Studer Education

MINNESOTA

Turning Strategy Into Action and Feedback Into Progress



OUTCOMES | South St. Paul Public School District

MATH PROFICIENCY

28.6%

Student math proficiency reached 28.6% in 2025, up from 22.8% in 2021.

READING PROFICIENCY

39.8%

Reading proficiency reached 39.8% in 2025, up from 33.7% in 2021.

GRADUATION RATE

77.6%

The graduation rate reached 77.6% in 2025, up from 71.4% in 2021.

OPEN COMMUNICATION

Improved

Timely communication scores increased from 3.02 to 3.28, while honest communication increased from 2.95 to 3.18.

EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

↑.33

POINTS

Employee pride increased from 3.56 to 3.89 on the Employee Experience Survey.

AT A GLANCE

STATE	ENROLLMENT	SCHOOLS	FOCUS AREA	STUDER EDUCATION PARTNER SINCE
Minnesota	2,500 Students	4 Campuses	Employee Culture & Strategic Plan Execution	2024

CHALLENGE

South St. Paul Public Schools was due for a new strategic plan and wanted a more effective way to manage surveys, understand feedback, and turn priorities into action. With declining enrollment and evolving district needs, leaders also saw an opportunity to strengthen communication and employee culture while creating greater alignment around the work ahead.

SOLUTION

In partnership with Studer Education, South St. Paul developed a new strategic plan and translated its priorities into shorter, measurable cycles of action. District leaders began listening more intentionally to employees and using survey feedback to identify needs, communicate what they were hearing, and create action plans. With leaders across the district engaged in the work, South St. Paul strengthened communication, closed the feedback loop, and built greater shared responsibility for moving priorities forward.

> *Studer Education has helped us move our strategic plan from priorities on paper to action across our district. We're listening more intentionally to our employees, using their feedback to guide our work, and creating greater ownership for moving our priorities forward.*
>
> — Dr. Brian Zambreno, Superintendent

SSP

LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

STRATEGIC PLANNING & SCORECARDS

In partnership with Studer Education, South St. Paul developed a comprehensive strategic plan and translated district priorities into measurable scorecards. Short improvement cycles help leaders monitor progress, maintain accountability, and adjust actions as needed. The district is now expanding these practices to individual departments.

LEADER ROUNDING & RECOGNITION

District leaders, including directors, principals, and assistant principals, established regular rounding conversations with employees to better understand their experiences, identify challenges, and recognize contributions. These practices create consistent opportunities to respond to feedback and strengthen communication across the district.

SURVEYS & ACTION PLANNING

South St. Paul implemented structured employee, student, and parent surveys to establish a more consistent approach to gathering feedback. By sharing results, identifying priorities, and developing targeted action plans, district leaders have strengthened transparency and helped build greater alignment across the organization.

INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS THROUGH PLCs

South St. Paul is implementing Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) across its schools to strengthen instructional collaboration and focus on student outcomes. By connecting this work to district priorities and improvement practices, leaders are creating greater alignment between strategic execution and classroom-level improvement.

SUMMARY

South St. Paul Public Schools in Minnesota partnered with Studer Education to strengthen strategic execution, improve communication, and build a more connected district culture. Through a new strategic plan, measurable scorecards, shorter improvement cycles, and consistent feedback from employees, students, and families, the district established a more intentional approach to turning priorities into action. These efforts have strengthened leadership alignment and accountability while supporting continued organizational improvement. Alongside this work, South St. Paul has demonstrated progress in academic proficiency, graduation rates, and employee experience.

LASTING IMPACT

Through its partnership with Studer Education, South St. Paul Public Schools has established a more disciplined approach to strategic execution and continuous improvement. What began with developing a new strategic plan has expanded into consistent leadership practices that help translate priorities into measurable actions, monitor progress, and respond to feedback across the district.

This approach has strengthened communication and created greater opportunities for employees and families to contribute to district improvement. By making survey feedback, leader rounding, and action planning part of how the district operates, South St. Paul is building a culture of transparency, shared accountability, and responsiveness. Superintendent Dr. Brian Zambreno has also shared the district's improvement journey at the Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA) conference, highlighting its approach to aligning strategy, culture, and communication.

Looking ahead, South St. Paul is extending its improvement practices through department-level scorecards and PLCs focused on student outcomes. Its continued partnership with Studer Education provides a foundation for maintaining strategic alignment, strengthening employee culture, and responding to evolving district priorities.