

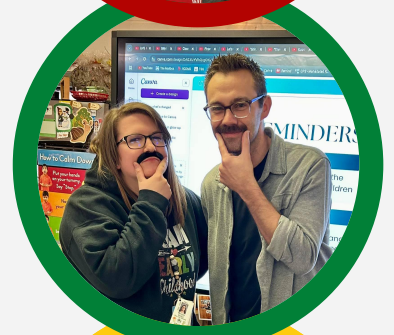


# 2024-2025 Annual Report Partnership in Action

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## ABOUT US | OUR PARTNERSHIP

The St. Croix River Education District (SCRED) was formed in 1991. In Minnesota, “Education Districts” help school districts to operate with greater fiscal efficiency by allowing them to share staff and services with neighboring school districts. We support our six member districts and also provide contracted services to the TRIO Wolf Creek charter school.

We are passionate about seeing our member district communities prosper because our youth thrive! We are enormously proud of the work being done in our member districts and enormously grateful to the educators, families, and community members who partner with us to maximize outcomes.



### Collaborative Decision Making

SCRED’s main governing body is the **Governing Board (pictured)**, which is comprised of one school board member from each member district.



In addition, the member district superintendents make up the **Superintendents’ Operating Committee** and provide recommendations to the Governing Board regarding services and programs.

Depending on the topic, input will be sought from one or more **stakeholder groups** prior to the approval of a decision.

#### GOVERNING BOARD (2024-2025)

- Sarah Aadland, Chisago Lakes
- Julie Domogalla, East Central
- Heather Hanson, Hinckley-Finlayson
- Sarah Grovender, North Branch
- Tim Geisler, Pine City (not 📷)
- Kristin Papke, Rush City

#### SUPERINTENDENTS’ OPERATING COMMITTEE

- Brian Dietz, Chisago Lakes
- Stef Youngberg, East Central
- Brian Masterson, Hinckley-Finlayson
- Sara Paul, North Branch
- Cindy Stolp, Pine City
- Brent Stavig, Rush City

#### OTHER STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

School Leaders (Principals/Curriculum Directors), Business Managers, Technology Directors, Special Education Providers, Interventionists, School Psychologists, Services Coordinators, Measurement Committee, Special Education Advisory Council



### Core Services

Core services are provided to all member districts:

- **Administration & Operation:** Executive Director, Director of Special Education, Special Services Supervisors, Business Manager, Office Manager
- **Services Coordination:** Services Coordinators serving in the areas of early childhood, academics, low incidence, social emotional learning, and social behavior
- **Itinerant Services:** Audiologist, Teacher of the Blind/Visually Impaired, Teacher of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Occupational Therapists, Teacher of the Physically Impaired, Physical Therapist
- **District Office Services:** Accounting Technician, Program Assistants, Outcomes Coordinator, Special Education Data Coordinator

### Elective Services

Elective services are available for districts to purchase:

- **Student Support Services:** School Psychologists, School Social Workers, Student Support Specialists, School Nurses
- **Itinerant Services:** English Language Learner Services, Developmental Adapted Physical Education Services, Early Childhood Special Education Teacher Birth - 2, Brailist/Vision Support Specialist
- **Program Coordination:** Adult Basic Education Program Coordinator and Instructors, Perkins Program Coordinators, Project SEEK Program Coordinator, We 'R' Able Program Coordinator and Assistant
- **Other:** As requested by member districts



### Community-Based Programs

- **Adult Basic Education (ABE):** Designed to assist people 17 years and older who are not currently enrolled in a K-12 program in earning their GED or high school diploma, or to brush up on basic skills or English as a Second Language
- **Project SEEK:** Designed as a summer enrichment program for students grades 1-7 who demonstrate high potential, talent, and creativity
- **We R Able:** Designed to enable adults with disabilities to participate in lifelong learning

### School-Based Programs

#### BEHAVIORAL AND/OR COMMUNICATIVE

- **Pathway to Change (PTC) and Vision:** Designed for students K-12 who demonstrate significant behavioral needs; focused on building students' fluency in a complex repertoire of social and emotional skills and their capacity to generalize these skills across settings with the ultimate goal of returning to the mainstream school setting
- **SOAR (Skillbuilding Opportunities for Academic Resiliency):** Designed to support students K-12 who demonstrate significant communication and behavioral needs; focused on increasing students' independence and skills in the areas of functional communication and self-regulation

#### TRANSITION

- **Chisago County Schools' Life Work Center and Pine County Transition Program:** Designed for students 18-21 years old who have successfully completed the requirements necessary for a high school diploma, yet are still making progress towards goals and objectives in the transition areas; emphasizes employment and independent living skills and works in collaboration with students, families, and community agencies



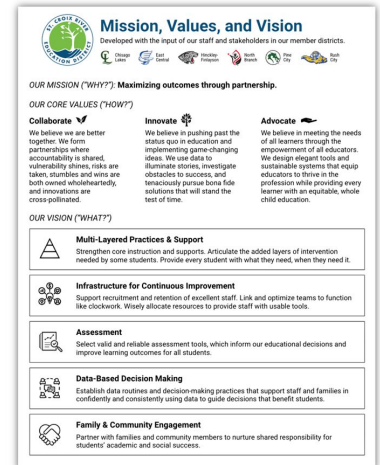


# SCRED Strategic Planning Process

For comprehensive information regarding the SCRED Strategic Plan, please visit the *SCRED website* ([scred.k12.mn.us](http://scred.k12.mn.us)) → *Our District* → *Strategic Plan*.

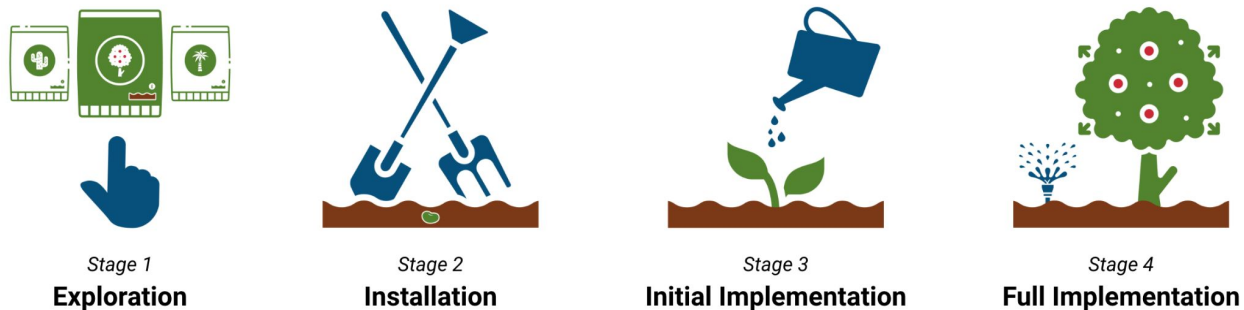
## Clear Vision

SCRED's Mission, Values, and Vision are the foundation of our Strategic Plan. Our clear Vision is the five components of the MnMTSS framework. The Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) comprehensive framework encompasses all of a district's operations, and it guides districts to operate efficiently and meet all students' needs through layered supports. As a complementary organization to our member districts, all of SCRED's work serves the purpose of sustaining and strengthening the MTSS frameworks of each member district.



## Continuous Improvement — Guided by Strategic Priority Objectives

To put our Vision of MTSS into practice, we partner with our member districts to engage in a **dynamic array of long-term implementation projects**. These projects follow the four stages of Implementation Science across multiple school years. Project progress is managed using **multi-year action plan documents**.

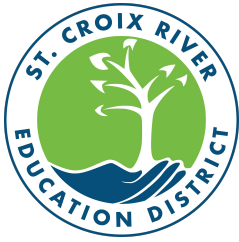


The SCRED Superintendents Operating Committee (SOC) makes an important contribution to this process by establishing priorities. **2025-26 Strategic Priority Objectives:**

1. Create a bold, unified vision for the future of specialized programming across SCRED
2. Build a robust continuum of behavioral services to serve all students in their Least Restrictive Environment
3. Center families as partners in every aspect of the special education experience
4. Develop a thriving special education workforce that is cared for, capable, and consistent
5. Ensure every student is identified early and supported with high-impact, evidence-based practices

## Communication

This written Annual Report, presented to the SCRED Governing Board, is an important tool for communicating progress regarding projects on the strategic plan. In the remaining pages, you'll see a list of active projects for each SCRED service area (e.g., academics, behavior), along with a short summaries of progress toward a few projects. Service area reports are also presented to the Superintendents Operating Committee (SOC) and the SCRED Governing Board, respectively, throughout the school year.



# Mission, Values, and Vision

Developed with the input of our staff and stakeholders in our member districts.



Chisago  
Lakes



East  
Central



Hinckley-  
Finlayson



North  
Branch



Pine  
City



Rush  
City

**OUR MISSION ("WHY?"): Maximizing outcomes through partnership.**

**OUR CORE VALUES ("HOW?")**

## Collaborate

We believe we are better together. We form partnerships where accountability is shared, vulnerability shines, risks are taken, stumbles and wins are both owned wholeheartedly, and innovations are cross-pollinated.

## Innovate

We believe in pushing past the status quo in education and implementing game-changing ideas. We use data to illuminate stories, investigate obstacles to success, and tenaciously pursue bona fide solutions that will stand the test of time.

## Advocate

We believe in meeting the needs of all learners through the empowerment of all educators. We design elegant tools and sustainable systems that equip educators to thrive in the profession while providing every learner with an equitable, whole child education.

**OUR VISION ("WHAT?")**



### Multi-Layered Practices & Support

Strengthen core instruction and supports. Articulate the added layers of intervention needed by some students. Provide every student with what they need, when they need it.



### Infrastructure for Continuous Improvement

Support recruitment and retention of excellent staff. Link and optimize teams to function like clockwork. Wisely allocate resources to provide staff with usable tools.



### Assessment

Select valid and reliable assessment tools, which inform our educational decisions and improve learning outcomes for all students.



### Data-Based Decision Making

Establish data routines and decision-making practices that support staff and families in confidently and consistently using data to guide decisions that benefit students.



### Family & Community Engagement

Partner with families and community members to nurture shared responsibility for students' academic and social success.



## **Implementation projects in process:**

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| → OTISS Observations (5)  | → Literacy Coach Support & Networking (5)    | <b>MATH:</b>  |
| <b>READING:</b>   |  | → AGS Math Replacement (5)                                    |
| → Building Fidelity of Implementation on Language! and Language! Live (4,5) | → Oral Language Screening & Intervention (5) | → Math Progress Monitor Refinement and Intervention Match (5) |
| → District Implementation Teams - Literacy (5)                              | → Phonics and Morphology Curriculum (5)      |   |
| → ELA SpEd Curriculum Adoption (5)  | <b>WRITING:</b>                              |   |
|   | → Writing Assessment and Intervention (4,5)  |   |

## **Writing Assessment and Intervention**

Students' literacy relies heavily on writing skills. Our current single normed assessment for tracking writing goals isn't meeting teacher and staff needs for age and skill-appropriate tools. To address this, we're developing a curated suite of writing assessments, interventions, and progress monitoring tools. In 2024-25, we focused our own learning on the science of writing and writing skill progression. In 2025-26, we will implement measures from The Early Writing Project to offer more direct skill assessment and progress monitoring, alongside ongoing professional development in writing throughout the school year.

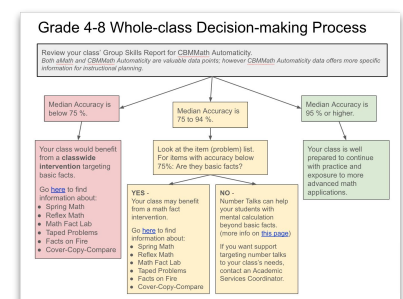


## **ELA SpEd Programming and Curriculum Adoption**

Systems that use the Language! or Language! Live ELA curriculum have had a reset with instructional support, helping teachers implement all of the components of the curriculum and pace instruction appropriately to help close achievement gaps. In addition, we've been working on a curriculum adoption in collaboration with North Branch Area Public Schools.

## **Math Progress Monitor Refinement and Intervention Match**

We developed a flowchart tool that helps teachers and grade-level teams interpret math automaticity scores of their students and determine their next instructional steps. The tool links directly to specific strategies and interventions on the Academics page of the SCRED website. During the 2024-25 school year, we've shared the tool with teachers and helped them use it for data-based decision-making with student interventions.



### *Implementation projects in process:*

- College Ready Math I & College Ready Math II @PTCC
- ParaEducator Support
- GED Testing @ PTCC

### **Improving Our Communities through HS Diploma Attainment**

SCRED's Adult Basic Education (ABE) program helped 25 students earn their GED or HS diploma in the 2024-25 school year! Completing this goal while employed, taking care of children or other adults, and all the other household tasks adults do can be a lot. But our students persisted and did it!



### **Supporting Our District's Paraprofessionals**

All paraprofessionals in MN are required to have earned at least 60 college credits or a passing score on an assessment, demonstrating the knowledge in reading/language arts, writing, and math. ABE continues to help SCRED district paras who may need assistance in passing these certification tests, including one on one tutoring and free resources.

### **College Readiness for Math at Pine Technical and Community College**

Many students are unprepared for the math involved in college technical programs. Beginning fall 2025, ABE will host two 8 week courses to help students prepare for the arithmetic and algebra needed to be successful in college. These course are tuition free for participants.



## Implementation projects in process:

### CORE / UNIVERSAL:

- Alternative to Suspension Practices (2)
- Advisory / Morning Meeting 2.0 (2)
- Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines (2)
- Discipline Processing Procedures (2)
- Life Skills Integration in Academic Content (2)
- Major-Minor Charts/Incident Data (2)
- Mood Meter (2)
- PBIS Instructional Coaching (2)
- PBIS Onboarding & Training (2)

### INTERVENTIONS & SPECIAL EDUCATION:

- Crisis Prevention & Response (2)
- ECIT-SpEd (4)
- Life Skills EBPs & Curricula for Interv./SpEd (5)
- SCRED Continuum of Behavior Services Model (2)

## Center-Based Programming

From 2023-24 to 2024-25, our districts more than doubled the amount of center-based programs. We collaborated in true partnership with your principals, SCRED administrators, SpEd teachers and paraprofessionals to tackle staffing allocations, room spaces, etc.

We are continuing to work on incentives/data, how students enter and exit the programs, curriculum planning, and much more!



## Crisis Prevention & Response

Through thorough reflection and input from principals, Ukeru was identified as an effective layer in the Crisis Response Continuum.

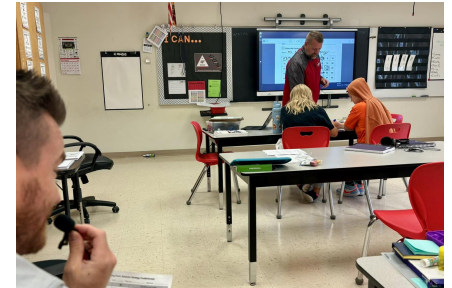
Today, we have successfully trained a number of trainers and buildings to implement Ukeru to increase safety, and provide a responsive approach for our students who need it the most.



## PBIS Instructional Coaching & More PBIS Work

Beginning in 2023, our member districts began to focus on a core set of six classroom management strategies during new teacher onboarding. In 2024-25, districts made intentional efforts to provide ongoing professional learning on these behavior strategies, and they also began to offer real-time instructional coaching support to teachers in these areas.

We also worked with our elementary schools to design superhero characters that align with each school's 3-5 school-wide behavior expectations. This had a big ripple inside and outside of the schools, and we can't wait to see what the superheroes get up to in 2025-26!



## Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines (CSTAG)

In the fall of 2024-25, each district's Threat Assessment Teams (administrators, School Resource Officers, and mental health staff) received training on this evidence-based process for preventing school violence. CSTAG also allows districts to be more transparent and communicative with communities while still maintaining student privacy.

## Discipline Processing Procedures

We worked with virtually every school in the SCRED districts to install discipline processing procedures filled with tools for their discipline referral spaces (e.g., Stop & Think Room, Focus Room, Reflection Room, etc.).

Several schools even started discipline referral spaces from scratch, including Rush City High School and Hinckley-Finlayson High School.

The feedback was tremendous!

- *"This has been a game changer for us."*
- *"The manual is AWESOME!!! Thank you so much!!! We've been raving!"*
- *"I just appreciate it so much. Give yourself some kind thoughts for this!"*





## *Implementation projects in process:*

- GOLD Assessment (5)
- IEIC Help Me Grow (HMG) Outreach Program (5)
- Family Directed Assessment Implementation (4)
- Early Intervention Coaching Practices (4)
- Pyramid Model (2)
- Building Blocks (4)

### IEIC Help Me Grow (HMG) Outreach Program

Our ongoing **marketing and outreach strategy** for Help Me Grow MN, the statewide referral system for Child Find (birth-5), is focused on expanding awareness and streamlining the referral process for stakeholders. Key advancements include the immediate availability of **new, engaging materials**, a clear **scope and sequence for outreach**, establishing a **systematic and targeted approach to engage diverse community partners** and families across the state, and the creation of **templated outreach letters** to standardize and enhance communication efficiency.



### Preschool Universal Screening and Instructional Refinement

This year, our districts continued to use **Teaching Strategies GOLD** as the authentic assessment tool to comprehensive data on the **whole preschool child**. After several years of implementation, we adjusted our professional development structure to provide more targeted and relevant training for new preschool staff, including three half-day training sessions focused on key topics such as **authentic assessment, data collection, and finalizing checkpoints**. Data review meetings held after each checkpoint helped teams analyze program-wide or individual classroom data through the lens of Tier 1 or Tier 2 and 3 instruction. This process allowed teams to make **program or classroom adjustments** to better support our earliest learners.

### Family Directed Assessment Implementation

We focused on strengthening capacity across the system through a **year-long professional learning** approach. A key focus was the implementation of the **Roadmap for Assessing Meaningful Participation (RAMP)** - a tool to assist parents and early intervention providers the development of the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). To support this, we have introduced a new **tool for gathering family information**, specifically designed to better capture and understand **parent priorities** and perspectives. These combined efforts will ensure our practice is informed by family needs, leading to more relevant and impactful services and professional development outcomes.

## ***Implementation projects in process:***

- Functional Communication Strategies
- LI Literacy Curriculum - Unique Learning System (5)
- LI Math Curriculum (5)
- LI Program Standards

## **Functional Communication**

Functional communication, the ability to effectively express needs, wants, and feelings, is crucial for student success. Students with receptive and expressive communication needs benefit significantly from Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) strategies and resources, such as visual supports and speech-generating devices.

In the 2024-2025 school year, we focused on improving educator access to AAC resources. This included adding video models to complement existing print visual resources and developing core vocabulary slide decks in collaboration with SCRED district Speech-Language Pathologists. Additionally, we provided on-demand, building-specific trainings on functional communication as requested. For the 2025-2026 school year, our next step is to continue enhancing these resources, including the development of a comprehensive AAC implementation guide and professional learning.



## **Low Incidence Curriculum: Unique Learning System**

Unique Learning System (ULS) continues to be a cornerstone for students with complex learning and communication needs in our programs, offering a structured, interactive, and standards-aligned curriculum.

In the 2024-2025 school year, we assessed ULS usage, teacher practices, and implementation barriers, while also providing professional development. For the 2025-2026 school year, our focus shifts to expanding professional learning opportunities for effective planning and delivery, building capacity for all teachers, and further exploring the ULS math curriculum.



## **Low Incidence Program Standards**

Program standards guide educators in providing effective services and implementing best practices within LI programs. During the 2024-2025 school year, these guidelines were established, alongside educator and administrative resources, to facilitate the implementation and analysis of LI programs. For the 2025-2026 school year, the focus will be on introducing these program standards through a professional learning cohort. This cohort will emphasize key features of the standards through instruction, resource delivery, and on-site coaching.



### ***Implementation projects in process:***

- |                            |   |  |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| → Centering Families       | → Special Education Resource Allocation Framework | → Three-Year Onboarding/Coaching Model |
| → SpEd Dept. Data Routines |   |  |

### **Three-Year Onboarding/Coaching Model**

We redesigned a **comprehensive onboarding learning series for new special education teachers**. With the staffing shortages we are seeing, the goal of this learning was to provide new teachers (who are frequently newly licensed or under-licensed teachers) a strong foundation to have a successful first year.

A resource included with this training was the development of “**IEP TV**” which is a series of videos modeling different parts of an IEP meeting to help teachers learn how to facilitate effective meetings.

Quotes from teachers:

- *“You all do a great job supporting the new staff!! I loved the sessions and learned a lot!”*
- *“I really liked the in-person training. It was an excellent chance to learn what I needed to learn this year, and it fell at the right time.”*
- *“It was very helpful to meet with a group of people who were facing similar situations—being new staff—even if we hold different jobs.”*



### **Special Education Resource Allocation Framework and Special Education Data Routines**

To support the ever changing needs of our member districts, it is vital that a framework is developed to support resource allocation with staffing, both certified and non-certified. Our leadership team continues to explore and refine approaches to paraprofessional allocation process with member districts, as well as allocation of certified staff.

The administrative team also collaborated with district leaders to identify important data sources to inform ongoing decision-making, and find opportunities to incorporate data into existing meeting structures. Specifically, the team continued to monitor and strengthen the use of our data to inform decision-making for individual students in buildings.

## STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS | SCRED Student Programs

### *Implementation projects in process:*

→ Setting IV Unified Vision

→ 18-22 Transition Unified Vision

### Setting IV Programs

Based on our data and current resource allocation, a priority is to strengthen our setting IV programs, located in Chisago Lakes/Lindstrom and Pine City. These programs continue to flexibly adjust programming to meet the needs of some of our most unique learners for specialized instruction.

During the current school year the SOAR program was expanded, with a temporary classroom opening at Vision, to meet the needs of learners in our system.

The SpEd Admin team continues to partner with member districts to problem solve how to support the growing needs in our communities.



## STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS | Whole Organization

### *Implementation projects in process:*

→ Contract Negotiations Framework

→ SCRED Climate and Culture

→ Strategic Planning Process

### Culture as a Foundation for Effective Strategic Implementation

Our core values — **Collaborate, Innovate, Advocate** — are the foundation of our culture. A culture that makes it possible to accomplish our mission: Maximizing outcomes through partnership. On this foundation, **our culture is constantly under construction**, constantly being built up and reinforced by the small everyday choices of SCREDsters in our office building and across our member districts. This year, **targeted efforts to focus on employee workload and wellness** resulted in a **90% retention rate**. We continue to focus on deliberately optimizing structures to foster a culture of trust, vulnerability, and shared accountability.

