

Tomahawk Elementary

6301 W. 78th Street
Overland Park, KS 66204
913-993-5500

Principal: Erin Aldrich
Grades Served: K-6
KSDE Bldg #: 8858

Feeder Pattern: Indian Hills MS & SM East HS



Notable School Characteristics

- Comprehensive school serving students in grades K-6
- Low-incidence centralized special education program
- National PTA School of Excellence 2019
- New building opening 2025-2026 school year

KSDE Building Report Card

[Tomahawk 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?

There are always a number of challenges that should be considered when evaluating student success in a district. Some of the key barriers that impact Tomahawk include, but are not limited to:

- Lack of special education funding.
- High percentage of students with severe special needs.
- Increased levels of students facing trauma.
- Limited access to community health services and mental health services.
- Difficulty in retaining and attracting highly qualified teachers
- Lack of access to extracurricular activities

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. The following budget consideration could have the biggest impact on student achievement at Tomahawk:

- Increased salary to recruit and retain highly qualified certified and classified staff
- Additional administrative support in buildings with center-based programs
- Additional social workers or counselors hired to meet the learning and SEL needs of all students
- Additional interventionist services and instructional aides
- Maintain current instructional coaching positions in each building
- Maintain current class size guidelines for great individualized instruction
- Maintain current building substitute
- Allocate additional stipends to compensate staff at the elementary level for planning, supervising, and implementing extracurricular activities outside of the contract day. (NEW)

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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?

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
 - Lack of constitutional funding of special education continues to impact our ability to fully meet the needs of all students.
 - Increased level of social emotional challenges and needs of students
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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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