

Comanche Elementary

8200 Grant
Overland Park, KS 66204
913-993-2800

Principal: Dr. Elyse Caspermeyer
Grades Served: PreK-6
KSDE Bldg #: 8793

Feeder Pattern: Westridge MS & SM West HS



Notable School Characteristics

- Comprehensive Title I school serving students in grades PreK-6
- Diverse population with English Language Learners supports including Newcomers
- Students living in multi-family housing
- Trauma informed staff to support increased SEL needs of students and families
- Building-wide Response to Intervention targeting student academic achievement

KSDE Building Report Card

[Comanche Elementary Building Report Card](#)

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Needs Analysis

What barriers must be overcome for each student to achieve grade* level proficiency on assessments?

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

- Transient population of students
- Increased class sizes (higher student to teacher ratio)
- Students with low language proficiency as well as limited or no school experiences
- Students that do not speak English fluently
- Chronic Absenteeism
- Transportation difficulties due to lack of bus services for a smaller school boundary & unique family circumstances
- Difficulties with basic needs of students being met
- Generational poverty and school experience cycle
- Declining enrollment that reduces funding and access to additional services and supports for all students
- Decreased special education funding, impacting student minutes and services received with increased student behaviors, requiring additional staff to support.
- High levels of students experiencing trauma
- Reduced direct services for English Language Learners due to a reduction of staffing.
- High percent of students living in poverty and an increased number of students qualified as McKinney Vento.
- Limited access to community health services and mental health services
- Unfilled sub jobs which leads to in-house coverage pulling other instructional supports away from regular duties and small group instruction
- Lack of appropriate building space to have additional PreK classroom with the opportunity for wrap-around care

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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 we could take to remove some barriers. Some of them include:

- Maintain low teacher- student ratio for high quality, individualized instruction
 - Minimum of 3 sections for each grade level to ensure that all students' needs are being met. Currently teachers are working to meet the diverse needs (IEP, 504, and ELL) of all students with little support in the general education classroom.
- Increased funding to support staffing based on assessment data
 - Add a full time Recovery Room aide
 - Full time assistant principal
 - Maintain our current SPED teachers
 - Add an additional full time additional SPED teacher (new)
 - Maintain our full time Instructional Coach
 - Maintain the ELL Instructional Coach, but reduce their number of buildings to partner and collaborate more.
 - Maintain our current building substitute teachers and add an building substitute teacher (2 Full time Building Subs)
- Maintain all title 1 staffing
 - Interventionists
 - Social Worker
 - Educational Aide
- Increase and maintain ELL funding and staffing
 - Maintain 2 ELL teachers
 - Add 1 ELL educational aide
- Maintain 2 additional educational aides
- Mental Health professionals in the school - increase the ABCD schedule to add an E to the rotation, with a school counselor or additional social worker focusing on Character Strong on E days to implement the Tier 1 instruction consistently.
 - Adding an E day would allow for one day a week to be a dedicated PLC day.
- Increased salaries to recruit and retain highly qualified certified and classified staff
- Additional staff members hired to meet the individual learning and SEL needs of all students

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- Continued funding of the additional part time Social Worker
- Add in Social Emotional Interventionist
- Increased funding and time for PLCs to meet
- Re-evaluate how the allocation of Special Education staff is assigned (minutes of student support vs number of students qualifying)
- Increased professional learning opportunities for school and district initiatives (ex and not limited to BIST, Trauma Smart, core content)
- Increased funding that is separate from Title 1 funding for professional development/professional conferences
- Equitable PTA fund allocation across the district

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?

There is no way to accurately predict how children will respond to our interventions because we cannot fix the daily challenges they face. Many factors impact students' academic achievement, such as:

- 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.
- While assessment scores are one measure, Comanche 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.
- An increased level of social emotional challenges and needs of students
- Lack of school readiness skills
- Lack of parent involvement.
- Full day kindergarten required and fully funded.
- Funded wrap around care for PreK

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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 and efficiently, limiting central administrative costs to less than 5% of the total budget. Over the past several years, the district has risen to external challenges that have impacted our students educational experiences, with an increased focus on learning recovery, chronic absenteeism, and an enhanced need for social and emotional support.

The district has used information from needs assessments conducted at each building to make targeted staff allocations at the building level. Specific needs identified by large numbers of schools, included additional teacher allocations to maintain lower class sizes at the elementary level, providing a building substitute at each building, taking extra measures to ensure paraprofessional/teacher support in special education classrooms, and higher salaries for both certified and classified staff to strengthen retention and recruitment of employees. In addition, following a comprehensive analysis of student needs, the district continues to budget for 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 (at about 1,700 students each).

Even with the incremental restoration of state general education funding, (an increase to the base, along with a corresponding increase in the Local Option Budget) we were **not** able to add any new positions identified in individual building needs assessments across our 48 attendance centers/specialized programs (in fact we cut 19.2 FTE). Our budget situation for this year was challenging given the ongoing shortfall in Special Education funding from the State and a decline in student enrollment. Through our individual building needs assessment, our leaders identified a need for an additional 79.3 FTE that the district was unable to fund. Some positions that were unable to be funded were:

- 34 elementary counselors
- 10 Classified Special Education positions
- 5.25 Certified Special Education positions
- 5 high school instructional coaches
- 5 Interventionists
- 3 ELL Teachers

The district is maintaining the following positions in the operating funds for at least 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.
- 10 additional teachers at the secondary level to support learning recovery.
- 6 Attendance Specialists to continue our work towards curbing chronic absenteeism
- At least 1 building sub at each building in the district.

The district will continue to analyze budget funds for the 2027-28 school year, in order to determine the ability to maintain the positions listed above that were originally 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. Due to the shortfall in special education state aid, along with the uncertainty of federal funds, this recently restored capacity is tenuous.

In addition, the district will take steps to absorb cuts to state aid for professional development and teacher mentoring in order to continue support for the professional growth and retention of all teachers, with a focus on Professional Learning Communities and Response to Intervention. These types of budgetary needs to offset unfunded mandates erodes the inflationary adjustments to general education state aid. Additionally, resources will be allocated to the following items which also were identified through the needs assessment process:

- Expand implementation of iReady math resources and assessments from 6-8 to K-8.
- Continue expanding the number of LETRS trained staff (structured literacy)
- Adopt a new Learning Walkthrough platform for enhanced data collection and feedback.

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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