



About Our School

Our Mission

The Southside Family Charter School (SFCS) is a small, K-5 school that meets the needs of a culturally and ethnically diverse population by engaging children in critical thinking and problem solving, involving children in political and social activism, encouraging creative expression, offering a wide range of electives and advocating for children and families.

If you would like to make a donation to our school, please [click here](#)

About Us

Southside Family Charter School (SFCS) is a nationally recognized, award-winning K-5 elementary school in South Minneapolis. Founded in 1972, we provide an academically challenging, socially conscious education to diverse learners. We are proud to offer a social justice curriculum, small class sizes, and hands-on learning.

At SFCS, learning goes beyond textbooks. We use the community as our classroom, encouraging students to think critically, engage in hands-on experiences, and become leaders in their communities. With class sizes of just 10-18 students, we ensure that each child gets the support they need to succeed.

We believe in:

- **Academic Empowerment:** We provide individualized support to help

every student grow academically, think critically, and develop the confidence to succeed.

- **Social Justice Education:** Our curriculum challenges students to think critically and take action in their communities. Through field trips and travel study, students engage with local organizations and real-world issues, deepening their understanding of social justice and inspiring them to make a positive impact.
- **Teacher-Powered Schooling:** Our educators play a central role in shaping curriculum and school values, creating a supportive and dynamic learning environment.
- **Inclusive Community:** We foster a diverse, welcoming space where all identities are honored
- **Family & Community Engagement:** We build strong connections with families, local organizations, and community members to enrich student experiences.

SFCS students consistently perform well on statewide tests, demonstrating that every child can succeed when given the right environment and support. Our educational model has influenced thousands of students, families, and educators.

Our Story

SFCS has a rich history of innovation and activism:

- Founded in the 1970s as Model Cities Mini School, part of a community initiative to support families
- Evolved into a Minneapolis Public Schools alternative site before becoming an independent charter school
- Incorporated activism into education, helping students understand and shape the world around them
- Began Travel Study with our Civil Rights History Trips in 1993, taking students on powerful learning experiences across the country

Today, our students continue to travel, explore, and engage with activists, artists, and leaders, expanding their understanding beyond the classroom.

What is a Teacher Powered School?

According to Education Evolving, a teacher-powered school has the following attributes.

- Teachers call the shots. Decisions are made in classrooms, not boardrooms. For students, not statistics.
- Students' experience learning designed expressly for them. School decisions reflect their unique assets and needs.
- Student voices are elevated, their agency and identities honored. Motivation and engagement flourish.
- There is a deep partnership with students, staff members, families and the community.

What Makes SFCS Unique?

A School That Puts Social Justice First

We integrate social justice into every grade level, telling the stories of the people, not the people in power, and helping students understand history and their role in making the world a better place.

Small Class Sizes & Personalized Learning

With classes of just 10-18 students, we ensure that every child is known, supported, and challenged academically.

A Community of Learners

We combine grade levels, encourage peer mentorship, and embrace an intergenerational approach to learning.

Teacher-Powered & Family-Driven

Our teachers have a strong voice in decision-making, and parents serve as the majority on our school board.

A Safe & Inclusive Environment

We are proud to be a welcoming space for all families, including LGBTQ+ students and families of all backgrounds.

Experienced & Passionate Teachers

Our educators are dedicated to student success, with many having taught at SFCS for over a decade. Our team includes Southside alumni,

experienced activists, and leaders in education.

Exciting Clubs & Hands-On Learning

Students explore their passions in elective clubs, which take place three times a week during the school day. Some examples include:

- Paper Mâché, Digital Drawing, Clay, and Tiny House Building
- Reader's Theater and Talent Shows
- Magic the Gathering, Dungeons & Dragons, and Chess
- Coding, Podcasting, and Structure Building
- Cooking and Baking
- Social Justice and Activism Projects

Outdoor Learning & Travel Opportunities

- Frequent field trips using public transportation
- Nature experiences at the Minnesota River Valley Wildlife Refuge, Wood Lake, and more
- Overnight trips for older grades, including Pipestone, Duluth, and the Iron Range
- Civil Rights History Trips across the country for older students

Strong Community Connections

We partner with local and national organizations, artists, and activists to enrich student learning. Our students and staff participate in local events and community organizing projects.

Past collaborations have included:

- Artists and performers
- Visiting authors, storytellers, and activists
- Dance instructors and musicians from diverse cultural backgrounds

At SFCS, we believe that education should be a force for change and we invite you to be part of that journey.

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School Information

- **Address:** 4500 Clinton Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55419
- **Phone:** (612) 872-8322
- **School Hours:** Monday-Friday, 9am to 4pm
- **Grades Served:** K-5

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