



**South St. Paul Public Schools Semi-Annual Report to  
Minnesota Department of Human Rights  
Reporting Period ending: September 1, 2019**

**1. Area: Community Involvement**

● **Links to website communication efforts:**

- [Equity Commitment](#) webpages are located on the district website under “About SSPPS.” This is a new section that highlights equity as a focus of our work. Information about programming for students and adults, a focus on student voice, meaningful involvement are now located here.
- The district’s Summer 2019 issue of [Six Times](#) was sent to all residents of SSPPS in June. This publication is mailed three times a year as part of the district’s ongoing communication efforts. Highlights in this publication include:
  - Student Affinity Leadership Groups
  - Focus on the whole child - student experience
  - Spotlight on a student receiving prestigious scholarship for high-achieving, underrepresented group
- District updates are archived online as part of the district’s [news and headlines section](#) of the website.

● **Examples of meaningful parent and community involvement and conversations:**

- Community Conversation Series: The District hosted a series of community conversations to bring together all partners as we look to build a more safe and supportive SSP, while moving forward with improvements that will positively impact students and families.
  - Parent conversations were held: Wednesday, Feb. 27, Thursday, March 28, Thursday, April 25 (Spanish Speaking), and a special Restorative Practices session was held on Monday, May 20.
  - Simultaneously, staff listening sessions and student listening sessions were held at all sites.

This is a change in practice, and will be continued as an important part of gathering authentic feedback. Linked here are plans for the continued engagements in the fall, 2019-20:

[Engagement Planning](#) - Improving the Daily Experience.

- National African American Parent Involvement Day As part of the observation of Black History Month, South St. Paul Secondary celebrated National African American Parent Involvement Day on Monday, Feb. 11. This event provided parents with an opportunity to learn more about their

student's academic experience starting with breakfast and accompany their students to classes to witness instruction and activities throughout their student's typical school day.

- **Surveys and feedback:**

- Parent/community survey results in late January showed that current families give district overall high marks but identify areas for improvement focused on personalizing education for all students. Ninety-three percent of South St. Paul Public Schools parents rate the quality of education provided by the district as either "excellent" or "good" according to a recent satisfaction survey. Concerns regarding bullying and harassment continue to be evident across settings. Content from the parent survey and from the MN Student Survey continue to be used during data analysis cycles for improvement planning and the district budget process.

## 2. **Area: Curriculum/Teaching and Learning**

- Summary of progress for Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) implementation: As a budget priority for the school district for SY19-20, we worked to align positions with programmatic improvement needs. Restructure of building and district level teams, committee responsibilities and eleven staffing positions have been realigned (at no additional cost) to offer support for both a stronger core in academics and develop a system for teaching social/emotional content and supporting students.
  - The district now has a structure for MTSS that includes:
    - MTSS District Implementation Team
    - BILT (Building Instructional Leadership Teams)
  - The district also realigned staffing positions to better meet the needs of our students:
    - An MTSS Coordinator is now allocated to each site, with specific responsibility for the development of Social/Emotional Learning Tiered Levels of support.
    - Three additional counselors have been added (one at each site) resulting in:
      - 2 counselors at Kaposia
      - 2 counselors at Lincoln Center
      - 5 counselors at Secondary Building
    - Additional Lunchroom staff have been added at the Secondary Building for student supervision and safety.
- We continue district-wide PBIS implementation. Kaposia Education Center will be entering year 4, with Lincoln Center and South St. Paul Secondary entering year 2 implementation for the 2019-20 school year.
  - PBIS Standard Work for Kaposia Elementary/Leadership group
    - Review and practice of PBIS consistently occurs during building staff meetings
  - Full use of SWIS data tracking program, program improvement cycle

- PBIS Cohort 14 Training will continue throughout the year for Lincoln Center Elementary/South St. Paul Secondary
  - Focus on systems development, consistency of response, reporting and data use
- Equal Opportunity Schools Student Diploma program participation records:
  - Our primary goal in this partnership work with Equal Opportunity Schools (EOS) continues to be closure of the participation gaps in International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IB DP) course enrollments. Data from our first two years of working with EOS shows substantial improvement in narrowing participation gaps between White students and typically underrepresented student groups (i.e., students of color and students whose families qualify for free/reduced price meals). The total enrollment in one or more IB Diploma Program classes rose to 300 in 2018-19, up from 281 the prior year. This work continues as students register for and are placed in classes for the 2019-20 school year.
- Curriculum review calendar:
  - New Elementary Math Curriculum adoption grades K-5 with focus on fidelity in core.
  - Health curriculum is being updated as part of Physical Education classes district wide.
  - Anti-Bullying curriculum, resources and training are in place for all staff and students, fall 2019-20.

### 3. Area: Professional Development

- Calendar of professional development opportunities held to date and what is planned for early fall, 2019:

	<b>Culturally Responsive Teaching/Practices</b>	<b>Audience</b>
January -May, 2019	Innocent Classroom Leadership Cohort: 6 sessions included Defining “good, “ stereotype threat, implicit bias and strategies to lead these discussions and expectations in our buildings.	All Administrative Staff, Curricular Leaders
Feb- May, 2019	SEED: Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity (Dahlen & Sexauer)	50 PreK-Adult Staff
August 26, 2019	Alex Paite, Keynote Address: Innocent Classroom, Opening Days	All Staff SSPPS
	<b>Restorative Practices</b>	
August, 2019	Restorative Practices Training - Equity Alliance, MN	Self-selected SSP staff
	<b>Bullying and Harassment</b>	

Aug 13, 2019	Bullying and Harassment: Enhancing and Improving Prevention, Identification and Response - Training provided by district legal/Admin Task Force (Level 3 - Admin)	District Administration
Aug 29, 2019	Bullying and Harassment: Enhancing and Improving Prevention, Identification and Response - Training provided by Admin Task Force for Level 2 Designees	All district Counselors and Student Support Specialists
Sept/Oc, 2019	Bullying and Harassment Training All Staff various dates	All Sites
	<b>PBIS (Behavioral systems and structures) future</b>	
Sept-May, 2019-20	PBIS Cohort Implementation Year 2: Lincoln Center PBIS Cohort Implementation Year 2: SSP Secondary PBIS Cohort Implementation Year 3: Kaposia Elementary	Lincoln Center Staff SSP Secondary Staff Kaposia Staff
	<b>Social Emotional Learning (MTSS behavior support)</b>	
April, 2019	Angst Screening/Panel Discussion by Mental Health experts included resource fair for mental health and community support	All Staff and Community invited
Feb - May, 2019	Conscious Discipline Going Deeper, Creating the School Family Book Study, Monthly Reflective Consultation (Hoff)	Early Learning Staff
Feb-Sept, 2019	Conscious Discipline Book Study	Lincoln Center Staff self-selected

- Summary of staff feedback regarding professional development participation:
  - The table above provides brief descriptions for the many professional learning opportunities available to our staff members. While some of the opportunities apply to all staff, or all staff at one site, some are directed at smaller groups and/or are choice-based. All of our schools and programs develop a professional development plan based on identified student and educator learning needs that guides their improvement work throughout the school year.
    - Regarding Innocent Classroom Leadership development, administrative staff report increased confidence and commitment to equity practices after the leadership training.
- Innocent Classroom implementation calendar/plan:
  - South St. Paul Public Schools did received a \$210,000, three year grant from the St. Paul Foundations for district wide Innocent Classroom training and implementation, 2019-2021. This plan supports district efforts to deliberately interrupt the racial predictability of academic performance and disciplinary referrals for our students of color, differing abilities and poverty. This project addresses the impact of stereotype threat and implicit bias, and the ways these interfere with authentic teacher-child relationships in classrooms and adult-child relationships across the district. Innocent Classroom strategies will serve as a restorative practice to enhance the effectiveness of South St. Paul's commitment to Positive Behavioral Intervention & Supports (PBIS), Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and Restorative Practices. Innocent Classroom helps to change how teachers think about and engage their students, especially students of

color. Every South St. Paul staff member will be involved in this work with the goal to radically impact the academic and disciplinary disparities for our students from underrepresented groups.

- Schedule:
  - Feb-Jun, 2019: Leadership and the Innocent Classroom.
    - Cohort 1 for District Administration/Teacher Leaders from each site to participate - COMPLETED
  - Opening Days, August 26, 2019: Alex Paite, CEO Innocent Technologies will provide keynote address for all staff to introduce Innocent Classroom theory and practice, and provide an overview to the district-wide implementation.
  - Sept-Feb, 2019-2020: Constructing the Innocent Classroom
    - Cohort 2 for Secondary and CLC teachers grades 9-12, and
    - Cohort 3 for Secondary teachers grades 6-8
  - Feb-June, 2020: Cohorts 2-3 follow up with podcasts, newsletters and implementation support
  - Spring/Summer 2019: Innocent Classroom presentation for School Board
  - Sept-Feb, 2020-21: Constructing the Innocent Classroom
    - Cohort 4 for Kaposia teachers grades K-5
    - Cohort 5 for Lincoln Center teachers grades K-5
    - Cohort 6 for teaching staff of birth to adult programs
  - Feb-June, 2021: Cohorts 4-6 follow up with podcasts, newsletters and implementation support
  - Other supports TBA 2019-2020: lab/practice sessions for paraprofessionals, community information

#### 4. Area: Procedures

- Summary data as defined in Minnesota Statutes sections 13.02, subdivision 19: Number of suspensions for each site during reporting period:

South St. Paul Public Schools	Total Number of Suspensions		
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
<b>District Total</b>	526	521	448
<b>Kaposia K-5</b>	38	37	17
<b>Lincoln Center K-5</b>	76	109	69
<b>Secondary Gr 6-8</b>	287	256	206
<b>Secondary Gr 9-12</b>	113	94	148
<b>CLCGr 9-12</b>	12	25	8

- Description of the reason for each suspension, exclusion, expulsion:

2018-19	Suspension/Description															
Site	Alcohol	Assault	Attendance	Bullying	Disruptive/Disorderly/Insubordination	Fighting	Harassment	Illegal Drugs	Pyrotechnics	Theft	Threat/Intimidation	Tobacco	Vandalism/Property Related	Verbal Abuse	Weapon	Terroristic Threats
Kaposia Gr K-5		10			1	4			2							
Lincoln Center Gr K-5		40			2	13	3				4		5		2	
Secondary Gr 6-8	2	29	24	15	36	49	6	1		3	7	12	6	7	2	3
Secondary Gr 9-12	2	8	13	2	24	27	4	11		1	6	42	1	5	1	1
CLC Gr 9-12					2	2		1				1			1	1

- Disaggregated data showing breakdown of each disciplinary incident by race and disability status:

2018-19	Suspensions							
Site	Total	Black	Hisp	Asian	Am In	White	Multi	Spec Ed
Kaposia (Gr K-5)	17	35.3%	5.9%	-	-	52.9%	5.9%	64.7%
Lincoln Center (Gr K-5)	69	24.6%	20.3%	-	-	46.4%	2.9%	55.1%
Secondary (Gr 6-8)	206	26.2%	33%	-	-	24.3%	16.5%	50.5%
Secondary (Gr 9-12)	148	4.1%	33.8%	-	-	50.7%	10.1%	32.4%
CLC (Gr 9-12)	8	0	12.5%	-	12.5%	75%	-	0

- Changes implemented in light of data analysis:

- Monthly District Oversight Committee Meetings continued each month through the end of the 2018-19 school year. This process had an impact on reducing suspension numbers across the district. We continued using the following protocol:
  - ATTENDEES: Superintendent, Director of Early Learning/Equity, Director of Special Services, Building/Site Administration
  - MONTHLY MEETING is pre-scheduled with each site during the first week of each month to review site data from previous month, and year-to-date
  - PRIOR TO THE MEETING the site administration reviews building suspension, exclusion, expulsion data, by total, grade level, demographics/special services, locations, time of day, reporting administrator, and individual reports per each incident including reason, name, grade, race and disability status
  - DURING THE MEETING: Site administration presents both trend and individual suspension, exclusion or expulsion data; reviews process for deciding on disciplinary action including alternatives to suspension options considered; reviews re-entry plan, re-entry experience; reviews data entered into the student information system for accuracy; and monitors individual and trend data to evaluate the need for, or effectiveness of changes in supervision, student support
  
- Adjustments, structural differences or innovative systems change put in place to: reduce total number of suspensions; discover the function of the behaviors, develop responses to change behaviors; and expand the use of alternatives to suspension. February through June, 2019
  - Kaposia (Gr K-5):
    - Year 3 of PBIS implementation including:
      - Reteaching of behavioral expectations taught by all staff
      - Consistent use of behavior matrix
      - Deeper staff understanding of role of Tier I core instruction, Tier II and III behavioral and social emotional supports
      - Team approach to discipline (Administration, Student Support (behavior) Specialist , Classroom Teacher) discuss alternatives to suspension and development of behavior plans/support
      - Building Leadership Team used student data, and decided where to target problem solving
      - Use of Second Step Bullying Curriculum by School Counselor, K-5
  - Lincoln Center (Gr K-5):
    - Year 1 of PBIS implementation including:
      - Administration:
        - Brainstorm alternatives to suspension for each situation
        - Intentional reentry agendas, use of restorative practices and apology templates
        - Consistently inputting data/using data:

- Noticed slowing of referrals from lunch room, after shifts to how supervisors were assigned, improving consistent support/communication
  - Student Support (behavior) Team implemented systems for Tier II support and preventative check ins
- Secondary (Gr 6-8):
  - Year 1 of PBIS implementation including:
    - Student Support (behavior) Specialist and assistant for Gr. 6-8 regularly employs restorative practices, positive relationship building
    - School Counselor for specific services for Gr. 6-8 - more preventative options
    - Structured time during lunch, added consistent adult supervision
    - Continued with vertical and horizontal staff conversations about consistent behavior expectations across grades & departments, and talking about student skills that may be missing or lagging/how to teach the skill
    - Relationships continue to get stronger with parents who are consistently involved in problem solving
- Secondary & CLC (Gr 9-12):
  - Year 1 of PBIS implementation including:
    - Flexibility in programming - more personalized learning and blended learning options. More students are engaged in what their interests are.
    - BARR in grade 9 last year added connections and continues to work on social and emotional learning.
    - Student Affinity Groups have blossomed, been acknowledged and have visible leadership roles, connectedness with more student voice.
    - Master schedule collaboration between Sped and Regular Ed is stronger matching students coursework and support to their needs. Teamwork for interventions done with intention, proactive and catching students earlier on.
    - Philosophy is changing with expectations to get to know kids first and build relationships.
- See Appendix at the end of this document for additional information regarding impact for Area 4: Procedures.

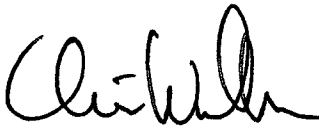

## 5. Area: Policy

- A new SSPPS Student Rights and Responsibility Handbook (link to website when published, Aug, 2019) has been developed for Prek-Grade 12. These new parent and student communications efforts will be posted on the sspps.org website once finalized and endorsed by the School Board.
  - Audience – SSPPS Students (Gr Prek-12), SSPPS Families (Gr Prek-12)



- This publication outlines unified, developmentally appropriate behavioral expectations for students across the district, and gives common vocabulary to restorative practices, and disciplinary responses.
- SSPPS Family Handbook (link to website when published, Aug, 2019):
  - Audience – Mailed to All SSPPS Families PreK-12/posted on sspps.org
  - Content satisfies all of the annual notification requirement of the school district. It includes information that is common across the district (e.g. data privacy, food/nutrition, pesticides, asbestos, etc.) as well as other district information of interest (e.g. school closing, community education, cultural liaisons, etc.)
- School/Program Guidebooks (link to website when published, Aug, 2019)
  - Audience – Building/Program students and families
  - Guidebooks include specific information about procedures that are unique to the building/program, including but not limited to: contact information, calendars, building hours and daily schedules, evacuation and emergency plans, fees, technology, transportation, etc.
- Anti-Bullying and Harassment Work :
  - During the summer of 2019, a South St. Paul Schools' Administrative Task Force was charged with review and refining improvements for our districts' efforts regarding bullying and harassment. The result of this work and planning will be enacted during the 2019-20 school year and will include a focus on building and district level work to enhance and improve prevention, identification and response regarding bullying and harassment by:
    - Continuing education and outreach for all students regarding bullying and harassment/violence. Using age appropriate instruction, every student in South St. Paul learns about how to prevent, identify and report bullying and harassment (Yearly).
    - Continuing professional development for our staff. All full and part time staff including volunteers will have in person and online tools to continue to learn additional strategies to prevent, identify and report bullying/harassment (Opening Days, Aug, 2019).
    - Administrators have received the most up to date training regarding legal updates, policy review, investigation strategies and documentation requirements for procedures regarding bullying and harassment and violence. (Completed Aug 13, 2019)
    - Parent/Student Handbooks and SSPPS Website are being updated, and made easier to use and understand with links to resources, and easy to use reporting procedures. (<https://www.sspps.org/Page/2221>)

**South St. Paul Public Schools Semi-Annual Report to  
Minnesota Department of Human Rights  
Reporting Period ending: February 1, 2019**

Date report presented to South St. Paul Public Schools Board of Education: August 26, 2019 <b>Board Chair Chris Walker</b>	
Submitted by: Connie Garling-Squire	
Title: Director of Early Learning/Equity	
Signature: 	8.27.2019
Date: September 1, 2019	

## APPENDIX

### **SSP Graduation Rate Tops 95 percent, Makes Progress in Reducing Persistent Achievement Gaps Published SSPPS website and Six Times**

*April 24, 2019* – The four-year graduation rate for South St. Paul (SSP) Secondary grew to 95.5 percent in 2018. According to data released by the [Minnesota Department of Education](#) on April 23, the achievement surpasses the statewide graduation rate of 83.2 percent and represents a five year high for SSP Secondary.

“We are thrilled with the growth of our SSP Secondary students and their commitment to academic achievement,” said Chuck Ochocki, principal. “Our students are preparing for a challenging world and we are proud that they will have a strong educational foundation from which to build as they prepare for their next step.”

Of the 200 SSP Secondary students included in the state’s 2018 graduation data, 191 or 95.5 percent graduated, defined by the state as completing high school in four years. Of the students who did not graduate, 1.5 percent are continuing school and plan to graduate in the future, one percent dropped out, and the graduation status of the remaining students is unknown (e.g. moved out of the district).

In addition to overall student graduation rates, the district is also looking at individual student group data to assess how curriculum and instruction adjustments can be made to help ensure each and every student has the opportunity to achieve and reach their full potential.

“We are pleased to see that the graduation rate of our Secondary Hispanic students and students in poverty also showing significant gains in 2018,” said Dr. Chad Schmidt, director of learning. “And when we look at specific student groups, we see that we are making some progress in closing the achievement gap between our highest achieving students and other students, but we know we still have work to do. Our focus is on providing more personalized learning opportunities for students to help them get the support they need to be successful.”

The four-year graduation rates for individual groups of SSP Secondary students in 2018 were as follows:

- 95.9 percent of White students at SSP Secondary graduated compared to 88.4 percent statewide;
- 95 percent of Hispanic students at SSP Secondary graduated — an increase of five percent over 2017 — compared to 66.8 percent statewide;
- 90 percent of Black students at SSP Secondary graduated compared to 67.4 percent statewide;
- 91.9 percent of students eligible to receive free or reduced-price school meals at SSP Secondary graduated — an increase of 3.4 percent over 2017 — compared to 70.2 percent statewide; and
- 65 percent of students receiving special education services/on Individualized Education Plan (IEP) at SSP Secondary graduated compared to 62.3 percent statewide.

Graduation rates for American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, English Learner students and students identifying two or more races were not reported for SSP Schools because there were fewer than 10 students in the group.

When factoring in the SSP students attending the Community Learning Center (CLC), the district-wide graduation rate is 81.2 percent. Ochocki and other district leaders acknowledged that there is work to be done in raising the four-year graduation rate for students attending the CLC, but they also noted that a major purpose of the alternative educational approach at the CLC is to allow students the extra time they need to complete their education.

“We recognize that some kids need more time to achieve high school diploma targets and that is okay,” Ochocki said. “By holding learning as the constant and time as a variable, we are able to help all of our students attain a high school diploma, which we know is important for post-secondary success.”

**SSP at the Top of Metro Area Public High Schools that Serve Populations with Higher Poverty Rates  
Published SSPPS website and Six Times**

June 3, 2019 – In April South St. Paul (SSP) Secondary learned that it had increased its overall [four-year graduation rate](#) from 92 percent in 2017 to 96 percent in 2018. Upon further investigation into the data, district officials learned that this trend also places SSP at the top of metro area public high schools that serve populations with higher poverty rates.

According to a recent analysis conducted by officials in the Anoka-Hennepin School District, for schools with 40-50 percent of students qualifying for free/reduced priced meals (i.e. the number by which a school district calculates its poverty index), SSP Secondary had the highest overall graduation rate. Furthermore, when looking at all metro-area public high schools, SSP Secondary’s 96 percent four-year graduation rate was also higher than high schools with 30-40 percent students qualifying for free/reduced priced meals, and was on par with many of the top schools with 20 percent or fewer students in poverty.

“We are always pleased to see our students graduating on time, especially when you look at students who are traditionally underrepresented in achievement statistics and who face additional challenges or barriers to learning,” said Superintendent Dave Webb. “By looking closely at the data and investigating trends within our student populations, we are better able to truly personalize learning to meet students where they are and prepare them for that next step.”

SSP administration was also pleased to see this trend of high graduation rates continuing for not only the overall population but also for identified individual student groups.

SSP Student Group	4-year Grad Rate	Percent of Class of 2018	MN Average Grad Rate
Students qualifying for Free/Reduced priced meals	92%	46%	70%
Students identifying as Hispanic	95%	20%	67%
Students identifying as Black	90%	5%	67%

“We know we can always do better, but this most recent data analysis shows that we are on the right path,” Webb said. “We look forward to digging even deeper into the data to the individual student level to see where

we can build on our successes and find new strategies to ensure every student is ready for life after graduation.”

### **Reducing Suspensions, Positive Outcomes Published SSPPS website and Six Times**

For Garling-Squire and other district leaders, even the district’s recent plan to reduce suspensions, exclusions and expulsions, as required by the Minnesota Department of Human Rights (MDHR), has resulted in positive outcomes for the district. Whether at the early learning level with [Conscious Discipline](#), the K-12 level with PBIS [[Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports](#)], or the monthly suspension review meetings with principals as a result of the MDHR requirement, district leaders have shifted the conversation away from solely looking at the negative actions of the students to more understanding of what education a student may need. “More often than not, student behavior issues are the result of skills gaps in kids. They don’t have the skills to react or respond appropriately to a situation, so they act out in a negative way,” said Garling-Squire. “By helping to teach students conflict management skills and to better understand their social-emotional needs, we can help them to make better choices.” Garling-Squire admits that disciplinary actions are still necessary at times, but giving teachers the training and tools to respond differently to kids’ behavior has resulted in better outcomes for everyone. She also noted that the addition of more counselors and behavior specialists this year have helped address some concerns. “We still have work to do,” she said, “but we are making great progress in teaching our students and staff how to appropriately respond and react to situations before they get out of control. In the end, it is about finding ways to achieve positive outcomes for all students.”