

Strong Schools, Strong Communities strategic plan is approved

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The Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS) Board of Education approved the District's *Strong Schools, Strong Communities*

strategic plan for improving student achievement. The sweeping plan, which was approved at the Board's regular Board of Education meeting Tuesday night, will provide equitable and predictable academic programs and services to all of the District's students.

"Tonight's vote sends the message that Saint Paul Public Schools is not simply *saying* that the status quo is no longer acceptable," said Board of Education Chair Elona Street-Stewart. "We have challenged the status quo and are committed to taking action by making changes to improve the way we deliver education to our students."

SPPS Superintendent Valeria Silva said that she appreciated the work students, families and community members had done to help make the *Strong Schools, Strong Communities* plan the best proposal for supporting the District's students.

"All of us who care about the future of our children helped in the evolution of this plan," Silva said. "We all own this plan and now the work to implement it begins. We owe it to our students and to each other to make sure that it gives the city's children everything they need to succeed."

The *Strong Schools, Strong Communities* plan charts a course to improve education for all students. It has three goals: to improve student achievement, to assure that all students have quality education choices in their community and to guide decisions regarding resources based upon what we know will deliver results for students.

It is based on research that includes 10 years of historical data and five years of predicting the District's future. Along with establishing a goal of increasing the percentage of students proficient in math and reading, the plan is expected to reduce District expenses and increase revenue by attracting up to 3,500 additional students by 2014.

"I look forward to working with the same people who helped guide this plan as we work to show the other districts what is possible with the strength of our schools and our communities," Silva said.