



Spokane Public Schools  
200 North Bernard Street

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Spokane, WA  
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## New schools coming soon

It's been a long time coming. When the Washington state legislature required smaller class sizes for grades K-3 in 2015, SPS began planning for change – to a 6th-8th grade middle school configuration, as well as new attendance boundaries to create more space at elementary schools throughout the district.

We are excited to finally be able to put our planning into practice. Starting in the fall of 2022, we will open two new middle schools (Flett and Yasuhara) and adjust attendance boundaries on the north side of the district. In the fall of 2023, we'll open the new Peperzak Middle School and a completely new Sacajawea Middle School, and adjust attendance boundaries on the south side. These buildings are possible thanks to voter support of our 2018 bond, the largest in SPS history. The bond also provided for a multi-use stadium in downtown Spokane, replacement of Shaw and Glover middle schools, a new commons area at Lewis & Clark High School, a new building for On Track Academy, and updates at Libby Center, including the Hive non-traditional library built in partnership with Spokane Public Library and a new Hillyard Library as part of the new Shaw.



## President's letter

The turnover in the calendar is a great time to reflect on what matters in life. After four years serving on the school board, I have seen time and again how relationships are central to what education is all about. Sure, there are times when we learn through independent reading, online work, or tucked away in the back of the class. But the most memorable, engaging, and productive educational experiences come from relationships and community connections. The time a teacher encouraged you in a life-changing way that was only possible because they knew you well. The group project that tested your limits while forming new friendships. The coach who pushed you to do your very best.



Michael Wiser,  
Board President

Our students thrive through positive relationships – with each other, teachers, administrative staff, custodians, bus drivers, and well, everyone at school! Those relationships make school a safe, interesting, and fun place for our students, even while facing pandemic-driven hardships. As I look to 2022, I wonder how our district can further enable every SPS student and staff member to nurture and enjoy the type of relationships that carry us through school and life. While I don't have all the answers, I do know where to look. I can't wait to see more dedication, creativity, hard work, and caring from the countless staff doing their best to build relationships with students in this time of great need.

This year, we're taking extra time each month to recognize SPS staff and students for "Exceptional Excellence." Anyone is welcome to fill out a nomination at [spokaneschools.org/awards](http://spokaneschools.org/awards).

**We have so many stories to tell, and so many ways to share them!**

**Read:** [spokaneschools.org/readmore](http://spokaneschools.org/readmore)

**Listen:** [spokaneschools.org/listen](http://spokaneschools.org/listen)

**Watch:** [spokaneschools.org/stories](http://spokaneschools.org/stories)

**You can also find us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter & LinkedIn.**

All-time high 2021  
On-time grad rate: 89%

Historically low  
class sizes

Accepted into the League  
of Innovative Schools



# SchoolTalk



## Enrollment window now open!

SPS offers an array of school options so that families have the freedom to choose the school that is right for their child. For most SPS families, the best fit will likely be their neighborhood school. Others may prefer one with a certain focus or different way of learning.

Families interested in having their student attend a school other than their assigned neighborhood school can request another SPS school of their choice. In addition, SPS offers many Option programs, such as Spokane Public Montessori, the APPLE Parent Participation program, The Community School, Spokane Language Immersion, the Institute of Science & Technology at North Central High School, Spokane Virtual Learning, and others.

**Learn more about our option programs and schools, as well as how to request a school, at [spokaneschools.org/enroll](http://spokaneschools.org/enroll).**

## SPS expands preschool opportunities

High quality early learning experiences have long-lasting positive effects on student success in school and in life. Preschool is when children first learn how to interact with others, learn critical social and emotional skills, and begin to develop interests that will be with them throughout their lives. SPS is dedicated to providing these opportunities to more of our community's preschoolers. We now have an Early Learning department and have expanded from 12 to 22 classrooms this year. With plans to continue expanding next year, we'll be able to help even more 3-5-year-olds build a solid foundation for lifelong learning and wellbeing.

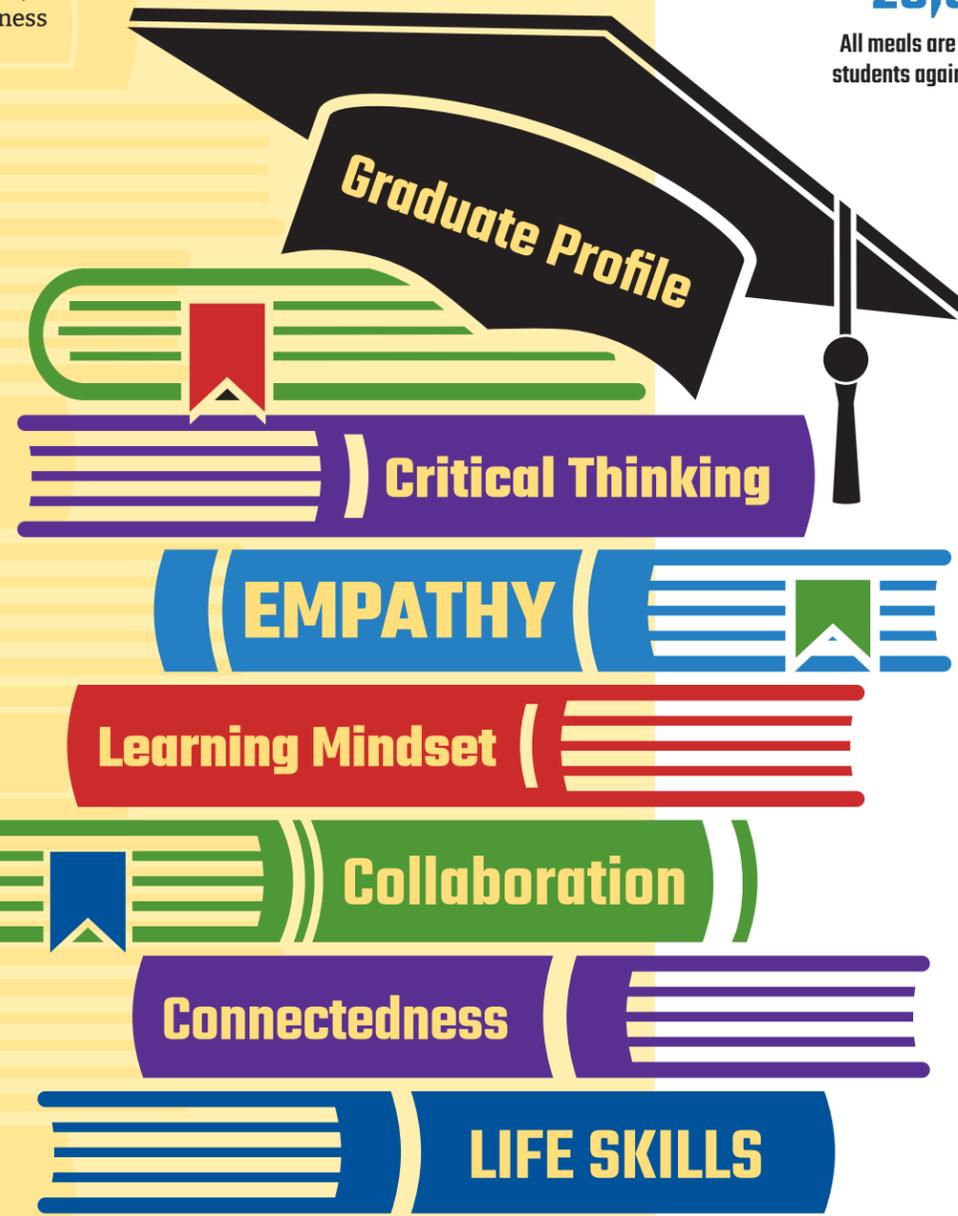
A new program, Transitional Kindergarten (TK), will be piloted this February at Balboa, Holmes, and Woodridge. TK serves 4- and 5-year-olds who will be kindergartners this fall and do not currently have access to high quality preschool. For more information about TK, please respond to a brief interest survey at [spokaneschools.org/TK](http://spokaneschools.org/TK) or call 509-354-5640.

*Elizabeth worked with 10 other students at The Community School on a video project called 'Students on the Soundstage.' The camera equipment was generously donated by community partner Hamilton Studio. The Community School offers project-based learning and gives students opportunities to connect with community members and businesses.*

# Planning for the future

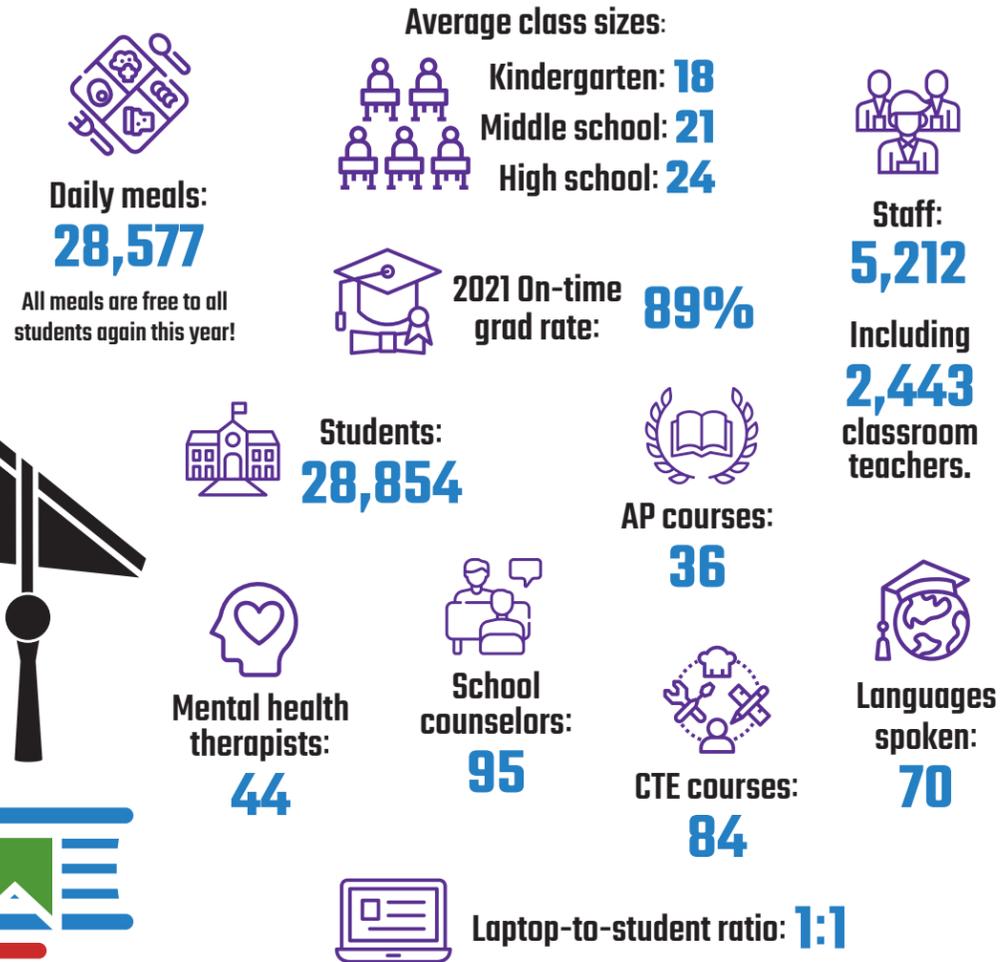
Over the past year, we worked with parents, families, staff, students and the larger Spokane community to develop our strategic plan for 2022-28, which will guide and inform our work for the next six years.

We have identified four priorities and associated initiatives. We also developed the SPS Graduate Profile, which describes the knowledge, skills, habits, agency and community connections that all SPS students will develop during their educational journey to prepare them for their desired post-secondary opportunities. It includes six attributes: critical thinking, empathy, learning mindset, collaboration, connectedness and life skills.



Learn more at [spokaneschools.org/StrategicPlan](https://spokaneschools.org/StrategicPlan).

# SPS by the numbers



SPS is proud to be one of 114 districts nationwide chosen to join the League of Innovative Schools! The LIS is a highly selective national organization that connects the most forward-thinking superintendents and districts in education. It is a tremendous honor for our district to be included in this exclusive group, and positions SPS with a national profile of quality. LIS recognized SPS for the wide range of innovative strategies used in the district, coherent and effective systems, and significant progress that has been achieved serving all students. One of the strategies highlighted by LIS is the RISE program, which connects students to community mentors who develop a caring and supportive relationship with students who are struggling in school.



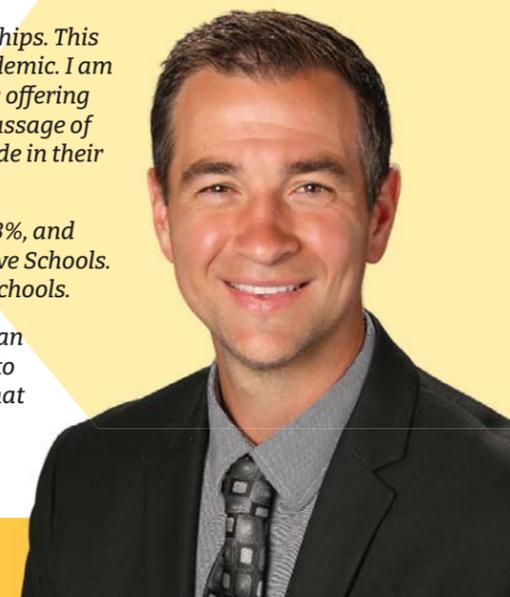
SPS has launched a new way to connect & get your questions answered. Let's Talk! is an online customer service tool that makes it easy for you to reach out about whatever's on your mind and ensures you receive a timely, accurate response. You can access Let's Talk! from any SPS webpage: [spokaneschools.org](https://spokaneschools.org).

## Message from the Superintendent

Spokane is a special city that values relationships and the development of strong partnerships. This has been particularly apparent as we have all been dealing with the challenges of the pandemic. I am deeply grateful to all the staff and community members who have devoted countless hours offering support, feedback, and encouragement. This includes ongoing investments through the passage of the district's levy last February. Our children represent the future, and the investments made in their education bring forth tremendous hope and opportunity.

I am proud to share that in the last year, SPS matched a record high graduation rate of 89.3%, and was selected as one of 114 school districts across the country to join the League of Innovative Schools. This national recognition is a direct reflection of the exceptional work taking place in our schools.

In this edition of School Talk, you will find information about the district's new strategic plan that will be used to shape our growth and improvement over the next six years, as we look to strengthen our ability to serve students. We are excited to share the work and the stories that will highlight the district's vision and mission in the years to come.



Dr. Adam Swinyard, Superintendent