome data and the research-informed factors that positively impact those outcomes. Research on contributing factors, effective strategies, and population-specific considerations for improving student outcomes were explored in connection to the District data reviewed. Staff insights also provided a greater understanding of why potential challenges may exist and possible approaches to creating sustainable change. In total, the following number of sources were considered throughout the planning process:

- 31 District data sources/reports (quantitative)
- 22 Voice of Customer sources (qualitative)^[2]
- 57 Research studies/resources

[1] The Strategic and Responsive Solutions (SRS) Protocol provides a structured process where staff explore three different types of evidence (i.e., data, voice of customer, research) to learn the root of an issue before proposing a solution.

[2] Including surveys, focus groups, interviews from program evaluations, needs assessments, Gibson Operational Audit, and Missouri Quality Award review.

Insight Statements

Based on the information gathered in the data and research reviews, several key points emerged and were thematically grouped to guide goal and strategy development:

- Creating a common understanding (re: purpose and process)
- Improving student outcomes
- Ensuring continuity across settings

Root Cause Analysis

A root cause analysis (5 whys exercise) was conducted for each goal area highlighting the supports, processes, and solutions needed to spur change as suggested by the research, data, and staff feedback gathered to-date. The identified elements became the CSIP strategies listed under each goal area.

Comprehensive School Improvement Plan Overview

Systems Frame

Once the CSIP strategies were confirmed, a systems frame was developed for each team as a means of identifying the stakeholders connected to the strategy's focus and who are therefore serving as an important voice in bringing the solution to life. Completing systems frames at the strategy level also helped diversify representation across teams by ensuring the same individuals (where possible) were not assigned to multiple teams.

Theory of Change

Once the strategy teams were formed, they were tasked with completing a theory of change which explains:

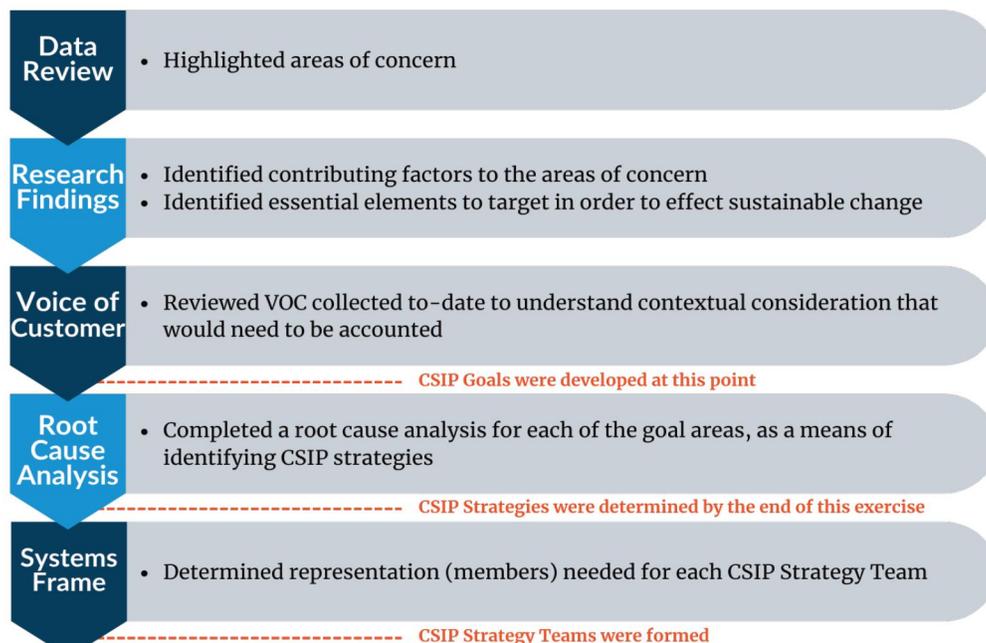
- The challenge they are addressing
- The work their committee will complete (actions to be taken, deliverables),
- The changes they expect to see as a result of their efforts (short and long-term outcomes); and,

- The stakeholders that need to be involved in order for their project to be a success.

These visioning documents will help align districtwide projects at both the CSIP and strategic plan-level and will help promote opportunities for collaboration. Furthermore, SSD staff will gain a better awareness and understanding of the improvement efforts that are underway.

Reporting and Monitoring Process

A plan was developed for the teams to report quarterly on the status of strategies and goals. This report is shared with the District Leadership Team, the Board of Education, and the Governing Council. Based on these reports and ongoing data collection, work plans will undergo a cycle of improvement, if needed, based on milestone attainment and performance outcomes.



Based on the outlined process, the team prioritized the following District goal areas:

GOAL 1: Proactively plan for student success.

There is a wealth of information on factors that contribute to successful outcomes for students. Drawing on this evidence-base, the District will clearly define more meaningful understandings of post-school success, as well as shape and introduce the necessary collaborative planning and data-informed work processes/tools needed to maximize the positive effects of these influential factors.

GOAL 2: Align and coordinate decision-making to provide student supports that are consistent with the District's mission.

SSD is proud of the wide range of services and supports it offers, and the ways in which those offerings can be tailored to the needs of students. However, without a shared understanding of the driving motivation for the use of particular interventions, services, and supports, the way in which they are assigned may unintentionally counteract plans provided by complementary service providers; or the District's ultimate goals for student success (e.g., assigning 1:1 adult support to promote student independence, pulling students out of class for interventions while subscribing to an inclusive education model). Furthermore, the degree to which programming decisions are evidence-based and rely on common data sources will also need to be explored.

GOAL 3: Create learning environments and systems that are responsive to the experiences of highly mobile students, their families, and the staff who serve them.

We need to better understand mobility trends and the associated student experience in order to provide greater continuity of service/instruction for highly mobile students. Based on that understanding, SSD will focus on working with partners to develop a solution that builds a network of consistent instruction/supports/systems for students who experience school changes. Trauma-informed approaches will also be an important consideration in this work, as youth receiving foster care services typically experience more than seven placements, resulting in at least eight school changes, over an average of 6.6 years.

CSIP Goals and Strategies - Goal 1

GOAL 1: SSD will proactively plan for student success by implementing evidence-based strategies resulting, in increased student achievement by 2027.

STRATEGY 1.1: Prepare students with the skills and planning needed for positive post-school or program outcomes.

STRATEGY CHAMPION: Dr. Tami Yates, Assistant Executive Director of Partner Districts and Casey Wisdom, Director of Transition Services

RATIONALE: There is a disconnect between compliant transition plans and ultimately achieving favorable post-secondary outcomes. An SSD data review found that 97% of transition plans are compliant. Yet over 90% of SSD graduates are not meeting Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) standards, and only 62% of students with disabilities attending partner district schools met positive post-secondary outcome criteria.

A research study by Miller-Warren (2015) found that transition planning that is designed to meet compliance requirements often tends to be 'cookie cutter' and does not properly prepare students for post-secondary success.[i]

Note: Almost 1/3 of SSD graduates' post-graduate outcomes are unknown (2019 cohort data).

Research-based strategies for implementation:

- Define the standards for post-school success
- Focus on student-centered planning
- Engage in futures' planning (conversations/use of facilitating tools)
- Start transition planning early
- Improve post-graduation follow-up rates

MEASURES:

Short-term

Products: Standards for post-school success; evidence of transition planning in IEPs

Activities: Rate of utilization of planning tools; post-secondary follow up rates

Long-term

Increase of positive post-secondary placement

FUNDING SOURCE: Standard operating budget

ALIGNMENT:

MSIP Standard: Student Success: TL1, TL3, TL4, TL6, TL8, CC3, CC4, DB2, DB4, EA2, EA3, EA4

Strategic Plan: 1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2

Equity Framework: 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8



STRATEGY 1.2: Improve connections between student data and research-based factors influencing student achievement, to support proactive planning.

STRATEGY CHAMPION: Alan Wheat, Executive Director of Student Services

RATIONALE: During the CSIP planning process, in areas where student outcomes needed to improve, a research review brought to light formative moments in time where a student's experience or proficiency-level in a particular content matter is likely to be indicative of their long-term outcomes.

With that in mind, the District recognized the need to proactively plan around these influential indicators, but in doing so would first need to develop the data monitoring system to support the work.

Research-based strategies for implementation:

- Make connections between factors associated with successful outcomes for students and the data collected
- Determine how it will be used to inform planning
- Data-based conversations with partner districts including early warning indicators

MEASURES:

Short-term

Products: Predictive factors identified with data sources; process for utilizing data for planning; process for data based conversations

Long-term

Increased graduation rates; increased growth and achievement scores/rates; positive post-secondary placements

FUNDING SOURCE: Standard operating budget

ALIGNMENT: MSIP Standard: Success Ready Students: TL1, TL4, TL5, TL6, TL7 TL8, CC3, DB1, EA2, EA3, EA4

Strategic Plan: 1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 3.2

Equity Framework: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8



STRATEGY 1.3: Engage in collaborative planning with partners.

STRATEGY CHAMPION: Chaketa Mack-Riddle, Executive Director of Partner Districts

RATIONALE: Research studies have shown that work completed with general education staff in partnership with, and/or reinforced by special education staff can create the sustainable upstream prevention mechanisms needed to impact special education students' school experience via referrals/diagnoses, discipline, and academics.

Currently, conversations with partner districts tend to be more focused on a division of responsibilities rather than collaborative ways to support students.

Research-based strategies for implementation:

- Co-develop productive collaborative planning practices with partner districts
- Co-develop integrated data-informed work processes with partner districts

MEASURES:

Short-term

Products: Partnership agreements

Activities: Implementation of the process for data-based conversations (see 1.2); number of data-based conversations occurring with each partner district

Long-term

Increased graduation rates; increased growth and achievement scores/rates; positive post-secondary placements; increase in student placements in the least restrictive environments

FUNDING SOURCE: Standard operating budget

ALIGNMENT:

MSIP Standard: Success Ready Students: TL1, TL3, TL4, TL5, TL6, TL7, TL8, TL9, CC1, CC2, CC3, CC4, DB2, DB4, AS1, AS2, EA1, EA2, EA3, EA4

Strategic Plan: 1.1, 1.2, 2.2

Equity Framework: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6

CSIP Goals and Strategies - Goal 2

Goal 2: SSD will align and coordinate decision-making to provide student supports that are consistent with the District’s mission by 2027, resulting in increased student growth, achievement, and placement in the least restrictive environments (LREs).

STRATEGY 2.1: Develop a shared understanding of the purpose that provides clarity for programming decisions pursued across teams (i.e., districtwide, service provider disciplines).

STRATEGY CHAMPION: Dr. Kelly Grigsby, Executive Director of SSD Schools and Programs

RATIONALE: All staff categories expressed the need for greater consistency in the availability/access to services, staffing, and decisions made across buildings/districts.[ii] Significant variances across the county in minutes/supports prescribed not only demonstrate regional inconsistencies, but also highlight decision-making that does not align with the District’s guiding principles (e.g., inclusion, student independence).

Furthermore, a recent SSD program evaluation found that “perceived barriers to inter/multidisciplinary collaboration have resulted in the simultaneous development of plans targeting the same goal, without providers necessarily communicating those plans to each other and/or subsequently aligning them.” [iii]

Research-based strategies for implementation:

- Identify a common set of intentions for the district
- Ensure the type and level of support assigned to students align with the District’s identified intentions
- Facilitate greater coordination across service providers to prevent programming in silos and competing directives

MEASURES:

Short-term

Products: Philosophy statement

Activities: Programming audit of the process used for placement and instructional decisions

Long-term

Increased graduation rates; increased growth and achievement scores/rates; positive post-secondary placements; increase in student placements in least restrictive environments

FUNDING SOURCE: Standard operating budget

ALIGNMENT:

MSIP Standard: Success Ready Students: TL1, TL6, TL7, TL8, TL9, CC CC2, CC3, CC4, DB2, DB3, EA4

Strategic Plan: 1.1, 2.2, 3.2

Equity Framework: 1, 2, 5, 6



STRATEGY 2.2: Ensure programming decisions are grounded in evidence-based practices.

STRATEGY CHAMPION: Dr. Mollie Bolton, Executive Director of Teaching, Learning, and Accountability

RATIONALE: Prior to 2020–21 school year, SSD had no centralized purchasing of research-based programs. Programming and strategy selection had fallen to administrators to approve, without much district-level guidance or oversight. While an SSD-developed research-based practices selection framework exists, initial feedback and online views suggest that the tool is not regularly accessed in making methodology decisions and/or purchasing materials.

Furthermore, different datasets are being used to make case-by-case decisions, which often leads to inconsistent approaches and inequitable access to programming.

Research-based strategies for implementation:

- Establish common data sources for program decision-making
- Address the degree to which practices in place are evidence-based/research-based

MEASURES:

Short-term

Products: Identify common data sources

Activities: Instructional audit of evidence-based/research-based practices; data analysis of practices being used currently

Long-term

Increased graduation rates; increased growth and achievement scores/rates

FUNDING SOURCE: Standard operating budget

ALIGNMENT:

MSIP Standard: Success Ready Students: TL1, TL3, TL4, TL5, TL6, TL7, TL8, CC1, CC2, CC4, DB2, AS1, AS2, EA1, EA2, EA4

Strategic Plan: 1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 3.2

Equity Framework Alignment: 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

CSIP Goals and Strategies - Goal 3

GOAL 3: SSD will create learning environments and systems that are responsive to the experiences of highly mobile students, their families, and the staff who serve them, which will lead to their increased academic outcomes, graduation, and post-secondary rates by 2027.

STRATEGY 3.1: Provide strong continuity of service/instruction for students experiencing school changes.

STRATEGY CHAMPION: Kevin Andert, Executive Director of Career Technical Education and College and Career Readiness

RATIONALE: Approximately 1/3 of partner districts have more than 20% of their student population experiencing a relocation during a single calendar year. Students with disabilities in these districts have outcomes significantly below target in math, ELA, graduation, post-secondary outcomes, and have a greater proportion of students attending SSD separate schools.

Not only does student mobility, more than risk factors associated with poverty^[iv], create an irreparable achievement gap between mobile and non-mobile students (Isernhagen, J.C, & Bulkin, 2011; NEPC, 2015), “higher student mobility in schools [has] a dramatic negative impact on the achievement of all students in the school.”^[v]

Research-based strategies for implementation:

- Understand patterns of school changes among students receiving SSD services/supports
- Understand the experience of mobile students and the staff that support them
- Work with partner districts to develop a solution that builds a network of consistent instruction/supports for students who experience school changes

MEASURES:

Short-term

Products: Solutions addressing negative impacts of mobility rates

Long-term

Increased graduation rates; increased growth and achievement scores/rates; positive post-secondary placements; increase in student placements in the least restrictive environments

FUNDING SOURCE: Standard operating budget

ALIGNMENT:

MSIP Standard: Success Ready Students: TL1, TL3, TL4, TL5, TL7, TL8, CC1, CC2, CC3, CC4, EA2, EA3, EA4

Strategic Plan: 1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 3.2

Equity Framework Alignment: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8

[i] Miller-Warren (2015)

[ii] (Engagement Survey, 2020)

[iii] (ABA evaluation, 2021)

[iv] (NEPC, 2015)

[v] (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2010)

CSIP Committee Acknowledgments

Thank you to the following individuals for dedicating their time and talents to the updated comprehensive school improvement plan.

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SECTION 4

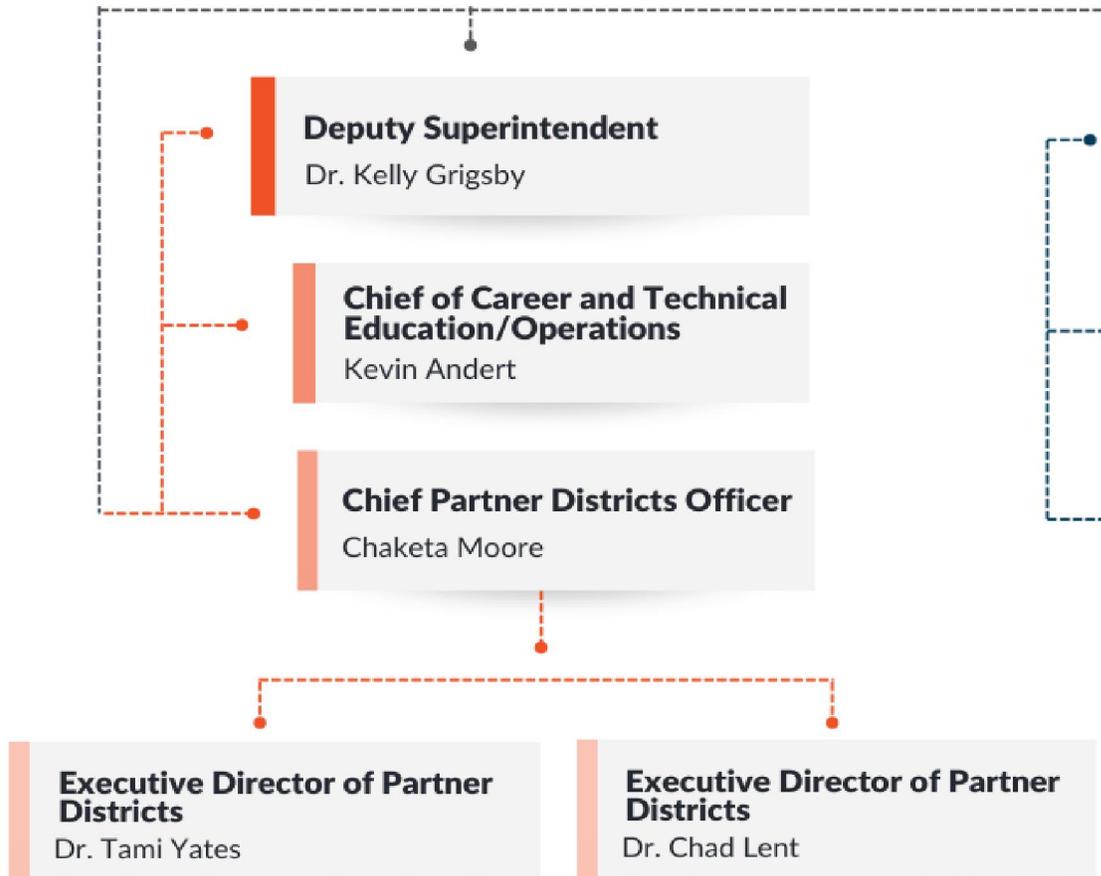
Appendix

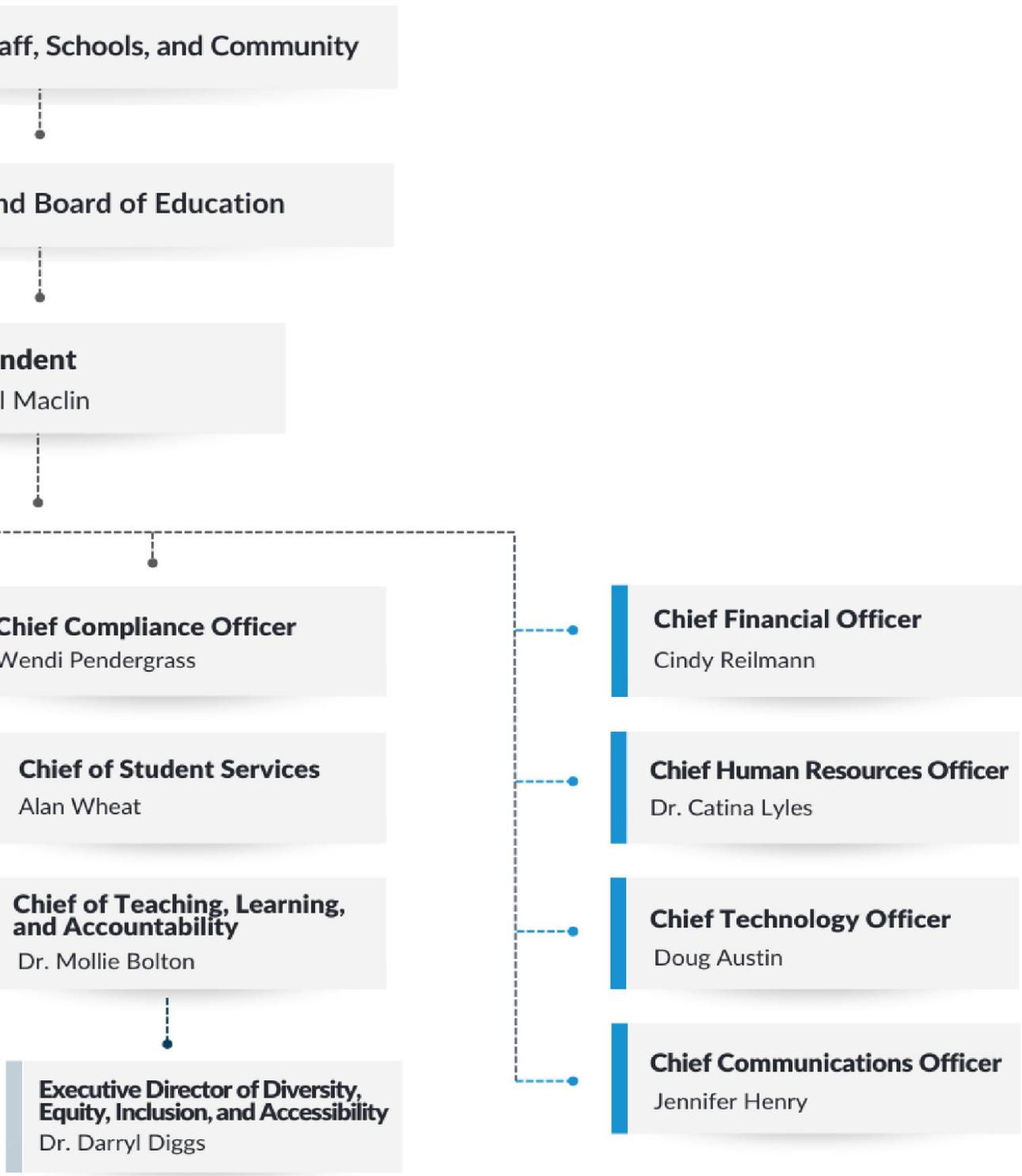
SSD 2025-26 Organizational Chart

Students, Families, St

Governing Council an

Superinte
Dr. Michael





Compliance

Special School District does not discriminate or tolerate discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation against an individual based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation, ancestry, disability, veteran status, age, genetic information, any other characteristic protected by law or activity protected by federal or state law in its programs, activities, and employment and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts, the Girl Scouts, or any other youth groups designated by law.

Direct inquiries and complaints under this policy to:

Student Matters: Compliance Liaison
Special School District
12110 Clayton Road
St. Louis, MO 63131
314.989.8100 (telephone)

Employee or Visitor Matters: Chief People and Culture Officer
Special School District
12110 Clayton Road
St. Louis, MO 63131
314.989.8100 (telephone)
-or-
U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights
One Petticoat Lane
1010 Walnut Street
3rd Floor, Suite 320
Kansas City, MO 64106
816.268.0550 (telephone)
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OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov

Information about the existence and location of services, activities, and facilities accessible to impaired persons can be obtained from the Special School District's Director – Compliance Liaison (Student Matters) or the Chief of People and Culture (Employee or Visitor Issues) at the phone number and address listed above.



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