

2026-27

Secondary Family Handbook

South St. Paul Public Schools

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Translated Handbooks

The 2026-27 Family Handbook is available in Spanish on the district website at www.sspps.org/about/handbooks or from your school office.

El manual para la familia 2026-27 está disponible en español en la página de internet del distrito en:

Welcome to the 2026-27 School Year

SSPPS Families and Staff,

Welcome to the 2026-27 school year! As we come together to support our students, staff, and community, I am filled with pride and optimism for what lies ahead. At the end of last school year and over the summer, South St. Paul Public Schools adopted a new strategic plan that will guide our work through 2030. Centered on our mission to Engage, Educate, Empower, the plan focuses on fostering academic growth, supporting staff excellence, cultivating inclusive opportunities, and living out our core values of Pride, Respect, Resilience, Integrity, Collaboration, and Equity.

Our goal with this Family Handbook is to enhance communication between school and home, improve understanding of district policies and procedures, and ensure consistent implementation across all schools. It serves as a centralized resource for key district information for all SSPPS families. In addition to this handbook, we provide a separate Student Rights & Responsibilities Handbook, which outlines student behavior expectations and consequences. This important resource will be reviewed with students at the start of the school year and is also available for families to read online at sspps.org/handbooks.

As you and your student prepare for the first days of school, I encourage you to take time to review the information in this handbook. It includes important updates, forms, and resources, as well as ways for you to get involved in our school community. Thank you for being a valued part of the Packer family. Together, we are building a welcoming and empowering educational environment for every student.



Regards,
Brian Zambreno, Ed.D.
Superintendent, South St. Paul Public Schools

District Mission and Core Values

Mission

Engage, Educate, Empower!

Vision

Nurturing an inclusive Packer community of lifelong learners

Strategic Priorities

Packer Performance *Fostering Growth and Achievement*	Packer Pride *Celebrating Core Values and Community*	Packer Promise *Cultivating Inclusive Opportunities for All*
• **Focus on Growth:** Cultivate an environment that encourages continuous improvement, academic success, and high performance. • **Support Staff Excellence:** Empower and support staff as they learn and collaborate to drive student achievement. • **Expand Opportunities:** Offer diverse academic and extracurricular experiences that inspire curiosity, critical thinking, and personal growth.	• **Align Actions with Core Values:** Ensure every decision and action reflects our commitment to our community values of Pride, Respect, Resilience, Integrity, Collaboration, and Equity. • **Promote District Strengths:** Showcase what makes our district unique and welcoming, attracting students, families, and staff. • **Celebrate and Promote Hard Work and Engagement:** Recognize and appreciate the dedication of students, families, staff, and community members in fostering a thriving and supportive educational environment.	• **Cultivate a Welcoming Environment:** Build a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning community where everyone feels valued and heard. • **Communicate Transparently:** Foster trust by delivering clear, consistent, and transparent communication that encourages engagement and strengthens relationships. • **Expand Pathways to Success:** Provide diverse opportunities for students to explore their academic and personal goals, unlocking their full potential for success in school, careers, and life. • **Foster Belonging:** Strengthen connections through shared experiences that create a sense of pride and belonging within our schools and community.

SSPPS Core Values

Pride
A welcoming, inclusive and supportive Packer community that honors and celebrates its rich history while collectively inspiring new traditions.

Respect
Recognizing and celebrating the goodness in oneself and others, seeing our differences as strengths and showing care and appreciation for people, property and the entire South St. Paul community.

Collaboration
Building community together through trust, hard work, innovation, and a shared commitment to building the South St. Paul that our community aspires to be.

Integrity
Being thoughtful, honest, transparent in our words, and actions, and accountable for our decisions.

Resilience
The courage to adapt, change and persevere when presented with challenges and opportunities.

Equity
A safe and supportive environment that provides opportunities for all to be seen, heard, and valued.



Important Dates

First Days of School

- Grades 1-5, 6, 9-12: Tuesday, September 1, 2026
- Grades K, 7-8: Wednesday, September 2, 2026
- 4-year-old Preschool: Thursday, September 3, 2026
- 3-year-old Preschool: Wednesday, September 9, 2026

Secondary Packer Essentials Days

Students will pick up schedules and locker information, can meet with the nurse and turn in immunization forms, setup educational benefits with nutrition services, and have their school photo taken at this open house event.

Thursday, August 13, 2026 and Monday, August 17, 2026
12:00-3:00 pm and 4:00-7:00 pm

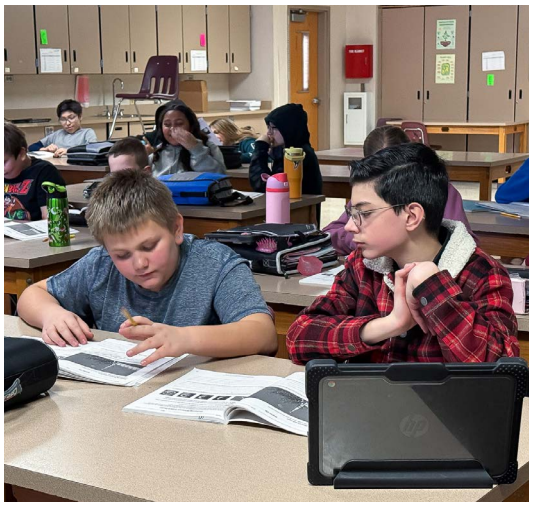
Secondary & CLC Family Connect Days (6-12)

Middle school families and students will meet with the student's connections teacher for a scheduled time. High School students and families can walk their schedule and meet with teachers when available.

Thursday, August 27, 2026, 3:30-7:30 pm

Friday, August 28, 7:30-11:30 am





Academics

At South St. Paul Public Schools (SSPPS), our top priority is to create a safe, welcoming, and culturally inclusive environment for all students and staff. The Educational Services team aims to foster a learning environment based on mutual respect, problem-solving, and restorative practices among students and staff at every school. Our approach is informed by evidence-based research using a variety of strategies aimed at fostering a positive and supportive learning environment.

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Packer Pathways

Packer Pathways are dedicated to preparing each and every student for their future through high-quality, individualized programs, services, and personalized learning tailored to every stage of their educational journey. Covering early learning, elementary, middle, and high school, this comprehensive plan provides students with opportunities to explore real-world experiences, interactive discussions, guest speakers, enriching field trips, and flexible curriculum options, allowing students to fully engage with their learning paths. The development of the Pathway to Packer Promise is the result of extensive feedback from our stakeholders, ensuring it aligns with the collective goals and values of our learning community.

Middle School

The curriculum for the 2026-27 school year at the Middle School level will build on the fundamental academic subjects that have formed the foundation of their academic journey so far. More targeted supports help students build skills on a more individualized level. In middle school, students will also begin to explore their interests and potential career paths with an introduction to Packer Pathways. Students will be immersed in hands-on experiences aimed at helping them discover their passions and where their strengths lie. This will better prepare them for curriculum choices in high school.

High School

Students will continue to build on their fundamental academic subjects on a more individualized level that follows their personal strengths and areas that need focus. Students will begin more in depth exploration of Packer Pathways that will empower them to follow their own academic journey equipped with tools, resources, and individualized college and career preparation. On top of the Packer Pathways, students looking to enter the workforce after graduation will also have Career and Technical Education opportunities. Through partnerships with other school districts, and community colleges/trade schools, students will have the opportunity to learn trade skills with the potential to earn certifications while in high school.

Talent Development & Advanced Academics

South St. Paul Public Schools offers a K-8 Talent Development and Advanced Academics program to provide equitable access in developing talents in students of all abilities, races, ethnicities, languages, gender, and socioeconomic circumstances. The program is designed to support and challenge students who demonstrate a need for additional academic enrichment and includes a variety of programs tailored to different grade levels. This initiative is designed to not only identify, cultivate, and celebrate the diverse strengths of each of our students, but to also provide specialized opportunities and tailored support to help each student to reach their full potential. Through this program, every student can feel inspired, valued, and equipped to thrive.

Talent Development TOSA
Jake Knaus
jknaus@sspps.org

Special Education Services

Children with disabilities are eligible for special education and related services from birth to age 21 as defined in federal law, P.L. 101-476, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Minnesota State Board of Education Rules, Chapter 3525.0200. Families can expect their referral to be processed by the Child Study team in a timely manner and according to due process requirements. Contact your building principal or the office of Student Services, at (651) 457- 9496 for further information and assistance.

Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)

PBIS is a framework, used in the Middle School, that assists schools in identifying and implementing research-based behavioral interventions in an effort to improve social and academic outcomes for all students. PBIS is based on the idea that students learn appropriate behavior through instruction, practice, feedback, and encouragement. Key features of PBIS include: outlining a clear set of defined positive expectations and behaviors, the teaching of expected behaviors, recognition of meeting expected behaviors, monitoring and correcting errors in behaviors, and using data-based information for decision-making, monitoring, and evaluating results at individual school sites.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

MTSS is a framework to make sure students get what they need socially, emotionally, behaviorally, developmentally, and academically. At SSPPS, we provide students access to layers of support with the understanding and belief that every student can learn and thrive. In addition, MTSS engages an anti-bias and socially just approach to examining policies and practices. There are five core components in the framework.

1. Infrastructure for Continuous Improvement
2. Family and Community Engagement
3. Multi-Layered Practices and Support
4. Assessment
5. Data-Based Decision Making

Each building in SSPPS has universal screening in place to review students who may be at risk for not making progress without intervention or support. Teams at each building review academic, social, emotional, and behavioral data to determine supports for students. If students are not making progress, then each building has an Individual Student Team (IST) that meets with the goal of understanding the student's specific needs and developing a plan to match the needs.

Building Assets, Reducing Risks (BARR)

BARR is a strengths-based educational model that provides grades 9-12 with eight interlocking strategies that build intentional relationships, utilize real-time data, and helps achieve academic and non-academic outcomes for each and every student. The BARR model allows staff to better understand and build on students' strengths, proactively address the non-academic reasons why a student may be falling behind in school, and identify what resources they need and steps they can take to thrive.

Catalyst Approach

Catalyst is committed to empowering students and staff to recognize themselves as leaders with a responsibility to learn, grow, and contribute to a culture where everyone plays a role in building relationships and disrupting inequity. Guided by the vision that every student is surrounded by leaders who understand, nurture, inspire, and support them, Catalyst promotes a community grounded in leadership, connection, equity, and service. Through its core values, Catalyst encourages individuals to seek leadership opportunities in everyday moments, build strong relationships, advocate for equity, speak up with courage, persevere through challenges, inspire others through service, and consistently provide high-quality support and experiences.

Home Schooling

The South St. Paul Public School District recognizes the right of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to decide the appropriate educational setting for their child. This may include the option of homeschooling. Homeschooling is an option for the parent(s)/guardian(s) to be the sole provider of the education of their child in all subjects. The only situation where an exception would be made is if a family objects, for religious reasons, to the course content in a health education class. In this case, health education could be taught as a single home schooled course, with all other courses taken at the school. In choosing this option, the adult family members are responsible for meeting the requirements as prescribed by the State of Minnesota. If you are interested in this option, please contact the District's Enrollment Specialist at enroll@sspps.org.

Middle School Schedules

Day One/Day Two Classes

In the Middle School, some courses meet every other day. Students have these courses either on day one or day two. Day one begins on the first day ofschool. In the event of school cancellation or other unforeseen events we will continue with the regular student schedule as if there was no interruption.

Schedule Changes

All requests for schedule changes should be made before school begins in the fall. The only schedule changes that will be made after school starts are those that must be made due to an error made in a

student's schedule or changes that have the approval of the administration. No schedule change requests made by students or families will be made after the first week of the semester.

High School/CLC Academics

Grading Average Scale

4.000	A	2.700	B-	1.400	D+
3.700	A-	2.400	C+	1.000	D
3.400	B+	2.000	C	.700	D-
3.000	B	1.700	C-	.000	NC

NC	No Credit
P	Pass- Indicates work meeting minimum requirements
I	Incomplete- Indicates the pupil has time to make up incomplete work (two weeks from the end of the marking period). Failure to do so will result in a NC.
AU	Audit- Indicates the pupil took the course, but is receiving no grade.
IB	To come up with the IB grading scale multiply by a factor of 1.1

Grading options

Auditing Classes (9th – 12th Only)

Students may be allowed to audit a course for no credit. You must obtain permission from the teacher and assistant principal before you will be allowed to audit a class. You will also be required to complete a parent(s)/guardian(s) permission form that will be kept on file with your assistant principal.

Incompletes

An incomplete (I) mark can be given if a student has been absent for an extended period of time and if there is reason to believe the student will make up the work. Incompletes must be completed within two weeks after the end of the grading period to get credit for the course. If not, the incomplete automatically becomes an "NC".

Independent Studies

Courses that are currently in our curriculum can be offered as an Independent Study for credit. Students will be graded on a pass/fail basis in all Independent Study courses. Independent Study forms are available through the grade level assistant principal.

Pass/No Credit

Graduation credit will be given but the Pass/No Credit grade will not be used to determine GPA.

Transferring of Credits

South St. Paul High School accepts credits and grades earned by students at other accredited schools. We will not accept any weighted credits unless they have been earned in I.B. courses. They will be awarded weighted credits that are equivalent to those given at South St. Paul High School.

High School Academic Awards

Honor Roll

Students will qualify for the honor roll based on the previous trimester grades.

- Gold Honor Roll- GPA of 3.700 or above
- Silver Honor Roll- GPA of 3.400 to 3.699
- Bronze Honor Roll- GPA of 3.000 to 3.399

Gold Awards

Academic awards are given to South St. Paul Secondary students in recognition of their achievement while attending South St. Paul Secondary (Grades 10-12). Academic awards are based on the student's academic achievement in the previous school year, and the earned grade point average (GPA) for that school year. Academic awards are given for the following criteria:

Academic Letter

A letter is presented for achieving at least a 3.700 GPA for one year (awarded for any one school year).

Chevron

A chevron is presented for achieving at least a 3.700 GPA for a second year (does not have to be consecutive).

Academic Pin

A pin is presented for achieving a 3.700 GPA for a third year at South St. Paul Secondary.

Gold Medallion

A gold medallion will be presented at the Honors Breakfast in April to all seniors who have attended South St. Paul Secondary and have achieved a 3.700 GPA during 9th, 10th, and 11th grades and their first two trimesters of grade 12.

National Honor Society

Students who maintain a GPA of 3.000 or better and excel in the areas of scholarship, leadership, service and character are eligible for selection into the National Honor Society. Information will be sent to eligible students in January.

Physical Education

Information will be given to you by your physical education teacher regarding appropriate attire. All physical education clothing should be labeled. Students taking physical education are required to bring their own padlock. Students will not be excused from physical education classes for more than two

physical education periods unless they have a note from the doctor.

Post Secondary Option (PSEO) and Other Credit Opportunities

Students who are interested in pursuing PSEO will need to register with the South St. Paul Secondary office before May 30th of the previous school year they wish to attend. It is the student's responsibility to apply and register to the college that they wish to attend. All courses must be pre-approved by South St. Paul Schools. Any courses dropped after ten days from the course's start date will result in a failing grade on a student's high school transcript and follows the institution's policy on their college transcript. All credit earned will factor in the student's GPA. Students attending college under Post-Secondary Enrollment Options are eligible to participate in extracurricular activities. South St. Paul Secondary eligibility rules apply.

For other Camps, Special Programs, and Online Learning- All credits must be earned from an accredited agency outside of South St. Paul. All courses must be pre-approved by South St. Paul Schools upon registration. The amount of credit that transfers back is determined by South St. Paul Schools. It is the student's responsibility to provide information about the program and credits to the Secondary building.

International Baccalaureate Diploma

Students in grades 11 and 12 looking for a more rigorous academic program, SSP High Schools will continue to offer the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (DP). The DP focuses on creativity, innovation, self-discipline, and the ability to function as part of a team. The Diploma Program consists of a common pre-university curriculum and a common set of external exams for students in schools throughout the world. It seeks to provide students with an international education that encourages an understanding and appreciation of other cultures and societies. More information can be found on the SSP High School website at https://highschool.sspps.org.

Concurrent Enrollment

In addition to the IB Diploma Program opportunities, SSP High School offers concurrent enrollment courses for students seeking college-level experience. These courses are college classes provided by SSP High School, taught by our own high school teachers. Students who successfully complete these courses will earn both high school and college credits from our partnering institutions.

Post-Secondary Testing

The tests that may be used for college admission and/or scholarships include: Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT), Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and American College Testing (ACT).

Students may take the ACT and SAT as juniors or seniors. The PSAT must be taken during the junior high year if a student wishes to be considered for the National Merit Scholarship Program.

Scholarships

Each year during the first part of May, scholarships are awarded to graduating seniors at the South St. Paul Educational Foundation Scholarship Banquet. During the 2026-27 school year, over $614,000.00 in scholarships were awarded to students in the senior class. All necessary forms for applying for these scholarships and any questions regarding the scholarships can be answered by the Career Center Coordinator at (651) 306-3654 or the Educational Foundation at (651) 457-9440. The application process begins in February.

Graduation

A senior student must earn a minimum of 65 credits in order to receive a diploma from South St. Paul High School. The Board of Education allows seniors to participate in the ceremony if he/she has earned 63 credits by the end of the school year. It is the district's expectation and the student's obligation to have a pre-approved plan to complete missing credits by the end of the summer. This plan must be presented to his/her assistant principal. Students should have a meeting with their assistant principal to develop a plan for completion of credits on or before August of the graduation year.

If a senior student prefers not to be a part of the commencement exercises, they must notify their assistant principal four weeks before graduation. The senior would receive their diploma after commencement. Participation in the commencement ceremony is a privilege. Violating school policies may result in the elimination of the privilege to participate in some or all of the commencement ceremonies. Decisions related to student participation and/or inclusion in commencement will include the superintendent and site administration.

Early Graduation Procedures

A student may petition before the start of their senior year to graduate early provided they can fully meet the graduation requirements at South St. Paul High School. Where mid-year graduation is granted,

the diploma will not be granted until the spring commencement exercises, although the records will indicate graduation at mid-year.

Graduation Awards

The following groups of students will be recognized at commencement:

- Students with an accumulative GPA of 3.700 or above plus the student must have taken 3 or more IB courses.
- International Baccalaureate Candidates
- International Baccalaureate Honors
- National Honor Society

Graduation Speech/Speakers

Commencement at South St. Paul Secondary features a student speaker, chosen to represent the graduating class. The guidelines below outline the process that will be used in choosing the speaker.

- All Seniors who will be a part of the commencement ceremony, meaning they have met all credit requirements and have passed all state mandated tests, are eligible to participate in the selection process. Interested and eligible Seniors should contact an office administrator to indicate his/her interest. A Graduation Speaker Committee will be formed including office administration and teachers. Guidelines on writing the speech and selection criteria will be made available to each interested candidate.
- Candidate(s) will be approved by the Graduation Speaker Committee. Members of the committee will not serve as mentors or assist in the writing or proofing of any of the proposed speeches by any of the candidates. Senior speaker candidates will be required to submit a typed, double-spaced audition speech ahead of their presentation to the committee.
- Potential speakers will present their proposed commencement speeches to the committee. Notes or written-out speeches may be used. Trial readings will take place within the first 2 weeks of May.
- Audition speeches are required to be well developed. During the selection process the committee will evaluate the following criteria:
  - Ability to communicate a message that is inspirational and represents our school in a positive manner.
  - Clarity of message
  - Speech length
  - Delivery
  - Eye contact
  - Body language

The finalist selected will be required to meet with building administration as the final speech is developed and polished. The final draft of the commencement speech that is to be read is due to the building principal by the 3rd Friday of May. The commencement speech will be between 3 and 5 minutes in length, with 5 minutes being the absolute maximum length. The speech should reflect the spirit of the class. Creativity of all kinds is strongly encouraged.

Secondary Attendance

Secondary Building

- Attendance Line: (651) 457-9415
- secattend@sspps.org

Community Learning Center

- Attendance Line: (651) 450-9966
- clcattend@sspps.org

Attendance

School attendance is mandatory in the State of Minnesota in order to make certain that all children acquire the necessary skills for success as adults. Establishing good attendance patterns is one of the best ways to ensure a student will stay in school through graduation.

Dakota County Guidelines

It is considered educational neglect if a student under the age of 12 has seven (7) unexcused absences. For students under the age of 12 years, the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) are responsible for the attendance of their child. When a child ages 12-17 reaches seven (7) or more unexcused absences, it is considered truancy and is required to be referred to the County's Truancy Reduction Program. School administration will notify parents of students ages 12-17 when the student has three (3) unexcused absences.

Notification of Absence

Parents/guardians are to call or email the Attendance Line before school begins to report an absence. Please leave the student's first and last name, teacher name/grade, reason for absence, and a name and phone number where you can be reached on the day of the absence. If you do not call the school or the school is unable to contact you regarding the absence, you must provide your son/daughter with a note when they return to school, verifying the absence. If your student will be gone (vacations, surgery etc.) or needs to leave for an appointment, please notify the attendance office ahead of time via email or call.

If an absence has not been reported, the District's-computerized notification system, ParentSquare, will attempt to call the student's parent/guardian at the number listed in the Campus Parent Portal. A return call is expected to verify the absence. All absences are considered unexcused until verification can be made. Verification must be made within a reasonable amount of time. All absences are considered unexcused until verification can be made. At the Secondary Building, the automated attendance alert calling system will automatically place two phone calls to the parents/guardians, one in the morning and one in the evening, to notify them of their child's absence regardless if the absence has been phoned in or not.

Report an Absence in ParentSquare

You can also report absences through ParentSquare. Submit upcoming absences, attach doctor's notes or travel details, and view past and upcoming absences from your personal dashboard. Step-by-step instructions are available on our website: www.sspps.org/dept/comms/parentsquare.

Doctor Notes

Please make every attempt to schedule doctor/dentist/counseling appointments outside of the school day. Doctor/dental/counseling appointments may require a note verifying the appointment date and time, doctor's name and number for the student. Students must check in at the office when they return to school.

Tardiness

Tardiness is considered anytime a student arrives to class late without an excuse note from the office. Upon arriving at school after the second bell has rung, the student must report to the office for a pass. Students will not be allowed to report to class without a pass.

Examples of Excused Tardiness

- Illness
- Serious illness in the student's immediate family
- A death in the student's immediate family or of a close friend or relative
- Medical or dental treatment
- Court appearances occasioned by family or personal action
- Physical emergency conditions such as fire, flood, storm, etc.
- Any tardiness for which the student has been excused in writing by an administrator or faculty member

Examples of Unexcused Tardiness

- Oversleeping
- Ride did not come
- Babysitting
- Missing the bus
- Shopping
- Parent work schedule
- Out to breakfast

- *Consistent early release:* Although consistently picking up a child from school does not technically equate to a tardy, a child who is consistently missing parts of their day can impact the child's overall education. We ask that you only pick your student up early from school for emergency or a doctor/dental appointment reasons only.

Excused Absences

The responsibility for excusing a child from school rests with the parent or guardian. The school reserves the right to accept or deny requests for excuses based on its policies. When absences are excused, students are expected to complete make-up work. Students will be given a period equal to the length of their absence to submit make-up assignments. For instance, if a student is absent for one day, they will have one day to turn in the make-up work.

Acceptable reasons for being absent

***As referenced in Student Attendance Policy 503*:**

- Illness (school may request doctor verification)
- Serious illness in the student's immediate family
- A death in the student's immediate family or of a close friend or relative
- Medical, dental, orthodontic or counseling appointments (Please avoid school hours if possible)
- Court appearance occasioned by family or personal action
- Religious instruction not to exceed three hours in any week
- Physical emergency conditions such as fire, flood, storm, etc
- Official school field trip or other school-sponsored outing
- Suspensions are to be handled as excused absences and students will be permitted to complete makeup work
- Religious holidays

Religious or Cultural Observances

The school will make reasonable efforts to accommodate any student who wishes to be excused from a curricular activity for a religious observance or American Indian cultural practice, observance, or ceremony.

Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences are those student absences which are not approved by the parent/guardian and/or school district.

Examples of absences that may be considered unexcused:

- Families taking students out of school on a consistent basis
- Any absence in which the student/parent failed to comply with any reporting requirements of the school district's attendance procedures
- Work at home
- Staying home to babysit
- Oversleeping
- Missing the bus
- Loss of bus riding privileges
- Too cold, or weather related - If school is in session, students are expected to be at school
- Needed at home
- Medical, dental, orthodontic or counseling appointments that do not require a full-day absence

All absences not authorized by the parent/guardian or school are considered unexcused.

- Any student who leaves school for any purpose without permission from the office will receive an unexcused absence.
- Parents/guardians may not excuse a student for leaving the building if the office has not been notified prior to the student leaving.
- Students who become ill must report to the Health Office for proper release. Failure to comply will result in an unexcused absence.

In some cases it may be required that a verification of illness from a doctor be presented to the school.

Consequences of Unexcused Absences

Students with unexcused absences shall be subject to discipline in the following manner in accordance with MN Statute 260C.007 Subd 19 Habitual Truant.

School based consequences may include:

- Detention
- Counseling Services

Withdrawals

When a student is withdrawn from school, they may request a meeting or phone call with the principal. The student will be given a check-out form that must be completed before he/she leaves the building. An official transcript will be mailed upon request to the school to which the student is transferring after completion of the withdrawal form. Students must return school property such as Chromebooks, chargers, and textbooks as applicable.

State law mandates a school must report to County Child Protection when a student drops enrollment from their district and does not re-enroll in another educational facility.

Secondary (High School and Middle School) Class Period Absences

Any student who exceeds seven (7) unexcused absences in any class period could be placed on non-credit status. Prior to loss of credit an administrative conference must be held among the principal, student, parent and teacher if applicable. There will be an appeals process to review the absences for any unusual circumstances and to document absences for doctor or other specialist visits. An appeals process is in place for students/parents/guardians that feel extenuating circumstances should be considered prior to denying credit. The appeals group will consist of teachers and an administrator. A good practice to follow is to ask for notes from your doctor, dentist, etc. at the time of any appointment for future documentation. Special exceptions will be made for students with serious injuries, long term illnesses, family emergencies, or school approved absences.

Appeals Process

At the end of the trimester, a student who is passing a course but has lost credit due to truancy will have the option to appeal the loss of credit. Appeal hearings will be scheduled during the last days of the trimester. The attendance appeals committee shall consist of a designated administrator, and teacher representatives. The student appealing the loss of credit is required to attend the hearing. If he/she does not appear for the hearing, the student will lose credit for the course. Parent(s)/guardian(s) may attend.

Makeup Work

Following an absence, it is the responsibility of the student to find out assignments and to complete course work assigned. Students are expected to complete any missed assignments and assessments that result from an absence.

High School Specific Attendance Policies

- High School students may leave school if they are enrolled in one of the approved work experience programs, community service or Post-Secondary Option Programs.
- Special permission to leave school can be granted by the Principal or assistant principals. All other absences will be dealt with accordingly. Please make doctor, dentist, or other appointments on non-school time, whenever possible.
- All college visits, during the school day, must be pre-approved and registered with the administration. College representatives will be available throughout the year during the senior high lunch periods. Please pay attention to the announcements regarding specific dates and colleges.

School Safety & Security

South St. Paul Public Schools (SSPPS) is committed to the safety of every student, staff member and person who enters our buildings. From the time they arrive in the morning to the time they leave in the afternoon, the wellbeing of our students and staff remains our top priority. There are a number of key components that go into this work.

District and school leaders continue to partner with local law enforcement and other agencies to plan, prepare, and implement a safe and supportive learning environment. For more information on the District's Safety and Security work and the Standard Response Protocols we have in place, visit our website at www.sspps.org/about/safety-security.



Communicating Emergencies

SSPPS places a high value on the connections we have with students, families, and the community. We communicate in a variety of ways to help grow these important relationships. While the district strives to be proactive, accurate and timely in communication with families and our greater SSP community, there may be times when circumstances dictate longer notification or response times. There may also be certain information that the district is unable to share due to data privacy reasons. The district will use a variety of communication channels when there is a need to move into a Lockdown, Secure, Evacuate or Shelter:

- ParentSquare (texts, emails, phone calls)
- Website
- Social Media (when warranted)

The district will not typically communicate with families when there is a need to move into a Hold as those are usually low level incidents where classrooms operate as normal, but hallways are kept clear to allow staff or medical personnel to deal with a situation. **To ensure you are receiving messages from the District, please make sure your contact information is up-to-date in the Campus Parent Portal.**

Evacuations/Reunification

In the event building and district leaders make the determination to evacuate a school to another location due to a severe fire or other inhibiting emergency, district leaders will communicate the evacuation plans and options families have for their student's safe release home. Photo IDs will be checked and only adults previously listed as emergency contacts will be allowed to take students from the evacuation areas. Students will only be released to a non-family member with approval by a parent/guardian.

Emergency Drills

Each school is required, per MN Statute, to perform five lockdown drills, five evacuation drills, and one severe weather drill each school year. One lockdown and one evacuation drill must each be completed within the first 10 days of school.

The primary objective of a drill is for participants to build muscle memory, and practice an action to use in various events or situations. A secondary objective is for school staff to validate procedures, clarify roles and identify operational process gaps. Drills are for staff and students, and are educational opportunities to practice life safety skills. For example, an evacuation drill is conducted at schools worldwide regularly. A fire alarm goes off, students line up and head outside. There is no trauma in these events because there is no simulation of a threat or hazard. Schools do not light fires in the hallways to simulate an evacuation due to fire. Lockdown drills are similar. There is no simulated violence needed to conduct them. The only information needed is for the protocol to be enacted, "Lockdown, locks, lights, out of sight," and then students and staff perform the proper functions.

Emergency School Closings

All unscheduled school closings, late starts and early dismissals due to severe weather, extreme cold or heat, or other emergencies, will be shared with families through the district's electronic messaging system Parent Square, the district's website (sspps.org), district social media accounts, and through local news media. Families are encouraged to have alternate plans in place for possible emergency school closings.

In accordance with district policy, decisions to cancel or shorten the regular school day are made by the superintendent or their designee, in consultation with other staff. Consultation may also include City of South St. Paul personnel, our transportation providers, and neighboring school districts, as appropriate.

The most compelling reason for closing schools involves the safety of students and employees. Decisions about school closings, early releases, and late starts will be made as early as possible to allow for appropriate notification. For more information, visit our website at www.sspps.org/about/emergency-closings.

NOTE: Please ensure your contact information is up-to-date in the Campus Parent Portal.

Emergency notification methods:

- Automated voicemail
- Email
- Text message
- District website
- Social media
- Radio: WCCO 830-AM
- Television: WCCO Ch 4, KSTP Ch 5, FOX 9 KMSP, KARE 11

Late Starts and Early Dismissals

Late starts and early dismissals are inherently difficult for many programs and families. With this in mind, administration will do their best to keep these to a minimum. Early dismissals will be determined as conditions dictate. All families should have a contingency plan for their children in the event of school closings.

In the event of a LATE START, unless otherwise noted:

- Morning Adult Basic Education (ABE) classes are canceled
- Kids' Choice will start late, in accordance with the emergency announcement (e.g. two hours late)
- Central Square Community Center/Community Education will start late, in accordance with the emergency announcement (e.g. two hours late)
- All morning Early Learning programs and classes (including community preschool, ECSE, ECFE and home visits) are canceled

In the event of an EARLY DISMISSAL, unless otherwise noted:

- Afternoon and evening Early Learning programs and classes (including community preschool, ECSE, ECFE and home visits) may be canceled
- Afternoon and evening Adult Basic Education (ABE) classes may be canceled
- After school Kids' Choice will be closed
- Evening cancellations

Evening Cancellations

Decisions to cancel after-school and evening activities will be made by 3:00 pm, if possible, and are not necessarily tied to a school closing.

E-Learning

E-Learning Days occur when the district or a specific school must close due to inclement weather or other emergency situation. Students will learn from home through a variety of lessons communicated through the student's school or teacher(s). Specific details regarding the expectations for the given E-Learning Day will be shared when the emergency closing is announced.

Student/Family Information

Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook

Every student and employee of South St. Paul Public Schools is entitled to learn and work in a safe school environment that is aligned with the core values, mission, and vision of the district. Parents/guardians, teachers, staff and administrators are expected to mutually support each other in efforts to help students exhibit responsible behavior within the school community as part of learning basic life skills. Students are taught ways to handle differences in a non-violent manner and are expected to use those methods to handle disputes or conflicts. Our desire is that every child that comes to our school has the right to feel safe and free to be who they are without feeling any more or less significant than any other student in school.



To ensure this safe environment, the District's Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook establishes clear student discipline policies, consequences appropriate to behaviors, and a practice to implement these guidelines fairly. Students are expected to behave in accordance with federal, state and local laws, district policies and guidelines, and in a way that respects the rights and safety of others.

Balloons (Latex) and Flowers

Balloons and flowers of any kind are **not allowed** in school due to various student allergies and the difficulty of transporting home.

Chemical/Tobacco Free Schools

All SSPPS property, school sites (including parking lots), buses and school-related activities are chemical and tobacco free. For more information, see District Policy 419.

Classroom Snacks

The District's Wellness Policy #534 encourages physical activities rather than food for classroom celebrations and parties. Families wanting to send snacks to the classroom, are encouraged to send healthy food choices. If you choose to send a healthy snack, please be sure to collaborate with the classroom teacher in advance to be incorporated into the class plans for the day. They need to be small and purchased from a store. We have seen an increase in very severe allergies so please **do not send balloons or flowers of any kind, or products that contain peanuts.**

Digital Parenting Resources

We understand that parenting in a digital age can be overwhelming. SSPPS provides numerous resources to help you and your child operate safely in a digital world. Resources include information about filters and protections, cell phone use, and a free online course about basic Internet safety and how to create a positive digital footprint. Learn more at https://www.sspps.org/resources.

Employed Parent/Guardian's Right to Attend School Conferences/ Activities

Minnesota law allows employed parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to request a leave for school conferences and activities. An employer must grant an employee a leave of up to a total of 16 hours during any 12-month period to attend school conferences or school-related activities related to the employee's child, provided the conferences or school-related activities cannot be scheduled during non-work hours.

A parent/guardian must let their employer know in advance and make every effort to disrupt workplace operations as little as possible. The law does not guarantee that the time off will be paid, but paid vacation or other paid leave time may be used. More information on the State of Minnesota website.

Field Trips

The district supports and approves student field trips and travel beyond the classroom that are properly planned, well organized, and carefully supervised.

Students participating in approved field trips and travel will be permitted to prepare assignments in advance or make up work missed in classes from which they are absent.

A signed parent/guardian permission form is required for students to participate in field trips off of school property. Students without parental/guardian permission will be supervised in school for the duration of the field trip. Students need to be in school even if not attending a field trip. Emergency information must be on file in the office for a student to attend a field trip. The school nurse does not accompany students on field trips. If you have specific health concerns, please talk with the school nurse to develop a health plan for field trips.

NOTE: No student will be denied a school-sponsored field trip due to the inability to pay. For scholarship opportunities, please contact your school principal.

Harassment/Violence

School Board Policy #413 prohibits acts of harassment and violence on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, creed, religion, national origin, immigration status, sex, gender, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability. For a definition of harassment and consequences for violating District Policy 413, see the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook at www.sspps.org/about/handbooks.

Lockers

Students are expected to use only the locker assigned to them and are responsible for all contents within the locker. Money and other valuables should not be brought to school. The school district assumes no responsibility for finding or protecting items contained within a locker. If the locker is damaged in any way the student will be charged.

School lockers are the property of the school district. At no time does the school district relinquish its exclusive control of lockers provided for students.

Inspection of the interior of lockers may be conducted by school authorities, for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant. The personal possessions of students within a school locker may be searched when school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover evidence of a violation of law or school rules.

Media Center

Students are welcome to use the various materials in the media center: books, films, tapes, magazines, newspapers, computers, etc. The staff will help you if you have questions about the use of the facility or if you need help in finding materials. Students coming to the media center during the school day need a pass from their teacher. Students wishing to use the media center after school do not need a pass. Seniors with materials not returned or paid for will not receive a diploma. Be sure to check materials out before taking them from the area. Magazines and reference books are to be used only in the media center. Failure to return borrowed items, when due, will result in the suspension of borrowing privileges. Lost or damaged materials must be paid for by the student. Hours: The media center will be available from 7:30 AM to 3:00 PM daily.

Online/Technology Acceptable Use

Through the internet, students have access to a world of online resources and learning experiences. Parents/guardians must provide approval for their child(ren) to access internet resources at school, and students must agree to follow the district's Acceptable Use Policy (District Policy 536). The Student Information Technology Acceptable Use Agreement must be read and signed by the user and a parent/guardian prior to the student being granted access to the district system or use district technologies. Signed agreements will be retained by the district. The district may require students to re-sign the agreement periodically thereafter as technology changes require.

According to the policy, "routine maintenance and monitoring of electronic technologies, including the district network, may lead to a discovery that a user has violated this policy, another school district policy, or the law." In addition, the district may find technology use that raises concern about a student's mental health or well- being. If such discoveries are made, the district may deem it necessary to notify parents/guardians and/or school administration of their findings.

School Issued Devices

South St. Paul Public Schools' goal is to help students develop the skills and knowledge necessary to responsibly navigate our changing world. In an effort to achieve these goals, South St. Paul Secondary has a 1:1 (student to computing device) program for the students using district Chromebooks.

All students are expected to use their school-issued device in every class, every day. Students in high school can bring their own technology if it meets the minimum standards (reach out to the Technology Services team to learn more). Students will be accessing online learning materials, and in some cases, will be using online textbooks instead of traditional textbooks. For devices furnished to students by the school district, the cost of repairs for damaged, lost or stolen devices must be paid by the student to whom the device was checked out. There is insurance available for families to purchase to help cover minor, accidental damages that may occur. Daily in-school checkout devices are available in the Media Center until fines have been paid in full or arrangements have been made with the Assistant Principal.

School Dances

The Middle School and the High School have separate dances planned by their own student leadership. For grades 6-8 dances, guests will not be allowed. Grades 9-12 guests are allowed for Mistletoe. All guests must be registered with the grade level assistant principal.

Dance Policy

Students are expected to follow all school regulations and behavior expectations. There will be disciplinary consequences for violations.

- A student or guest whose behavior does not meet acceptable standards including but not limited to, fighting, alcohol or drug use shall forfeit their privilege to participate in school sponsored dances for the next three consecutive dances (PROM INCLUDED - NO EXCEPTIONS.)
- A guest is the responsibility of the accompanying South St. Paul Secondary student. If a guest violates the South St. Paul Secondary Dance Policy of no alcohol and tobacco, their privilege to participate in school sponsored dances for three consecutive dances (PROM INCLUDED– NO EXCEPTIONS).
- All students attending a dance must present a South St. Paul Secondary student picture I.D. at the door. If a South St. Paul Secondary student does not have a student ID, they must fill out a form in the office by the Wednesday prior to the dance. When the form is completed, the student will be given a verification letter on Friday. The student must bring this verification letter to the dance to be admitted.
- Students bringing a guest from another school must submit a "Guest Request Form" by 2:00 PM the Wednesday prior to the dance. "Guest Request Forms" are available in the high school office.

- Students bringing a guest must accompany the guest and the guest must present a picture I.D. at the door.
- A guest must be currently enrolled in high school or have graduated high school the prior spring.
- Once students and guests are admitted to a dance, they cannot leave and be readmitted.
- 6th,7th and 8th grade students are not allowed to attend Homecoming or Mistletoe dances.

General Dance Rules

- No guests from outside the district with the exception of Mistletoe and Prom
- No ID/No admittance.
- Students will need to be in class at least 50% of the school day the day of the dance, or the day prior if the dance is on a Saturday, this follows the same guidelines as MSHSL rules
- No one will be admitted after 8:45 PM
- When a student leaves the dance, they will not be readmitted.

Prom Rules

- No 6th, 7th, 8th, or 9th graders will be allowed to attend PROM.
- 10th graders can attend only if asked to be a guest by an 11th or 12th grader.
- Students will need to be in school at least 50% of the school day the day of the dance, or the day prior if the dance is on a Saturday, this follows the same guidelines as MSHSL rules
- No guests over 20 years of age can attend PROM.
- School administrators have the right to deny any guest.

Parental Custody/Restricted Contact

Minnesota law offers a non-custodial parent the right to review and receive copies of school records and information, to attend conferences, and to be informed about the child's welfare, educational progress, and status. The school is not required to hold a separate conference for each parent.

In cases where parents are separated or divorced, it is recommended that the school have legal documentation of custody and visitation rights. The custodial parent is responsible for providing the following to the school:

- A copy of the signed and certified court order; and
- Court order revisions/updates that affect custody, visitation, or record-access rights.

If there is no legal restriction, and upon request, the school will send duplicate correspondence to the non-custodial parent; arrange for review of school records by the non-custodial parents; and keep non-custodial parents apprised of major school events.

It is the parent(s) or legal guardian(s)' responsibility to inform and provide the school with current documentation if anyone is legally restricted from contact with a child. Adults listed as an authorized person on the emergency contact list are allowed to pick up a child in case of illness or emergency. Parents/guardians will be notified prior to the release of their child from school.

Personal Electronic Devices (e.g. cell phones, smartphones, etc.)

South St. Paul Public Schools believes the use of personal electronic devices is a privilege and can be an acceptable communication and educational tool that requires responsible use by all students. Use of electronic devices including, but not limited to, cellular phones, smartphones and smartwatches, digital cameras, laptop computers, tablets and other personal electronic devices capable of transmitting data or images.

Middle School

The Middle School is a cell phone free school from 7:50 to 2:25 each day. Students must keep their phones off and in their locker during the day. If students/ families would like to have the student carry their phone with them to class, it must be locked in a Yondr pouch. Pouches can be requested in the main office at no charge.

Students may use the landline phone in any classroom, or may come to the office and use the student phone. It is recommended that students memorize important phone numbers, but staff can look up phone numbers as needed.

If a staff member sees a student carrying their phone on them, and it is not in a Yondr Pouch, the phone will be taken to the office and will need to be picked up by an adult.

High School

Cell phones will not be allowed to be used in any classroom. Cell phones will need to be placed in the student's backpack or purse and not on their persons while the student is in class.

Pets

Please **do not** bring family pets into the school or on school property, for visitation/sharing. Student allergies and uncharacteristic, nervous responses by animals create health and safety concerns at school.

Report Cards and Conferences

Report Cards

Report Cards are issued within three weeks after the end of each trimester. Report Cards will be communicated online ONLY through the family's Infinite Campus account. Teachers will communicate to parents/guardians of students who are not making adequate progress.

Conferences

Conferences are held for the teacher, student, and parents/guardians to discuss the child's academic and social strengths and needs. Students should attend conferences with their family. This team is focused on helping the student become more aware of individual goals early in the year. As the year progresses, communication between home and school is ongoing. During the school year, additional conferences may be held as requested by school personnel or parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

Statewide Testing Assessments: Parent/Guardian Participation Guide and Refusal Information

Your student's participation in statewide assessments is important as it allows your school and district to ensure all students have access to a high-quality education. By requiring that all students take statewide assessments, schools and teachers have more information to see how all students are doing. This helps schools to continuously improve the education they provide and to identify groups, grades, or subjects that may need additional support.

Statewide assessments are based on the Minnesota Academic Standards or the WIDA English Language Development Standards. These standards define the knowledge and skills students should be learning in K–12 districts and charter schools. Minnesota prioritizes high-quality education and statewide assessments give educators and leaders an opportunity to evaluate student and school success.

Student participation in state and locally required assessments is a parent/guardian choice. If you choose to have your student not participate in a statewide assessment, please complete and return the Statewide Assessment: Parent/Guardian Decision Not to Participate Form to your building principal.

Student Information Release

Throughout the school year students attend programs, activities, field trips and events along with normal classroom routines that support their education, promote community service or encourage positive behavior. District officials may visit your child's school to cover these special events, and the South St. Paul Public School District may wish to use your child's photographs, voices, likenesses or student work for promotional and educational reasons. This includes co-curricular activities/athletic program rosters, school yearbook, district/school newsletters, etc.

If you wish to opt-out regarding the use of your child's name or image for school district and/or media purposes, please sign the Student Information Release Agreement form and return completed form to your school. This restriction is valid for one year and a new agreement must be signed for each school year.

Textbooks

Textbooks are furnished by the school district. Lost or damaged books must be paid for by the student to whom they were checked out. The school will charge an appropriate replacement fee for textbooks, workbooks or library books lost or destroyed by students.

Visitors

All district school buildings are secured during the school day. For the safety of the students and staff, all exterior doors are locked during the school day except for the main entrance.

Individuals wishing to visit the school during the school day should adhere to the following expectations:

- All visitors, including parents/guardians must first sign in at the main office, show their photo ID and receive a visitor badge.
- Visitors must coordinate with the classroom teacher, secretary or administrator to schedule a visit. Visitors are asked not to loiter in/or around the buildings, without purpose, to avoid interrupting the academic flow of the school day.
- When requesting to eat lunch with your child, due to space restrictions, parents/guardians need to call the main office and reserve a spot to eat lunch with your child.
- Adult visitors are role models in our buildings and should abide by all school and district rules and codes of conduct.

- All visitors must sign out in the office upon departure from the building.
- Visitors who have not received permission from the office to be in the building will be asked to leave the premises. Failure to comply will be considered trespassing and the police will be contacted if necessary.
- Should an attempt be made by an unauthorized person to remove a child from school, the principal will immediately notify the custodial parent/guardian and contact the police if necessary.

As a guest in our building, it is expected that visitors remain in visual contact with a school employee when with students. For the protection of our students, as well as our visitors, it is expected that visitors refrain from physical contact with our students and do not discipline them.

Unauthorized Visitors

The Trespassing statute (MN Stat. 609.609) contains a provision making it a gross misdemeanor for a group of three or more persons to be found in the school building after 2:50 PM unless the persons:

- Are enrolled students or their parent(s)/ guardian(s);
- Have reported to the school office or have permission to be in the building;
- Are attending an event to which the public is or the individuals are invited.

Students who are in the building after 2:50 PM may be given a "No Trespassing" letter issued by the school. The letter will state that the student(s) are not to be on school grounds without their parent or permission from the administration for up to one calendar year from the time the ticket is issued. Consequently, students who are caught trespassing will receive a ticket by the police and may receive school consequences for the violation. Consequences may vary depending on the situation.

Family Communications

South St. Paul Public Schools places a high value on the connections we have with students, families and the community. We communicate in a variety of ways to help grow these important relationships. Families who do not have internet access should contact their respective schools to arrange to receive information in other ways.

Website

The district website (sspps.org) is your primary source for news and updates, information about academic programming, school board policies and meeting information, links to school and Community Education program websites, easy access to the portal and more.

Newsletters

Each school and often teachers, send an electronic newsletter to families on varying schedules to keep families in the loop on what is happening. Additionally, the district publishes the following newsletters:

- **SSPPS District eNews -** A monthly electronic newsletter containing information and stories sent to all district families via email the Wednesday following a SSPPS School Board business meeting.
- **Six Times -** A printed newsletter mailed to all residents in the district and to families who open-enroll into SSPPS four times each year.

If you do not receive the District eNews to your inbox and would like to sign up for it. An electronic form can be found at: www.sspps.org/dept/comms.

School Newsletters

Weekly newsletters are sent on Fridays by each school. These newsletters include upcoming events, reminders, and resources for families. It also includes important messages from the principal specific to your student's school. *This is the primary school-wide communication to all families.*

Social media

Stay connected to SSPPS through social media!

Like our Facebook page (/SSPPS6) to see news, photos, videos, events and emergency notifications.

Follow us on X (formerly Twitter) (@SSPPS6) for district news and emergency notifications, real-time updates and more.

Follow us on Instagram (@SSPPS6) to get a glimpse of the student experience and achievements and quick stories of life in SSPPS.

Subscribe to the SSPPS YouTube channel (SouthStPaulSchools) to be the first to see district produced videos and watch school board meetings.

Connect with us on LinkedIn (South-St-Paul-Public-Schools) for professional news.

ParentSquare

The district uses the electronic notification system ParentSquare to send direct messages via email, voicemail, and/or text message to district families and staff. This system communicates emergency information quickly, as well as important messages, alerts, and reminders. Please make sure your contact information is up-to-date in the Campus Parent Portal. To update your contact information in the Campus Parent Portal, visit the Resources tab of the District's website.

With ParentSquare users can:

- Fine-tune notification settings for both school and district notifications so you receive them when it is most convenient for you
- See communications from all teachers and schools that your students are connected to, as well as the district, in the same place
- Direct message your student's teachers from your phone
- Report your student's absence
- Change your language settings and receive all messages in your preferred language

The best way to receive school alerts and communications is to download the app to your smartphone. Just search for "ParentSquare" in your app store.

StudentSquare

At the Secondary Building, students use StudentSquare, an add-on service through ParentSquare. High school students will use this for school and athletics, Middle school students will use it with athletics and activities. StudentSquare connects our staff with students in real time without the need to exchange personal information.

SSPPS uses for StudentSquare:

- Teachers may send reminders to students about classroom items- tests, homework, or resources
- Coaches can use it to communicate with their team
- Students can stay connected with information from the school
- Students can receive non-school day reminders and emergency closing notifications

Students will learn more about setting their accounts up from their connections teacher or coach/advisor at the beginning of the school year or season. If students have a smartphone there is an app to download. The app allows for students to receive real-time notifications without connecting personal information.

Peachjar eFlyers

SSPPS uses Peachjar, a digital flyer management system, to share community sponsored events, classes and activities for SSP students and families. Peachjar provides an innovative flyer management system that sends school-approved eflyers directly to parents' inboxes and posts them on schools websites, making it easy for parents to learn more about events, activities and programs offered to students. Each Wednesday and Friday, parents/guardians will be notified via email when the flyers are posted. They can then access the flyers through the email link or via each school's Peachjar page, a link can be found on the district and school's homepage. Learn more at www.sspps.org/dept/comms/peachjar.

Calendars

The district's online calendars have the most current information about important dates in the district and events at your students' schools. Customizable online calendars show the events that are most important to your family, which can be downloaded to your personal or mobile calendar. Find information on how to customize calendars for your devices at www.sspps.org/calendar.

Student Information Access

SSPPS uses technology tools to allow better utilization of the district's student information system and better access to online learning tools and classroom resources.

Infinite Campus

Infinite Campus is the student information system. This is where student schedules, report cards, etc. are located as well as your Parent Portal, where you can manage your Contact Information and Preferences. All families should have a Portal account to stay connected and to receive important messages from the District. Portal information is posted on the Resources and Parents/Family tabs of our website. If you need an Access Key to set-up your Portal account, contact your school office.

Schoology

The district's learning management system for grades 6-12. Students and teachers use Schoology for assignments, daily gradebook, and standards mastery reporting. Parents must have their Campus Parent Portal account set-up prior to gaining access to Schoology. Information regarding parent Schoology accounts is posted on the click on the Schoology link in the quick link on the District website homepage.

Student/Family Support

SSPPS understands the importance of parent and family involvement in schools and its contribution to student success. To help engage and support families, the following support services are available.

Cultural Liaisons

Our cultural liaisons help to make sure all of SSPPS families feel welcome and heard at our schools and the district is able to communicate well with families about their school, learning and student progress. Additionally, the liaisons serve to reduce language and cultural barriers so that all of our students can thrive and know they have a team of support around them. Visit your school office or our website at www.sspps.org/academics/equity for more information.

Language Access Plan

South St. Paul Public Schools is committed to equitable communication with all families. The district's Language Access Plan provides interpretation and translation services to ensure families can access information, participate in their child's education, and engage fully in school programs, regardless of their preferred language. View the full plan on the website: www.sspps.org/dept/ed-services/interpretation-translation.

Translation & Interpretation

The district provides translation and interpretation services to meet families' language needs at school and with district-related programs or communications. If you would like language assistance with a message you have received; an interpreter for a school meeting, conference or phone call; or want to know more about the district's translation and interpretation services, visit your school office or our website at www.sspps.org/dept/ed-services/interpretation-translation.

SSPPS Licensed School Counselors

Licensed School Counselors help every student thrive academically, emotionally, and socially. In partnership with students, staff, family, the school counselors strive to prepare students to become effective learners, achieve success in school, live successful and rewarding lives, and develop into contributing members of our society. The goal is that each and every student builds the skills they need to be successful in the classroom and beyond. Visit the Student/Family Support Webpage to see the school counselor for your student's school www.sspps.org/support/student.

SSPPS School Psychologists

SSPPS Licensed School Psychologists work as the lead of the multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) model at each school. They ensure assessment practices are applied across all levels of the system for a deeper understanding of each student's needs for academic and social-emotional success. They work closely with staff, students, and families to conduct special education evaluation and support teachers in addressing needs of students who may have a disability. Visit the Student/Family Support Webpage to see the school psychologists for your student's school www.sspps.org/support/student.

SSPPS School Social Workers

The role of a SSPPS School Social Worker is to assist students, families, and staff with methods and resources to address issues contributing to achievement, social emotional adjustment, and attendance in school. Licensed social workers are available to intervene in problematic behaviors in early stages to address outside challenges that may be contributing to the problematic behavior. Visit the Student/Family Support Webpage to see the school social workers for your student's school www.sspps.org/support/student.

SSPPS Family Support Workers

In addition to cultural liaisons, the district's partnership with 360 Communities provides Family Support Workers at each school to help families find and access community resources to help with the challenges of raising a family today - everything from food and finances to getting connected with activities, volunteering, counseling and other specific needs based resources. Learn more atwww.sspps.org/support/student.

HELPme App



SSPPS partners with STOPit Solutions to bring HELPme, a 24/7/365 technology platform, into our school community. HELPme is designed to provide invaluable assistance to our students, families, and staff, offering a private and accessible way to access a wide array of resources and support. Users can make anonymous requests and reports through the app or web-based platform. The best way to use the tool is to download the app. Search for HELPme in the Google Play or Apple App store. Once downloaded, searching for our schools in the app or on the web-based platform use the access code: SSPpackers. To learn more about HELPme or to find a link to download the app visit: www.sspps.org/support/helpme.

Educational Benefits

Educational Benefits and Other Benefits for Families

All SSPPS families are asked to complete or opt out of the Application for Educational Benefits, regardless of income or eligibility. A new application must be submitted each year. By completing the application and if you qualify, your student and family may be eligible for a variety of discounts through SSPPS like free/reduced athletic/activity fees as well as many other discounts such as:

- Internet Services
- Phone Services
- MTC Bus Passes/Lime Access
- Science Museum of Minnesota
- Minnesota Children's Museum
- SUN bucks (Summer EBT)
- Amazon Prime
- YMCA; and much more

In addition to the benefits your student and family may receive, families also have the potential to help SSPPS. For each qualifying application, SSPPS receives thousands of dollars in state and federal revenue.

For more information on available discounts for qualifying families and the different ways you can complete an Application for Educational Benefits, visit the District's website at www.sspps.org/dept/nutrition/ed-benefits or contact our Student Nutrition Office at (651) 457-9456.

Educational Benefits- Additional Information

- All SSPPS families are asked to complete the Application for Educational Benefits regardless of income or eligibility. Applications for Educational Benefits are approved annually.
    - If your family was approved in the 2025-26 school year, you will need to reapply to ensure no disruption of benefits for the 2025-26 school year.
    - NOTE: If at any time during the school year your family income status changes (e.g. laid-off, furlough, government shutdown, seasonal work) you are encouraged to complete a new application for educational benefits.
- Milk alone is not provided for free even if a student qualifies for meal benefits- Milk can be purchased for $.50.
- Foster children who are the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court are eligible for Educational Benefits regardless of household income. Please complete an application identifying the children who are in foster care.
- Children in households participating in WIC may be eligible for Educational Benefits. Please fill out an Application for Educational Benefits.
- You may apply if someone in your household is not a U.S. citizen.
- Include all people living in the household in the application, related or not (e.g., grandparents, other relatives or friends)
- If your income is not always the same, list the amount you normally get. If you normally get overtime, include it, but if you get overtime only occasionally, ***do not*** include it. You may provide your annual income amount.
- Information you provide on the form, and your child's approval for educational benefits, will be protected as private data. More information on the back of the application.
- Information given in the application will be verified, you may be asked to provide written documentation.

Students of those families who qualify for educational benefits also receive financial assistance for participation in activities and athletics. Your approval letter can also qualify for household discounts on some services and activities throughout the state of Minnesota. For more information, see district website at www.sspps.org/dept/nutrition/ed-benefits.

Food & Nutrition

It is the goal of Nutrition Services to provide delicious, nutritious meals to all students. Student Nutrition is an important part of the school day. All South St. Paul Public Schools participate in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program. Our district provides a wide variety of meals that meet or exceed the Federal and State guidelines for nutrition. Our goal is to help teach healthy eating habits and enhance learning as well as maintain the financial integrity of the National School Breakfast and Lunch programs. Menus are available online at https://www.sspps.org/menus. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Healthy Breakfast

A breakfast meal consists of whole grains, meat/meats alternates, a variety of fruit/juice and milk. Students must take a fruit along with 2 other items to receive breakfast at no cost.

- Elementary Students have access to a Grab N' Go breakfast that they will take to the classroom to eat.

Each student is allowed one breakfast per day at no cost. 2nd meals or a la carte items will be available for purchase. Purchases may only be made if the student has money in their meal account.

Healthy Lunch

A lunch meal consists of Meats/Meat Alternates, Grains, Fruits, Vegetables and Milk. Students must take a fruit or vegetable along with 2 of the other components that make up a meal to receive lunch at no cost.

Elementary school Students are provided a choice between 2 different entrees. All schools offer a variety of fruits, vegetables and milk with every lunch. 2nd meals or a la carte items will be available for purchase. Purchases may only be made if the student has money in their meal account.

Student Meal Prices

Meal	Cost
Breakfast (includes milk)	FREE
Lunch (includes milk)	FREE
Milk	$0.50
Students receive one free breakfast and lunch per day. Additional meals are purchased at full cost as noted below.	
Additional Breakfast	$2.25
Additional Lunch	$5.00

(Note: Meal costs may be adjusted as directed by the state and federal government. Visit the nutrition services webpage by clicking here for the most recent information.)

Student PIN Numbers

All SSPPS students and staff will use a Meal PIN for school meals. Elementary students will receive their Meal PIN either at the Open House held before school starts or in their classrooms on the first day of school.

The Meal PIN will belong to a student for as long as he/she is enrolled in our district. This number will not change if a student switches between elementary buildings or when they move to the secondary building. Secondary students who are at an elementary building during their lunch period will be able to purchase lunch by using their Meal PIN.

Online Meal Account

SchoolCafé is the online program for school meal payments and application for educational benefits. SchoolCafé provides a number of key features you will find beneficial including:

- View your student's school meal account balance
- Review daily spending and purchases
- Access from any computer 24/7
- Low balance email reminders
- Automatic payments

Families will need to create an account with SchoolCafé. Instructions are available on the district website under SchoolCafé - Student Meal Payment System. Learn more about SchoolCafé at https://www.schoolcafe.com/southstpaul.

Interactive Online Menus

SSPPS students and families can access interactive meal menus online through their SchoolCafé account. User friendly drop-down boxes allow access to great nutritional and allergen information of food options provided at each school. Users are able to click on menu items to see detailed descriptions and nutrient information.

Equitable Lunch Protocols

While the district holds parents/guardians accountable for paying their unpaid lunch balances, students will never be denied a regular school breakfast or lunch meal because of negative account balances. The district is committed to working with families to continue to provide nutritious meals for all Students.

Parents/guardians may sign up to receive low balance notifications via email in SchoolCafé. For additional questions about account balances or activity, or to apply for educational benefits, visit the district website www.sspps.org/dept/nutrition/ed-benefits or contact the Nutrition Services Department at (651) 457-9477.

Secondary Closed Campus

All lunch periods will have closed campus. Students are to remain in the cafeteria until their lunch period ends. Food may not be ordered or delivered to South St. Paul Secondary.

Health Services & Wellness

Immunization Requirements

FOR NEWLY ENROLLED STUDENTS AND THOSE ENTERING KINDERGARTEN AND 7TH GRADE

SSPPS has a NO SHOT- NO SCHOOL policy in compliance with Minnesota School Immunization Law. State law requires students entering early childhood programs, kindergarten, 7th grade, 12th grade, and those newly enrolled to SSPPS to show proof of required immunizations or to file legal exemptions from immunizations with the school. Families will be contacted if immunization information is needed in order for their child to attend school. Updated or new immunization information should be sent to the school health office as soon as possible to allow time for processing.

Many clinics in Dakota County provide immunizations at low or no-cost to children without insurance through the Minnesota Vaccines for Children (MnVFC) Program. Contact your clinic to find out if they participate in that program. In addition, the Dakota County Public Health Department also provides immunizations for children of all ages without insurance at their walk-in clinics and by appointment. These clinics also serve children on Minnesota health care plans including MA, MNCare or PMAP. Children under 18 years of age must be accompanied by an adult.

Call the Immunization Information Line from Public Health, at 952-891-7999 (English and Spanish) for current information about immunizations.

On-Site Health Services

The Mission of SSP Health Services is to promote optimum health status to strengthen educational potential for all students. School Health Services provides care that promotes students' academic success by:

- Managing chronic health care conditions
- Providing interventions that return students to class
- Lessening the number of students sent home
- Shortening illness-related absences
- Identifying health-related barriers and referring for appropriate care
- Providing health screenings such as vision and hearing
- Promoting a safe and healthy school environment

A Licensed School Nurse (LSN) or Registered Nurse (RN) is on staff at each district school building during regular school hours. Nursing care is provided for students who become ill or injured during the school day, need medications or treatments, or have other medical needs. If your child has a health condition that requires medical attention during the school day, please contact the Health Office to arrange a conference to discuss how these needs can be met during school hours.

Illness

Students should not come to school if they have had:

- A fever of 100.0 degrees or more, the student must stay home for 24 hours after the temperature returns to normal without fever reducing medication such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen;
- Has vomited or had diarrhea, the student must home until 24 hours after the last episode;
- Has had any rash that may be disease-related or the cause is unknown, check with your health care provider before sending the student to school;
- When a student is out with an illness call the school daily to report the absence.

Notify the Health Office if your child develops a communicable disease (e.g. strep throat, chickenpox, head lice, impetigo, scarlet fever, pink eye, etc.). Note: If you take your child in for a throat culture, DO NOT send them back to school until the results are negative, or they have been on an antibiotic for 12 hours.

Other Health and Wellness Guidelines

- Please send a note from the doctor if your child has any activity limitations or will need to remain out of physical education for more than three days.
- Children should be dressed appropriately for the season and specific weather
- If your child has an accident in which their clothing has obvious blood or other bodily fluids on it, the parent will be asked to bring in a change of clothing if none is available in the Health Office. This is to keep other students and staff safe from potential contact with possible blood transmitted pathogens.
- It is important that your child eat a nutritious breakfast every day. NOTE: Free breakfast is available for all students prior to the start of school.
- Please read communicable diseases notifications emailed or sent home with students and follow recommendations for each specific illness.

If your child becomes ill or is seriously injured during the school day, the Health Office will notify the parent/guardian so arrangements can be made for your child to be taken home. Emergency contact information must be kept current, to include home, parent/guardian work, and daycare phone numbers. A note or phone call to the School Office about a change in work or home phone numbers is important. You can also update this information yourself through your Campus Parent Portal. Students will not be released unless accompanied by a responsible adult. It is expected that students will be picked up within one hour of the call to the parent/guardian.

Children with Chronic Health Conditions

Families should consult with the Licensed School Nurse if they have a child with a diagnosed chronic health condition such as asthma, diabetes, seizures, or severe allergies. The nurse, student, and family will work with the child's health care provider to establish a health plan that will assist school staff in understanding and accommodating the student's health needs.

Health Concerns Shared with Transportation Company

If a student's health concern information is not to be shared with the contracted transportation company, the parent/guardian is obligated to notify the District. Questions should be directed to the school nurse.

Medication

Some students may require prescription and non-prescription medication during the school day. Medication may only be administered by a licensed school nurse or delegated trained school personnel. District procedures and Minnesota State guidelines require the following:

- Each year, at the beginning of the new school year, a form must be completed and placed on file with the school nurse for any student to receive any medication or medical treatments during school hours. New forms are required whenever there are changes in medications, dosages or times medication is to be given.
- ALL medications need to be FDA approved. If there is a question about FDA approval, parents/guardians are to check with the Licensed School Nurse.
- Medication may only be administered by a Registered Nurse (RN) or Licensed School Nurse (LSN), or in the absence of the nurse, a health assistant or someone designated by the school nurse.
- Medication to be given in schools must be supplied in the original prescription bottle. The pharmacist should prepare a container of the medicine with the appropriate labeling for school use.
- Written parent permission AND written physician orders are required for all prescription medications and procedures, including oxygen to be given in school. Over the counter medications require written authorization from the parent only: unless the student is 18 years or older. The medication administration must be at the discretion of the Licensed School Nurse. Forms are available in the Health Office and online at www.sspps.org/dept/health.
- All medication must be accompanied by specific instructions, including student name, medication name, dosage, time of day, and length of time needed. Medications should be given at home whenever possible.
- All medicine will be kept in a locked area or cabinet and dispensed in the health office, except in special circumstances, which must be approved by the school nurse.
- For the safety of all students, it is recommended that parents bring their child's medication to the health office directly. If this cannot be done, we require a phone call to the health office alerting the staff of the amount and date the medication was sent.
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of students requesting that any prescription or over the counter medication be administered during school hours by school personnel are required to provide:
  - A written parental release for the administration of medication,
  - A signed statement from the licensed prescriber stating the name, dose, and frequency of the medication to be given,
  - Medication in the original container or pharmacy-labeled container

Self-Carry Medication

Doctors' orders and Licensed School Nurse authorization are needed for students to self-carry medication at school. An authorization/agreement form is available in the Health Office.

Medical Devices

Medical devices (crutches, wheelchairs, neck braces, arm/leg slings, etc) need to be provided by the family or physician and require a doctor's note indicating restrictions and length of use.

Health Screening

If a vision or hearing screening is warranted, the district may provide the appropriate screening. If a parent/guardian does not want their child screened they need to contact the school nurse to opt out.

Do Not Resuscitate/Do Not Intubate (DNR-DNI) Orders

When any student experiences sudden illness or injury, the role of an employee is to render emergency health care to preserve life and prevent disability. In life-threatening emergencies, the emergency medical system (911) will be activated. Per District Policy 518, district staff will not accept or honor requests to withhold emergency care or DNR-DNI orders. The school district will not convey such orders to emergency medical personnel. Notwithstanding this school district policy, IEP and Section 504 teams must develop individualized medical emergency care plans for students when appropriate in accordance with state and federal law.

Medical, Health & Accident Insurance

The district does not purchase medical, health, or accident insurance for students. If a student has an accident, becomes ill, or is injured while at school or participating in district-sponsored activities, families will need to access their own insurance plans to cover any associated costs (e.g. medical care, emergency transportation). The district cannot pay these associated costs.

Legal Notifications

SSPPS is required to inform parents/guardians and school employees of the following notifications.

Health and Safety Notifications

Asbestos

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) requires that the district notifies building occupants annually regarding asbestos-related activities. Until the late 1970s, asbestos was commonly used in building materials, such as floor tile, fireproofing, and insulation. In the late 1980s, all school buildings were inspected for asbestos-containing building materials by EPA-accredited inspectors. Based on the results of these inspections, management plans were developed for each school where asbestos was found. AHERA also requires that districts conduct periodic surveillance inspections every six months to evaluate the condition of asbestos-containing materials, and to re-inspect buildings every three years to re-quantify all remaining asbestos-containing materials.

Indoor Air Quality

To help maintain our healthy school environment and comply with requirements established by the Minnesota Department of Education, SSPPS has developed and implemented an Indoor Air Quality Management Plan. Inspections of district buildings are performed regularly to detect problems and help prevent future problems from occurring. General information regarding school indoor air quality is also available from the Department of Health at www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/air/schools/

Lead in Drinking Water

SSPPS conducts Lead in Drinking Water testing per the Minnesota Department of Health's "Reducing Lead in Drinking Water: A Technical Guidance for Minnesota's Schools" publication, and Minnesota Statute 121A.335. If results of any test are over the EPA-established action level for lead, the affected fixtures are taken out of service, repaired, or replaced, and then re-tested to verify the repair or replacement was effective. Some fixtures are not meant for drinking water, like bathroom sinks, custodial slop sinks, lab sinks, or most hose connections, so those are not routinely tested. Please only take drinking water from hallway water fountains and bottle fillers, break room sinks, elementary classroom water fountains, or other fixtures that are clearly meant for drinking water.

Pesticides/Herbicides Application

As needed, SSPPS applies certain pesticides and herbicides on school property. To be notified prior to pesticide or herbicide application, contact the Buildings and Grounds Department.

Herbicides

Because of such variables as weather, it is difficult to predict the day on which herbicides will be applied. The district generally applies only one herbicide (i.e. dandelion preventer). It is applied twice yearly in June and August, during times when there is no scheduled use of the affected area.

Pesticides
Because the district applies pesticides only on an as-needed basis, it is likewise difficult to predict exactly when they will be applied. The district contracts with a pest elimination service to inspect each building monthly. Category IV pesticides are applied only in affected areas, on average twice per year in each building, and always on non-school days. Category IV pesticides are in the least harmful category, and are not regulated by state notification laws.

More Information
Testing and reports are public information. You can receive a copy or learn more about the health and safety notifications in this handbook by contacting the SSPPS Buildings and Grounds Office at (651) 457-9431 or mfenton@sspps.org.

Educational Program Notifications

Title I
As Title I schools, we must meet federal rules related to teacher qualifications as defined in Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). These rules allow you to learn more about your child's teachers' training and credentials. We are happy to provide this information to you. At any time, parents/guardians have the right to:

- Request information on the qualifications of your student's teacher and whether or not the teacher received an emergency or conditional teaching certificate through which state qualifications were waived
- Know if your student is being taught for more than four consecutive weeks by a teacher not licensed in the area of instruction
- See progress reports for their student and school
- Ask whether your child receives help from a paraprofessional and information about that paraprofessional's qualifications
- Ask for a meeting with your school's principal or student's teacher at anytime

504 Plans
Section 504 is part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Section 504 protects individuals from discrimination based upon their disability. The South St. Paul Schools, through its policies and practices, follows the nondiscriminatory procedures of Section 504. Parents wishing information concerning 504 planning should contact, Director of Student Services at (651) 457-9481.

Homebound Instruction
The school district provides instruction for students who have documented medical conditions that require the student to be confined to their home. A note from a medical authority must be provided with written verification confining the student to the home for a specific amount of time. A teacher will be assigned to the student and one-hour of instruction will be provided for each school day.

Pledge of Allegiance
Students may recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America one or more times each week. Pursuant to Minn. Stat. §121A.11, subdivision 3(c), anyone who does not wish to participate in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance for any personal reasons may elect not to do so. Students and school employees must respect another person's right to make that choice.

Statement of Family/Student Rights
Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, the Confidentiality of Information section of the regulations implementing the Education for all Handicapped Children Act of 1975, and the Data Management Policy of Independent School District (Policy 515) parent(s) or legal guardian(s), and eligible students have the following rights:

- The right, if asked to provide private or confidential data, to be informed of:
  - The purpose and intended use of the data within the school system
  - Whether he/she may refuse or is legally required to supply the requested data
  - Any known consequences data
  - The identity of other persons or entities authorized by state or federal law to receive the data.
- The right to inspect and review the student's education record
- The right to explanations and interpretations of the record
- The right to have a representative of the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or eligible student inspects and reviews the records
- The right to exercise a limited control over other people's access to the student's education record
- The right to seek to correct the student's education record; in a hearing if necessary
- The right to report violations of the rules and regulations, cited above, to the Department of Education

Students Experiencing Homelessness

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, part of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), ensures educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness. To ensure that these children have access to educational programs, school districts are required to implement transportation provisions. School districts must within reason provide students experiencing homelessness with transportation to and from their school of origin. If you have questions about the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, contact the office of Student Services, at (651) 457-9481.

Enrollment Information

Families new to the South St. Paul Public Schools (SSPPS) can enroll online at www.sspps.org/enroll. On this site you will find information about enrollment, school attendance boundaries, open enrollment, intradistrict transfer, free/reduced meals, and child care. Have questions or need help enrolling? Email our Enrollment Specialist at enrollsspps@sspps.org for help enrolling or to learn about additional programs and services available to you and your family.

Open Enrollment

Families residing outside of South St. Paul Public Schools are able to enroll in SSPPS through Minnesota's Statewide Enrollment program. Learn more at SSP Open Enrollment.

Family Involvement

South St. Paul Public Schools is strongest when the ideas, energy and voices of all stakeholders are included in planning and decision-making. Throughout the year there are many ways for you to be involved with the school district.

In alignment with the district's strategic priorities, the district is continuing to place a strong emphasis in 2026-27 to help build engagement with staff, students, and family/community. Watch for these and other opportunities to be announced on school and district websites and through various school and district communication channels.

Parent-Teacher Associations and Advisory Groups

Family involvement at the school level is positively related to a student's achievement and success. In our elementary schools, Parent/Teacher Associations (PTA) meet monthly in each building. See the principal's weekly newsletter and the District calendar for details. All parent(s)/guardian(s) are welcome and encouraged to attend. There are also Advisory Groups families can join to give feedback and help guide the district and departments in their decisions. Contact your school office or visit www.sspps.org/get-involved to see the many ways you can be involved.

Partnerships

Working in partnership is a key component to the South St. Paul Public School's mission, and it is one of the five primary initiatives of our strategic plan to leverage local resources to meet student needs. The power of partnership is in its ability to serve as a multiplier for the involved parties, providing greater benefit together rather than working alone. Learn more about district partners at https://www.sspps.org/partnerships.

School Resource Officers

South St. Paul Public Schools partners with the South St. Paul Police Department to include two School Resource Officers (SROs) in our schools during the school year. Their office is located at the Secondary Building, but the officers travel to the other buildings periodically. The purpose of the School Resource Officers is:

- **Enhanced Safety and Security:** SROs provide a visible law enforcement presence on the school campus which can deter potential threats and respond quickly to emergencies, ensuring the safety of our students and staff.
- **Builds Positive Relationships:** SROs can foster positive relationships between students and law enforcement, promoting trust and understanding, and serving as role models and mentors.

Volunteers and Chaperones

Volunteers/Chaperones are welcomed and encouraged in SSPPS. Volunteer opportunities are determined and communicated by building/department administration and/or the classroom teacher. All volunteers and chaperones are required to complete a Volunteer Application Form and complete a background check each school year. These checks are only kept on record for the current school year. You can receive a form and background check consent at your student's school office. The fee for the background check is paid by the district. Please be proactive, it can take a week or more for the background check to be completed.

SSPPS Community Education

South St. Paul Community Education provides inspiring and motivating high quality opportunities for lifelong learning, leadership development, and citizen engagement while advancing equity and eliminating disparities for our community. Community Education provides resources that help people from newborns through adults of all ages raise the quality of life in their communities. If you are an individual, local organization, or business that is interested in bettering our community through community education, please contact our office. We are always looking for new class offerings. For more information, call (651) 306-3632 or visit https://communityed.sspps.org/.



Early Education

The Early Learning/Family Center ECFE offers high-quality education opportunities for families with children from birth through age five. New baby classes, parent education, inclusive preschool programming and kindergarten readiness are all part of serving the district's youngest learners.



Youth Programs

A variety of fun and educational activities are offered through Kids' Choice school-age care (gr. K-5 school year), Kids' Choice Summer program (gr.K-7 in the fall) and enrichment classes (grades K-12). These opportunities are available before and after school, on many school release days, and all summer.



Adult Programs

Lifelong learners thrive. They are happier, healthier and more connected. Our programs, including adult enrichment, Access adults with disabilities programs, older adult programming, and Adult Education (ABE) all provide opportunities for adults to continue learning and following their passion.



SSP Senior Center

The South St. Paul Senior Center promotes and provides opportunities in the area of socialization, recreation, education, and health to residents age 55 and up. Annual membership includes senior center activities, free senior lap swim (65+) during scheduled days/times and senior fitness class pricing (65+).

SSP School Board

The care, management and control of the schools is vested by statutory and constitutional authority in the school board. The school board shall carry out the mission of the school district with diligence, prudence, and dedication to the ideals of providing the finest public education. The SSP School Board strives for excellence in governance, operates in partnership with the Superintendent, who strives for excellence in management, and both partner for excellence in consultation with staff, students, families, and the public.

The SSP School Board meets twice per month. Work Session meetings are open to the public and begin at 5:00 pm. The second Monday of month, the work session will be held at the SSPPS District Office (104 5th Ave S). The fourth Monday of the month, the work session will be held at SSP City Hall (125 - 3rd Avenue North). Business Meetings take place the fourth Monday of the month and are open to the public. Meetings begin at 6:00 pm at SSP City Hall (125 - 3rd Avenue N). Meetings can be viewed in person, on television, or web-streamed visit for more: https://www.sspps.org/about/school-board/meetings.

Current Board Members



Anne Claflin
aclaflin@sspps.org



Paul Cumings
pcumings@sspps.org



TBD
tbd@sspps.org



Tim Felton
tfelton@sspps.org



Wendy Felton
wfelton@sspps.org



Kim Humann
khumann@sspps.org



Monica Weber
mweber@sspps.org

Student School Board Representative

The South St. Paul School Board has made it a priority to increase opportunities for student voices in their work. One of those ways is through the Student School Board Representative. Representatives serve as the liaison between the School Board and our students. They work closely with the Board to provide input and share student perspectives. Each spring students who will be in 11th or 12th grade the following school year are encouraged to apply. Two or Three representatives are chosen each year. The 2026-27 Student Board Representatives are:

- Josie Albin
- Sophia Arrivillaga
- Monica Schmidt

District Directory

District Office
104 5th Avenue South
Phone: (651) 457-9400
Fax: (651) 457-9485
www.sspps.org

Transportation
Phone: (651) 457-9474
www.sspps.org/dept/transportation

Nutrition Services
Phone: (651) 457-9429
www.sspps.org/dept/nutrition

Student Services
Phone: (651) 457-9481
www.sspps.org/dept/student-services

Parent Tech Help
Phone: (651) 457-9458
ParentTechHelp@sspps.org

Community Education & Adult Basic Education
Jeanne Zehnder, Director
Central Square Community Center
100 7th Avenue North
Phone: (651) 306-3632
Fax: (651) 457-9485
Español: (651) 306-3644
communityed.sspps.org

Early Learning & Early Childhood Screening
Kristen Sammartano-Weeks, Coordinator
Family Education Center
104 5th Avenue South
Phone: (651) 457-9418
Fax: (651) 457-9485
earlylearning.sspps.org
Office Hours: 7:00 am - 4:00 pm

Community Learning Center Information

CLC Administration

Building Administrator
Robin Schwab
651-306-3686
rschwab@sspps.org

Student Support Specialist
Anna Randt
651-457-9433
arandt@sspps.org

Program Assistant
Kelly Krosting
651-306-3670
kelly.krosting@sspps.org



710 19th Ave N
Phone: (651) 450-9966
Attendance: (651) 450-9966
School Hours: 7:45 am - 2:20 pm

After School Program: 2:30 - 4:00 pm (Mon-Wed)
clc.sspps.org

SSP Secondary Information

700 N 2nd Street
Phone: (651) 457-9408
Fax: (651) 457-9455

Attendance: (651) 457-9415
SecAttend@sspps.org

School Hours: 7:50 am – 2:30 pm
Drop-off Students: 7:30 – 7:50 am
Pick-up Students: 2:30 pm – 2:45 pm

Middle School

middleschool.sspps.org

Administration

Middle School Principal
Leah Bourg
651-306-3659
lbourg@sspps.org

Assistant Principal
Nimo Hadji
651-457-9405
nhadji@sspps.org

Principal's Admin Asst.
Joleen Macioch
651-457-9410
jmacioch@sspps.org

Dean of Students
John Raasch
jraasch@sspps.org

School Couselor
Luke Riesgraf
651-306-3693
luke.riesgraf@sspps.org

School Couselor
Shannon Smith
651-306-3688
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Multicultural Liaison
(habla español)
Ana Cuate-Pacheco
651-457-9490
acuate-pacheco@sspps.org

American Indian Cultural Liaison (habla español)
Niizhoogabaw Wahpepah
651-228-5916
nwahpepah@sspps.org

Secondary Health Office

Licensed School Nurse
TBD
651-457-9449

Health Office Assistants
TBD
651-457-9476



High School

highschool.sspps.org

Administration

High School Principal
Chuck Ochocki
651-457-9402
cochocki@sspps.org

Assistant Principal
Angela Ryter
651-457-9435
aryter@sspps.org

Principal's Admin Asst.
Joleen Macioch
651-457-9410
jmacioch@sspps.org

Dean of Students
TBD
651-457-9433
tbd@sspps.org

School Couselor
(Last names A-K)
Paige Levendusky
651-457-9487
plevendusky@sspps.org

School Couselor
(Last names L-Z)
Jelena Maric
651-306-3654
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Multicultural Liaison
(habla español)
Delia Granados
651-306-3665
dgranados@sspps.org

American Indian Cultural Liaison
Niizhoogabaw Wahpepah
651-228-5916
nwahpepah@sspps.org

Athletics and Activities Office

Sports Hotline 651-457-9419

Activities Director & Assistant Principal
Brady Krueger
651-457-9417
bkrueger@sspps.org

Activities Admin Asst.
Kris Nihart
651-457-9462
knihart@sspps.org

Student Success

Families and schools are partners in education. We all need to work together to ensure that students gain the most from their high school experience.

Students will

- Attend school on time every day.
- Respect themselves, their teachers and classmates, and be a cooperative learner.
- Prepare for class daily and complete homework on time.
- Give their best effort to school work and seek assistance when needed.
- Inform their parents/family about their school progress and other important information.

Families will

- Send students to school appropriately dressed, prepared to learn and on time every day.
- Provide a healthy home environment including adequate sleep, nutrition, and school supplies.
- Require a daily time for homework or study.
- Encourage and praise each student's learning efforts.
- Communicate with teachers and support their homework policies and classroom expectations.

Teachers will

- Have high expectations of success for all students.
- Provide a safe and positive learning environment.
- Teach and motivate students to the best of their abilities.
- Respect and address each student's individual needs and encourage individual talents.
- Communicate with parents regarding student progress and work cooperatively on student issues when needed.

Assistant Principal's Role

The assistant principals will be working with you in all aspects of your educational experience. They will work with all students to understand their strengths, weaknesses and to determine aptitudes, abilities, and interests. In addition, they can help with schedule changes, academic concerns and social issues.

The assistant principals also assist with a variety of issues that may be affecting your academic or emotional well-being. Appointments can be made in the main office, please call (651) 457-9408 to set appointments with the appropriate grade level assistant principal.

Arrival/Dismissal Information

Students should come in through doors #4 or #14 from 7:30-7:50. At 7:50, those doors will be locked, and then students should enter through door #7, sign-in, and receive a timed tardy slip that will let teachers know what time they entered the building.

Buses

Buses will drop off and pick up students along 3rd St N (near the Auditorium). Students will enter and exit through door #14. See the District Transportation map to see if your student qualifies for bus transportation /www.sspps.org/departments/transportation.

Bikes

Students are able to bike to school. There are bike racks located at door #4 along 2nd St N. Students may use these to lock their bike up during the day. The school district is not responsible for lost or stolen bikes.

Walkers

Student who walk may enter the building through doors #4 and #14. They may exit the building through any door when school is dismissed.

Family Drop Off/Pick Up

Families are asked to drop and pickup their students from door #4 along 2nd St N. Please do not loiter in front of the building when waiting to pick up your student. This causes a backup and impacts traffic along Marie Ave and 7th Ave S. When dropping students off please pull up as far as possible, let your student out and then move along to allow space for the next family. Students may also walk and meet you along adjacent streets.

Student Parking

Students are allowed to park on Kaposia Boulevard and on the south side of 3rd Street between 9th and 6th Avenues from 6:50 AM to 4:00 PM. Special School District #6 accepts NO responsibility for loss of personal property or damage to your car in the school parking lot. Keep your car locked and do not leave valuables in it. Vehicles that are illegally parked, parked outside of designated areas in the SSPS lot, may be booted ($30 – 1st offense, $60 – 2nd offense, $90 – 3rd offense). The fine must be paid before the boot will be removed. (See District Policy #527).

Secondary Drop-off & Pick-up Map

