

Hocker Grove Middle School

10400 Johnson Drive
Shawnee, KS 66203
913-993-0200

Principal: Jessica Schmitt
Grades Served: 7-8
KSDE Bldg #: 222

Feeder Pattern: Hocker Grove MS & SM North HS



Notable School Characteristics

School Mission:

- The Hocker Grove Middle School community promotes unity and celebrates individuality while cultivating creativity and the academic, social, and technological skills necessary to persevere and thrive in a rapidly changing world.

School Vision:

- Inspiring each other to succeed in life.

School Characteristics

- Comprehensive school serving 7th and 8th grades in the Shawnee Mission North attendance area
- Extensive elective options including fine and performing arts, Business, Family and Consumer Science, Physical Education, and World Languages.
- Award-winning teaching and support staff
- Diverse student body
- Athletics and activities program available to all students
- Center-based Special Education Program- SLC (Structured Learning Classroom)
- JAG (Jobs For America's Graduates) Program

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KSDE Building Report Card

[Hocker Grove Middle School Building Report Card](#)

Needs Analysis

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

- Lack of applicants for paraeducator and educational aide positions due to the additional credit hours required for Title 1 school and the low pay.
- High student to counselor ratio to meet growing social emotional needs. 2 counselors and 1 social worker meets the needs of 780 students.
- Shortage of front office personnel to support growing building needs (i.e. athletics, enrollment, etc.)
 - Currently there is an inequity, as one middle school building has four office secretaries, while the other four have three
- Increase in students who require support in academics and personal development by providing consistent guidance, discipline, and advocacy.
- Growing gaps in literacy need to be addressed at the middle school level
- Insufficient time to address the specific needs of all learners in core content areas.
- Lack of staff support for our ELL students who score in Level 1 or 2 on the KELPA assessment.

What budget actions should be taken to address and remove those barriers?

- Increase paraeducator pay for Title 1 schools only due to the college credit requirements and additional student needs.
- Provide additional FTE for social worker to support growing social emotional needs of students and the school community
- Add an "Intervention Hour" for Tier 3 reading, math, and social-emotional support to students needing extra help beyond core instruction. During this hour, regular Tier 1 classes can occur, but all interventions would be scheduled within the same period(s) to ensure coordinated, flexible support from all intervention staff.

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- An additional dean of students to provide focused leadership on student behavior, social emotional well-being, and restorative practices. The dean would serve as a consistent point of support for students, helping them navigate academics, social, and emotional challenges. This position would work closely with our cross-curricular teams, families, and administrators to ensure clear communication and supportive practices.
- An additional office secretary position, that would focus primarily on athletics and act as school registrar.
- Maintain daily building substitute
- Maintain ELL support staff including full time aide

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 we are making every effort to decrease the percentage of students scoring below grade level proficiency every year, we are not able to estimate the time needed to ensure that 100% of students meet grade level proficiency given the challenges that our district and students will face moving forward.

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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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