

STRATEGIC PLAN

2023-2028





MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear SVN community,

It has been an honor to serve the SVN community since 2010. I am humbled to be entrusted with ensuring our students have a positive school experience and flourish at SVN. Making sure they flourish means meeting them where they are and allowing them to grow and learn in a loving, nurturing environment. This enables our students to thrive, reach their full potential, connect, learn from their peers, and find their passion and purpose to live a successful life.

I have the pleasure of leading our talented team, working with caring community partners, and supporting energetic students and their loving families dedicated to partnering with us to fulfill our mission, vision, beliefs, and values.

At SVN, we understand the importance of planning and setting goals. Our Board of Directors has been working diligently to develop a new strategic plan that is meaningful and purposeful for our thriving community of inspired learners. This plan is intended to be a roadmap for the next five years. We cannot predict the future, but we can provide a safe, healthy, collaborative community of engaged learners who flourish, collaborate, and strive toward our goals. In addition, we foster a supportive network for families to build meaningful relationships and co-create a school that eliminates barriers and defines excellence together.

We understand the importance of meeting the needs of the whole child and believe our families are our most significant partners. We thank them for their continued engagement and trust. With the firm belief that education is not confined to textbooks and classrooms, we strive to cultivate a future learner who is inspired to ask questions, seek answers, and embrace all cultures as they embark on fulfilling their hopes and dreams. We want our students to know their value, so we create an environment where they can be their authentic selves.

This endeavor is not something we can accomplish alone; therefore, we value your partnership. Surrounding our students with loving and caring adults will enable them to find their passion and purpose, learn from their peers, and grow beyond academia to flourish into the people they are meant to be.

Serving Kids, Changing Lives,

Nicole Goodman, Superintendent



INTRODUCTION

About SVN

Scuola Vita Nuova (SVN), translated from Italian to English, is the "School of New Life." SVN opened its doors in 1999. In its 24-year history, the school has maintained the founder's purpose of providing educational opportunities to the children of the Northeast Neighborhood that are culturally responsive and include exposure to the arts.

In the past 24 years, the neighborhood's population has diversified from primarily Hispanic to include first and second-generation families from Mexico, Cuba, Honduras, Somalia, Vietnam, Burma, and others. Throughout neighborhood diversification, SVN has worked to remain culturally responsive to its students and families and continue its tradition of exposure to the arts.



In recent years, and especially since the pandemic, SVN has felt the acute desire to develop a school environment that celebrates and capitalizes on the strengths of a diverse community while supporting the whole child and family. SVN wishes to become more than a school in the community; its goal is to become a center where the community engages to serve children and families to change lives.

The focus of Scuola Vita Nuova's work is one of intense hope and positive change. Even our name, Scuola Vita

Nuova, or School of New Life, gives voice to our unique place in helping to shape lives. We are a nation of immigrants and Kansas City's Northeast neighborhood has been a welcoming region for people new to our country. SVN is a vital part of this welcoming environment. Both our national and local histories are complex: they include systemic injustices as well as triumphant successes. Black and brown students have been



historically disenfranchised from the gift of a quality education. Their families have experienced systemic inequities in housing, healthcare, employment, and justice.

Our time in history brings significant challenges to SVN's work. The students and families we serve face increasing and worrisome gaps in income, wealth, health and mental health outcomes, and polarization in politics and policy. SVN's work is especially urgent in these times.

SVN's mission has always included bringing the power of knowledge to the next generations of students in Northeast Kansas City in a safe environment. We serve as a source of optimism and energy for all students to succeed. SVN is intentional about identifying any factors that do and do not contribute to the success of our students. We take these as urgent matters that require swift action to ensure we do not fail SVN students.



ABOUT THIS PLAN

A strategic plan serves as a roadmap for an organization, outlining its long-term vision and the specific steps required to achieve that vision. It is a crucial tool for guiding decision-making, resource allocation, and organizational alignment.

The purpose of SVN's strategic plan is to provide clarity and direction, ensuring that the SVN community is prepared and committed to:

- Continuing to contribute and support the well-being of the SVN community.
- Inspiring and engaging learners.
- Supporting and growing committed and qualified staff.
- Supporting the growth of students' academic achievement.



Contributors

This strategic plan is based on the involvement of and feedback from key stakeholder groups, including Board members, teachers, support staff, students, and families.

We gathered feedback through sessions with stakeholder groups and the following surveys: Missouri School Climate and Culture Survey, School Insight Survey, TLIM Measurable Results Assessment, and locally developed survey.

OUR BELIEFS

Vision

As a collaborative community of learners, SVN shall be a positive, engaged community member and be recognized statewide as one of the top ten charter schools in academic performance.

Mission

To provide a safe, healthy, collaborative community of engaged learners inspired academically while fostering a supportive network for their families.

Core Values

- ♥ Meaningful Relationships
- ♥ Personal Excellence
- ♥ Engaged Families
- ♥ Collaborative Community
- ♥ Culture of Leaders

Commitments

SVN staff will:

- provide a safe, positive, and healthy learning community.
- intentionally plan for the strengths and needs of each child to maximize individual growth.
- help each child grow as a lifelong learner and leader.
- communicate with parents regarding their child's progress.
- foster a learning environment that promotes family engagement and partnership.

Families will:

- ensure that my child attends school daily and on time.
- set aside time daily for my child to read and complete work.
- model lifelong learning for my child.
- actively participate as a member of the Scuola Vita Nuova learning community.
- communicate regularly with SVN concerning my child's well-being and academic progress.

Students will:

- be on time and ready to learn each day.
- show respect and cooperate with all members of my learning community.
- work cooperatively with others and use accountable talk in class discussions.
- be responsible for my own learning by utilizing all school resources.
- complete all my work to the best of my ability.
- strive to be a leader every day.

As a school, SVN will continue to be an academic leader in the Northeast Kansas City community, the charter sector, and the State of Missouri. We are home to both innovation and high standards for education. Our efforts are continually tailored, and improved, to meet the needs of the population we serve.

SVN inspires a community of engaged learners in a safe, healthy, collaborative setting and we surround every learner and their family with a supportive network to assure success.



As both a community pillar and community partner, SVN collaborates as a servant-leader organization. We work hand in hand with others to shape the future of Northeast Kansas City. Students at SVN are the future leaders of this community. They are also independent, strong individuals, many of whom will take their gifts and talents to other communities around the globe. It is imperative that they are well-prepared for the next stages of their lives.

At SVN we always...

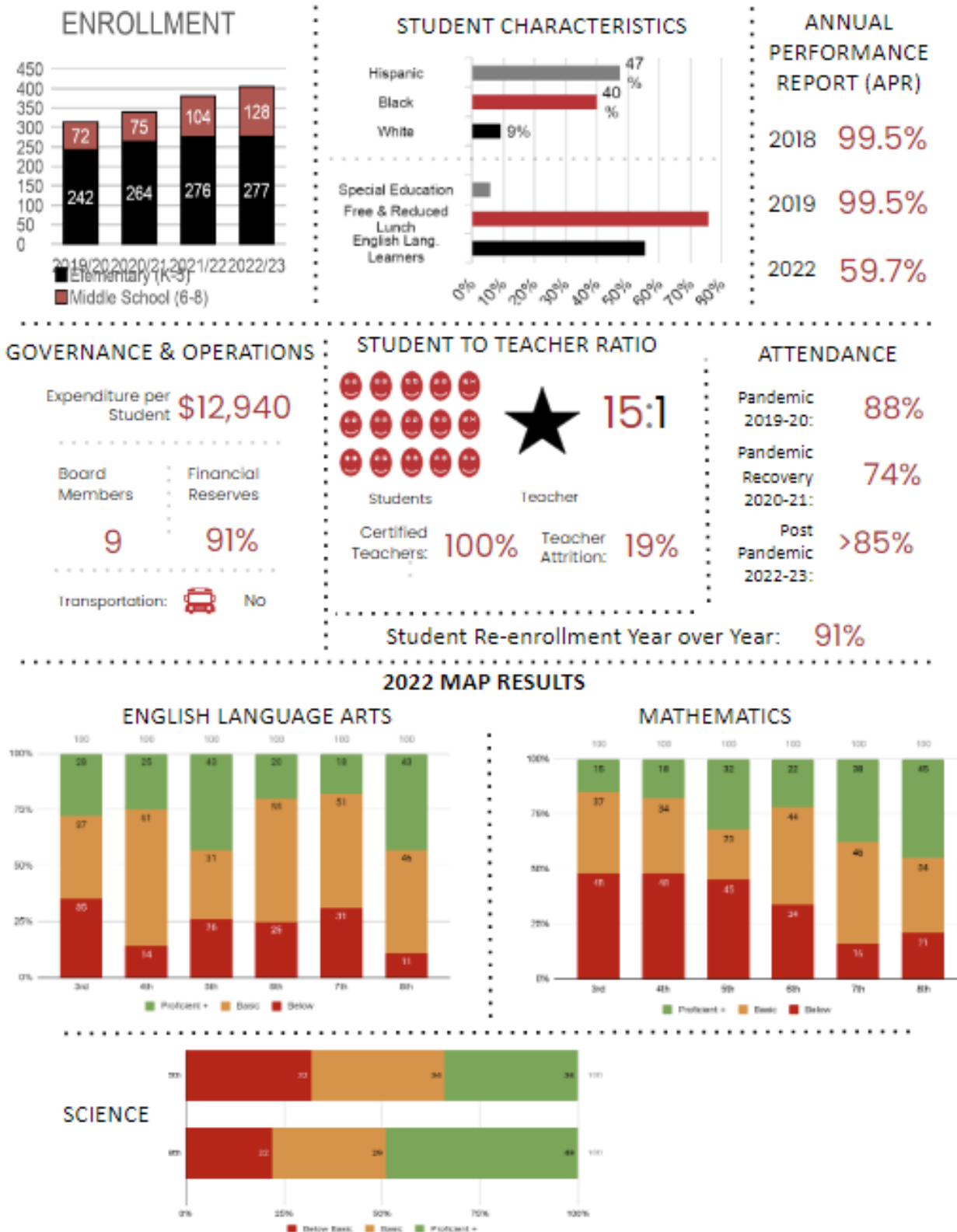
- Focus on the interests of students as our motivation for work and all our decisions.
- Create and support the conditions for all SVN staff to do quality work.
- Act with transparency in both the process of how we make decisions as well as the substance of the decisions we make.
- Thoughtfully consider people, history, data, the intended impact, and the potential unintended consequence of actions and decisions.

At SVN we never...

- Settle for less than high-quality curriculum and instruction for all SVN students.
- Mistreat or disrespect students, families, staff, or partners in our collective work.
- Act without ethical and moral consideration.

WHERE WE ARE NOW

SVN is the 3rd highest-performing Charter School in Kansas City



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES & GOALS

Between 2023 and 2028, SVN will focus on the following priorities:

1. Accelerated learning for all students
2. Fostering an engaged community
3. Representing and supporting the SVN community
4. Exemplary leadership
5. Sufficient resources

The goals associated with each priority have been selected and structured using the SMART goals framework. This is a structured approach to setting objectives that are clear, achievable, and measurable. The acronym "SMART" stands for **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant, and **T**ime-bound. A "Specific" goal is unambiguous; it details exactly what needs to be accomplished. "Measurable" ensures that progress and achievement can be tracked quantitatively or qualitatively. "Achievable" ensures the goal is realistic, given the available resources and constraints. "Relevant" ensures that the goal aligns with broader objectives and has significance in its context. Lastly, "Time-bound" establishes a clear timeframe or deadline for achieving the goal. By adhering to this framework, individuals and organizations increase the likelihood of setting and attaining meaningful objectives.



Accelerated Learning for All Students

SVN is focused on accelerating its students' learning to increase the number of students reading at grade level and achieving proficiency or above on state assessments in English Language Arts (ELA), math, and science.

While ELA, Math, and Science are presented below with goals, SVN understands that strong ELA and math skills apply to all curriculum areas. These skills equip students with the ability to decode complex texts, interpret data, and draw inferences—abilities that are crucial in math when deciphering word problems, in science when understanding experiments and results, in social studies when analyzing historical events or contemporary issues, and in the arts when critiquing and appreciating various forms of expression. Without solid literacy, comprehension, and numeracy skills, students will be challenged to navigate and integrate the nuanced information that every subject area presents, hindering their holistic educational growth.

ELA1: SOLID FOUNDATION

50% or more of K- 2nd grade students will be on grade level measured by Lexile levels and STAR. Milestones/benchmarks will be set to monitor progress toward goal over the five years.

ELA2: ACCELERATION

Students in grades 2 through 8 will generate an average yearly gain of 1.25 on Fall to Spring analysis, as measured by STAR Reading.

ELA3: ACHIEVEMENT

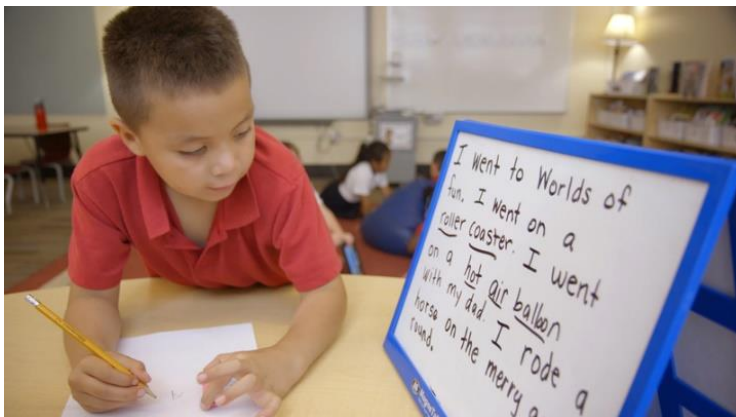
50% or more of 3rd – 8th grade students will be on grade level by 2028. Milestones/benchmarks will be set to monitor progress toward goal over the five years.

Action Plan

Proactive: SVN will continue administering the literacy universal screener to all new students (Kindergarten and transfers into later grades) to identify any needs for additional literacy support proactively.

Implement: Continue implementing the teacher-created literacy curriculum, guided by SVN's literacy processes and protocol, and informed by the K-5 Literacy Data Tracker. In 2024-25, begin exploring options for a standards-based purchased curriculum for pilot implementation the following year. Also, explore intervention programming for students in the middle grades who need substantial support to reach grade-level reading and comprehension.

Adapt: Access to curriculum and teaching will be adapted per best practices and evidence base



related to EL learners (using the ESL Playbook) and students with accommodations per individual educational plans (IEPs) or 504 plans.

Monitor: All students' reading levels and grade level proficiency will be monitored via the STAR literacy assessment and state assessments in grades 3-8. Results will inform small group instruction and additional levels of support and re-teaching via the school's

Multi-tier System of Support (MTSS). Students needing intensive levels of support will be referred to the Student Success Team.

Professional Development & Capacity Building: SVN will continue to support the growth and development of ESL-certified teachers and LETRS-trained teachers.

Math

Math1: SOLID FOUNDATION

75% or more students in grades K-2 will master math facts and operations as specified by STAR CBM.

Math2: ACCELERATION

Students in grades 2 through 8 will generate an average yearly gain of 1.25 on Fall to Spring analysis, as measured by STAR Math.

Math3: ACHIEVEMENT

50% or more students will be on grade level by 2028. Milestones/benchmarks will be set to monitor progress toward goal over the five years.

Action Plan

Proactive: SVN will use the Kindergarten Exit protocol to identify students in need of additional math support proactively. Transfer students will be administered the grade level STAR math assessment to determine their current math abilities and any needs for additional support.

Implement: In 2023-24 implement the new standards-based Eureka Math curriculum across the grade levels with ongoing support and capacity building from Eureka. Also, explore intervention programming for students in the middle grades who need substantial support to obtain grade-level numeracy skills. Students will be given the opportunity to grow/sharpen numeracy skills and concepts using IXL or REFLEX, two computer-based supplemental math programs.



Adapt: Access to curriculum and teaching will be adapted per best practices and evidence base related to EL learners (using the ESL Playbook) and students with accommodations per individual educational plans (IEPs) or 504 plans.

Monitor: All students' math concepts and skills will be monitored via the STAR math assessment and state assessments in grades 3-8. Results will inform small group instruction and additional levels of support and re-teaching via the school's Multi-tier System of Support (MTSS). Students needing intensive levels of support will be referred to the Student Success Team.

Professional Development & Capacity Building: Eureka Math will continue to provide support and professional development for successful implementation of the new curriculum. SVN will continue to support the growth and development of ESL-certified teachers and LETRS-trained teachers.

Science

Sci1: SOLID FOUNDATION

SVN teachers will develop a scope and sequence of key science concepts and skills aligned to the MO state science standards.

Sci2: DEEPENING SCIENCE UNDERSTANDING:

SVN will explore evidence- and standards-based science curricula and select one for pilot implementation in 2025-26. Special attention will be paid to building students' critical thinking skills and applied learning at each level.

Sci3: ACHIEVEMENT

50% or more of students will score proficient or better on the MAP in 5th and 8th grade. Milestones/benchmarks will be set to monitor progress toward goal over the five years

Action Plan

Implement: Each grade will cover the science standards in their lessons at a level that is developmentally and academically appropriate. As such, students will be exposed to key science concepts and skills each year to continue to deepen their understanding of the concepts as well as apply skills in various experiential learning opportunities.

Adapt: Access to curriculum and teaching will be adapted per best practices and evidence base related to EL learners (using the ESL Playbook) and students with accommodations per individual educational plans (IEPs) or 504 plans.

Monitor: Middle school students' science knowledge and skills will be reviewed via state assessments in grades 5 and 8. These results will inform areas SVN will refine in coverage or re-teaching.

Professional Development & Capacity Building: SVN will continue to support the growth and development of ESL-certified teachers and LETRS-trained teachers.

Fostering an Engaged Community

SVN intends to increase student attendance by increasing engagement with families. SVN will also increase students' active engagement in their learning supported by a community of caring adults.

Engage1:

Reduce overall chronic absenteeism from approximately 20% of students to 10% or less by 2028.

Engage2:

Increase the already strong family participation at SVN

Engage3:

90% or more students will be engaged in year-round enrichment activities.

Engage4:

Explore, and pilot programming and practices to support student and family "flourishing," that is, overall well-being beyond the SVN-supported 3 H's (Health, Hygiene, and Habitat).

Action Plan

Continue to:

- implement [best practices](#) related to increasing attendance and on-time rates.
- Intentionally promote and build caring and empathetic relationships with students and families.
- Visit students' homes (and expand to take place throughout the year) to build strong relationships with families.
- Close the enrichment opportunity gap due to financial burden and access to quality programming by working with community partners who provide programming and/or financial support for SVN students' enrollment in extracurricular activities during the school year as well as the summer.



Gather feedback:

- from students related to students' sense of belonging in a perceived caring environment with high expectations.
- From families related to family connection to and satisfaction with school, how they'd like to be involved in their child's education, and challenges to consistent student attendance and on-time rates.

Educate:

- Families on the disruption absences cause in a student's learning.
- Families the geographic area SVN serves, especially those who may be transient and wish to continue to enroll in SVN.

- Families about content, curriculum, standards, and at-home strategies to support learning.
- Staff and families regarding public health guidelines when students are sick and/or experiencing health-related issues. Specifically removing perceived barriers from families or staff to attendance because of minor health issues.

Implement:

- With families, co-develop a blueprint for family engagement at SVN.
- Mechanism/practices for sharing SVN positions (paid or volunteer) that may be a fit for family or community members. These positions could funnel into SVN's "grow your own" strategy.
- Introduce students and families to domains of flourishing and begin to explore school-based practices that grow and support student and family flourishing.

Monitor:

- Student attendance and tardiness
- Family participation in various school events and workshops
- Identify and implement measures of flourishing as well as student risk factors.

Representing and Supporting the SVN Community

SVN will continue to use recruitment and workplace wellness strategies to attract and retain staff who are representative of SVN students and their families.

Rep1:

Maintain a teacher turnover rate of less than 15%

Rep2:

Explore and pilot programming and practices to support staff "flourishing," that is, well-being beyond reducing workplace stress.

Rep3:

When possible (e.g., due to turnover and new positions), SVN will hire staff demographically representative of the student population. By June 2028, SVN staff will include representation of all SVN demographics.

Action Plan

Gather feedback from staff:

- regarding work-life balance, workplace stress, and flourishing, as well as solicit solutions/ideas from staff on how to reduce stress and increase balance.
- to ensure an equitable and supportive working environment.

Provide:

- programming and support to reduce/eliminate staff burnout and promote health and mental well-being in a culture of high expectations. This includes:

- Full staff development and support in the domains of human flourishing via the St. Louis University Human Flourishing Consortium. Including strategies in mindfulness, stress reduction, etc.
- Individual coaching available to SVN staff interested in more intensive support provided by expert coaches associated with the Harvard Human Flourishing Network
- Health and wellness workshops and services for SVN staff, e.g., massage therapy, yoga, mindfulness, and continued access to the SVN dedicated self-care space.

Continue to implement:

- Policies and opportunities for staff and leaders to engage in solutions-oriented discussions regarding improving staff commitment to SVN, reducing workplace stress, and finding work-life balance.
- Best practices to seek and recruit new staff representing the SVN community.
- "Stay conversations" (asset-based conversations to promote feelings of appreciation and belonging)
- Job crafting and monitoring intentions to leave – year to year by asking staff and teachers for feedback on their current positions, plans to stay at SVN, and any requests to transition within SVN, e.g., from one grade level to another, one position to another based on openings, and promotions)



Monitor:

- Staff perceived workplace stress and flourishing.
- Staff intentions to leave SVN and proactively discuss possible changes/refinements needed for staff to recommit to SVN.

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## Exemplary Leadership

### BOARD TO COMPLETE

SVN will have sustained, exemplary, professional leadership. Work products to be developed by the Governance Committee and Superintendent during the 2023-24 school year.

#### Goals

Led1: **The SVN Superintendent will achieve a score above X on their Board-adopted annual 360 Evaluation.**

Led2: **The SVN Superintendent will meet or exceed improvement targets mutually agreed to as part of the 360 Evaluation.**

Led3: **The Board will meet or exceed its responsibilities for support of all improvement targets mutually agreed to as part of the 360 Evaluation.**

Led4: **Contingency succession and transition plans for highly effective school leadership will be in place by June 2024.**



## Sufficient Resources

### BOARD TO COMPLETE

The Board will ensure that SVN has sufficient resources to thrive as a community pillar.

#### Goals

##### OPS1: **Resources commensurate with goals and objectives**

- Develop (or refine?) an overall financial and operations framework and benchmarks against which to monitor operational health

##### OPS2: **Annual fund balance**

- Set (review) annual fund balance at least quarterly to determine extent to which it will support SVN needs

##### OPS3: **Operating reserves**

- Set and review annual operating reserves goals at least quarterly to determine extent to which financial health is on track

##### OPS4: **Compliance with fiscal controls**

# HOW WE WILL HOLD OURSELVES ACCOUNTABLE



SVN will adopt a data-informed mindset and approach to continuous improvement.

Teachers and support staff will receive specific professional development in using data to inform instruction, new curricula implementation, and direct and explicit instructional strategies during the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years.

After each formative assessment cycle, teachers will use results to adjust intervention placement and differentiated learning needs.

Student success teams will meet weekly to review student attendance, engagement, and achievement via classwork and formative assessments.

In addition to regular communication via email, etc. to families, leaders and staff will ensure at least one touch point with each SVN family each month to facilitate one on one communication. Teachers will check in with families at least once per quarter regarding student's social-emotional and academic progress.

SVN will continue to distribute surveys as a point of specific feedback from stakeholders as well as establish a series of listening sessions throughout the year.

Leaders will meet monthly to review progress on action steps related to each goal and report progress to the Board.

