

Shawnee Mission Northwest High School

12701 W. 67th Street
Shawnee, KS 66216
913-993-7200

Principal: Dr. Lisa Gruman
Grades Served: 9-12
KSDE Bldg #: 8890

Feeder Pattern: Broken Arrow, Mill Creek, Ray
Marsh, Rhein Benninghoven, Shawano
Elementary Schools, Trailridge MS and SM
Northwest HS

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Notable School Characteristics

- Comprehensive high school serving students in grades 9 through 12
- Recognized as a Blue Ribbon School in 2001
- International Baccalaureate school since 2008
- College credit opportunities for students including twenty Advanced Placement course offerings, and comparable concurrent enrollment options with neighboring colleges including Johnson County Community College, in addition to our International Baccalaureate diploma and certificate programs. Students in Class of 2025 - 40.6% earned 9 or more college credit hours.
- Athletic teams compete in the Sunflower League, and are classified as 6A, the largest classification in Kansas.
- Focus on the learning and growth of each individual student with a variety of programs in place to ensure ALL of our students are college and career ready with the interpersonal skills for life success.
- Commitment to creating a school culture where all students belong and feel valued.
- Commitment to create opportunities for students to earn a Market Value Asset (MVA) to align with our focus to prepare students for college and career opportunities. Students in Class of 2025 - 95% of students earned a MVA through a Client-Connected Project, Internship, College Credit of 9 hours or more, Industry Recognized Credential.

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- Center-based program for Social Emotional Resource, specialized programming for students identified for special education services in a central program for emotional and behavioral support.
- Center-based program for Post-High School, students receiving specially designed instruction identified for placement through special education for these services ages 18-21.

KSDE Building Report Card

[Shawnee Mission Northwest Building Report Card](#)

Needs Analysis

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

A strength of Northwest is our community of teachers, students, and families who each contribute a valued perspective within our classrooms and activities. While we learn from one another as we share our gifts and talents, we also acknowledge that we face a number of challenges in ensuring students achieve grade level proficiency on assessments. Some of those challenges for Shawnee Mission Northwest include:

- Students with chronic absenteeism continue to need additional support to attend school regularly.
- Students learning English as a second language face a broader skill gap to attain grade level proficiency at the high school level. Grade level proficiency on the KAP for ELA requires they build ten years of skills after as few as two years of education within our school. Many of our students in our ELL program are students with limited and/or interrupted formal education experiences. Some students have not been in school since early elementary grades. Our data reflects these challenges. Students have a wide range of skills and continue to demonstrate gaps in learning that need to be addressed.
- Students in our special education resource and intensive resource programming have increasingly complex needs that necessitate adult support at a lower staffing ratio.
- Students managing medical diagnoses that necessitate a 504 Plan to access their education have increased in number to nearly 8% of our student population. That marks a 46% increase in the number of students with a 504 Plan from 2023 to 2025.

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- Students that have a prior history of trauma. Trauma impacts students from all socioeconomic and racial or ethnic backgrounds. Supporting students affected by trauma requires specialized training for staff and skilled support from social workers, counselors, and administrators. Progress is most effective when partnering with community organizations to provide a continuum of social-emotional support, yet those services are often understaffed or under-supported to meet all needs.
- Lack of or limited access to community health services and mental health services to provide necessary care for students to be ready to engage in academic studies.
- Students may struggle to recognize the value of one assessment at a given moment in time rather than a comprehensive assessment plan.
- District resources from the general operating budget are diverted to cover the gap in funding for special education. Fully funding special education at the state levels would allow those general education dollars to be utilized to support student needs through our RTI process.
- Difficulty in attracting and retaining highly qualified teachers in specialized areas. This has improved over the last two years and we are benefitting from prioritizing teacher salaries. Due to the complex nature of educating the whole student, our teachers and counselors at the high school level provide challenging academic experiences while serving as trusted adults to support social and emotional needs. They serve many roles and meet the needs of so many diverse students.

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 Shawnee Mission Northwest could take to remove some barriers. Some of them include:

- **Restore one paraprofessional position** to our special education staffing, either resource or Intensive Resource. Last year, our building became a center for a Post-High School Program. At that time, a paraprofessional was reassigned to the post-high program, reducing our paraprofessional staffing for resource and intensive resource by one staff. This position would restore staffing to prior levels, replacing the paraprofessional that was reassigned to a district program. Northwest has currently filled all of our allocated paraprofessional positions. We are excited to serve as home to our new post-high program; we are submitting this request based on support needs for our students in resource and IR.
- **New position for an Interventionist** - educational supports identified at building level (providing 504 accommodations, data collection for 504 plans, writing interventions, manage assignment of students to intervention sessions,

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- **ELL Staffing - Maintain ELL staff** assigned across the high school level. Establish an ELL enrollment ratio similar to special education and general education. Staff are allocated based on the staffing ratio.
 - Annually review ELL enrollment numbers in the spring to add staffing allocations for the following school year. Increase needs to support ELL students in Level 1 and 2, including new enrollments.
 - Adjusting the staffing ratio to align with our current practices in general and special education addresses the concerns when most SMSD schools have seen increased ELL enrollments.
- Lower **teacher-student ratio or increase the base at-risk weighting ratio to provide for highly effective intervention structures within our RTI programming**. Allows for lower class sizes in courses where the intervention supports are provided. These intervention structures are essential for course programming to ensure success for our most at-risk learners and enrichment for our most advanced learners. Adjusting current staffing allocation allows us to provide these supports while maintaining reasonable class sizes across all courses and content.
- Additional programming options including alternative school options for at risk students. Specifically students that do not meet the current profile of a learner at Horizons High School.
- Maintain competitive salaries of staff to improve recruiting and retention.
- Establish a plan to **increase** the number of staff earning an **ELL endorsement**.
- Funding to provide more intensive social emotional and programming supports for identified groups within school to reduce rates of chronic absenteeism. We need to maintain the attendance specialist position that we currently have as an intervention.
- Time for teacher teams to meet within our Professional Learning Communities to deeply explore student achievement data and determine appropriate, researched based interventions for students identified as below grade level proficiency.
- Maintain building substitutes to ensure quality instruction when staff need to be absent.

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?

The staff at Shawnee Mission Northwest is committed to continuous professional growth and learning as we strive to improve how we serve our students and our community. We are building and refining systems of support for our students through our Response to Intervention efforts and will continue to work together as a Professional Learning Community to focus on student achievement. Our work focuses

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on a variety of assessments and data, both internal and external, to determine student growth and progress. As an International Baccalaureate school, we recognize the value of both curriculum based authentic assessment in addition to the external assessments. A comprehensive profile of the student's individual growth, both academic and social-emotional, is most beneficial to inform our work. As we monitor our students' growth, we learn more about the daily changes many of them face. These factors such as trauma, mental or physical health needs, or financial needs affect school attendance and have a direct impact on student achievement. The issues impacting our students at the high school level developed over several years and will need consistent, dedicated funding and services to address. This would include a dedicated and consistent commitment to funding building staff at a level to ensure retention and balanced workload. Mitigating these factors requires concerted resources beyond what is currently available. One primary example is the need to fully fund special education to provide students the necessary support to thrive and close that opportunity gap. Given adequate resources with long-term funding to support our students, our goal would be to decrease the percent of students scoring at level one by 3% per year.

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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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