



The Spartan Spirit

LEARNING • SERVING • LEADING

One Interaction at a Time

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DISTRICT SPOTLIGHT

2026–2027 Organizational Goals & Strategic Focus

As Southern Lehigh School District embarks on the 2026–2027 academic year, Superintendent Dr. Trinkle has formally unveiled the finalized Organizational Goals. Serving as a prioritized extension of the multiyear strategic roadmap, these targets are designed to sharpen operational efficiency, elevate academic quality, and ensure long-term fiscal stability. Entering the new year, our leadership team stands fully aligned and focused on executing these goals with high expectations and purposeful momentum.

Outstanding Academic Distinction: U.S. News & World Report Ranking

We are thrilled to launch the school year with major national recognition! In the newly released *U.S. News & World Report 2026–2027 Best High School Rankings*, Southern Lehigh High School has officially been ranked as the **#2 High School in the Allentown Metro Area**! Beyond our local standing, this prestigious honor validates the exceptional academic growth and rigorous instruction occurring in our classrooms daily. Additionally, Southern Lehigh High School earned the 2025–2026 *Excellence in Mathematics Award* through the Mathematics League Regional Championship.

Strategic Administrative Appointments & Transition Support

Following competitive evaluation processes, the district is proud to announce key leadership appointments to elevate student achievement and operational continuity:

- **Middle School Principal:** Dr. Michael Faccinetto has been selected as the new SLMS Principal. Dr. Faccinetto demonstrated exceptional vision, strategic clarity, and a profound commitment to middle-level learners.
- **Middle School Assistant Principal:** Mr. Spencer Cameron has been recommended for the SLMS Assistant Principal vacancy, completing a dynamic administrative team for our middle school.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Cutting-Edge AI Symposium with Penn State CSATS

Southern Lehigh continues its focus on responsible technology integration. On September 21, the Penn State Center for Science and the Schools (CSATS) will deliver an intensive three-hour professional learning symposium for approximately 200 district educators in grades 4–12. The training focuses on practical applications of artificial intelligence, ethical considerations, academic integrity guardrails, and hands-on *Teachable Machine* experiences. Penn State researchers will evaluate teacher feedback to help plan follow-up workshops in January.

Full-Day Kindergarten & Arts & Letters Expansion

This fall marks the historic debut of Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK) across the district! Comprehensive preparations were executed over the summer, including specialized early childhood professional learning, cross-building curriculum mapping, and the acquisition of rich play-based learning manipulatives. In tandem, elementary instructional leaders participated in an intensive *Arts & Letters* lead session to lay the groundwork for our new foundational literacy framework.

Comprehensive Professional Learning Days

Southern Lehigh educators engaged in an impactful series of August professional development workshops to prepare for student arrival. Sessions featured custom content coaching in *Arts & Letters* and *Amplify Science*, program overview training for the *Amplify Desmos* math platform, and data-driven instruction modules in *LinkIt!*. Interdepartmental teams also collaborated on integrating Career and Personal Finance standards into elementary and secondary coursework.

STRATEGIC OPERATIONS

Capital Projects & Summer Facilities Progress

Thanks to the tireless work of our facilities and support services teams, all summer infrastructure projects were successfully executed on schedule:

- **SLHS Infrastructure:** Complete HVAC and boiler modernization in occupied spaces, gym floor re-sanding and refinishing, and new gymnasium scoreboard installation.
- **JPLIS Enhancements:** Brand new outdoor playground equipment installation, main office structural modifications, cafeteria acoustic paneling, and library shelving and carpeting.
- **FDK & Grade 3 Transitions:** Delivery and installation of specialized modular furniture for incoming kindergarten and intermediate classrooms.

High School Performing Arts Center Planning

District administration conducted foundational roadmap meetings to establish project parameters for the new High School Performing Arts Center. Administrative teams are initiating site surveying and re-engaging faculty to finalize design parameters for this flagship regional venue.

SPARTAN SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS

Hopewell & Liberty Bell: Welcoming Our Youngest Learners

Our primary schools buzzed with enthusiasm as educators and families prepared for the new year! Liberty Bell hosted its popular summer *Jump Start Camp*, providing targeted reading and math practice for rising first and second graders. Both Liberty Bell and Hopewell PTAs hosted well-attended *Popsicles on the Playground* socials and Kindergarten Orientations, welcoming new families to the Spartan community. Additionally, maintenance teams gave Liberty Bell's main office and nurse's suite a vibrant, fresh coat of paint!

JPLIS: Ambassadors, SWPBS & Playground Upgrades

Joseph P. Liberati Intermediate School kicked off the season with its inaugural *Popsicles on the Playground* event, where incoming 3rd and 4th graders tested out brand-new swings and climbing structures! Trained JPLIS Student Ambassadors led building tours and collaborated with the SWPBS Committee to recommend whole-school rewards and school store inventory for the upcoming year.

SLHS: Freshman Schedule Walk & Open Building Sessions

Southern Lehigh High School opened its doors to incoming freshmen and new students for a schedule walk-through session. Students navigated hallways, located classrooms, and met faculty members, building confidence ahead of their official high school transition.

State FAFSA Mandate (Class of 2027)

Under Pennsylvania Act 202 amendments, all graduating seniors are now required to either submit the FAFSA or complete a signed state Opt-Out Form prior to graduation. To support Spartan families with this new requirement, SLHS will host a dedicated Senior Parent FAFSA Workshop on October 6, 2026.

Academic Initiatives: Honors 8th Grade Science

A committee of middle and high school science faculty convened this month to establish course prerequisites and unit planning for the newly created Honors 8th Grade Science curriculum, expanding advanced STEM pathways for middle school scholars.

ATHLETICS & FINE ARTS



FALL SPORTS IN FULL SWING!

High School Athletics, State Champion Legacies & Game Ticketing



Golf Program Off to Explosive Start

Southern Lehigh Varsity Golf launched the fall season in dominant fashion! The team boasts an undefeated 3–0 record and captured an impressive 6th-place overall finish among top state programs at the prestigious Happy Valley Invitational.



2026 Varsity Football Season Passes & Ticketing

Get ready for Spartan Football! 2026 Varsity Football Season Passes offer the best value for all five home matchups and are available online through Hometown Ticketing. Single-game digital tickets open six days prior to each matchup, and cash entry is accessible at the gate behind the middle school.

- **Hometown Digital Single-Game Tickets:** \$7.00 (no fees) for Adults; \$5.00 (no fees) for Students & Seniors (62 years and older).
- **Cash Gate Option:** \$7.00 flat rate for Adults, Students, and Seniors at the gate.
- **Digital Passes & Ticketing Portal:** Purchase season passes and digital tickets online at [Sports Passes](#).



Marching Band & Fine Arts Preparations

The Spartan Marching Band, color guard, and student musical ensembles completed summer intensive camps to prepare for fall halftime shows and regional parades. Recruitment is underway for a Band Assistant to support our performing artists throughout the competitive season.



Extended School Year (ESY) 2026 Success!

Our Special Education department wrapped up another productive Extended School Year (ESY) session. Staff, therapists, and instructional assistants engaged students in vital academic, speech, and social skill-building activities, setting the stage for a confidence-filled school year ahead.

BOARD & COMMUNITY UPDATES

Welcoming 18 New Inductees to the Spartan Family

Southern Lehigh School District is thrilled to welcome 18 exceptional new educators and professional staff members for the 2026–2027 school year! Day 1 of New Staff Induction was hosted at JPLIS, featuring a welcome luncheon with district leadership, Board members, and faculty mentors. Day 2 featured specialized workshops facilitated in partnership with Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit 21 (CLIU 21).

Modernizing Governance: Keystone Agenda & Policy Portal

The district has officially transitioned to the new **SLSD Keystone Agenda Portal** on our website. All historical public board meeting agendas, minutes, and supporting documents previously stored in BoardDocs have been migrated into Keystone Agenda as searchable PDFs. Final integration of the accompanying PSBA Policy Portal is currently being completed.

Tech Help Desk Upgrade: Mojo Help Desk AI Platform

Following an extensive evaluation process by the Technology Department, the Board approved the adoption of **Mojo Help Desk**. The platform incorporates intuitive AI tools that utilize historical solution repositories to resolve technical issues faster and streamline diagnostic communications for district staff.

KEY UPCOMING DATES & CALENDAR EVENTS

September 2, 2026	SLMS Middle School Open House (6:00 PM – 8:00 PM)
September 14, 2026	SLSD School Board Meeting (6:30 PM, SLHS Media Center)
September 18, 2026	Go Gold Night / Class of '76 Reunion
September 28, 2026	SLSD School Board Meeting (6:30 PM, SLHS Media Center)
October 1, 2026	In-School PSAT & School Day SAT Administration
October 6, 2026	Senior Parent FAFSA Workshop (SLHS Media Center)

SOUTHERN LEHIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Southern Lehigh School District shall not discriminate in their educational programs, activities or employment practices.