

St. James High School Improvement Council (SIC) Meeting Minutes

Date: September 8, 2026

Location: St. James High School

Attendees:

Ryan Poston, Caroline Ross, Amy Wates, Kristin Owens, Valerie Hensley, Maureen Davis, Ken Broz, Kelly Prassenos, Susan Follrod, Melanie Ausherman, Amanda Fennell

1. WELCOME

- Mr. Poston opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees.

2. INTRODUCTIONS

3. SJHS/SIC Overview:

- School focused on vision statement: every St. James student will graduate college **and** career ready (both- this was a change from or to and)
- 1711 students (855 males, 856 females)
- Voted Best Public High School 6 years in a row
- Excellent Report Card Rating (almost 94% graduation rate) Goal= 95%
- SJHS is Number 1 in Algebra, English and US History and Number 2 in Biology EOC scores
- AP scores 91% of test takers made a 3,4 or 5 on the exam
- Goals:
 - 95% Graduation Rate
 - 95% Reading on grade level by 2030
 - 100% safety rate
- Reading, Writing and Thinking- structural model preparing students for what's next...life skills not just school skills...writing is super important (read, think, write, speak, solve)
- Rise with Reading (1295 Lexile goal by time graduate)
 - This is on grade level for graduates
 - Holding i-ready testing as a diagnostic tool
 - We don't reach 1295 by testing more, we reach 1295 by reading, writing, and thinking more.
 - Once a student hits 1295, they never have to take the test again.
 - 60% in the school has already hit 1295 (9th-12th)
- Advisory- every day at St. James rather than weekly like last year. This will help:
 - students build relationships with their advisors

- monitor grades
- set goals
- develop academic habits
- explore college and career opportunities
- prepare for life outside of high school
- High School 101 curriculum- this class has not been offered the past two years but is being brought back to build goal setting and career and college exploration.
- School safety- weapons detection, SRO/security (3 officers), Centegix (wearable safety tech), Vape detection, Visitor procedures (all must check in, present ID and receive approval), Structural security (secured entrances, controlled access and regular safety drills), Digital safety/Linewize (monitors 2/7 with screenshots to principal to protect students online)
- Free to Focus- technology should support learning- not compete with it... limit screen time to 3 hours a day between all classes
- Attendance Matters- Be Present, Be on Time
 - Attendance Updates: 6 Parent notes- 3 per semester, 10 medical notes
- Middle College
 - Sophomores- 23 students, Technical- 20 students
 - Update next time with head of program (Amanda)
 - Working out hiccups
 - Working with USC Upstate. They have been responsive and helpful. 2nd semester should be easier.

4. 2025/2026 Recap

- SIC Report to Parents
 - Annual report is online
 - Meeting minutes are online
 - School Report card is online
- Discussed:
 - Kindness Week
 - Kim Frederick Scholarship
 - Middle College
 - Volunteer Opportunities
 - Field Day Annual Event

5. Elections

Secretary: Amanda Fennell
 Vice-Chair: Kristin Owens
 Chair: Amy Wates

6. 2026/2027 Goals

- Monthly Parent Meeting (Partnering with Parents)
- Meetings at 6 pm
 - August 17- Freshman and New Student Parent Meeting
 - September- Internet Predators Night

- October 19- FAFSA night
- November 9- Pathway options night/inform about college funding...virtual coach meeting
- January 25- Rising 9th Grade night
- February 8- Rising 12th Grade night
- March 15- Middle College/DE parent night
- April- Vaping/drugs Discussions

7. Homecoming Tailgate

- Discussed parade (5-6)
- Tailgate- immediately following parade
- Send a sign up genius for supplies (20 pizzas, 240 waters, 144 Gatorades, Cookie trays (3), Chips (4 xl boxes), 400 napkins, 400 plates, Outdoor sports, Balloon stands (grade level)

8. Kim Frederick Scholarship

- Will raise funds in the Spring.
- Have enough money for one scholarship.

9. SIC Dates: Noon Meetings

- September 8
- October 6 (1st Tuesday)
- November 10
- December 8
- January 12
- February 9
- March 9
- April 6 (1st Tuesday)
- May 11