South St. Paul School Board - Work Session

Monday, November 9, 2026 5:00 PM

District Office, 104 - 5th Avenue South, South St Paul, Minnesota 55075

I. **STUDENT SCHOOL BOARD REPRESENTATIVES**

I.A. Opening Connection (Josie and Monica)

I.B. MSBA Amplifying Student Voice Conference (K. Humann, A. Wardell, Superintendent Zambreno and Student Board Representatives Josie and Monica)

II. **EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

II.A. FastBridge Screener (S. Sundstrom)

III. **ENROLLMENT**

III.A. Enrollment Update (Superintendent Zambreno)

IV. **SCHOOL BOARD**

IV.A. Public Relations and Community Engagement (Board)

IV.B. Committee Updates (Board)

- District 917
- AMSD
- Community Education
- Educational Foundation
- Finance, Facilities and Long-Range Planning
- Local Issues
- Policy
- SSP Open Foundation
- Superintendent Executive

IV.C. The Empowered Educator Book Study (Board)

IV.D. Other Items Deemed Necessary by the School Board

South St. Paul Public Schools

School Board Agenda Item

Date: November 9, 2026

Place on Agenda: Work Session

Action Requested: None. Discussion Only

Attachment: None

Topic: MSBA Amplifying Student Voice Conference Reflections and Next Steps

Presenter(s): Chair Humann, Amy Wardell, Superintendent Zambreno, Student Board Representatives Josie and Monica

Background:

On October 28, 2026, South St. Paul Public Schools student school board representatives Josie Albin and Monica Schmidt, along with Board Chair Kim Humann, Board Director Amy Wardell, Principal Ochocki, Superintendent Brian Zambreno, and Lisa Brandecker, attended the Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) Amplifying Student Voice Summit.

The summit brought together students, school board members, and district leaders from across Minnesota to share ideas, build connections, and explore ways to strengthen student voice and engagement in school board work.

Josie and Monica shared valuable feedback from the experience, along with ideas for creating more opportunities to hear from students and bring their perspectives to the school board table.

This agenda item provides an opportunity to share key takeaways from the summit, hear directly from our student representatives, and engage the full Board in a conversation about how we can continue building on this work. The goal is to identify opportunities and next steps to strengthen student voice and create meaningful connections between students and the School Board.

Recommendation:

N/A

Alternatives:

N/A

South St. Paul Public Schools

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Action Requested: None. Discussion Only

Attachment: None

Topic: FastBridge Screener

Presenter(s): Scott Sundstrom

Background:

FastBridge screeners, given in fall, winter, and spring, provide a consistent snapshot of every student's progress in reading and math. A screener is a brief, nationally normed "dipstick" measure that shows how students are doing compared to peers across the country and flags who is at risk. FastBridge benchmarks are linked to the MCA, so scores help predict which students are on track to meet proficiency.

The fall screener sets a baseline and identifies students who may need intervention or may need enrichment. Those students are monitored more frequently through progress monitoring, so teachers can see whether support is working and adjust quickly. This has been a stronger focus this year.

The winter screener is a mid-year checkpoint to confirm students are on track and to refine intervention groups, and the spring screener measures fall-to-spring growth. Teachers and staff look at both benchmark status and rate of growth, and use the data alongside classroom work to guide instruction. Ultimately, this process benefits all students by keeping our focus on improvement, celebrating progress, and ensuring every child receives instruction matched to their needs.

Recommendation:

N/A

Alternatives:

N/A

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Action Requested: None. Discussion Only

Attachment: None

Topic: Enrollment Update

Presenter(s): Superintendent Zambreno and Ra Chhoth, Executive Director of Finance and Operations

Background:

As part of our ongoing strategic priorities, district and school leaders have been intentionally gathering, reviewing and analyzing enrollment data to better understand current trends and what they mean for our district, both now and in the future.

Like many school districts, South St. Paul Public Schools continues to experience the impact of declining birth rates, with smaller kindergarten classes entering our schools while larger classes graduate. Beyond these demographic trends, we are also taking a closer look at student enrollment patterns. This includes understanding where students who live South St. Paul are choosing to attend school and why some families may be choosing other districts. As we continue to unpack the data, we are also identifying some positive indicators that are worth exploring further and continuing to monitor.

Enrollment plays a significant role in district planning and decision-making, impacting several key areas, including:

- School funding and financial sustainability
- Staffing and class sizes
- Educational programming and student opportunities
- Facility utilization and future space needs
- Long-range planning and responsible use of district resources

Understanding these trends helps us anticipate future needs, make informed decisions and plan for how we can best use our resources to support students.

This ongoing work is an important part of our commitment to planning that supports both the current and future needs of our students, schools and community.

Recommendation:

N/A

Alternatives:

N/A

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Action Requested: None. Discussion Only

Attachment: None

Topic: Public Relations and Community Engagement
Presenter(s): School Board
Background: As part of its ongoing commitment to community engagement, the Board will review and discuss the 2026-27 Public Relations and Community Engagement Calendar throughout the year. The calendar serves as a resource for planning engagement opportunities, promoting transparency, and supporting meaningful connections with district stakeholders.
Recommendation: N/A
Alternatives: N/A

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Action Requested: None. Discussion Only

Attachment: None

Topic: Committee Updates
Presenter(s): School Board Members
Background: School Board members will provide an update for the following committees that they serve on: • District 917 • AMSD • Community Education • Educational Foundation • Finance, Facilities, and Long-Range Planning • Local Issues • Policy • SSP Open Foundation • Superintendent Executive
Recommendation: N/A
Alternatives: N/A

ENGAGE. EDUCATE.
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Action Requested: None

Attachment: None

Topic: The Empowered Educator Book Study

Presenter(s): School Board Members

Background:

As part of the School Board's ongoing commitment to professional development and continuous improvement, Board members are participating in a book study of *The Empowered Educator* by Jen Rafferty.

At this work session, Board members will discuss Chapter 1, sharing key takeaways, reflections, and connections to their work as school board members. The conversation provides an opportunity for shared learning and discussion about how the concepts in the book can support the Board's leadership, governance, and continued growth.

Recommendation:

N/A

Alternatives:

N/A