

Family News

October 1, 2026

Listening, Learning, and Moving Forward

Following the May 2026 facilities and capital levy election, SSPPS asked our community to share feedback through a post-election bond survey. Thank you to everyone who participated. In September, the school board reviewed the feedback and identified opportunities to strengthen communication, build understanding, and increase community engagement. The work ahead is organized around things to do now, things to do next, and things that can wait until later. You can read more in depth about the survey **on our website**.



Engage, Educate, and Empower Our Packer Community

One of the first steps is a new Finance & Facilities Communication Series focused on making school finance and facilities planning easier to understand. Through the coming months, we will share information about where school funding comes from, how dollars can be used, facility needs and how financial decisions support our students and schools. Follow along through district newsletters, our website, social media, and the SixTimes.

This same information will be included in the family newsletter going out this evening.

Planned Internet Outtage



We want to make you aware of a **district-wide internet service outage scheduled from 10:00 PM Thursday, October 1, through 5:00 AM Friday, October 2**, due to road construction impacting fiber optic connections. During this time, families and students will not be able to access Infinite Campus or Schoology. These systems will be unavailable even when using personal internet or a hotspot.

Our internet service provider expects service to be restored by 5:00 AM Friday, and district staff will test our systems early Friday morning to make sure everything is up and running as expected. If service is not restored as planned and the outage will impact the school day, we will send a follow-up message Friday morning with any necessary information. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Padres Informados, Hijos Graduados



Want to better understand the U.S. school system and learn how to support your child's success? Padres Informados, Hijos Graduados is a five-session program offered entirely in Spanish for families with SSPPS students from Preschool–12th grade. The program covers how our schools work, available resources, and ways families can be involved. Dinner and childcare are provided!

Lincoln Center Elementary from 6:00-8:00 pm
Mondays:

- October 5, 19
- November 2, 16
- December 7
- Graduation: Thursday, December 10

Click here to Register

Learn More Before You Vote in November



The November 3, 2026, General Election will include a proposed constitutional amendment concerning Minnesota's Permanent School Fund. Voters will decide whether to change the way the fund is calculated and how its funds are distributed to public schools.

The Permanent School Fund has supported public education in Minnesota for generations. If approved, the proposed change could provide additional funding to school districts, including approximately $80,000 in additional annual revenue for SSPPS. Currently, distributions are based primarily on interest and dividend income earned by the fund. Under the proposed change, annual distributions would be based on 4.5% of the fund's three-year rolling average market value. The proposed change would also establish how the fund is managed and distributed while maintaining it as a long-term financial resource for public education.

SSPPS has information available to help families understand the proposal, including the current and proposed formulas, frequently asked questions, and the potential impact on the district. Learn more at: **https://www.sspps.org/about/elections/mn-psf-amendment**

Explore Tax Savings and Resources for Minnesota Families



Minnesota families may be eligible for state tax credits and tax relief programs. With the help of the Minnesota Department of Revenue, we are here to make the process simple, so you can feel confident getting the support your family deserves.

Child Tax Credit: Families may qualify for a Child Tax Credit of $1,800 per qualifying child with no limit on the number of children claimed. They can receive a refund even if they do not owe tax. More at **Child Tax Credit**.

K-12 Education Subtraction and Credit: Minnesota has two tax relief programs for families with children in kindergarten through 12th grade: the K-12 Education Subtraction and K-12 Education Credit. Both programs help lower taxes and may provide a larger refund. More at **K-12 Education Subtraction and Credit**.

Free Tax Preparation: Families may qualify for free tax preparation through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) or AARP Tax-Aide programs. These programs prepare federal and state income tax and Property Tax Refund returns. Learn more **Free Tax Preparation Sites**.

Packer Pride in Action

Homecoming Brings Packer Pride to Life



Homecoming 2026 was a week full of Packer Pride! Students and staff celebrated with fun dress-up days, homecoming coronation, the annual homecoming dance, and a parade through the elementary school hallways. The school week wrapped up with our Packer football team taking the win in the "Battle for the Barge" against Simley High School. The Barge trophy will stay at SSP High School for another year! It was a great week of celebrating our schools, students and Packer community!

SSP High School Academic Gold Awards

Congratulations to the students who received **Academic Honor Awards** September 22, 2026. These awards celebrate students in grades 10–12 who demonstrated outstanding academic achievement during the previous school year. Students earning a cumulative GPA of 3.700 or higher each trimester are recognized for their hard work, dedication, and commitment to learning.







Kaposia Awarded DNR Grant to Expand Outdoor Learning Opportunities



Kaposia Education Center was awarded a $4,200 No Child Left Inside Grant from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to expand hands-on outdoor learning opportunities for students. Through hands-on experiences students will explore aquatic ecosystems, conservation, and natural resources while building a lifelong appreciation for the outdoors. This summer, students in Elementary Summer Learning Academy traveled to Snelling Lake (transportation provided by the SSP Ed Foundation) to learn about fishing and cast their lines with the help of professional anglers.

School Board Meeting Updates

Below are highlights from the Monday, September 28, 2026 School Board Meeting. Meeting materials and a recording of the business meeting are available on the **School Board Section** of our website.

Levy Proposal

At Monday's meeting, the School Board reviewed the district's preliminary 2026 Payable 2027 property tax levy, which will provide revenue for the 2027–28 school year. The Board approved certifying the preliminary levy at the "maximum," which allows the levy to be adjusted as the Minnesota Department of Education continues to update calculations before final approval in December. The district will hold its annual Truth in Taxation hearing on **December 14 at 6:00 p.m.**, when the Board will review the final levy and provide an opportunity for public comment before taking action.

Social-Emotional Learning

At Monday's School Board meeting, Educational Services Coordinator Dr. Scott Sundstrom shared an update on the district's K-5 Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum. This year marks the first year of implementation, with students at Kaposia Education Center and Lincoln Center Elementary participating in SEL instruction twice each week.

South St. Paul Public Schools uses the CASEL 5 framework to help students develop the social and emotional skills they need to succeed in school, build positive relationships, and navigate challenges. Students learn and practice skills across five areas: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

SEL supports our vision of "Nurturing an inclusive Packer community of lifelong learners" by helping students develop the skills to participate in a caring, respectful, and inclusive school community. Through age-appropriate lessons and everyday experiences, students practice skills such as handling frustration, solving conflicts, showing empathy, and making responsible choices.

SEL also brings our core values of Respect, Resilience, Pride, Equity, Collaboration, and Integrity to life, helping students put these values into action in their classrooms, relationships, and daily lives. Learn more about it **on our website**.

The following policy reviews were approved by the Board:

- **206- Public Participation in School Board Meetings**
- **207- Public Hearings**
- **208- Development- Adoption & Implementation**
- **301- School District Administration**
- **302- Superintendent**
- **303- Superintendent Selection**
- **304- Superintendent Contract, Duties, & Evaluation**
- **305- Policy Implementation**



Important Dates

- **October 13,** Secondary Conferences
- **October 13-14,** Elementary Conferences
- **October 14-16,** No school- MEA Break

Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact us.

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