



## A new brand and logo for Missouri's largest school district

Springfield Public Schools

### Summary

A new vision to become the **District of Choice** that equips students to pursue their goals and highest potential prompted **Springfield Public Schools** (SPS) to make the bold move of creating a new visual identity and brand. The existing district logo had been in use for almost 25 years and during that time its impact had diminished due to a lack of consistency in implementation. As Missouri's largest school district, SPS wanted families to view it as an innovative leader in education that offered expansive resources and unique programs that students weren't offered by other educational options.

### Research

Beginning in the spring of 2024, SPS collaborated with Fieldtrip, a marketing and design firm, to conduct the necessary research to support the rebranding effort. Initial insights were drawn from a review of the district's newly adopted strategic plan, comparative analysis of neighboring school districts and communication and creative audits. This was followed by a critical community input phase which included online surveys of families and employees and in-person interviews and focus groups with teachers, parents, young professionals and business and community partners.

Simultaneously, Fieldtrip was working with internal groups including the SPS communications team, executive leaders and school board members to conduct creative exercises that helped define creative themes and expectations.

Insights from the research include:

- Families view the district's size as a benefit to SPS in its ability to be an innovative leader in educational programs but it can become a barrier when parents attempt to navigate the system.
- Families were positive about their own school but don't feel connected to the SPS brand.
- Staff feel more connected to their school community and its visual identity than to the district brand.
- Staff have a more negative perception of SPS than families.

### Planning

To enhance the positive perception of SPS and elevate its value in the minds of current and potential stakeholders, SPS and Fieldtrip developed a strategic branding, marketing and communications plan. The plan included Brand Platform, Marketing & Communications Goals, Target Audiences and Strategic Messages.

The most visible component of this work was a new district logo. Fieldtrip synthesized the feedback and data collected and developed a set of three initial designs. Through several phases of creative feedback and iteration, an **open door concept** was identified as the theme for the new logo to be accompanied by the tagline **Your Future. Our Focus.**

Some key messages developed to support the new brand include:

- We open our doors so you can find yours.
- Our doors are open to all who want to discover their full potential.
- We empower students to dream big and steer their own learning, providing them the tools to shape their future.

### **Implementation**

To coincide with the district's annual employee Back to School Kickoff, Aug. 13, 2024, was identified as the official launch date for the new brand. A timeline was developed to guide deployment which included three phases. Phase 1 deployment included high visibility items like a 90-second brand video, logo T-shirts and lanyards for all employees, business cards, website updates, social and digital platforms, building and door signage at district administrative buildings, key printed marketing materials, presentation templates and decals for buses. Phases 2 and 3 included additional items as funding allowed such as replacement of employee ID badges and print materials, and additional signage throughout the district, including fleet vehicles.

At the Back to School kickoff, employees saw the new logo and brand video for the first time, and the superintendent explained the rationale behind the brand and why positioning SPS as a leader in education is important for its future success.

The following day, the brand was launched community wide with an email to parents, community members and the news media explaining the brand and sharing the video. Style guides were also distributed to SPS leaders, vendors and news media to ensure that the new logo was implemented appropriately moving forward.

### **Evaluation**

The initial launch of the new brand and logo were successfully implemented based on the established timeline. Goals in Phases 1, 2 and 3 of the launch timeline were met, except for a few that are ongoing such as replacing collateral materials and signage.

The successful launch of the new brand in August is supported by engagement with the video and social media:

- 23,410 views of the SPS Brand Video
- 320 engagements on Facebook, LinkedIn

Recently, in a series of in-depth news coverage by the [Springfield Daily Citizen](#) about public education options in Springfield, the reporter noted in one story that the new SPS brand visually supports the district's focus on preparing students for a successful future.

Participation in monthly T-shirt days for SPS employees is widespread, which demonstrates the pride and enthusiasm they have for their district, the new brand and the message it shares.

An email from an SPS employee reinforces the positive impression the new logo made: "I want to recognize (the Communications Team) for their incredible creativity and commitment in designing our new organizational logo featuring an open door. The logo beautifully symbolizes openness, accessibility, and new opportunities. ...Thank you for your resilience and passion! We appreciate your efforts in representing our mission and values in such a meaningful way. Keep shining and opening doors of opportunity for SPS."



Starcatcher logo used from 1999-2024



# Springfield Public Schools

New Open Door logo implemented in 2024

### Variations of Open Door logo and icons

PRIMARY (TRIPLE)



TAGLINE (TRIPLE)



WORDMARK (TRIPLE)



TAGLINE WORDMARK (TRIPLE)



PRIMARY (DOUBLE)



TAGLINE (DOUBLE)



WORDMARK (DOUBLE)



TAGLINE WORDMARK (DOUBLE)



PRIMARY (SINGLE)



WORDMARK (DOUBLE)



MONOGRAM



SECONDARY STACKED



DOORWAY ICON



FRAME ICON



**Typeface:  
DM Sans (-50)**



## Support Materials

[Brand Launch Video](#) featured only SPS students, employees and family members.

[District Brand Guidelines](#)

[Brand launch email to All Staff](#) was sent on the day of Back to School Kickoff.

[Brand launch email and news release to parents, community leaders and news media](#)

[First Day of School Message for Staff and Families](#)

[Presentation to Board of Education](#)

[Employee Newsletter Branded Template:](#)

Monthly Districtwide Employee T-shirt Day

**REMINDER**

# WEAR YOUR SHIRT

The first Thursday of every month is SPS T-Shirt Day, made possible by **SPS shirt sponsors**.

**FOUNDATION for SPRINGFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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**Penmac EDUCATION STAFFING**

**Your Future. Our Focus.**

**Springfield Public Schools**

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