

Cultivating GROWTH

SOUTH CITY COMMUNITY SCHOOL
OUTLINE OF THE 2023-26 STRATEGIC PLAN



At a Glance Overview:

Cultivating Growth for Generations to Come

Created by the Board of Trustees and leadership team at South City Community School, this Strategic Plan was finalized with the goal of long-term sustainability for this special place. It's main focus is to maintain financial stability, attract and retain top educators and continue to foster a culture of care and support.

Enhancing your child's learning	• Reviewing and enhancing curriculum • Bolstering employee satisfaction • Maturing the Student Support Department • Evaluating the school schedule
The health of your child and our community	• Continuous emphasis on a culture of belonging • Marketing and maturing the admissions process • Developing our parents and students holistically
Making room for your child and others	• Developing a plan for expansion • Reflecting and serving the diversity of our city • Taking care of our place
Launching the Annual Fund	• Why an Annual Fund? • Giving opportunities
Leading the Charge	• The Board of Trustees leadership and involvement • Church Partners • Coyote Parent Organization

For fifteen years, South City Community School has existed to be in intentionally accessible Christian school in the city of St. Louis. By 2035, we intend to be a school that provides a feast of ideas to 350 students: two classes per grade for K-8th grades, and expanding our preschool offerings. The journey towards this long-term vision advances through the initiatives in our strategic plan.

Who Joined the Team:

Our new Director of Student Support, Director of Community Life, Office Administrator, full-time nurse, and Middle School Curriculum Specialist

- Director of Student Support: This role is crucial for addressing the diverse needs of students and continuing to create an accessible Christian education that SCCS is. Since Jessica Green began in July, she has ensured that students receive the necessary academic and emotional support to thrive. By focusing on student well-being and learning accommodations, our teachers can better support the academic success and personal development of all of our students.

- Director of Community Life: By promoting engagement among students, parents, and staff, Riley Vossen helps create a nurturing and inclusive environment that aligns with our school's values and mission. She also has been charged with marketing our mission and welcoming new families to apply to help us grow.

- Office Administrator: A dedicated Office Administrator is essential for managing the daily tasks that keep the school running smoothly. Anna Gnau ensures that processes are efficient and effective, communication between the school and families is succinct and that the school's operations are organized.

- Full-time Nurse: The presence of a full-time nurse in Kari Sherman is invaluable for ensuring the health and safety of students. This role provides immediate medical care, manages chronic health conditions, and supports overall student wellness, which is especially important in maintaining a safe and healthy school environment.

- Middle School Curriculum Specialist: This role directly impacts the quality and coherence of the educational experience for middle school students. Madeline Mitchell is working diligently to ensure that the curriculum is well-aligned with SCCS educational standards, integrates the school's philosophy, and meets the diverse needs of students. By having a dedicated expert focused on curriculum development, our middle school team can create a more engaging and supportive learning environment that prepares students for the challenges of high school and beyond. This role also supports teachers by providing them with the resources and guidance needed to effectively deliver the curriculum, preparing our students for their next academic endeavor.





Our Homelike Environment

Upgrades and Maintenance to our Facility

These enhancements demonstrate our commitment to creating a safe, inviting, and inspiring school environment that supports the educational and social needs of our students. We have created new spaces for art and music classes to flourish, filling them with new furniture and finishes that create vibrant, functional spaces for creativity and engagement. The front entry of the main school building has been revitalized with new concrete, making it safer, more accessible, and welcoming. We installed new flooring on the third floor hallway, adding a modern, durable surface that improves both aesthetics and safety. The parking lot has been sealed and repaired to provide a smoother experience for all its uses. Additionally, we added convertible picnic benches at the front entry to promote outdoor learning and create inviting communal spaces for students and parents. By continuously improving our facilities, we are investing in the well-being and success of our place in the city.







Enhancing Your Child's Learning

Reviewing and Editing Curriculum	We enhance our curriculum each year to ensure that students receive a rich and engaging education rooted in the Charlotte Mason philosophy. This approach allows us to cultivate learning environments where students are continually challenged and inspired, fostering growth in character, knowledge, and faith. By intentionally refining our curriculum, we aim to provide an ever-evolving "feast of ideas," helping each student reach their full potential and thrive academically.
Emphasizing Teacher Satisfaction	This plan emphasizes our efforts for teacher satisfaction by actively listening to our educators' concerns through surveys conducted at both the midpoint and endpoint of the year. We are also launching a teacher mentoring program, to help our seasoned teachers advise and support our newest members of the team. Additionally, we are continuing to provide competitive compensation and benefits to staff, per market standards. By increasing the support for teachers, and serving them best from their own feedback, we aim to ensure a positive and enriching experience for your child in the care of our teachers.
Maturing Student Support	We plan to determine the future needs of Student Support personnel to ensure that each student receives the individualized attention and care to help them flourish. By assessing these needs, we can better equip our staff to address the developmental and emotional challenges that younger students may face, fostering a supportive and nurturing environment that aligns with our commitment to holistic education.
Evaluating the Schedule	We are evaluating our existing schedule to determine whether a late start or early release structure would better serve our students and community. This review is part of our ongoing commitment to providing a balanced and effective learning environment that supports both academic achievement and the well-being of our students and staff.

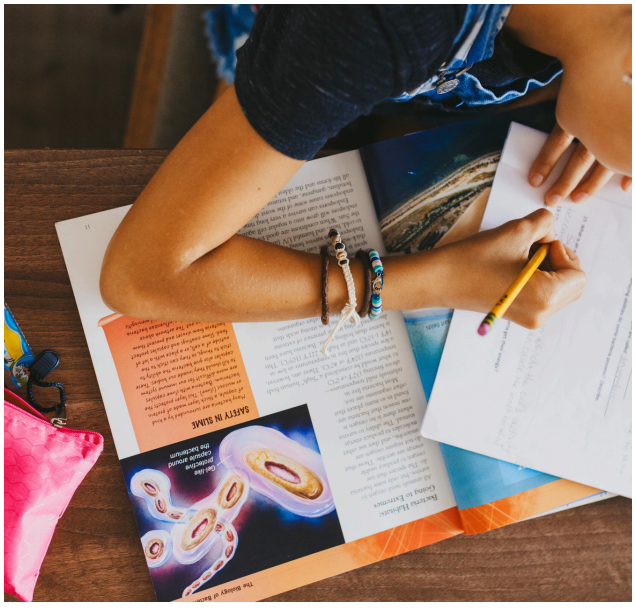




The Health of Your Child and our Community

Practicing our Culture of Belonging for Staff	We are collaborating with Peak Leadership Collective to analyze SCCS best practices to enhance a culture of belonging for both staff and students. This partnership focuses on assessing current practices and implementing strategies to foster an inclusive and supportive environment. We hope to model and communicate trust-building behaviors within our team, demonstrating a commitment to creating a positive and cohesive community. The confidence and collaboration of our team has a direct positive impact on our students.
Receiving All Feedback as a Gift	We are committed to fostering growth by regularly hearing your input on our school's needs and experience. This feedback is carefully reviewed to identify trends and areas for our improvement. This information informs decision-making and future program refinement, ensuring that changes align with our community mission. We are able to track this data over multiple years to compare and commit to continuous improvement for your child.
Marketing our Mission and Maturing the Admissions process	We are eager to fill each classroom by fostering community connections for incoming parents and developing a Parent Ambassador Program. We plan to build and extend relationships with church partners, preschools, and elementary schools that reflect the demographics of the city we are in. Additionally, we are focusing on marketing strategies, enrollment practices, and engaging the Coyote Parent Organization to drive enrollment and retention. Annual reviews of admissions materials and surveys of new and departing parents guide our continuous improvement, ensuring we enroll mission-aligned families that we can effectively serve.





Partnering with Parent Development organizations	We are partnering with professionals from Grow: Cultivating Families that Flourish on attachment-informed parenting practices from a Christian perspective to strengthen the bond between parents and the school. These partnerships offer scheduled trainings for parents and caregivers that align with our school's practices. Additionally, we will provide small-group education opportunities to address the unique challenges faced by parents of PreK, elementary, and middle school students, fostering a deeper sense of belonging and connection within our community. This school year, and the years to come we are committed to partnering with Jill Oberle (LPC) and Rachel Hodges (LCSW) as they host parent seminars that span topics directly related to SCCS parents, to support you specifically.
Utilizing Crossroads Counseling Center	Our partnership with Crossroads Counseling Center enables us to address the diverse social, emotional, and behavioral needs of students, promoting their overall well-being and academic success. This partnership offers professional counseling, crisis intervention, and helping students navigate challenges that might impact their learning and development.



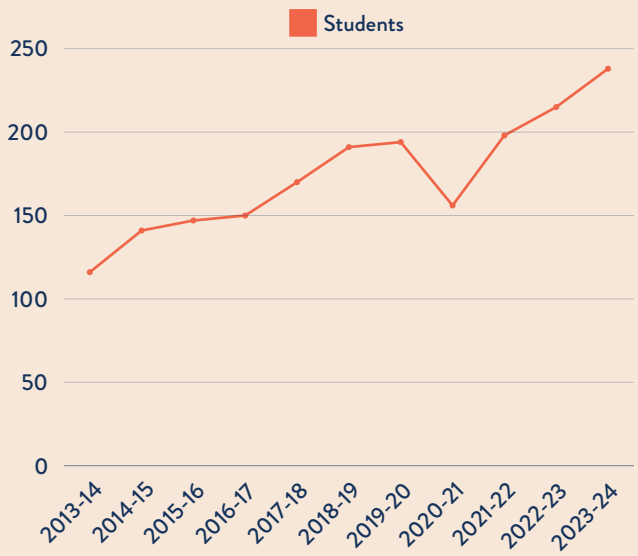




Making Room for Your Child and Others

Developing the Plan for Expansion	SCCS is committed to keeping the educational homelike environment as we expand the number of classrooms necessary for our younger children as they get older. This is part of a broader vision to ensure that the school can welcome more families to the feast and provide the environment we've always had. The Board and leadership team have diligently assessed our options and are working to finalize a decision to share with you before the end of the calendar year. We have the opportunity to reconfigure a few spaces in our current school building by moving walls to create more classrooms, using our parking lot space to utilize modular classrooms, or adding on to our existing facility.
Taking Care of our Place	As proud partners in the Southwest Gardens neighborhood, we plan to continue taking care of our space and caring for our campus. Maintenance projects include things like tuck pointing, roof repairs, electric and plumbing upgrades, parking lot maintenance, painting and exterior lighting enhancements. Bigger, broader projects on the horizon include replacing fencing and gates, roof and gutter repairs, upgrading bathrooms, a new HVAC System, replacing exterior doors, and installing fire doors in stairwells. Many of these projects are contingent on classroom expansion costs. Because of your generosity, we are able to continue making this place feel like a home away from home for your child.
Reflecting and Serving the Diversity of our City	This strategic plan emphasizes the importance to our mission, specifically providing a feast of ideas to all children regardless of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status. Our goal is to more closely reflect the racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity of our city.

Enrollment Year Over Year





Annual Fund:

To continue providing accessible education to all of our families, and improve our students classroom experiences, we hope the Annual Fund will give families a streamlined approach to giving. We are thankful to partner with families and legacy givers who also value the benefit of sacrificial giving. With the Annual Fund structure, we've eliminated here-and-there requests throughout the school year. And as a school seeking to do Christ's work through education, practicing the ideas of Charlotte Mason, while sowing seeds to bless our city, we are asking each parent, grandparent, and caregiver to prayerfully and thoughtfully ask yourself how might you be able to give.



Opportunities to Give:

$29,000 Ten Student Scholarships	South City Community School was founded on being an intentionally accessible school in St. Louis. What allows us to continue to live out this vision is the generosity of our community, giving towards financial aid. We hope your experience at SCCS has been transformative for your family, and we long to pull up more seats to the table for the children who wouldn't be here without tuition assistance. Giving to this fund allows us to continue living out our mission of grace to those in need.
$30,000 School Supplies for Students	In the whirlwind of late-July, the last thing we want you to worry about is buying school supplies for your child and their classroom. We are thankful for the structural support to provide our classrooms with fully stocked school supplies, ready for your child on the first day of school.
$10,000 Campus Physical and Cyber Safety	We understand that your child's safety is a high priority, which is why we are allocating funds from the Annual Fund specifically to continue ensuring we are upholding the highest safety measures for your child and our staff each year.
$18,500 Middle School Curriculum Enrichment	As we continue to enhance and mature our middle school program, we have added to our team a middle school curriculum specialist to help us refine this final piece of the SCCS education. Our goal is to prepare students for their next academic endeavor, so we understand the importance of your students' development in 5th-8th grades.
$12,500 Teacher Appreciation	We understand your love for the ones that develop your students each day, and how eager you are to show them your appreciation, so we've ensured there is a segment of the Annual Fund for you to give to just that. The Coyote Parent Organization will be charged with the task of using funds given for teacher birthday gifts, Christmas gifts and stocking the fridge.

Annual Fund giving can be made online at sccommunityschoool.org or by mailing a check noting the Annual Fund in the memo.

Leading the Charge

Professionally Developing as a Board	The Board is committed to being well-informed, engaged, and aligned with best practices in SCCS governance. Engaging with current literature allows trustees to stay updated on trends, challenges, and innovations in education, leadership, and non-profit management, which directly impacts their ability to make sound decisions that benefit the school. Discussing these materials as a group fosters a culture of continuous learning and open dialogue, enabling board members to deepen their understanding of key issues such as strategic planning, fundraising, diversity and inclusion, and student development. A main focus is strengthening the committees of the Board. They include the Governance Committee, the Head of School Stewardship Committee, the Finance Committee, the Philanthropy Committee, the Diversity Committee, and the Building and Grounds Committee.
Growing the Board to 12 Members	To provide a diverse and well-rounded governance structure that greatly benefits the school, we have a goal to grow our Board of Trustees to 12 members within the next three years. A board of this size allows for a broad range of expertise, perspectives, and skills, ensuring more comprehensive decision-making and planning. This division of labor increases the board's efficiency and effectiveness in guiding the SCCS mission and vision, alongside appropriately representing the interests and voices of our school community, fostering deep connections and trust with parents, staff, and students with the aim of long-term sustainability.
Our Church Partnerships	This Strategic Plan encourages us to increase and deepen our relationships with church partnerships to engage and serve our city. Partnerships at SCCS exist to grow generosity, leadership and families that bless our shared community through supporting and extending the life of the local church.
Coyote Parent Organization	The Coyote Parent Organization's (CPO) mission is to support the vision, mission and leadership of South City Community School and encourage volunteerism and community among the parent and caregiver population. They are divided up into three committees: Teacher Appreciation, School Spirit, and Community Building. This strategic plan gives the CPO encouragement to continue enhancing and creating a great community for the school.


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