



SIXTIMES

The Official Newsletter of Special School District No. 6

SPECIAL EDITION- OPERATIONAL LEVY 2022



FALL 2022

STUDENTS DISTRICT-WIDE HEAD BACK TO THE CLASSROOM

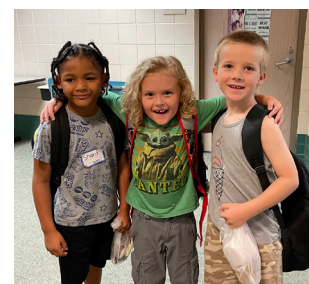
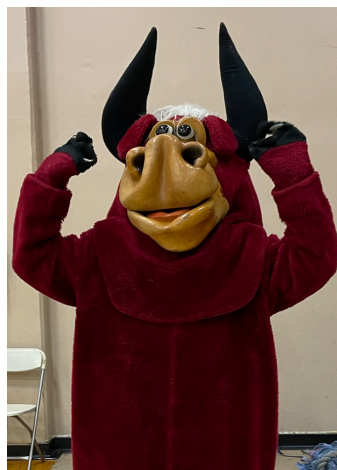
WELCOME TO THE 2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR!

South St. Paul Community,
I hope this message finds you doing well amidst the excitement of the start to the new school year. Even if you don't have kids in school, it's my hope you are still feeling the excitement of a new school year all around our community. From the fields, courts and pool filled with students, to our schools buzzing with activity, our youth are amazing and doing great things both in and out of the classroom.

In visiting our schools, I have been totally impressed with the engagement of our staff and students. All summer, our staff worked hard to prepare for the school year knowing that our students are still bouncing back from the impacts of the COVID pandemic. Their hard work has created safe and conducive learning spaces where our students can be the risk takers and inquirers, we all want them to be. This ties closely to our Packer **P.R.I.D.E.** theme for the year of **Perseverance and Resilience In Delivering Excellence**. One thing I have learned is that Packer Pride runs very deep and transcends throughout our entire community. It's that shared pride that makes South St. Paul the best place to live, work and be a student.

As you may have heard by now, our School Board approved two referendum questions to be on the November 8th ballot this fall. They took this action to avoid the continuation of ongoing budget shortfalls and avoid a potential financial cliff that is on the horizon when emergency federal COVID relief funding expires. The first question asks voters to revoke our current operating levy and to replace it with a new levy with

additional per student funding that will stabilize our budget and allow us to maintain current class sizes and programs. The second question seeks voter approval of an additional \$250 per student that the district will use for additional academic and mental health supports that are sorely needed after the pandemic. It will also help expand programming in the areas of college and career readiness and performing arts, all of which are areas that community members shared as high priorities in serving our students and providing them with an educational experience that compares with what is offered neighboring school districts. Informational materials can also be found on our website at www.sspps.org/levy2022.

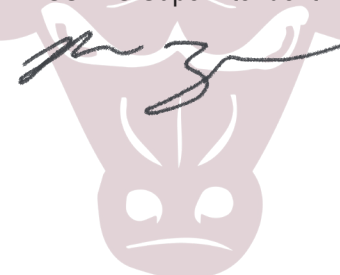


Also on the ballot this fall are four open seats on our School Board. We had a tremendous show of interest with 22 residents filing to run for these seats. This is a very important role for our district as our Board serves the role of governance, providing strategic direction for the district.

Knowing SSPPS is helping shape the future for our youth brings great pride amongst our staff. On behalf of our staff, thank you to all of our students, families, and our entire community for your partnership in this very important work. We are excited for what is sure to be a great year.



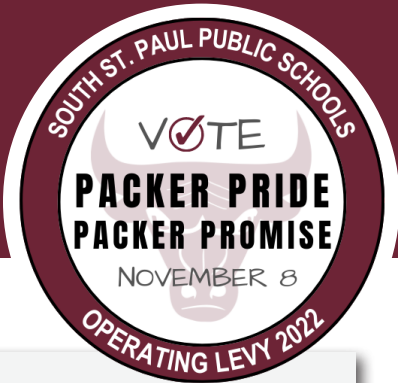
Dr. Brian Zambreno
SSPPS Superintendent



STAY CONNECTED!



SOUTH ST. PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOLS IS SEEKING AN INCREASE TO THE VOTER APPROVED OPERATING LEVY TO SUPPORT THE NEEDS OF OUR STUDENTS AND STAFF.



WHAT IS THE DISTRICT ASKING FOR?

South St. Paul Public Schools is asking community members to:

QUESTION #1

Approve an increase of \$900 per student. The additional funds will enable the district to:

- Maintain small class sizes
- Avoid the potentially devastating impact of substantial budget cuts to programs and staff

QUESTION #2

Approve an additional increase of \$250 per student that the district will use to:

- Invest in much-needed academic and mental health support for students
- Expand programming opportunities for students
- Increase career and college readiness courses and experiences

QUESTION #1 MUST PASS IN ORDER FOR QUESTION #2 TO PASS

BALLOT QUESTION	MONTHLY TAX IMPACT*
Question #1	\$29
Question #2	\$8
Total of Q1 and Q2	\$37

*This amount is based on the average SSP home (\$275,000 home value).



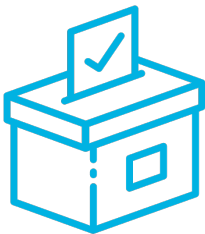
CALCULATE YOUR TAX IMPACT

Calculate the tax impact for your property, visit www.sspps.org/levy2022 (or scan the QR code) and use the Tax Impact Calculator.

WHERE DO I VOTE?

- Precinct 1: St. John Vianney Church (789 17th Ave. N)
- Precinct 2: First Presbyterian Church (535 20th Ave. N)
- Precinct 3: Luther Memorial Church (315 15th Ave. N)
- Precinct 4: Dakota County Museum (130 3rd Ave. N)
- Precinct 5: Kaposia Education Center (1225 1st Ave)

Find your precinct: <https://pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us/>



DID YOU KNOW?

Operating levies are all about the students

- Also called a learning levy.
- The money must be used for the day-to-day operations of schools and direct instruction and support for students.
- An operating levy can't be used for buildings or facilities.

State funding has not kept up with the increasing cost to run schools

- There are services we are required by law to provide to students that the state and federal government do not fully fund.

If the levy does not pass the district will face a \$2.7million financial shortfall

- For perspective: \$2.7 million is approximately 34 teachers.
- The district will engage in an in-depth process to identify the best path forward.

School districts are the only entity that needs voter approval for levy dollars

- The city and county are able to levy for what they need without voter approval.

The district has made intentional efforts to keep past budget reductions out of the classroom

- With few options left, additional reductions will unfortunately directly impact student learning and support.
- In 2021 and 2022 SSPPS refinanced existing debt that brought \$2.2 million in savings and reduced the financial burden to taxpayers.

COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

This past spring, SSPPS contracted with Morris-Leatherman to conduct a community survey to gather information from an even broader group of South St. Paul residents.



SURVEY RESPONDENTS SUPPORT AN INCREASE OF FUNDING FOR:



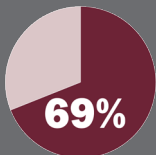
Mental, Social, and Emotional Health



Career and College Readiness



Student Achievement Support



Long-Term Financial Stability

QUESTIONS?



If you have any questions or need additional information about the school funding request, please reach out via one of the following ways:
Visit: www.sspps.org/levy2022
Email: levy@sspps.org

LESS LEVY FUNDING MEANS THE SCHOOL DISTRICT HAS LESS MONEY TO SUPPORT STUDENTS, STAFF, AND PROGRAMMING.



MAKING OUR COMMUNITIES BETTER

2022-23 CAREER AND COLLEGE READINESS KICKOFF

TriDistrict CAPS (Center for Advanced Professional Studies) programs started the school year with some BIG ideas around community building, and making our TriDistrict schools communities better places for everyone. All four CAPS programs (Business & Entrepreneurship, Computer Science/IT, Healthcare, and Transportation & Skilled Trades) convened September 7-9 for three afternoons of community and team-building, ice-breaking, and critical thinking and creative problem solving. More than 110 CAPS Associates (students) from the TriDistrict member high schools (South St. Paul, Simley, and Two Rivers) met at Evolve Workplace in West St. Paul.

The last two days, the students were a part of a "hack-a-thon" to close out the week. Facilitators from Reve Academy, along with TriDistric CAPS program leaders, led them through a Human-Centered Design workshop. CAPS students learned the basics of human-centered design and design-thinking. They then put their new skills into action with a design challenge of how to build, improve, and support a more positive and inclusive school culture at their home high schools. Programs will come together again later in the fall to revisit this work, and ultimately design, refine, and present these findings and proposals to their principals and school leaders.

The TriDistrict CAPS is a profession-based learning program that is a collaboration between South St. Paul, Inver Grove Heights, and West St. Paul - Mendota Heights - Eagan Schools. TriDistrict CAPS is a member of an international CAPS Network of programs that promote career exploration, professional skill development, and preparing students for the workplaces and careers of today and tomorrow. Interested in learning more, or finding out how you or your organization can be involved? Visit the TriDistrict CAPS website (<https://careercollegeready.org/>) for more information.



SOUTH ST. PAUL SCHOOLS DESIRED DAILY EXPERIENCE

South St. Paul Public Schools is seeking input from staff, students, and families about the desired daily experience in our district. At this year's opening days for staff, the week before school began, staff members worked in small teams to discuss the topic for each of the stakeholder groups. One of the tasks was to brainstorm and create lists of words to describe the feelings and experiences they want for every student, staff, and family member in their interactions with South St. Paul Schools.



The next step in the process is to engage with students and family members. Students in a variety of grade levels will be invited to provide their insights and ideas about the daily experiences they want and expect for themselves and their classmates. Be on the lookout for more information on how the community and SSPPS families can be involved in helping develop the desired daily experiences.



35TH ANNUAL WALKATHON

Thank you to everyone who participated in the South St. Paul Educational Foundation (SSPEF) Walkathon! This year more than \$18,800 was raised to support classrooms and the Foundation. The SSPEF helps support our schools by giving back to classrooms and students. Each year, fifty-percent of the Walkathon pledges students collect go directly back to their classroom or organization. The SSPEF also sponsors other district related events and last year awarded nearly \$500,000 in scholarships to graduating seniors. If you'd like to donate to the SSPEF you can do so on their website www.sspef.com.



SOUTH ST. PAUL HOMECOMING 2022



South St. Paul Public Schools
104 5th Avenue South
South St. Paul, MN 55075
sspps.org

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
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SOUTH ST. PAUL,
MN



SEPTEMBER 26-30

- Dress up days
- Coronation
- Pepfest
- Athletics
- Activities
- Backyard Games



PACKER PRIDE!



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South St. Paul, MN 55075



Scan to view
our current job
opportunities

WORK FOR SOUTH ST. PAUL SCHOOLS!

SSPPS is always looking for great
people to join our team.



LEA LOS SIXTIMES EN ESPAÑOL

Escanee el código QR para leer una versión
digital del Boletín Sixtimes de SSPPS en español.

FOLLOW OUR JOURNEY ON SOCIAL MEDIA:



/SSPPS6

#SSPpride



@SSPPS6

#SSPcares



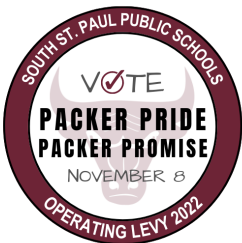
@SSPPS6

#SSPlearns

DID YOU KNOW SSPPS HAS AN OPERATIONAL LEVY ON THE NOVEMBER 8 BALLOT?

Basic state funding for education has not kept pace with the increasing costs for operating schools. To narrow the funding gap, most Minnesota schools rely upon voter-approved funding. South St. Paul Public Schools is near the bottom of all metro school districts when it comes to voter approved funding, ranking #35 out of 43 districts.

The financial gap coupled with the end of one-time COVID relief funding in 2024, the district is facing a devastating financial cliff. South St. Paul Public Schools will then be faced with the need to make broader and deeper cuts to staffing and academic programs. To avoid these potentially devastating cuts, the school board made the difficult decision to ask our community to increase its current operating levy. **More information inside.**



22 CANDIDATES RUNNING FOR SOUTH ST. PAUL SCHOOL BOARD

We are excited to have 22 South St. Paul residents file to run for four open seats on the South St. Paul School Board. All candidates who filed an affidavit were asked to fill out a questionnaire about their candidacy. You can find a link to each candidate's profile on the homepage of the South St. Paul Public Schools website (www.sspps.org) or by scanning the QR code.

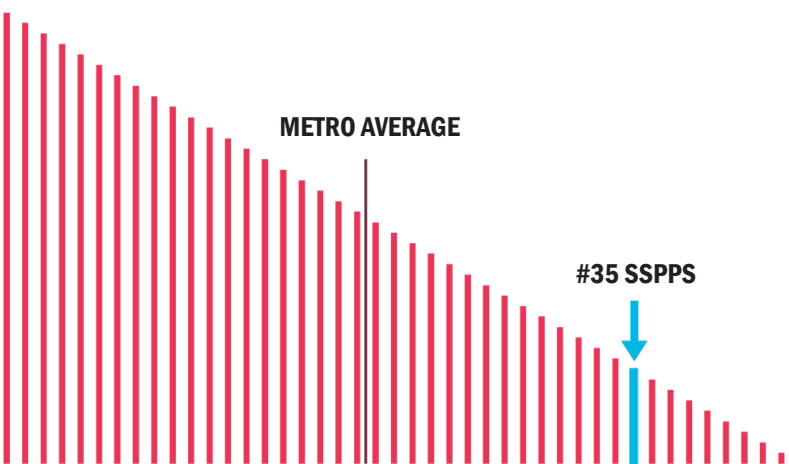


Bill Arend
B.E. "Bernie" Beermann
Colinda Blackbird
Anne Claffin
Brian Counihan
Fred Everson
Tim Felton
Wendy Felton

Deborah Franzen
Kim Humann
Gage E. Kemp
Hugh Kenety
Jean Lubke
Michael Mathews
Erica Petersen
Jeff McClellan

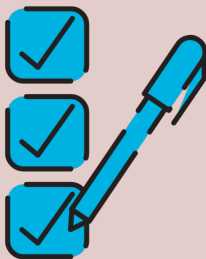
Nicole Scheiber
Thomas Rongitsch
Ted Pieper
Peter Skwira
Ashley Wickenhauser-Greif
John Wilcox

TWIN CITIES METRO SCHOOL DISTRICTS VOTER APPROVED OPERATING LEVIES



All candidates were asked that same questions and information. Answers represented on the website are in the candidates own words:

- Tell us about your background
- What activities and organizations are you involved in?
- Why is running for the South St. Paul School Board important to you?
- What areas of concern do you have regarding South St. Paul Public Schools?
- What are your specific suggestions for improvement?
- What is your candidate statement?



**GENERAL ELECTION
NOVEMBER 8, 2022**