Informational Presentation - November 2026

What you need to know to run for school board

Dr. Reed - Superintendent

Diana McFarland - School Board President

Tricia Markevitch - Executive Assistant to Operations

Sun Prairie Area School District

Futures depend on us...every child, every day.



November 23, 2026

Our Core Values and Commitments

Our Core Values and Commitments



Student-Centered Decision Making

We center students in all decision-making by focusing on the needs of the whole child.

Welcoming Climate

We believe in providing a welcoming, safe, nurturing, and collaborative environment that allows the opportunity for every child to reach their full potential.

Relationships

We embrace positive and strong partnerships with students, staff, parents, caregivers, and the community.

High Expectations

We have high expectations for students and ourselves.

Equity

We embrace our commitment to equity and are committed to providing resources aligned to students' needs so that every child can thrive.

Diversity

We believe our diversity is an asset and our strength.

Respect and Dignity

All students, parents, caregivers, and staff are valued and treated with respect and dignity.

We will live these shared values and commitments through service, leadership, and integrity. Every Child, Every Day. This is our commitment to this community.

District Equity Statement & Preamble to Board Governance Policies



AT THE SUN PRAIRIE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT, WE STAND BY OUR STUDENTS, STAFF, AND FAMILIES.

The Mission of the Sun Prairie Area School District is to inspire and prepare every child, every day, by providing relevant, engaging, and innovative learning experiences in and out of the classroom.

The SPASD celebrates and values our diverse community. We support and are inclusive of all students, staff, families, and community members of all races, ethnicities, faiths, national origins, home language(s), socioeconomic status, immigration status, political viewpoints, abilities, sexual orientations, and gender identities.

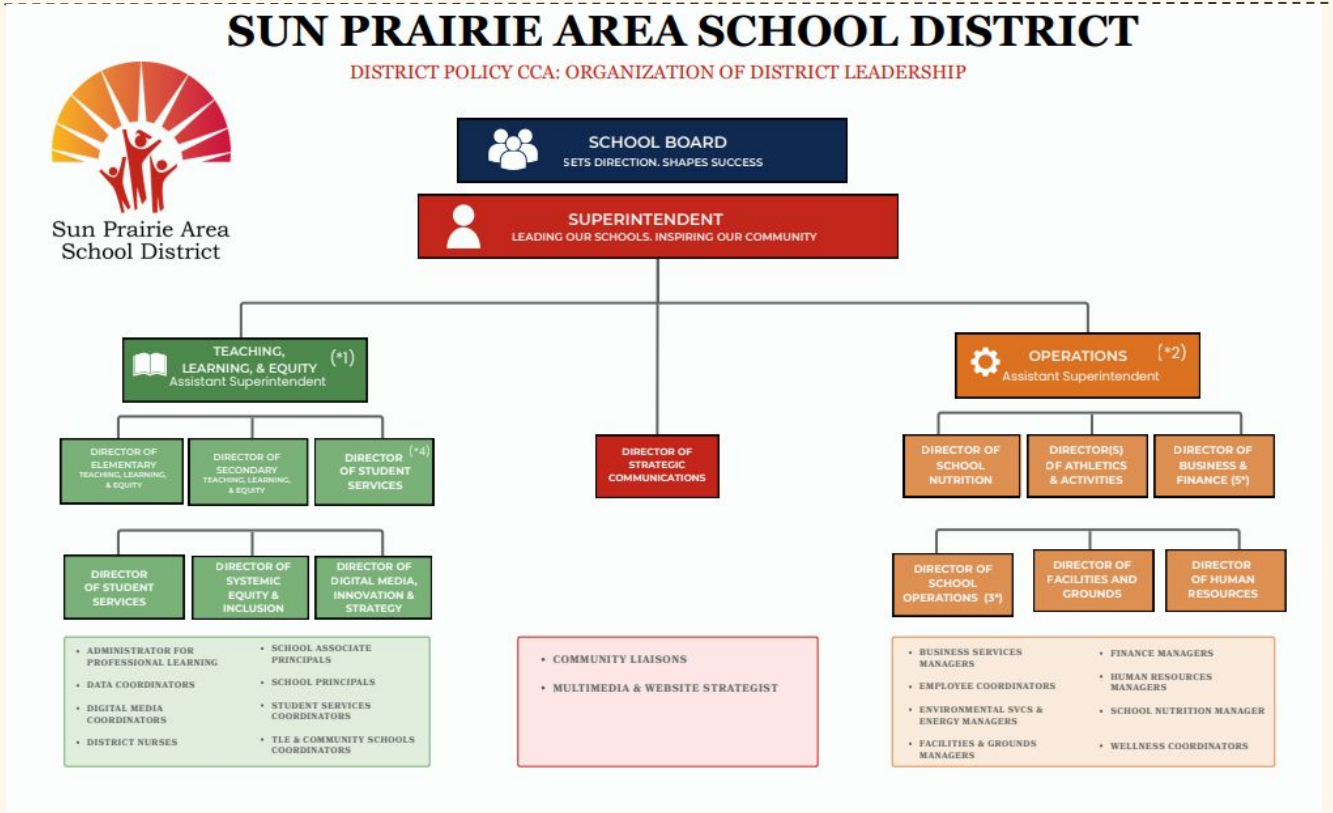
In order to realize our Mission, we are committed to changing the foundational inequities that we acknowledge exist in our system, and we unequivocally state as follows:

- **We stand** by our Black and Brown students, staff, and families. We will continue to speak and act swiftly against statements of bigotry, social injustice, discrimination, racism, and hate that may plague members of our community. We are committed to developing and implementing strategies and best practices that dismantle racism, bigotry, and ethnic oppression within all aspects of our schools and School District.
- **We stand** by our immigrant students, staff, and families. All are welcome and safe in our schools regardless of immigration status.
- **We stand** by our students, staff, and families with disabilities. We will continue to staunchly protect the rights of people of all abilities and create educational environments in which all educators collaborate for high educational outcomes for all students.
- **We stand** by our LGBTQIA+ students, staff, and families. We take seriously our responsibility to provide safe, nondiscriminatory, and inclusive environments for people of all orientations and identities, as they reflect our diverse community.
- **We stand** by our students, staff, and families of lower socioeconomic status. We will do all we can to meet the nutritional, physical, and emotional needs of all students regardless of their economic status.

ALL CHILDREN WILL BE SAFE AND LOVED IN OUR SCHOOLS. . . . EVERY CHILD, EVERY DAY.

Revised 9/11/2023

School District Leadership



School District Demographics

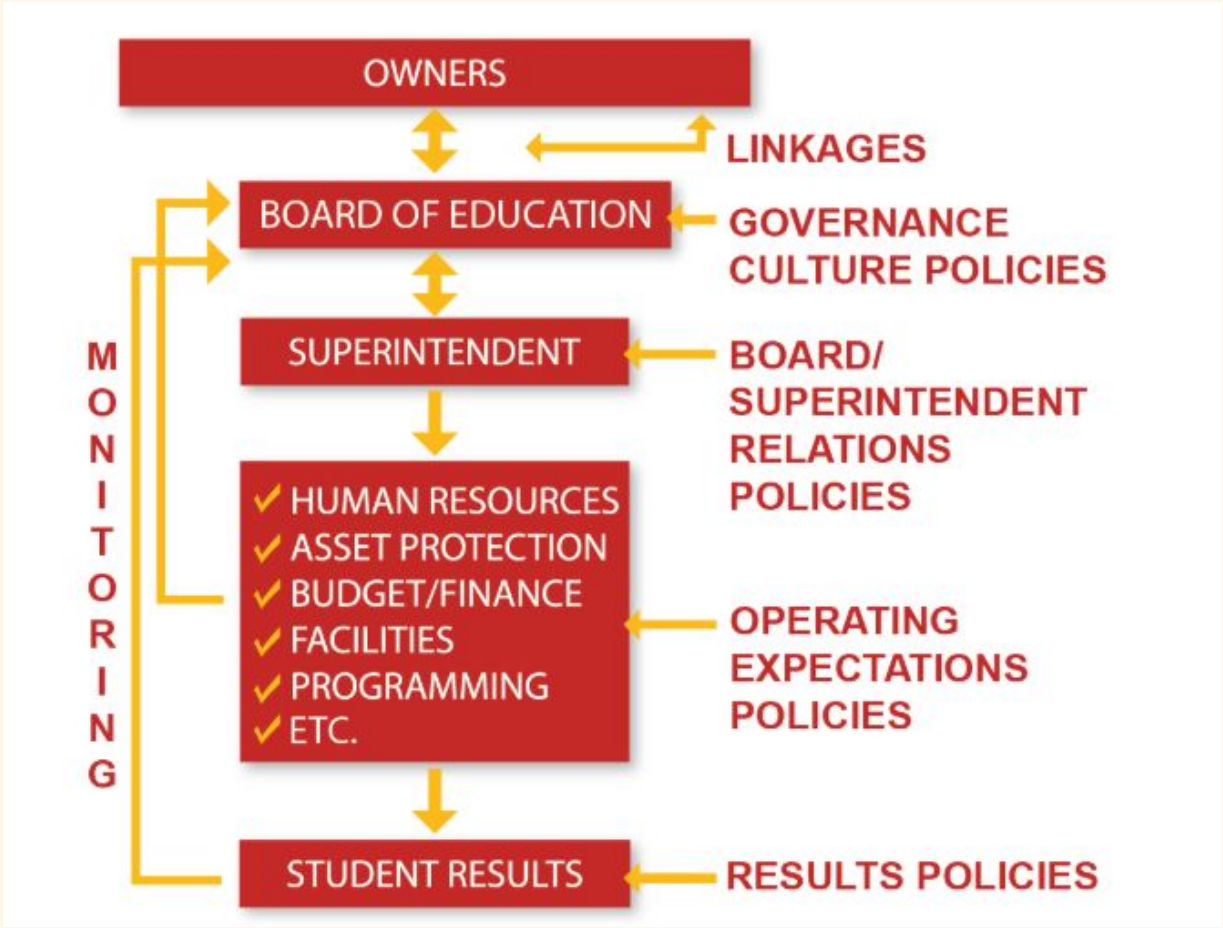
2025-2026 BY THE NUMBERS

- 784 Teachers
- 1,352 Employees
- 9 Elementary Schools, 3 Middle & High Schools
- 90+ Bus Routes
- $130.5 Million Operating Budget
- $23.3 Million Debt Service
- 126 Sports Teams
- 170 Middle School and High School Based Clubs
- 33 Advanced Placement Courses
- 46 Arts and Music Courses
- Largest Summer School Program in the State

Governance Background

Coherent Governance

What does it look like?





The 10 Principles of Coherent Governance are:

1. The Board is accountable to the owners, and serves as their trustee.
2. The Board knows what its job is, and is responsible for its own performance.
3. The Board plans its own work, and faithfully concentrates on its governance role.
4. The Board is active, but not intrusive.
5. Board members recognize the value of acting as a unit, even when unanimity is elusive.
6. The Board effectively monitors both the Organization's and its own performance.
7. The Board controls the organization through policy, not through "resolutions" or approving administrative recommendations.
8. The Board owns the vision for Organizational Performance.
9. He who makes the decision is accountable for the result.
10. The Board considers the performance of the Organization and the performance of the CEO to be identical.

Board Purpose Statement

The Sun Prairie Area School District Board of Education is the governing board of the Sun Prairie Area School District. The Board leads, directs, and supervises the affairs of the District through policy development and accountability to expectations. The Board serv es and is accountable to the community it represents.

The Board holds itself and the Superintendent accountable through continuous monitoring of the expectations and values expressed in the Student Results Policies, Operational Expectations Policies, Governance Culture Policies and Board-Superintendent Relationship Policies. The Board will govern lawfully and ethically, as a single unit, focusing primarily on the students of the District, as well as:

- Strategic leadership focused on the future;
- Setting a long-term vision and direction for the district;
- Encouraging all voices be heard, especially the community whom we serve and represent;
- Governance matters rather than administrative issues;
- Clear separation of Board and Superintendent roles;
- Continuous improvement and professional development;
- Building trusting and respectful relationships within the District and throughout the community.

We Believe in the Power of School Boards!

Purpose

Govern on Behalf of Our Community

- Lead not Manage

Role

Vision, Mission & Values of the District

- As one voice through policy

Responsibility

Trust & Hold Management Accountable

- Those who make the decisions are held accountable to the results

Board - Superintendent Relationship

- Board Authority & Accountability
- Superintendent Authority & Accountability
- Communication & Engagement between the Board & Superintendent

Operational Expectations

- Global Operational Expectation
- Superintendent Continuity
- Treatment of Community Stakeholders
- Personnel Administration
- Financial Planning, Financial Administration and Insurance and Asset Protection
- Communication and Engaging with the Public
- Learning Environment and Instructional Programming
- Facilities and Grounds

School Board Job Description

Top 5 Things to Know as a Board Member

1. Board meetings require preparation. We are expected to come to meetings having read/watched the material and ready for discussions and questions.
2. The time commitment is for more than just board meetings and can vary widely from week to week.
3. Board members only have authority as a body during a publicly posted meeting.
4. It requires “thick skin.”
5. Board members must be aware of all the laws that govern them, including open meetings, public records and open records requests.

Bonus: *Your focus as a board member is the success of all the children on behalf of the community aligned to our shared vision and mission.*

School Board Job Description

The role of a Board Member is to represent and serve the community and to govern the District by establishing expectations for student development and achievement, quality operational performance, and to monitor actual performance against those expectations.

Board Members will:

1. Ensure that students, through Student Results Policies, are the dominant focus of District performance
2. Work collaboratively to establish effective Board policies and to delegate authority for the administration of the District/Schools to the Superintendent
3. Collaboratively supervise and evaluate the Superintendent's performance through effective monitoring of Student Results and Operational Expectations policies
4. Work with fellow Board members to ensure excellent Board and District performance through effective evaluation of Board policies, actions, and processes

School Board Job Description



5

Attend all regularly scheduled Board meetings and be informed concerning the issues to be considered at those meetings

6

Advocate for the District and the students it serves

Maintain a presence in the community in order to communicate and listen to the people we represent

7

Be informed about current educational issues through individual and group study and through participation in programs providing needed information, such as those sponsored by state and national school boards associations

8

Embrace a continuous improvement mindset and

Be student-centered and adult-minded

Key Wisconsin State Statutes Regarding School Boards

- The authority of school boards is identified in Chapter 118 of the Wisconsin state statutes.
- Laws governing school boards, including powers, duties, plan of election, and meetings, are found in Chapter 120 of the Wisconsin state statutes.
- Laws governing school finance are found in Chapter 121 of the Wisconsin state statutes.
- Laws related to open meetings and public records are found in Chapter 19 of the state statutes.
- School board members should have a good understanding of the Wisconsin Open Meetings and Public Records laws.

School District Budget and Operations

Budgets are a reflection of Strategic Plan

- What are community expectations?
- What does the Board expect of this school district?
- What are the highest confidence strategies we have to meet these expectations?
- How do we fund the staffing, development, and materials necessary to make progress toward these expectations?

Overall Expense Budget

• General Fund	$168,892,099
• Special Education Fund	$29,107,159
• Debt Service Fund	$22,207,658
• Capital Projects Fund	$1,315,000
• School Nutrition Fund	$5,159,399
• Community Service Fund	$1,416,831
• Grand Total of Budgets	$228,098,146

District Facilities

Sun Prairie Area School District Building Info Sheet					
School	Address	Constructed	Max Capacity	Square Footage	Site Acreage (Acres)
C.H. Bird Elementary	1170 N. Bird St.	1965	451	80,609	13.37
Creekside Elementary	1251 O'Keefe Ave.	2008	506	91,210	5.86
Eastside Elementary	661 Elizabeth Ln.	1966	500	66,960	12.62
Horizon Elementary	625 N. Heatherstone Dr.	2005	501	93,997	5.00
Meadow View Elementary	200 N. Grand Ave.	2018	590	118,301	16.90
Northside Elementary	230 Klubertanz Dr.	1962	521	70,808	13.70
Royal Oaks Elementary	2215 Pennsylvania Ave.	1975	502	84,530	10.85
Token Springs Elementary	1435 N. Thompson Rd.	2018	590	128,117	19.071
Westside Elementary	1320 Buena Vista Ave.	1966	500	71,836	9.36
Hilltop Campus	220 Kroncke Dr.	1959	853 CHMS 240 PPA	270,748	42.60
Patrick Marsh Middle School	1351 Columbus St.	1998	853	130,630	29.56
Prairie View Middle School	400 N. Thompson Rd.	1998	853	131,495	26.38
Sun Prairie East High School	888 Grove St.	2010	2,073	410,578	85.70
Sun Prairie West High School	2850 Ironwood Dr.	2022	2,073	439,139	100.10
Bank of Sun Prairie Stadium	155 Kroncke Dr.	2020	4,070	13,965	10.30
District Support Center	501 S. Bird St.	1976		49,000	5.00

School Board Current Work & Discussions

Current School Board Discussions

- Community Engagement
- Portrait of a Graduate
- Board Governance & Professional Development
- Equity Policy Updates
- Finance & Facility Policy Interpretations
- Monitoring Student Results and Operational Expectations and Results
- Budget Framework (2026-2027 and beyond)
- Public Schools Advocacy

April 2027 School Board Election Information

2027 School Board Election Information

Seats

- At the Spring 2027 election there will be two seats up for election.

Term

- Term will begin on April 26, 2027 and will serve for 3 years.

Election

- Primary will be held on February 16, 2027 if 5 or more candidates.
- Spring Election will be held on April 6, 2027

Current School Board Members



Diana McFarland, President

Tenure: April 2022 to April 2028



Melissa Grayson, Vice President

Tenure: April 2025 to April 2028



Dr. Isaac Sung, Clerk/Governance Officer

Tenure: August 2025 to April 2029



Amanda Davis, Treasurer

Tenure: April 2025 to April 2028



Kaleena Stephan, Member

Tenure: April 2026 to April 2029



Bryn Horton, Member

Tenure: April 2018 to April 2027

*Open Seat - Not Seeking Re-election



Colleen Uhlenkamp, Member

Tenure: January 2025 to April 2027

Required Paperwork

The following Ballot Access Documents must be submitted by January 5, 2027 at 5:00 pm to the District Clerk at 501 S. Bird Street, Sun Prairie, WI:

1. **Campaign Finance Registration Statement** (Form CF-1L)
2. **Declaration of Candidacy** (Form EL-162SD)
3. **Nomination Papers for Nonpartisan Office** (Form EL-169)
    a. **Minimum of 100 Signatures are required** *(no more than 200)*.
    b. Make sure each nomination form is filled out completely and correctly in order to avoid disqualification. **(Nomination papers may not be circulated before December 1, 2026.)** The back of Form EL-169 has complete instructions.
    c. **School District Restrictions:** You (and anyone helping you) are prohibited from distributing nomination papers and campaign literature, or gathering signatures, on school district property during normal school hours or during scheduled school activities.

Who is Qualified to Run for School Board?

- Be a citizen of United States
- Be 18 years of age or older
- Have no disqualifying prior criminal convictions
- Be a resident of the school district for at least 28 consecutive days at the time of filing declaration of candidacy

Campaign Finance Paperwork

Candidates should determine if financial disclosure reports are required.

- You can claim Exemption from Filing Campaign Finance Reports if you plan on raising and spending less than $2,500 combined on your campaign.
  - You will still be required to file a termination report after the election. (Form CF-2L)
- If you do not claim exemption from reporting requirements, please request the following additional documents:
  - Campaign Finance Overview - Local Candidates (Manual)
  - Campaign Finance Report (Form ETHCF-2L)
    - Submit a January Continuing Campaign Finance Report no later than January 15, 2027
    - Submit a Pre-Primary Campaign Finance Report no later than February 8, 2027
    - Submit a Pre-Election Campaign Finance Report no later than March 29, 2027
    - Submit a July Continuing Campaign Finance Report no later than July 15, 2027
  - Committees must file “Continuing Reports” until a termination report is filed (Form CF-2L)

Key Dates & Filing Requirements

- **December 1, 2026:** Earliest date to circulate nomination papers
- **January 5, 2027:** Candidate Deadline for filing all Ballot Access Documents (5:00pm at the District Support Center) needed to establish eligibility to appear on the spring ballot
- **January 12, 2027:** Deadline for drawing of lots for ballot order
- **February 16, 2027:** Spring Primary Election (if needed)
- **April 6, 2027:** School Board Spring Election
- **April 16, 2027:** Board of Canvassers Deadline to certify election results.
- **April 26, 2027:** School Board Members take Oath of Office

Contact Information for School Board Elections

- **Contact Tricia Markevitch a**t (608) 834-6538 or tamarke@sunprairieschools.org for more information about School Board election paperwork or packet
- **Contact School Board Members** for information about the School Board:
  - Diana McFarland, President: dmmcfar@sunprairieschools.org
  - **School Board Website:** https://www.sunprairieschools.org/district/board-of-education
- **Contact the Wisconsin Elections Commission** (elections@wi.gov) for information about the election and to access electronic versions of the required forms (http://elections.wi.gov/forms)
- **Contact the Wisconsin Ethics Commission** (ethics@wi.gov) for information about campaign finance or ethics

Question and Answer

Thank you for attending and your consideration in serving our community and district!