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# Acknowledgements

***Strategic planning is only meaningful when it reflects the voices of the people it serves, and this work would not be possible without the time, insight, and honest feedback from our entire community.***

# Thank You!

- **To students and families—thank you for sharing your experiences and aspirations.**
- **To teachers, staff, and school leaders—thank you for collecting and sharing feedback, and your thoughtful engagement throughout this process.**
- **To community members, partners and leaders—thank you for helping us understand the broader needs of the community we serve.**
- **To the Planning Team for your time, analysis, thoughtful debate, and commitment to moving this forward.**
- **To the members of the Board—thank you for your leadership, your guidance, and your dedication to ensuring that every decision truly supports student success.**

**Thank you for your partnership and for your belief in what can be achieved together.**

# Executive Summary & Methodology

## Introduction

In Fall 2025, Midland Public Schools (MPS) contracted with Omni Tech to create a strategic plan for the district. As part of the strategic planning process, consultants engaged with students, parents, staff, and community members to gather meaningful input into future priorities for the district. The feedback was collected through surveys, focus groups, interviews, and community forums to ensure that the strategy encompasses a broad representation of priorities. The following summary highlights the methodology and key themes collected from this data. This will guide decision-making and help align goals with the needs and aspirations of the broader school community. By incorporating voices from all stakeholder groups, the aim is to create a strategic plan that meets the needs of all stakeholders.

## Methodology

To ensure a comprehensive and inclusive strategic planning process, input was gathered from a wide range of stakeholders using multiple methods:

- **Surveys:** Distributed to students, staff, and community members to capture broad perspectives on priorities, challenges, and opportunities.
- **Focus Groups**: Conducted with students, parents, staff, and community members to allow for deeper discussion and exploration of key themes.
- **Individual Interviews**: Held with key community stakeholders and board members to gain insight into strategic issues, partnerships, and long-term vision.
- **Student Videos**: Created by students explaining their vision of the “dream school” or changes they would like to see.

This mixed-method approach provided a broad range of feedback opportunities, ensuring that the strategic plan reflects the voices and needs of all groups within the MPS community.

## Overall Findings

Many questions were asked stakeholders, with the overall number of questions dependent upon the collection method and length of engagement. There was a high degree of consistency in how stakeholders answered questions, and many stakeholders repeated the same themes/answers, even when asked different questions. The following is a high-level summary of themes common to ALL stakeholders.

## Major SOAR Themes (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results)

**STRENGTHS**

- Highly dedicated, collaborative staff that form strong relationships and connections with students, helping to create a welcoming culture and student-centered environments
- The breadth and depth of academic offerings and extra-curricular opportunities (including AP, IB, STEM, arts, athletics, and numerous clubs/activities) which contribute to well-rounded and prepared students
- Effective communication systems and active parent and community involvement through PTOs and volunteer efforts, which help reinforce connection and engagement across the district
- A school system with a strong reputation and high achievement scores; seen as an asset to enhance attraction and growth in the community. A sense of pride for the community
- Financial discipline and a stable cash position

# Executive Summary, cont.

## Major SOAR Themes (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results), cont.

**OPPORTUNITIES**

- **Strengthen Student Experience, Wellbeing, and Daily Balance**
  - Create a healthier daily cadence with manageable homework, balanced schedules, and time for academic support
  - Improve school climate with a more inclusive, respectful, and welcoming environment
  - Address behavioral and mental-health needs; improve consistency in expectations across classrooms and schools
  - Enhance food quality, safety, and overall student comfort
- **Equitable Access and Achievement Gaps**
  - Ensure consistent access to programs, supports, enrichment, and technology across all schools
  - Expand early learning supports and address readiness gaps
  - Strengthen literacy, elementary foundations, and middle-school performance; close achievement gaps
  - Focus on stronger interventions, and equitable access to tutoring, after-school supports, and holistic services
- **Extracurricular Access and Alignment With Student Interests**
  - Broaden inclusive, interest-based extracurricular opportunities across all ages
  - Expand participation-based sports, creative clubs, STEM clubs, esports, identity-based groups, and service activities
  - Increase supports so all students can engage equitably
- **Modern, Future-Ready Learning Environments and Facilities**
  - Address aging buildings, inconsistent conditions, and the need for long-term, transparent facility planning
  - Improve space, layout, natural light, safety upgrades, and specialized instructional spaces (labs, CTE, STEM, arts)
  - Modernize secondary schools; planning and communication on options
  - Ensure equitable facility quality across the district and align buildings with future academic pathways
  - Continue updating elementary spaces as part of long-range planning
- **Purposeful and Responsible Use of Technology**
  - Expand student opportunities to use technology and AI for problem-solving and future-readiness
  - Ensure ethical, age-appropriate, and balanced use of technology (address screen use for younger students)
  - Provide consistent access to devices, digital tools, and emerging technologies across all schools
- **Relevant, Engaging, Future-Ready Learning Pathways**
  - Grow offerings in CTE, STEM, technical fields, real-world life skills, world languages, cultural studies, arts, and advanced academics
  - Increase flexible course options, student agency, and experiential learning such as internships
  - Ensure pathways are coherent, clearly communicated, and aligned to future careers, community expectations, and modern skill needs—including ethical use of AI

# Executive Summary, cont.

## Major SOAR Themes, cont.

**OPPORTUNITIES, cont.**

- **Deepen Community Engagement and Partnerships**
  - Build stronger partnerships with families, community leaders, local businesses, and nonprofits
  - Increase volunteering, feedback mechanisms, and collaborative problem-solving
  - Position schools as central community hubs that build identity and belonging
  - Expand community-based learning, internships, and shared use of school spaces
- **Improve Communication, Transparency, and Trust**
  - Strengthen internal and external communication; standardize and modernize communication practices across the district and community
  - Provide more transparent decision-making, clearer rationale, and better long-term planning communication
  - Create meaningful feedback loops showing how stakeholder input influences decisions
- **Build Organizational Capacity and Long-Term Sustainability**
  - Enhance staff recruitment, retention, competitiveness and mental health/well-being supports
  - Align financial planning, staffing, and strategic goals for long-term sustainability
  - Promote innovation in teaching and learning across the system

**ASPIRATIONS/VISION**

- A vibrant, well-rounded school experience with rich extracurricular, leadership, arts, and skilled-trades opportunities as essential to a “destination district”
- Whole-child experience and strong relationships: belonging, safety, wellbeing, and supportive relationships that are foundational to a successful school experience
- Engaging, relevant, and empowering learning: learning that is hands-on, real-world, future-focused, and gives students more choice, agency, and personalized pathways
- Modern, future-ready learning environments and facilities: well-maintained, flexible facilities that match modern instructional needs and reflect district pride
- Multiple pathways to postsecondary success: students prepared for college, careers, trades, and civic life through rigorous academics, applied learning, and coherent, clearly communicated pathways
- Equity, consistency, and excellence for all students: a district that closes gaps, sets high expectations, and ensures fair access to opportunities, programs, and high-quality experiences
- Deep community connection and shared identity: MPS is a community hub, strengthened by partnerships with businesses and organizations, with robust communication, civic engagement, and a shared pride in the district

# Executive Summary, cont.

**Major SOAR Themes, cont.**

**RESULTS**

- A broader definition of student success: metrics that extend beyond test scores to include student engagement, wellbeing, belonging, and readiness for life after graduation
- Postsecondary and career outcomes: graduation outcomes, postsecondary enrollment, career credentials, and long-term alumni success
- Academic growth, not just achievement: standardized test scores in addition to growth-focused measures that present a more complete academic picture
- Equity and access: equitable access to programs as well as transparent, timely reporting that builds trust and supports improvement
- Supportive school and community climate: teacher/staff satisfaction, support indicators, and metrics that capture the quality and visibility of community partnerships


7

# Stakeholder Engagement Opportunities

## *Specific Feedback Mechanisms and Touchpoints*

**MPS Stakeholder Analysis**

**Student Feedback**

- Student Survey (442)
- Elementary Visioning Sessions (1,145)
- Supt. Student Focus Group (23)
- H.S. Focus Groups Dow & Midland (90)
- Student Video Segments (80)

**Community/Public/Parents**

- Community Survey (722)
- Community Focus Groups (15)
- Parent Focus Groups (5)
- Special Community Focus Groups (10)
- Community Member Interviews (6)
- Community Leader/Stakeholder Interviews (12+)
- MBA Board Session (30)
- GMCA Midland (2)

**Employees/Educators/ Union**

- Employee Survey (491)
- Employee Listening Sessions at each school (114)
- MCEA Focus Group (45)
- Leadership Team Focus Group (40)

**Strategy Sessions**

- Planning Team Meetings
- Supt. Leadership Team Meetings
- Board Interviews & Strategy Workshop

**3,200+**

*Touchpoints*

# Student Feedback: Summary of Key Findings

## Summary of Key Findings

1

**Strengths: What Students Like Best**
Relationships, especially friends and favorite teachers, are the strongest positive anchors in students' school experience. Teachers and connection are core strengths of MPS, with academic rigor and choice playing a key role in the classroom and extracurricular activities.

2

**Opportunities: Changes to Make School Better**
Students primarily want a healthier daily cadence (time, homework, exams), a friendly and inclusive climate, better food/facilities/tech and safety, richer and more flexible course options, and broader, well-supported access to clubs and sports.

3

**Opportunities: Subject/Topics to Learn More About**
Students want more real-world life skills, expanded CTE, STEM and technical courses, diverse language and cultural studies, creative arts opportunities, and advanced academic topics.

4

**Opportunities: Making School More Enjoyable**
Students want school to be less stressful and more enjoyable through better balance, engaging learning environments, upgraded facilities, and an inclusive, respectful culture. They also asked for more time during the school day for homework support and greater consistency across schools and classrooms.

# Student Feedback: Summary of Key Findings

## Summary of Key Findings

5

**Opportunities: Infrastructure**
Students want more space and better layout, improved athletic and recreational facilities, more comfortable environments with natural light, practical safety and storage upgrades, and modernized specialized spaces.

6

**Opportunities: Technology**
Students expressed a strong desire for expanded opportunities to use technology for problem-solving, with particular emphasis on the responsible and ethical use of artificial intelligence (AI). They want to be prepared for future careers and voiced concern about falling behind in a rapidly evolving technological landscape.

7

**Opportunities: Extracurricular Activities**
Extracurricular preferences varied by grade level. Elementary students favored play-based sports and creative or STEM-focused clubs, while middle and high school students prioritized inclusive, participation-based sports and clubs centered on gaming and esports, identity or interest-based groups, and service activities.

8

**Aspirations: Ideal or Dream School**
Students defined a “dream school” less by academics and more by supportive relationships, engaging learning, and a positive daily experience. Inclusion, belonging, and safety mattered across all grades, with older students placing greater emphasis on modern facilities and school culture. Students have a vision for more choice and agency in curriculum and daily life.

# APPENDIX

-Student Dataset

-Community/Parent Dataset

-Employees/Union Dataset

# Student Dataset

# Student Dataset Overview

## Student Dataset Overview

As part of Midland Public Schools' strategic planning process, comprehensive feedback was gathered from students across the district to ensure their voices help shape the future. This dataset reflects input from multiple engagement methods designed to capture diverse perspectives and ideas:

- **Student Survey**: Broad participation from K–12 students provided insights into priorities, challenges, and aspirations.
- **Elementary Classroom Visioning Sessions**: Interactive sessions where younger learners shared their vision for an ideal school environment.
- **Superintendent Student Leadership Focus Group**: A focused dialogue with a diverse student leader group (high school) to explore strategic issues.
- **High School Focus Groups**: In-depth discussions with students from Dow and Midland High Schools to understand their experiences and expectations.
- **Student Video Submissions**: Creative expressions of students' "dream school" concepts, offering a unique lens into their hopes for the future.

Together, these sources provide a rich blend of feedback, ensuring that the strategic plan reflects authentic student voices and fosters an educational experience aligned with their needs and aspirations.

The summary of student feedback is divided into two sections:

1. **Student Survey Results**
2. **Interactive Engagements**

# Student Survey

# Student Survey Overview

**442** **Number of Student Survey Responses**

**Survey Questions**:

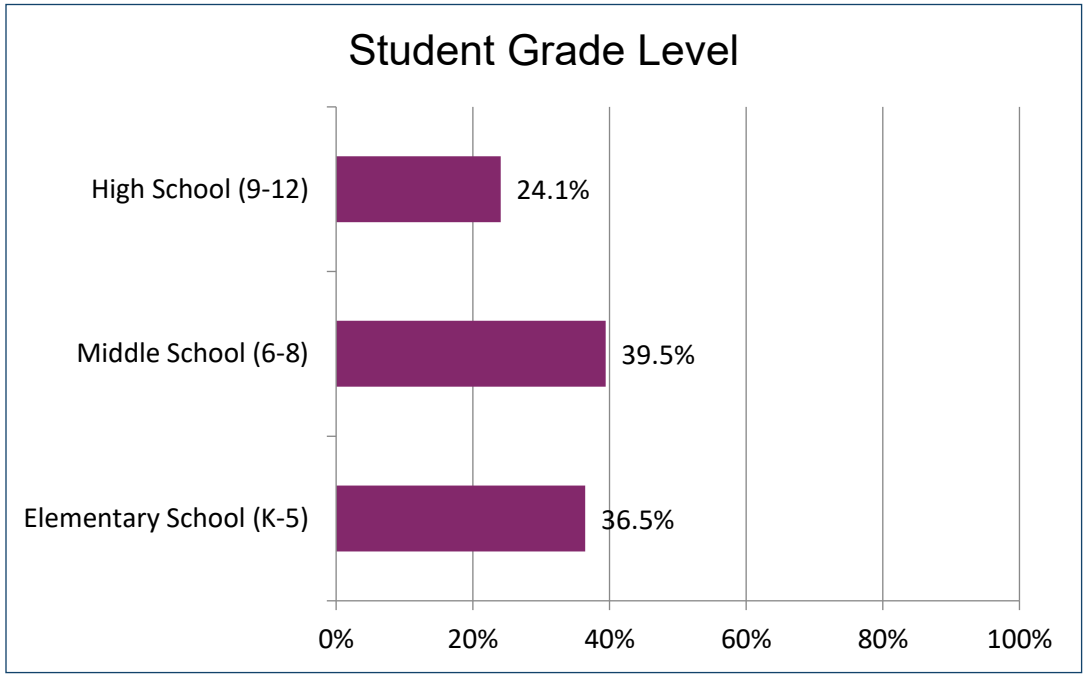
1. What is your vision for the ideal or dream school?
2. What do you like best about MPS?
3. What would you change to make it better?
4. What subjects or topics do you wish you could learn more about?
5. What would make school more enjoyable for you?
6. If you could change one thing about your school building, what would it be?
7. What kinds of clubs, sports, or after-school activities/experiences would you like to have?

This survey was designed and distributed online via email and through other internal communications. Surveys were collected October – December 2025.

## Student Demographics

Feedback reflects perspectives from the full K–12 continuum.

- Responses skew slightly toward middle school students with 172 responses.
- There were 159 elementary school responses.
- High school voices were less represented with 105 responses.



# Student Survey

## *What is your vision for the ideal or dream school?*

1

### Engaging Learning

- Hands-on activities, projects, and real-world learning
- More creativity and choice vs. busy work
- Learning methods that are most effective for the individual
- Many classes to choose from
- Teachers that make learning as fun as possible

2

### Supportive & Kind Environment

- Feeling safe, respected, and cared about
- Teachers who listen, help, and treat students fairly
- A place where mental wellbeing is a priority
- Anti-bullying is enforced

3

### Facilities & Resources

- Clean, modern campuses that have appropriate spaces for learning
- Outdoor recreation and equipment
- Access to technology, art, music, and sports
- Healthy and broad food choices in the cafeterias

4

### Fun & Enjoyment

- School that is enjoyable, not stressful
- Balance between learning and fun, games in class
- Less homework and more time with family and friends
- Later school start time for high school students
- Broad selection and opportunity for extracurriculars

# Student Survey

## *What do you like most about your school?*

### Teachers & Staff

- Kind, supportive, and helpful
- Patient and understanding
- Make learning enjoyable
- Eager to make the school a better place
- Collaborative

### Friends and Social Connections

- Interacting with friends
- Feeling safe and valued
- Welcoming and supportive culture
- Diversity and kindness are promoted
- School spirit, pep rallies, and events that foster a sense of belonging

### Special Classes

- Wide selection of electives
- Ability to take classes at another location
- AP/IB/Honors Classes
- Early Middle College
- Dual enrollment
- Foreign languages
- Music and arts
- Access to challenging opportunities

### Extracurricular Activities

- Abundance of extracurricular opportunities to choose from
- Clubs - debate, art, robotics, tech, history, astronomy, theater, chess, etc.
- STEM
- Sports

# Student Survey

***What would you change to make it better?***

1

### Time & Workload Balance

- Later high school start time
- Less homework
- Longer lunch time
- Longer time between classes
- Reduced exam stress, exam exemptions
- Built in study periods

2

### School Climate

- More responsive teaching
- Consistent grading and phone policies
- Consistent discipline, stronger anti-bullying enforcement
- More student voice
- More inclusive supports

3

### Facilities & Tech

- Healthier and broader food choices in the cafeterias
- Enhanced climate control
- Enhanced cleanliness
- Continuous focus on safe and clear security processes
- Upgrade tech, Wi-Fi, and Chromebooks
- Misc. upgrades such as bathrooms, lockers, parking lot, tracks, pool, playgrounds, auditorium, and labs

4

### Classes & Real-World Prep

- More electives, career and life skills options such as trades, finance, law, coding, public speaking, ASL, cooking, etc.
- More language choices
- Flexible/hybrid schedules to align learning and post-secondary goals

5

### Extracurricular Access & Equity

- Better-funded clubs and expanded sports options, including earlier access to soccer, hockey, and swimming; Arts and theater support
- Transportation for high school and middle schoolers
- Considerations for 7th-hour students (transportation, etc.)

# Student Survey

***What subjects or topics do you wish you could learn more about?***

1

### Career & Life Skills

- Personal finance, taxes, insurance, investing
- Job readiness
- Real-world skills like cooking and life management

2

### STEM & Technical

- Coding, programming
- Computer science
- Robotics
- Engineering
- 3D printing
- Medical science

3

### Languages & Culture

- More language options such as ASL, Korean, and Japanese
- Cultural arts, literature, and traditions
- Language learning tied to cultural context
- Understanding global perspectives

4

### Arts & Creative Expression

- Art
- Music theory
- Drama/theater
- Fashion design
- Creative writing

5

### Advanced/Specialized Topics

- Astronomy and space science
- Psychology
- Law
- Government
- History
- Biology

# Student Survey

***What would make school more enjoyable for you?***

1

### Time & Workload Balance

- Later high school start time
- Shorter or 4-day weeks
- Less homework
- Longer lunch and time between classes
- Built in study periods

2

### Learning & Classroom Experience

- More engaging, hand-on learning
- Option for using headphones while working
- Friend-based or flexible seating
- Positive teacher interactions
- Clearer alignment of assignments and testing to what is taught

3

### Facilities & Tech

- Healthier and broader food choices in the cafeterias
- Climate control
- Cleanliness of bathrooms
- Bigger lockers
- Windows and natural light
- Fewer device restrictions
- Improved parking & outdoor space
- Bike racks
- Better Wi-Fi and Chromebooks

4

### Climate, Inclusion, & Fairness

- Strong anti-bullying enforcement
- Consistent and fair policies
- Inclusive supports such as gender-neutral bathrooms
- Considerations for absences
- Student voices are heard
- Kinder atmosphere

5

### Extracurricular Access & Variety

- Easier access, scheduling with 7th-hour students
- Transportation for middle schoolers
- More spirit weeks, dances, and events
- Better funded arts & clubs
- More options including hockey, soccer, swimming, debate, chess, astronomy, arts, and theater

# Student Survey

***If you could change one thing about your school building, what would it be?***

1

### Spaces & Layout

- Dedicated elementary art and music spaces
- Upgrade auditorium
- Bigger classrooms
- Less crowding, better flow, including wider hallways and additional floors if needed

2

### Athletics & Recreation

- Pools
- Track
- Football and soccer fields
- Larger gymnasiums
- Weight rooms
- Updated playgrounds

3

### Facilities & Comfort

- Cleaner bathrooms, more bathrooms
- Climate control
- Windows and natural light
- Improve cafeteria space

4

### Safety

- Continue to focus on door security and entry procedures
- Improve screening
- Improve pedestrian safety in parking lots
- Sheltered bike racks
- Fence in playground boundaries

5

### Technology

- Modernized technology that includes Wi-Fi, Chromebooks, PA system

# Student Survey

***What kinds of clubs, sports, or after-school activities/experiences would you like to have?***

### Sports

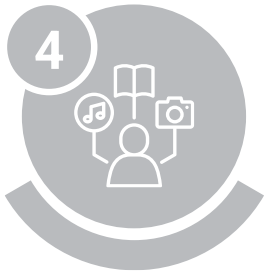
- Basketball
- Soccer
- Volleyball
- Hockey
- Swimming
- Tennis
- Gymnastics
- Dance
- Baseball & softball
- Football for 6th grade

### Arts & Performance

- Band
- Choir
- Orchestra
- Drama/theater
- Fashion design

### Academic & Career

- Debate
- Coding/programming
- Robotics
- Math & science
- Astronomy
- Career prep such as finance, law, medical, engineering




### Creative & Hobby-based

- Art
- Crafting
- Baking/cooking
- Jewelry-making
- Gaming & Esports
- Reading

# STUDENT FOCUS GROUPS/VIDEOS

# Student Focus Groups & Videos Overview

**Focus Group Question Examples**:

- What is your VISION for the ideal/dream school?
- What do you like best about MPS? What do you think we are doing well?
- What would you change to make it better?
- What subjects or topics do you wish you could learn more about?
- What would make school more enjoyable for you?
- If you could change one thing about your school building, what would it be?
- What kinds of clubs, sports, or after-school activities/experiences would you like to have?
- What kinds of food would you like to see in the cafeteria?
- What helps you feel safe and happy at school?
- What's one idea you have that could make school better for everyone?
- Profile of a graduate - what skills, knowledge, dispositions do you think we should prioritize for all graduates?

**Background**

Students were given the opportunity to provide feedback during focus groups held at each school, with some schools offering multiple opportunities. Not all questions were asked at each session due to time constraints. There was intentional focus on ideal/dream school, what students like best or what could make school more enjoyable, and what changes could improve student experience.

Students were given the opportunity to participate in individual video sessions to express their thoughts for an ideal/dream school or what could be changed to improve student experience.

# Student Focus Groups

## *What is your vision for the ideal dream school?*

***What's one idea you have that could make school better for everyone?***

### Inclusive and Safe

- Inclusive to all students
- A sense of belonging
- Prioritize wellbeing alongside academics
- Physical, emotional, and personal safety

### Facilities & Infrastructure

- Modern and welcoming facilities showing care for students
- Upgraded common spaces & library
- More natural light in schools
- Better heating & cooling
- New athletic facilities

### Academics & Culture

- Built-in time to work, practice and get help during the school day
- Time to think rather than rush through content
- Learning connected to real life, future careers, and adult skills
- Clear, consistent expectations and experiences regardless of school/classroom
- More open time—recess, time between classes, lunch

# Student Focus Groups

## *What do you like most about your school?*

### *What helps you feel safe and happy at school?*

1

### Teachers & Staff

- Teachers care about students' education and future
- Principals and assistant principals are helpful
- Supportive staff that engage with students
- Teachers are willing to stay after school to help

2

### Social Connection

- Clubs, sports and activities are critical in making friends and feeling included
- Strong sense of school pride, cross-town rivalry seen as fun and community-building
- Many students feel accepted for who they are, but opportunities remain for broader inclusivity

3

### Academics & Curriculum

- Students believe MPS prepares them well for college and future pathways
- Students value the wide range of courses and pathways, including AP, IB CTE, dual enrollment and co-op.
- Students feel their hard work matters, and their achievements are respected

4

### Extracurricular Activities

- Sports yes, but there's also a wide range of clubs, music, arts, and leadership opportunities
- Students feel there is something for everyone
- Co-curricular activities allow students to connect with community partners and real-world experiences

# Student Focus Groups

## *What would you change to make it better?*

***What's one idea you have that could make school better for everyone?***

### 1 Time & Workload Balance

- High schoolers report homework overload and little time during the day for completing work or asking for help during school hours
- Middle school students are adjusting to more rigid schedules and, like elementary students, would like more movement & play

### 2 Academics & Culture

- Secondary students and elementary students alike emphasize strong relationships with teachers, but inconsistent expectations between classrooms
- Middle school students, particularly, express an emerging fragility in their sense of belonging

### 3 Facilities & Infrastructure

- High school and middle school students describe buildings as outdated, drab, and institutional
- Comfort becomes inconsistent as students reach middle school, with top concerns including climate control
- More selection and quality of food was a consistent ask
- There is a theme around lack of common or multi-use space and underused areas

### 4 Technology

- Students feel confident in technology provided, but there are calls for AI literacy and more modern tools
- Students call for tech that supports learning, not just assignments

### 5 Extracurricular Access & Equity

- There is a broad theme from K-12 that participation depends heavily on schedules and transportation
- Students also note gaps emerging based upon support and resources that are tied to fees and fundraising

# Student Focus Groups

## *What subjects or topics do you wish you could learn more about?*

***Profile of a graduate - what skills, knowledge, dispositions do you think we should prioritize for all graduates?***

1

### Career Exploration

- Elementary students are curious about “what people do”, while middle schoolers are starting to explore their identities and interests
- High school students want more help in developing concrete pathways, placements, and decision support

***Student Quote: “We want clear, honest information about all pathways, not just college.”***

2

### Life Skills

- Practical life skills emerge as a theme in secondary students, with skill and confidence building being the focus in middle school
- High school students speak to a wide range of subjects such as financial literacy, cooking, and job readiness as life skills they would like to acquire before they graduate

***Student Quote: “Not everyone learns life skills at home. School is where everyone should have access to that knowledge.”***

3

### Technology, AI & Digital Literacy

- Students want to learn more about how to use technology as a problem-solving tool, not just a way to complete an assignment. They want to be prepared for a fast-changing digital world, and fear falling behind
- AI is a big theme in students wanting to understand how to use it effectively and ethically as a problem-solving tool

***Student Quote: “We need to learn how to use AI ethically and responsibly, not just be told not to use it.”***

# Student Focus Groups

## *What would make school more enjoyable for you?*

1

### Elementary School

- Elementary students want to feel safe, cared for, and supported
- They want predictability and hands-on learning, with attentive, caring teachers
- Recess and movement are critical to their enjoyment
- While stress is comparatively low at this level, disruptions are a factor in their wellbeing

***Key Theme: School is more fun when we feel safe, our teachers are kind, and we get time to move and play.***

2

### Middle School

- Students in middle school want belonging and acceptance among peers and teachers
- As children reach middle school, there is an emerging desire for having a say in their days
- Spaces start to feel more confined and generic
- There is a desire for more consistency in rules

***Key Theme: School is better when we feel like we belong and aren't embarrassed for being ourselves or making mistakes.***

3

### High School

- High school students want more flexibility in the school day, with later start times
- They also expressed a need for more time and space to connect, along with movement and breaks during the day
- Students also highlighted a desire for less stress and pressure, and want more agency/choice as young adults

***Key Theme: School would be more enjoyable if we had more flexibility, were trusted more, and felt like the system was designed for real people.***

# Student Focus Groups

## *If you could change one thing about your school building, what would it be?*

### Elementary School

- Students in elementary want basic comfort and cleanliness
- Bathroom cleanliness, availability of soap and paper towels are important to them
- Outdoor and play spaces are highly valued

***Key Theme: Clean, comfortable spaces help elementary students feel safe and ready to learn.***

### Middle School

- Students in middle school want common gathering spaces, less institutional-like
- They also desire bathroom cleanliness, and expressed a desire for more autonomy and flexibility in accessing restrooms during class times
- Students would like less crowding with more hallway space during passing time

***Key Theme: Middle school students want more access and independence, with buildings that feel more open and welcoming.***

### High School

- Students want buildings that feel modern and functional, with more light and a campus-like feel
- They spoke to needing more collaboration, social, and study places
- High school students also represented a strong voice for fieldhouses, practice space and auditoriums

***Key Theme: School should represent that we matter and are preparing for our adult life.***

# Student Focus Groups

## *What kinds of clubs, sports, or after-school activities/experiences would you like to have?*

1

### Elementary School

- Students in elementary want low-pressure activities that focus on play
- Soccer, basketball and playground or recess-style sports were some examples of sports desired
- In clubs, students share a desire for arts & crafts, STEM, Legos, music and drama

***Student Quote: "I like clubs because we get to do fun things and be with our friends."***

2

### Middle School

- Students in middle school want interest-based clubs and low-pressure sports, with a mix of competitive and recreational options
- Many of the traditional sports were highlighted but with a focus on participation, not pressure
- Gaming, creative clubs and identity-based groups were also desired

***Student Quote: "I want to be able to try things without worrying about messing up or being judged."***

3

### High School

- High school students also expressed a strong desire for varsity and non-competitive/open play options
- In clubs, esports, content creation, diversity clubs and service clubs were highlighted
- Students also expressed a strong desire for tutoring, study spaces and academic support

***Student Quote: "Open gym time where students could work out or play a game just for fun and health."***

# Student Focus Groups

## *What kinds of food would you like to see in the cafeteria?*

### Elementary School

- Students in elementary want food that feels familiar and comfortable
- They want food that looks appealing and tastes good, with simple favorites they recognize
- They also asked for more fruit and easy-to-eat options

***Key Theme: Food equals comfort and care to elementary students.***

### Middle School

- Students in middle school also want better tasting food, mentioning they want their hot food to be warm
- Students are sensitive to food repetition, quality inconsistency, and mealtimes that feel rushed
- They also want a lunch experience that feels equitable to all peers with equal time, equal food choices/portions, etc.

***Key Theme: Good food means quality and fairness to middle schoolers.***

### High School

- High school students want more options and choice, asking for fresher, high-quality food
- Students speak to challenges with food access as it relates to long school days and after school activities
- Cafeteria experiences have been described as chaotic, lacking flow, and they want to be treated as young adults by staff

***Key Theme: Food equates to respect and readiness for adult expectations to high school students.***