

This SY' 25-26 school plan has been approved at the building-level by the Principal and Teacher Leadership Team, and is final pending SEZP Board approval later this school year.

**SEZP**



**Springfield  
Empowerment Zone  
Partnership**

# **Van Sickle Prep**

**2025-26**

**School Plan**



**Springfield Public Schools  
2025-2026 Student Calendar  
Van Sickle Prep  
1170 Carew Street, Springfield, MA 01104**



**Student Hours** 7:25 AM - 3:05 PM

**Teacher Hours** 7:15 AM - 3:10 PM (M - Fri) \*see calendar for specific extended M, Tu. & Th. hours

Aug 25: School Begins

August 2025				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

Feb 16: Schools Closed - Presidents Day  
Feb 17 - 20: Schools Closed - Mid-Winter Vacation

February 2026				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27

Sep 1: Schools Closed - Labor Day  
Sep 9: Schools Closed - Teacher PD Day

September 2025				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

March 2026				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

Oct 7: Open House (4-6pm)  
Oct 13: Schools Closed - Indigenous People's Day

October 2025				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31

Apr 3: Schools Closed - Good Friday  
Apr 20: Schools Closed - Patriots Day  
Apr 21 -24: Schools Closed - Spring Vacation

April 2026				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	

Nov 4: Schools Closed - Teacher PD Day (Election Day)  
Nov 11: Schools Closed - Veterans Day  
Nov 26 - 28: Schools Closed - Thanksgiving Vacation

November 2025				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28

May 25: Schools Closed - Memorial Day

May 2026				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

Dec 19: Early Release at 11:05am  
Dec 22 - 31: Schools Closed - Holiday Vacation

December 2025				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		

Jun 19: Schools Closed - Juneteenth Day  
Jun 25\*: End of School Year - Early Release at 11:05am

June 2026				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

Jan 1-5: Schools Closed - Extended Holiday Vacation  
Jan 6: Schools Closed - Teacher Professional Day  
Jan 19: Schools Closed - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

January 2026				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

\*Calendar includes five (5) additional pupil school days for inclement weather. Schools will close after they have been in session for 180 pupil school days. Official end date and dismissal will be covered by bulletin.

School Closed  
 Student Early Release



**Springfield Public Schools  
2025-2026 Staff Calendar  
Van Sickle Prep  
1170 Carew Street, Springfield, MA 01104**



**Student Hours** 7:25 AM - 3:05 PM

**Teacher Hours** 7:15 AM - 3:10 PM (M - Fri) \*see calendar for specific extended M, Tu. & Th. hours

Aug 18 - 22: Teacher PD

Aug 22: Special Staff Hours (for 6th grade only 10am - 5pm)

Aug 22: Convocation

Aug 25: School Begins

August 2025				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

Feb 16: Schools Closed - Presidents Day

Feb 17 - 20: Schools Closed - Mid-Winter Vacation

February 2026				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27

Sep 1: Schools Closed - Labor Day

Sep 9: Schools Closed - Teacher PD Day

September 2025				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

March 2026

March 2026				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

Oct 7: Open House (4-6pm)

Oct 13: Schools Closed - Indigenous People's Day

October 2025				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31

Apr 3: Schools Closed - Good Friday

Apr 20: Schools Closed - Patriots Day

Apr 21-24: Schools Closed - Spring Vacation

April 2026				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	

Nov 4: Schools Closed - Teacher PD Day (Election Day)

Nov 11: Schools Closed - Veterans Day

Nov 26 - 28: Schools Closed - Thanksgiving Vacation

November 2025				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28

May 25: Schools Closed - Memorial Day

May 2026				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

Dec 19: Early Release at 11:05am for Students / Staff Early Release at 11:15am

Dec 22- 31: Schools Closed - Holiday Vacation

December 2025				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		

Jun 19: Schools Closed - Juneteenth Day

Jun 25\*: End of School Year - Early Release at 11:05am for Students / Staff Early Release at 11:15am

June 2026				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

Jan 1-5: Schools Closed - Extended Holiday Vacation

Jan 6: Schools Closed - Teacher Professional Day

Jan 19: Schools Closed - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

January 2026				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

\*Calendar includes five (5) additional pupil school days for inclement weather. Schools will close after they have been in session for 180 pupil school days. Official end date and dismissal will be covered by bulletin.

- School Closed
- Staff Early Release at 11:15am
- Regular Day + PD until 3:45pm
- Full Day PD from 8:00am-3:00pm
- Regular Day + Thursday Extra Help until 3:45pm
- Regular Day + Wednesday Extra Help until 3:45pm
- Regular Day + Parent Conferences until 3:45pm
- Regular Day + Staff Meeting until 3:45pm
- Regular Day + Guided Planning until 4:00pm

**1. Staff work year calendar and calculating total educator time**

The calendar tool is built to give schools flexibility on the types of days (known as ‘day types’) that their school will follow during the following school year. The calendar tool correctly determines the total hours and salary based on calculations aligned to our Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). Student and staff calendars are then generated based on the information entered in Tab 1 of the calendar tool. The decisions made on the calendar tool will then become the school-specific Educator Working Conditions. This template will extract educator hours to provide everyone with a clear understanding of what is expected for total educator hours for the upcoming school year.

**Part 1: School year hours**

These hours reflect “**school year hours**” which is 180 days of instruction with students plus any professional development days during the school year (traditionally 3) and the 5 days of August professional development that occurs just before students begin the year.

			Grades 6-8		
	Day Type	Staff Category	Start time	End time	Hrs: Min
1.	Regular Day for Students and Staff	Regular Day	7:15 AM	3:10 PM	7:55
2.	Early Release for Students and Staff	Staff Early Release	7:15 AM	11:15 AM	4:00
3.	No School for Students / Full Day Staff PD	Full Day PD	8:00 AM	3:00 PM	7:00
4.	Regular Day for Students/ Extended Afternoon Staff - Parent Conferences	Special Staff Hours - PC	7:15 AM	3:45 PM	8:30
5.	Regular Day for Students/Extended Afternoon Staff - Extra Help	Special Staff Hours - EH	7:15 AM	3:45 PM	8:30
6.	Regular Day for Students/Extended Afternoon Staff - Guided Planning	Special Staff Hours - GP	7:15AM	4:00PM	8:45

**Part II: Additional educator hours**

Teachers may be required to participate in professional development activities, or student-related activities throughout the school year, including before and after the school day for students, and before or after the school year starts and ends.

These hours will be included in the total educator work hours and payment will be calculated into an educator’s annual compensation. This does not preclude teachers from independently scheduling individual parent-teacher meetings or other meetings as needed. Because compensation varies before the ‘traditional’ start of school, which in SY 25-26 is August 18<sup>th</sup>, please be sure to use the correct table to record (and transfer) events from your calendar tool into this document.

**A. Summer Events *Prior to August 18<sup>th</sup>***

Event Description	Date/Time	# of Staff Hours in gr. 6-8
N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>TOTAL ADDITIONAL SUMMER HOURS BEFORE 8/18/25</b>		0 HRS

**B. Other Events *on or After August 18<sup>th</sup>***

Event Description	Date/Time	# of Staff Hours in gr. 6-8
Open House	9/30/2025 (4:00 - 6:00 pm)	2
<b>TOTAL ADDITIONAL SUMMER HOURS ON OR AFTER 8/18/25</b>		2 HRS

### Part III: Total educator hours

The total educator hours are a combination of “school year hours” and planned “additional events” that require educators’ presence that fall outside of the typical workday.

Hours	Summer PD Hrs	School Year Hrs	Other Events	Total Hrs	Day Count
Gr. 6-8 Staff Hours	0	1493.333	2	1495.333	188

#### 2. Staff workday

- Teachers will receive a 30-minute duty-free lunch
- Educators will have – at minimum - the equivalent of 350 minutes over ten consecutive school days of self-directed preparatory time. These minutes will be allocated across the ten days as evenly as the schedule permits. Schools will strive – as the schedule allows – for educators to have no more than one day each week when the educator does not have self-directed preparatory time. This self-directed time can be used to plan, grade, collaborate with colleagues, etc. In extenuating circumstances, teachers may be asked to perform some duties during this time. On that day, the teacher must have an equivalent non-instructional period.

In addition to traditional responsibilities in a typical workday, all staff may be expected to be involved in educational and administrative activities that are necessary to fulfill the mission of the school. These activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Phone calls to families about the academic/behavior progress of students (hours are already built into the calendar for specific Tuesday’s of each month;
- Preparation of individual student weekly reports, progress reports, and report cards;
- Working regularly with school administrators and colleagues to improve one’s instructional practices;
- Checking homework on a daily basis;
- Attending student-related meetings including, but not limited to IEPs and/or 504s;
- Serving as a mentor to a small cohort of students;
- Participate in staff recruitment and hiring processes.
- Attend/Participate in the Guided Lesson planning meeting as designated on the staff calendar. These extra help hours are accounted for in the total educator hours on the calendar.
- Attend/Participate in Parent conferences as designated on the staff calendar. These extra help hours are accounted for in the total educator hours on the calendar.

#### 3. Additional staff duties

##### A. During the Workday

During a typical Monday-Friday school day work week, all staff members are expected to perform additional duties that the Principal and the TLT have determined are necessary to fulfill the school’s mission, operations, safety, and overall improvement efforts. This may include coverage of homeroom, community building or safety-related activities, including, but not limited to (examples are below but a school can customize):

During a typical Monday-Friday school day work week, all staff members are expected to perform additional duties that the Principal and the TLT have determined are necessary to fulfill the school’s mission, operations, safety, and overall improvement efforts. This may include coverage of homeroom, community building or safety-related activities, including, but not limited to (examples are below but a school can customize):

- Coverage of arrival, dismissal, hallway, and Advisory periods; and
- Substitute coverage of classes and duties of others who are absent from school.
- All educators will be required to complete weekly lesson plans using the VSP Lesson Planning Template. Lesson plans must be completed - and submitted digitally - to administration each Monday morning by 7:15 am. If Monday is a holiday then lesson plans will be due - digitally - to administration on Tuesday morning by 7:15 am.
- On specifically designated Mondays (please see exact dates below and also highlighted in the calendar), after the regular school day ends for students, all Unit A members will be required to attend guided planning for 55 minutes, from 3:05-4:00 pm, and will be compensated at the contractual hourly rate of \$22.50/hour.

The following Mondays are when specified staff will be required to stay after:

- September 22<sup>nd</sup>
  - October 20<sup>th</sup>
  - November 17<sup>th</sup>
  - January 26<sup>th</sup>
  - February 23<sup>rd</sup>
  - March 23<sup>rd</sup>
- Types of tasks educators may be asked to perform may include coverage of lunch, coverage of break periods, safety-related assignments. All efforts will be made to avoid teacher prep time or counseling services to students;
  - Substitute coverage of classes and duties of others who are absent from school;
  - Development and maintenance of hallway bulletin boards;
  - Staff will video record themselves utilizing Swivl/Reflectivity teaching a one-block period a minimum of 3 times between September 1, 2025 and April 18, 2026 to be used exclusively for training and coaching. Not to be used for evaluation.

**If an educator is asked or directed to perform these duties during the contractual lunch break, self-directed preparation periods or during collaboration time, they shall be compensated at \$35 per/occurrence.**

#### **B. Afterschool Support for Students**

All educators will offer extra help/makeup sessions - to support students - one day after school from 3:05 pm - 3:45 pm for 22 weeks as designated in the calendar and beginning the week of September 15<sup>th</sup>. These extra help hours are accounted for in the total educator hours on the calendar. The day of the week that educators will be required to stay after is dependent on the subject taught :

- **Wednesday** = ELA, Social Studies, ESL, SEBS ELA/Social Studies and Special Education Inclusion teachers.
- **Thursday** = Math, Science, Art, PE, SEBS Math/Science teachers.
- Counselors will also be required to stay after from 3:05 PM - 3:45 PM on either Wednesday or Thursday, and they will be able to determine which day (Wednesday or Thursday) works best to support students either through academic or social/emotional support.

#### **4. Professional learning**

Teachers are required to participate in professional development activities throughout the school year, including before and after the school day for students, and immediately before or immediately after the school year starts and ends as outlined in section 1 above from the calendar tool. Most professional learning activities should be connected to TLT identified priority levers and the capacity and skill building needed to help the school reach their improvement goals.

All staff members are expected to participate in professional development, collaboration activities and/or PLC meetings, unless otherwise directed by the principal.

#### **5. School curriculum issues**

The school's curriculum will be aligned with the Massachusetts State Curriculum Frameworks and receive a high rating for quality and rigor as defined by [Edreports](#). In instances where highly rated curriculum is not available, teachers may be asked to assist in developing new and improved curricula for their own use and that of other teachers in the building. To the extent possible, teachers will be made aware of curriculum changes in advance and will have an opportunity to provide feedback.

#### **6. Notices and announcements**

Teachers will be notified in advance of special events which will involve students such as Zone, district, or school mandated assessments, health testing, assemblies, etc. Classroom interruptions for notices or public address announcements will be kept to an absolute minimum.

#### **7. School health and safety issues**

The school will make every effort to provide appropriate materials, space, and technology to support effective teaching and learning. Security of school premises will be maintained. Visitors to the school will be required to check in upon entry and all members of the school community are expected to monitor visitors without badges and immediately report these instances to the main office or security desk.

Every effort will be made to mitigate painting or repairs to buildings while school is in session, to avoid distractions or interruptions to student learning.

#### **8. Staff dress code**

Staff are asked to dress professionally for a school setting. Excessively casual clothing such as ripped jeans, sweat pants, revealing clothing, beach wear, hats, baseball style caps, tank tops, and open toe shoes/slides/flip flops/sandals, sports/athletic jerseys is not permitted.

#### **9. Class size**

Efforts are made to ensure a reasonable class size for students and teachers. Class sizes may be differentiated, to support student learning and teacher development and/or to support a school's specific model (e.g.,co-teaching, dual language, etc.).

#### **10. Bulletin boards**

The Springfield Education Association (SEA) will be provided a clearly designated bulletin board for the purpose of posting Association-related notices and other materials. Such space will be provided in each building for the exclusive use of the Association.

#### **11. Family-teacher communication**

Relationships between teachers and families/caregivers are critically important to the overall academic success of a student's school experience. Teachers may be required to make regular phone calls to families about the academic progress of students, as well as respond to family inquiries via email, phone or in-person meetings throughout the school year. Teachers are not required to respond to families outside of the work week.

#### **12. TLT elections for the next school year**

Teacher Leadership Teams play an essential role in planning and decision-making in SEZP schools. While the TLT itself is a permanent body, the composition and dynamics of the team will change annually as individual TLT members' terms expire, and new members are elected. It is important that TLT elections take place in a timely fashion at the beginning of each school year to ensure the TLT can operate effectively on a continual basis. For the coming school year, our TLT elections (for any open positions) will be held on 08/22/2025.

## School Priority Levers Form: Van Sickle Prep

### Ways in which the faculty was engaged in Phase 1 of School Planning:

- TLT presented and discussed data and working conditions with individual team
- TLT brought suggestions and ideas to the planning sessions representative of the school collective

### Priority 1

**Selected Lever:** Lever 1

**Text of Lever:** Vision for Equitable Instruction, Educator Empowerment, and Leadership Actions

### What is our most concerning data, and what are some working theories of what needs to improve to drive better results?

#### Data:

- School Quality Review indicated that teachers are in need of more frequent feedback to guide them in the implementation and follow through on school priorities and best practices.
- SQR areas of focus indicate that we need to target (2i) Effective Educator Feedback Systems, specifically focusing on a common standards and tools
- Insight Survey - 25% of teachers discuss best Practices and 44% of teachers believe that the expectations of effective teaching are clearly communicated and the same percent agree with the standards that they are held to in regards to effective teaching practices.

**Working Theory:** We believe that the feedback from our School Quality Review and our Teacher Insight Survey indicates that we need a consistent tool in which to provide feedback to teachers from administration. The results of both survey and SQR indicate the need for consistent and clear communication between administration and teachers regarding academic and behavioral expectations within the classroom and methods on which to improve classroom practices. The need for further professional development around classroom best practices was sighted through the Insight Survey with 25% of teachers reporting that teachers use common vocabulary to discuss effective teaching practices.

### What questions or information will be needed to refine your theory of action and set goals in this priority area?

- What are our feedback systems for teacher development and do they align to best practices in the Framework for Equitable Schools?
- Do all teachers have the supports and resources to help them implement best practices consistently within their classrooms?
- What levels are each of our individual teachers on when looking at the “Get Better Faster Guide” and how can we provide more individualized coaching?



## Priority 2

**Selected Level:** Level 2

**Text of Level:** Coherent Actions for Improving Assurances for Educational Equity

- Instructional Leadership for Equity
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Feedback System for Building Educator Capacity
- Professional Learning and Collaboration

**What is our most concerning data, and what are some working theories of what needs to improve to drive better results?**

**Data:**

- Scored Beginning on School Quality Review on 2f:Data Driven Instruction. This has been flagged as our area of focus for SQR. The Report states that questions are being asked infrequently and data is not used to effectively tailor the lessons to students needs.
- Areas of Focus from the School Quality Review indicates Effective Planning (2I) and Aligned and Culturally Responsive Curriculum (2H) as areas of focus to improve.
- Our Winter MAP Data indicates that 6th and 8th grade made little to no growth in our RIT score in Reading and only 40% of students met their growth targets in Reading.

**Working Theory:** We believe that the low growth rates and lack of movement for our RIT scores directly correlates to the evidence cited within our School Quality Review focusing on checking for understanding, and or the lack thereof. Our MAP results, learning walks, TLT observations, and administrative observations indicate that there is a lack of implementation with fidelity of grade level lessons during core instruction across all classrooms. In guided coaching and planning sessions, teachers indicate that they understand the surface level of the standards and lessons but need further guidance on going deeper into the lesson and understanding the higher order thinking push at the core of the lessons. During checking for understanding, it was observed that teachers completed a major portion of the answer for students and at times offered students an incorrect answer.

**What questions or information will be needed to refine your theory of action and set goals in this priority area?**

- Do we have a clear instructional vision and do our PLCs and professional learning sessions help teachers gain skills in common instructional practices?
- Does feedback to teachers align to these practices?
- Do we utilize guided planning or coaching to ensure continued feedback and professional development on an individualized level?
- Do we have a system of regular informal feedback to teachers regarding the implementation of these practices?
- Do teachers regularly unpack the standards and skills to anticipate misconceptions?
- Do teachers understand the levels of higher order thinking within the standards to scaffold questions to push students deeper understanding of the standards?