



## Schools and Youth

Schools and Youth were highlighted as one of the five Vision 3.0 recommendations. The recommendation “Prepare Our Next Generation” encompasses access to K-12 education as well as post-secondary education. However, the city’s Strategic Priority that stems from this Vision 3.0 recommendation is “creating opportunities to build social capital through community engagement.” More specifically, this Strategic Priority points to the following bullets in relation to youth:

- » Connecting and engaging with the St. Louis Park School District and other community organizations to meet the needs of current and future community.
- » Continuing to support youth and future generations.

## Supporting Youth in the Community

The city has always valued youth in the community. In particular, the city is working on supporting youth with its own programs and initiatives, as well as with partnerships with the School District and several other organizations. Some of these include:

- » City Programs and Initiatives
  - Youth members on city commissions
  - Cops N Kids programming – such as safety camp, holiday shopping event, fishing with a Cop
  - Summer Park Playground Program for youth ages 4-12
  - Structured year-round recreational activities for young people of all ages

- Providing scholarships and volunteer opportunities to assist with costs of programs
- Junior Naturalist program
- Events such as Community Link to offer families information, services, and resources
- Health in the Park – improving healthy food options in the schools
- Kids in the Park housing program
- Public housing for families in single family homes and apartments
- Tobacco policies – tobacco-free parks; prohibiting the sale of flavored tobacco products; raising the age to 21 for purchasing tobacco products
- Supporting The Nest – a place for students to gather for social, recreational, artistic and educational activities
- » School District Partnerships - The city partners with the School District in a number of ways, including:
  - Sharing of recreational fields and facilities
  - Programs at Westwood Hills Nature Center
  - Planning to improve pedestrian and bike routes to schools
  - Participating in Career Day at the High School
  - Partnering on school facilities, including the redevelopment of Eliot School and implementing improvements to buildings
- » Community Organizations - The city provides support and partners with many community organizations to support youth, including:
  - Children First – Children First is a philosophy that encourages adults to positively support children of all ages by supporting the 40 Developmental Assets, which address the relationships, experiences and expectations young people need to thrive
  - Parktacular annual festival
  - St. Louis Park Community Youth and Development Fund – supports a number of youth activities in the community
- » Perspectives and Wayside House – support women with children

## St. Louis Park Public Schools

St. Louis Park Public School District is a nationally recognized suburban public school district, serving approximately 4,600 students. The School District and the City of St. Louis Park boundaries are nearly identical and both public entities work closely and collaboratively to support residents of all ages.

The St. Louis Park School District was organized in July of 1890 with two schools and 51 students, and recently celebrated its 125th anniversary. Over the decades, school enrollment has fluctuated greatly tied to changes in general population demographics, and public facilities have been both opened and closed to respond to these fluctuations. In 2010 the School District initiated a reconfiguration of its elementary, middle, and high schools in order to better leverage its financial resources. Cedar Manor School was closed, and programs based at the Eliot, Central, and Lenox community centers were consolidated. The Junior High School was changed to a Middle School, with grades 6-8. All of the elementary schools became Kindergarten through 5th grade.

## Where We Are Today

St. Louis Park Public Schools is a caring, diverse community with a tradition of putting its children first. There are currently six schools within the public school district, including four elementary schools (K-5), one middle school (6-8) and one high school (9-12), with a total enrollment of approximately 4,600 students.

## Community Education

The School District recognizes that the success of children in school and beyond is heavily influenced by available opportunities and the success of the community that surrounds them. The School District operates a robust Community Education program, which includes Early Learning programming for children ages 0-5 and their families, childcare services for school age children, and additional programming and volunteering opportunities for youth, adults, and seniors.

## Where We Are Headed

### Bond Referendum

In 2017, voters in St. Louis Park approved a \$100.9 million bond referendum aimed at addressing increasing enrollment, aging facilities, and a need for more flexible learning spaces to accommodate next century learning. The bond referendum will also allow the district to achieve strategy four in the 2015-2020 strategic plan, which states that the district will ensure that facilities are consistent with the needs of learners and community. Major changes include: moving the Park Spanish Immersion School to the Cedar Manor building, remodeling the Central Community Center for District Offices, installing air conditioning at elementary schools; and numerous other building renovations and remodeling.

As part of its mission, St. Louis Park Public Schools is committed to ensuring all students achieve their highest level of achievement; preparing all students to contribute to society; offering high quality opportunities for lifelong learning; providing multiple pathways to excellence; challenging all learners to meet high standards; and providing a safe and nurturing environment that energizes and enhances the spirit.

The 2015-2020 Strategic Plan guides the work of the school district. It includes four key strategies – each with multiple results to be achieved – all of which are measured to ensure that the mission is achieved.



## Racial Equity

St. Louis Park community members come from all parts of the world, which contributes to a diverse and ever-changing student body. Students benefit from this opportunity to learn with classmates from all racial, ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic backgrounds. The school district welcomes and celebrates its diversity, aims to close racial achievement gaps, and become the least demographically predictable public school district in Minnesota. St. Louis Park is also home to several private schools as shown in Table 7-2.

**Table 7-1. Public Schools Enrollment**

NAME	GRADES	ENROLLMENT
Aquila Elementary School	K-5	569
Peter Hobart Elementary School	K-5	524
Susan Lindgren Elementary School	K-5	525
Park Spanish Immersion School	K-5	509
Middle School	6-8	1026
High School	9-12	1435

**Table 7-2. Private Schools Enrollment**

NAME	GRADES	ENROLLMENT	DESCRIPTION
Torah Academy	P/K-8	299	Jewish day school
Holy Family Academy	P/K-8	187	Catholic day school
Minneapolis Jewish Day School	K-8	200	Jewish day school
Metropolitan Open School	K-8	8	Mixed-age, non-traditional day school
Groves Academy	1-12	272	School for students w/ learning disabilities & attention disorders
Benilde-St. Margaret's High School	7-12	1131	Catholic junior high and high school
Bais Yaakov High School	9-12	27	All girls, Jewish high school
Yeshiva of Minneapolis	9-12	31	All boys, Jewish high school
French American School of Minneapolis	P/K-5	60	French language immersion day school
Talmud Torah	2-8		Supplementary afternoon/evening Jewish education

