

Board of Education Regular Meeting
Monday, December 8, 2025 7:00 PM
HS CONFERENCE ROOM
705 N 9th Street
Arlington, NE 68002

1. OPENING PROCEDURES
 - 1.1. Call Meeting to Order
 - 1.2. Roll Call
 - 1.3. Pledge of Allegiance
 - 1.4. Approval of Regular Meeting Agenda
2. WELCOME TO GUESTS AND PUBLIC FORUM
3. CONSENT AGENDA
 - 3.1. Minutes of the Previous Board Meeting(s)
 - 3.2. Monthly Financial Reports
 - 3.3.
 - *Percentage of funds sheet not attached
4. CURRICULUM/INSTRUCTION REPORTS
 - 4.1. NSCAS Report 2024-2025 School Year
 - AQuESTT Information
5. REVIEW OF ANNUAL DISTRICT PLAN
6. PRINCIPALS' REPORTS
 - 6.1. Dr. Morgan's Elementary Report
 - 6.2. Mr. Shada's Activity Report
 - Scoreboard Sponsor Update
 - 6.3. Mr. Pflingsten's Secondary
7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT
 - 7.1. DLR Update
 - 7.2. Supt Leave Log Review
 - 7.3. NRCSA and NASB Reports
 - 7.4. Legislation Update: Watch List
 - EPIC
 - AFAN
 - Changes valuation inside the formula
 - Hard Caps on Valuation increases
 - Minimum teacher compensation funded by block grant
 - Retirement (possible 120 hard no-work rule)
 - Currently 180 days with some flexibility and limitations
 - Budget Shortfall
 - Others:

- Option/SPED
 - Supt Pay
 - Hard Tax Caps (access to 3-7% discussed)
- Change in Senators:
 - 10 term limited out
 - 2 not running again
 - 12 seeking re-election
- 7.5. Discuss Bus Delivery Date
- 7.6. Discuss and Consider Dates for Annual Community Engagement Meeting and Board of Education Retreat
- 8. COMMITTEE AND REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS
 - 8.1. Buildings and Grounds Committee
 - Focus Group Meetings Report
 - 8.2. Finance Committee
 - 8.3. Professional Development Sharing
- 9. NEW BUSINESS
 - 9.1. Discuss, Consider, and Take Necessary Action to Approve Financial Statements for 2024-2025 Fiscal Year
 - 9.2. Discussion, Consider and Approve Supt Evaluation
- 10. ADJOURNMENT

**Arlington Public Schools
November 30, 2025**

Fund Name 2 Rivers Bank	Bank Statement Starting Balance	Receipts	Disbursements	Interest	Interfund Transfers	Bank Statement Ending Balance
General Fund - 864	\$ 3,627,884.88	\$ 257,446.64	\$ 938,182.69	\$ 6,463.76	\$ 49,272.89	\$ 3,002,885.48
Activities - 109	\$ 215,634.15	\$ 53,774.10	\$ 57,700.45	\$ 304.73	\$ -	\$ 212,012.53
Hot Lunch - 487	\$ 49,692.94	\$ 39,539.33	\$ 50.00	\$ 44.40	\$ (49,272.89)	\$ 39,953.78
Depreciation Fund	\$ 1,019,172.60	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,692.24	\$ -	\$ 1,021,864.84
Depreciation CD - 5826	\$ 284,398.87	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 284,398.87
					Total Depreciation:	\$ 1,306,263.71
2017 Bond Refunding	\$ 783,168.17	\$ 4,658.20	\$ -	\$ 1,617.46	\$ -	\$ 789,443.83
QCPUF	\$ 201,828.33	\$ -	\$ 25,913.29	\$ 416.83	\$ -	\$ 176,331.87
Spec Bldg Fund	\$ 618,559.71	\$ 16,327.19	\$ -	\$ 1,277.50	\$ -	\$ 636,164.40
Sp Bldg CD (none for now)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
					Total Spec Bldg:	\$ 636,164.40
Total Special Funds	\$ 2,907,127.68	\$ 20,985.39	\$ 25,913.29	\$ 6,004.03	\$ -	\$ 2,908,203.81
Total SF minus CD's	\$ 2,622,728.81					\$ 2,623,804.94

CHECK REGISTER FOR NOVEMBER 2025

(Includes special fund checks)

PAYEE NAME	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
Airgas	gas delivery for shop classes	\$ 398.07
Airgas	Welding gas tank rental	\$ 94.63
Arbor Family	Onsite hours for October	\$ 2,190.10
Blair Community School	registration fee-show choir workshop	\$ 250.00
Bomgaars Supply	Bus barn supplies	\$ 466.11
Border States Ind	lights-maintenance	\$ 92.01
Border States Ind	lights-maintenance	\$ 240.00
CDW-G	backordered shipment Epson Projectors (reentered)	\$ 4,017.00
Capital One (Wal-Mart)	Various supplies for classrooms	\$ 113.41
Charleston Inc	contactor-maintenance	\$ 18.16
Martin Clausen	monthly pest control	\$ 92.64
Culligan	salt for HS water	\$ 511.50
College Board	PSAT	\$ 33.30
Egan	gym floor resurfacing	\$ 5,253.00
Enterprise Publishing	legals meeting & minutes	\$ 184.29
Enterprise Publishing	legals minutes & mtg notes	\$ 232.52
ESU 3	special ed facilitators & the leadership grind	\$ 100.00
ESU 3	student services for October Brook Valley, Speech, Vis	\$ 17,044.58
ESU 3	student services for Aug & Sep speech, vision	\$ 2,754.58
Fiber Platform	internet provider	\$ 558.62
Fremont Electric	football field-replace lights	\$ 367.50
Hometown Leasing	printer copier lease	\$ 1,810.93
HyVee	steak lab	\$ 54.08
Jeredith Brands	facility cleaners	\$ 540.00
KSB School Law	Emails & phone calls re personnel matter	\$ 385.00
Knudsen Oil & Feed	Fuel for buses	\$ 4,639.11
LE Learn2Move	PT services	\$ 866.95
Little Bee Speech Co	Yearly Membership	\$ 119.99
Menards	Bus barn supplies	\$ 138.92
Menards	Maintenance supplies	\$ 236.54
Menards	Bus barn cleaning items, hose handler	\$ 294.26
Menards	air filters	\$ 335.58
Menards	Custodial winter supplies, hvac items	\$ 617.40
Menards	Maintenance supplies	\$ 91.87
Menards	building maintenance	\$ 4.90
Methodist Fremont Health	athletic trainer services for Oct	\$ 3,165.62
NASB	State education conference Board & Superintendent	\$ 2,036.00
Nebraska Council of Scho	legislative preview	\$ 120.00
Nebraska Council of Econ	Stock market game	\$ 84.00
Omaha Truck Center	Buses 2019 & 2020 repair	\$ 814.92
Omaha Truck Center	shop supplies oil	\$ 19.73
Omaha Truck Center	oil change supplies for bus barn	\$ 1,266.47
One Source	background checks	\$ 149.00
OPPD	Electricity	\$ 10,605.01
O'Reilly Auto Parts	shop supplies	\$ 83.08
Pave the Way Concrete	Pad Bicycle rack	\$ 3,000.00
P & H Electric	60" V-Belt B Section	\$ 50.00
P & H Electric	Jason 21", 24" 25" outside length	\$ 68.78
JW Pepper	sheet music-HS	\$ 303.00
JW Pepper	sheet music-HS	\$ 194.00
Roots to Wings	Farmer Service Fees	\$ 1,252.50
Skills USA	Advisors Dues	\$ 56.00
Sports Facility Maintenance	New & Old gyms inspections	\$ 4,582.00
T & T Electric	labor & materials parking lot lights	\$ 650.00
VISA	Various supplies for classrooms	\$ 7,251.67
Village of Arlington	Water	\$
Warehouse-Lighting	parking lot flood lights	\$ 440.99
Waste Connections	trash service	\$ 865.25

Total Payables (GF checks not mailed until approved by the BOE)

\$82,205.57

HANDPAYABLES (GF Paid and mailed after previous board meeting but before this board meeting)

Peru State College	registration fee-choral festival	\$ 250.00
APS Arlington Activity	GBB Camp Money from HL Acct	\$60.00
APS Arlington Activity	Transfer funds	\$33,348.48
Village of Arlington	Water	\$759.71
Music Theater Internation:	Contract for Musical	\$750.00

Total Hand payables **\$35,168.19**

Total General Fund **\$117,373.76**

SPECIAL FUNDS (Building, Bond, QCPUF, Dep checks)

BOKF, National Assoc	bond payment	\$543,903.75
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Total Special Funds **\$543,903.75**

Hot Lunch Expenses

US Foods	\$2,687.52
Sysco	\$3,090.36
CWD	\$13,801.06
Jackson Service	\$227.20
Earthgrains	\$529.80
Hiland Roberts	\$2,926.20

Hot Lunch Total **\$23,262.14**

EFINANCE - POWERSCHOOL
 DATE: 12/02/2025
 TIME: 15:03:30

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOL
 CHECK REGISTER

PAGE NUMBER: 3
 VENCHK11
 ACCOUNTING PERIOD: 4/26

FUND - 99 - DISBURSEMENT FUND

CHECK NUMBER	CASH ACCT	DATE ISSUED	VENDOR	ACCT	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
48823			4607 VISA		VOID: MULTI STUB CHECK	
48824			4607 VISA		VOID: MULTI STUB CHECK	
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	AMAZON - 30 DRAWER STORAG	29.99
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	AMAZON - 50X72 RECTANGULA	16.66
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	AMAZON - AAA BATTERIES	38.50
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	AMAZON - COMPUTER MONITOR	12.99
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	AMAZON - CORDLESS HOT GLU	20.99
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	AMAZON - CORDLESS HOT GLU	20.27
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	AMAZON - CRAYOLA CRAYON B	26.99
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	AMAZON - FOAM PLATES	52.46
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	AMAZON - PAPER MATE FELT	29.95
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	AMAZON - PLASTIC STORAGE	38.61
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	AMAZON - WONDER FORGE DIS	9.99
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2530	AMAZON-100' ROLLS HP PAPE	63.00
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	AMAZON-5 PORT GIGABIT POE	44.99
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	AMAZON-CHARGERS	12.78
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	AMAZON-EMERGENCY SUPPLIES	45.01
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	AMAZON-EMERGENCY SUPPLIES	105.02
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	AMAZON-HUBBELL WIRING DEV	65.42
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2431	AMAZON-HYS VHF MARINE ANT	13.45
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2431	AMAZON-HYS VHF MARINE ANT	31.37
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2734	AMAZON-LAPTOP BATTERY	42.98
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	AMAZON-PRINTER	648.70
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	AMAZON-SMOKE DETECTOR	98.00
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	AMAZON-TAPE	53.24
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2431	AMAZON-TOWING MIRRORS	9.95
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2431	AMAZON-TOWING MIRRORS	23.21
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	AMAZON-WATER FILTERS, AAO	599.29
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	EBAY-128GB M.2. SSD HARD	124.22
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	EBAY-ANALOG DEVICES	77.60
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	EBAY-HP PROBOOK MOTHERBOA	269.90
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	ENVELOPES	1,439.35
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	ENVELOPES	1,439.35
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	ESTIMATED SHIPPING/HANDLI	13.00
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2626	FILL-RITE BUS BARN FUEL	85.00
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2330	FREDDY'S-MEALS FOR TRAINI	22.65
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	GROCERIES FOR CONFERENCE	275.68
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2580	HAMPTON INN ADVISOR ACCOM	247.11
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2643	LEARNING A-Z: VOCAB FOR H	125.00
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2580	MCDONALDS MEAL	6.47
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2580	MECA-CHI HEALTH CTR PARKI	20.00
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2330	NMEA - CONFERENCE REGISTR	135.00
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2643	STORYJUMPER-STUDENT BOOKS	27.91
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	TENSION RODS SAFETY CURTA	15.99
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2330	THE KITCHEN-MEALS FOR TRA	93.60
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2431	TOMMYS CARWASH, VANS 1 &	8.98
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2431	TOMMYS CARWASH, VANS 1 &	20.98
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	TPT - BUILD A PARADE BALL	8.00
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	TPT - ELEMENT OF ART HOW	5.00
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	TPT - PHONICS RULES POSTE	10.50
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2431	VAN 4 AND VAN 2 CARWASHES	8.99
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2431	VAN 4 AND VAN 2 CARWASHES	20.97
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	WALMART- FRUITS & VEG LAB	129.93
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	WALMART-CHICKENS TO MUMMI	26.05

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FUND - 99 - DISBURSEMENT FUND

CHECK NUMBER	CASH ACCT	DATE ISSUED	-----VENDOR-----	ACCT	-----DESCRIPTION-----	AMOUNT
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	WALMART-REFRESHMENTS FOR	101.91
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	WASHINGTON CO TREASURER-P	14.10
48825	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	WASHINGTON CO TREASURER-P	32.90
TOTAL CHECK						6,959.95
TOTAL FUND						6,959.95
TOTAL REPORT						7,251.67

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ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOL
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FUND - 06 - FOOD SERVICE

CHECK NUMBER	CASH ACCT	DATE ISSUED	-----VENDOR-----	ACCT	-----DESCRIPTION-----	AMOUNT
431	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	AMAZON-PLANNER	8.99
431	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	AMAZON-SUPPLIES FOR VETER	28.99
431	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	DELUXE-DEPOSIT BOOKS	136.99
431	9001	12/02/25	4607 VISA	2610	ESTIMATED SHIPPING/HANDLI	24.83
		TOTAL CHECK				199.80
		TOTAL FUND				199.80

Activity Balances as of			11/30/2025						
Source Code:	Account	Beginning Bal	YTD Revenues	YTD Expenditures	Balance				
701	One School One Team	\$ 15,698.98	\$468.00	\$14,000.00	\$ 2,166.98				
702	Always For Kids ELEM	\$ 13,354.46	\$ 6,292.33	\$4,252.42	\$ 15,394.37				
702	HS Always for Kids	\$ 2,355.89	\$693.07	\$147.00	\$ 2,901.96				
703	Art Class	\$ 5,791.54	\$420.00	\$2,619.64	\$ 3,591.90				
704	Art Club	\$ 1,596.69	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ 1,596.69				
705	Athletics	\$ (33,348.50)	\$36,513.75	\$41,952.13	\$ (38,786.88)	(transfer Ck went in Dec '25 for \$533,348.48)			
706	Band	\$ 3,960.89	\$537.85	\$644.21	\$ 3,854.53				
708	Book Club	\$ 822.17	\$0.00	\$97.80	\$ 724.37				
709	Cheerleading	\$ 1,336.15	\$5,925.14	\$4,024.39	\$ 3,236.90				
710	Welding	\$ 2,202.96	\$30.00	\$0.00	\$ 2,232.96				
711	Class of 2030	\$ -	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ -				
713	MS Show Choir	\$ -	\$515.00	\$420.00	\$ 95.00				
714	SKILLS	\$ 336.53	\$960.00	\$512.00	\$ 784.53				
716	GIRLS WRESTLING	\$ 1,398.90	\$3,233.50	\$270.00	\$ 4,362.40				
717	Transition	\$ 1,613.51	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ 1,613.51				
720	Concessions	\$ 620.62	\$20,618.91	\$14,855.17	\$ 6,384.36				
721	Dance Squad	\$ 5,825.13	\$2,155.50	\$2,265.43	\$ 5,715.20				
722	Drama	\$ 2,245.84	\$1,834.89	\$283.22	\$ 3,797.51				
723	MS STEM	\$ 250.56	\$710.46	\$100.00	\$ 861.02				
725	WEIGHTS	\$ (30.82)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ (30.82)				
726	FBLA	\$ 17,499.94	\$21,996.19	\$18,759.95	\$ 20,736.18				
727	Football	\$ 7,481.28	\$6,437.00	\$5,720.08	\$ 8,198.20				
728	Reimbursement (general)	\$ 278.55	\$605.00	\$202.00	\$ 681.55				
732	Fam Cons Science	\$ (194.52)	\$400.00	\$485.31	\$ (279.83)				
733	Wrestling	\$ 1,043.48	\$3,936.50	\$947.97	\$ 4,032.01				
735	Honor Society	\$ 1,184.19	\$20.00	\$0.00	\$ 1,204.19				
736	Activities Interest	\$ 4,089.10	\$988.96	\$0.00	\$ 5,078.06				
737	MS Student Council	\$ 3,684.26	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ 3,684.26				
739	Library Fund Elem/HS	\$ 1,433.77	\$632.32	\$512.53	\$ 1,553.56				
740	Industrial Tech / Woods	\$ 3,475.21	\$675.00	\$0.00	\$ 4,150.21				
742	Quiz Bowl	\$ 870.82	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ 870.82				
744	HS Lounge	\$ 119.09	-\$119.09	\$0.00	\$ -				
746	Spanish Club	\$ 149.97	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ 149.97				
747	Speech	\$ 214.17	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ 214.17				
748	Spring Musical	\$ 14,117.33	\$2,820.30	\$904.91	\$ 16,032.72				
749	Student Council	\$ 4,368.97	\$1,835.80	\$1,449.39	\$ 4,755.38				
750	Student Vending	\$ (663.09)	\$624.00	\$203.07	\$ (342.16)				
751	Swing Choir	\$ 3,784.32	\$0.00	\$1,554.35	\$ 2,229.97				
753	Yearbook	\$ 743.38	\$1,750.00	\$4,120.72	\$ (1,627.34)				
756	Pepsi	\$ 792.71	\$0.00	\$330.00	\$ 462.71				
758	Floor Fund	\$ 427.95	-\$427.95	\$0.00	\$ -				
762	Baylor/ACT	\$ 3,121.21	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ 3,121.21				
764	Metro	\$ 25,466.91	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ 25,466.91				
765	Class of 2028	\$ 1,267.40	\$2,152.50	\$650.25	\$ 2,769.65				
766	FFA	\$ 15,133.42	\$5,544.63	\$17,888.56	\$ 2,789.49				
768	RR Store	\$ 7,840.58	\$0.00	\$1,119.94	\$ 6,720.64				
770	K3 Basketball Camp	\$ -	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ -				
773	Class of 2024	\$ 798.81	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ 798.81				
774	Class of 2025	\$ 60.04	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ 60.04				
775	Class of 2026	\$ 2,755.59	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ 2,755.59				
776	Class of 2027	\$ 3,639.90	\$105.00	\$0.00	\$ 3,744.90				
777	Class of 2029	\$ -	\$1,067.80	\$0.00	\$ 1,067.80				
782	Volleyball	\$ 8,415.72	\$2,099.75	\$733.87	\$ 9,781.60				
783	Boys Golf	\$ 3,441.85	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$ 4,441.85				
784	Girls Golf	\$ 4,472.71	\$1,030.00	\$115.61	\$ 5,387.10				
785	Cross Country	\$ 7,576.53	\$1,513.00	\$3,663.28	\$ 5,436.25				
786	Track Fund	\$ 4,064.38	\$1,000.00	\$487.50	\$ 4,576.88				
787	MS Track	\$ 222.12	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ 222.12				
788	Softball	\$ 493.69	\$2,503.50	\$1,892.00	\$ 1,105.19				
789	Baseball Fund	\$ (333.34)	\$12,540.50	\$11,540.50	\$ 666.66				
790	Boys Basketball	\$ 697.34	\$3,220.00	\$1,849.25	\$ 2,068.09				
791	Girls Basketball	\$ 4,750.24	\$4,890.32	\$1,773.54	\$ 7,867.02				
792	MS Girls Basketball	\$ 181.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ 181.50				
793	Striv	\$ 1,585.17	\$550.00	\$0.00	\$ 2,135.17				
794	Sped	\$ 1,163.21	\$1,738.30	\$558.00	\$ 2,343.51				
795	Wellness (District)	\$ 1,094.00	\$3,000.00	\$550.00	\$ 3,544.00				
796	Elementary Activity	\$ -	\$240.00	\$240.00	\$ -				
799	Elem Run Club	\$ -	\$212.40	\$0.00	\$ 212.40				
713	Alpaca	\$ 7.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ 7.00				
100-800	ELEM Unified School	\$1,078.11	\$688.38	\$400.52	\$ 1,365.97				
200-800	HS Unified School	\$1,125.99	\$3,153.38	\$3,010.52	\$ 1,268.85				
300-801	Hospitality	(\$140.22)	\$1,300.00	\$525.25	\$ 634.53				
	Totals	\$190,912.23	\$172,531.89	\$168,622.28	\$194,821.84				

District Snapshot

Student Membership



Student Membership
702

State 330,136 Peers 725



Teachers
58

State 23,951 Peers 57

Program Participation



English Learners

State 10% Peers 7%



Free/Reduced Lunch
25%

State 50% Peers 30%



Gifted
13%

State 13% Peers 10%



Special Education
15%

State 17% Peers 17%

Metrics



Attendance Rate
96%

State 93% Peers 95%



Dropout Rate

State 1% Peers *



Graduation Rate
100%

State 88% Peers 95%



College-Going Rate
83%

State 76% Peers 81%

Financial



State Aid
State Aid Data Not Available

State Peers



Per Pupil Expenditures
Per Pupil Expenditure Data Not Available

State Peers



Other State Receipts
Other State Receipts Data Not Available

State Peers



Expenditures
Financial Expenditure Data Not Available

State Peers

Performance



NSCAS English Language Arts

70%

State 59% Peers 67%



NSCAS Mathematics

73%

State 58% Peers 71%



NSCAS Science

90%

State 80% Peers 87%



ACT (11th Grade)

56% 69% 70%

ELA Math Science

State ELA
43%

State Math
41%

State Science
48%

Peers ELA
59%

Peers Math
54%

Peers Science
58%

AQuESTT

Beginning Status

EXCELLENT

NSCAS English Language Arts &
Mathematics Proficiency

SUCCESS, ACCESS, AND SUPPORT



Positive Partnerships, Relationships, and Success

Students Without Out of School Suspension or Expulsion **98%**

TEACHING, LEARNING, AND SERVING



Postsecondary, Career, and Civic Ready

In Development!



Transitions

Four Year Graduation Rate **97%**

Extended Graduation **100%**

AQuESTT uses 2023-2024 graduation rates



Student Achievement & Growth

Individual Score Growth **55%**

Non-Proficiency Reduction **No**

Science Proficiency Status **82%**



Educational Opportunities and Access

Chronic Absenteeism Reduction Score 0%

Progress Towards EL Proficiency 67%



Educator Effectiveness

In Development!

Final AQuESTT Classification

EXCELLENT	GREAT	GOOD	NEEDS SUPPORT TO IMPROVE
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Arlington Public Schools



Arlington Public Schools
705 North 9Th



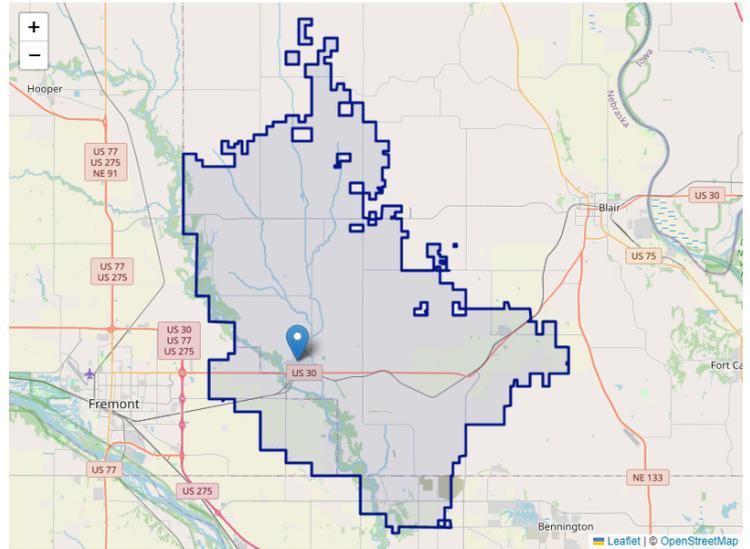
(402)478-4173



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89-0024-000



Schools in District	2
State Board District	3
Educational Service Unit	3
Legislative District	15

District Description

The Arlington School District #24 serves PK-12 students in portions of Washington, Dodge, and Douglas counties which include the communities of Arlington, Kennard, and Elk City and surrounding areas. The district's instructional facilities are located in Arlington on one site. The present 7-12 building was completed in 1962 and the K-6 building and gym were dedicated in 1973. In 2009, the district completed a renovation project of 20,000 sq. ft. and 49,000 sq. ft. of new construction. A 10,000 sq. ft. addition was completed in 2022, adding 6 classrooms. Arlington is classified as a Class III (K-12) district by the Nebraska Department of Education and a Class B/C school by NSAA. This district is a member of the Nebraska Capitol Conference for activities programs.

This description was provided by the district



ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2025-2030 DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN



ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS STRATEGIC PLAN - TABLE OF CONTENTS

Arlington Board Of Education..... 2

Mission Statement..... 3

Vision..... 3

 Guiding Principle I: Academic Learning & Success..... 4

 Guiding Principle II: District/Building Climate & Culture..... 8

 Guiding Principle III: District Resources..... 12

Board Governance..... 15



This Strategic Framework Presented to

Dr. Dawn Lewis, Superintendent

and

Arlington Board Of Education

Chase Kratochvil

Cassie Flesner

Brian Laaker

Steve Slykhuis

Shannon Willmott

Jason Arp



MISSION STATEMENT

Empower all students to develop skills for life-long learning and responsible decision making in order to contribute to a global society.

VISION

For all students to discover a Passion, feel a sense of Purpose, and find or create a Pathway.



GUIDING PRINCIPLE I: ACADEMIC LEARNING & SUCCESS

Objective: Amplify the academic program at APS by providing the necessary supports, systems, and opportunities for all to engage meaningfully in the education process.

Strategy 1.1: Provide job-embedded meeting time for certified staff members to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional supports through the MTSS process, using data to ensure all students are provided with necessary support and enrichment.

Recommended Performance Indicators:

- a. Administration will provide staff meeting time to increase staff data literacy, assessing if data is utilized well in the MTSS process to meet the needs of students.
- b. Administrators and appropriate staff will evaluate the effectiveness of the instructional supports and benefits of MTSS implementation and enhance where needed.

Strategy 1.2: Through professional development and staff collaboration, staff will clarify and develop the components of the instructional program (instructional framework, curriculum mapping, alignment, scope and sequence) to build common instructional practice district-wide.

Recommended Performance Indicators:

- a. Evaluate current district onboarding process and implement necessary changes to ensure the process for certificated and appropriate classified staff includes a focus on utilizing the district-adopted instructional framework.
- b. Administration, with board support, will develop an annual schedule that provides consistent collaboration time for staff (departments and teams) to fully develop the components of the curriculum, establishing the order the components should be addressed.

Strategy 1.3: Develop program evaluations to verify integration of APS Curriculum and Outcomes with character expectations and future workforce needs of the community, with specific attention given to CTE offerings.

Recommended Performance Indicators:

- a. The board and administration will determine key data sources to use in the evaluation of district programming.
- b. Utilizing gathered data, determining long term feasibility of district programming, including CTE expansion, giving consideration to local needs, stakeholder feedback and functionality of current or future facilities.
- c. The district will communicate the potential CTE program expansion, ensuring expansion aligns with community expectations and workforce demands.



ACADEMIC LEARNING & SUCCESS

Strategy 1.1: Provide job-embedded meeting time for certified staff members to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional supports through the MTSS process, using data to ensure all students are provided with necessary support and enrichment.			
Alignment Areas:		NASB Guiding Principles: Personnel Effectiveness; Student Centered Learning	
Performance Indicator	Target Date	Responsible	Progress Updates
a. Administration will provide staff meeting time to increase staff data literacy, assessing if data is utilized well in the MTSS process to meet the needs of students.	Ongoing	All members of admin team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mrs. Wolf preparing staff to interpret new iReady data on 9-9-25 and 9-22-25
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular Tuesday morning staff meetings to adjust to Friday PLC shift for the 2025-2026 school year
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elementary Team Time Weekly to discuss student data
b. Administrators and appropriate staff will evaluate the effectiveness of the instructional supports and benefits of MTSS implementation and enhance where needed.	Annually	Administrator Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elementary and MTSS teams meet regularly throughout the year Implementation supported by the service unit PD agendas will evidence the meetings
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">



ACADEMIC LEARNING & SUCCESS

Strategy 1.2: Through professional development and staff collaboration, staff will clarify and develop the components of the instructional program (instructional framework, curriculum mapping, alignment, scope and sequence) to build common instructional practice district-wide.			
Alignment Areas:		NASB Guiding Principle: Personnel Effectiveness	
Performance Indicator	Target Date	Responsible	Progress Updates
a) Evaluate current district onboarding process and implement necessary changes to ensure the process for certificated and appropriate classified staff includes a focus on utilizing the district-adopted instructional framework.	Aug 2025	All members of the admin team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-boarding (new teacher orientation and mentoring) shifted from one day to two days pre-contract; time dedicated to Instructional Model
	Oct 22		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inservice in Oct/Dec/Jan: Review Marzano Instructional Framework and MTSS with all staff members, as we have many new staff since adopting the framework
	Dec 1		<ul style="list-style-type: none">
b) Administration, with board support, will develop an annual schedule that provides consistent collaboration time for staff (departments and teams) to fully develop the components of the curriculum, establishing the order the components should be addressed.	Jan 19		<ul style="list-style-type: none">
	March 2026	Calendar Committee, Admin Team, and Board of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calendar committee and admin team will propose calendar to the board which will include PD days to embed time to work on curriculum and staff collaboration
	Jan 6, 2026	Principals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team time facilitated weekly in the elementary by Dr. Morgan Department meetings at the secondary level during inservice time and/or Tues morning meetings when possible



ACADEMIC LEARNING & SUCCESS

Strategy 1.3: Develop program evaluations to verify integration of APS Curriculum and Outcomes with character expectations and future workforce needs of the community, with specific attention given to CTE offerings.			
Alignment Areas:	NASB Guiding Principle: Access to Educational Opportunities		
Performance Indicator	Target Date	Responsible	Progress Updates
a) The board and administration will determine key data sources to use in the evaluation of district programming.	Ongoing	All members of the admin team, curriculum committee board members, and full board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implementation of iReady ● Adoption of curriculum with teacher/admin/board input
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●
b) Utilizing gathered data, determining long term feasibility of district programming, including CTE expansion, giving consideration to local needs, stakeholder feedback and functionality of current or future facilities.	Dec 2025	Board, Supt, and Architect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sept 9-DLR interviewed Teacher ● Sept 22- DLR conducted focus group meeting #1 ● Oct 21- DLR conducted focus group #2 ● Nov 17- DLR conducted focus group #3
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●
c) The district will communicate the potential CTE program expansion, ensuring expansion aligns with community expectations and workforce demands.	January 2026	Board of Education and Admin Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community Engagement meeting 2026 plan to present DLR findings, cost of improvements, etc.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●



GUIDING PRINCIPLE II: DISTRICT/BUILDING CLIMATE & CULTURE

Objective: Foster a positive culture of high expectations that pushes all students and staff members toward connection and excellence.

Strategy 2.1: The board and administration will seek opportunities to recognize staff and will engage community partners to support the recognition program.

Recommended Performance Indicators:

- a. Administration will develop an annual communication calendar to ensure an APS communication system of regular updates to staff is established.
- b. Administration and designated staff will develop and implement strategies to inform the public of events, accomplishments and opportunities in the district.
- c. Embed opportunities to recognize staff, at all levels, into regular district wide communication.

Strategy 2.2: Beginning with the Board of Education, the district will clearly define behaviors and habits that strive to meet the APS standard of excellence.

Recommended Performance Indicators:

- a. Create opportunities for staff to have dedicated time to define APS standards of excellence in the areas of academics, student behaviors, MTSS, etc. and formulate action steps to pursue high and consistent expectations in these areas.
- b. Consider parent advisory committees for building level administrators to help define high expectations and APS standards of excellence.

Strategy 2.3: Evaluate and revise the district onboarding process for all staff members to ensure clear professional standards, preparation of all job duties, and the instillation of district values and cultural expectations.

Recommended Performance Indicators:

- a. Develop an onboarding team to determine necessary components based on roles of new staff members and district values and priorities.
- b. Ensure all teachers, with attention given to new hires, have access to and use high quality curriculum resources, including curriculum maps, common assessments, academic programs, and instructional materials.



DISTRICT/BUILDING CLIMATE & CULTURE

Strategy 2.1: The board and administration will seek opportunities to recognize staff and will engage community partners to support the recognition program.			
Alignment Areas:		NASB Guiding Principle: Family & Community Partnerships	
Performance Indicator	Target Date	Responsible	Progress Updates
a. Administration will develop an annual communication calendar to ensure an APS communication system of regular updates to staff is established.	Ongoing	Principals and Supt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supt email report to board regularly Bi-Monthly newspaper article- Discontinued due to paper changes; reconsidering <u>how to proceed</u>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principals send weekly newsletters to staff and families
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication responsibilities chart established for external review, available on website
b. Administration and designated staff will develop and implement strategies to inform the public of events, accomplishments and opportunities in the district.	Ongoing	Admin team, secretaries, technology staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of Canva to create graphic posts on events for social media Use of Gipper for athletic game day info graphics
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New activities calendar program (scheduler) to keep the public informed of competitions and performances
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">
c. Embed opportunities to recognize staff, at all levels, into regular district wide communication.	Ongoing	Admin team, student council, PPP committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher of the Month Staff Spotlights
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student attendance all-star (high school) Eagles of the month (elementary)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">



DISTRICT/BUILDING CLIMATE & CULTURE

Strategy 2.2: Beginning with the Board of Education, the district will clearly define behaviors and habits that strive to meet the APS standard of excellence.			
Alignment Areas:	NASB Guiding Principle: Student Centered Learning		
Performance Indicator	Target Date	Responsible	Progress Updates
a. Create opportunities for staff to have dedicated time to define APS standards of excellence in the areas of academics, student behaviors, MTSS, etc. and formulate action steps to pursue high and consistent expectations in these areas.	Ongoing	All staff and admin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SOAR program in elementary
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">
b. Consider parent advisory committees for building level administrators to help define high expectations and APS standards of excellence.	TBD	Principals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NASB strategic planning initiated the conversation
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent Group participation in DLR focus groups Parent/Patron interview group for external review
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">



DISTRICT/BUILDING CLIMATE & CULTURE

Strategy 2.3: Evaluate and revise the district onboarding process for all staff members to ensure clear professional standards, preparation of all job duties, and the instillation of district values and cultural expectations.

Alignment Areas:		NASB Guiding Principle: Personnel Effectiveness		
Performance Indicator	Target Date	Responsible	Progress Updates	
a. Develop an onboarding team to determine necessary components based on roles of new staff members and district values and priorities.	TBD	APS Principals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding Master Teacher and Content Teacher to new staff mentoring program 	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	
b. Ensure all teachers, with attention given to new hires, have access to and use high quality curriculum resources, including curriculum maps, common assessments, academic programs, and instructional materials.	Ongoing	APS Principals and Curriculum Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All pacing guides and curriculum guides gathered/included on CIP website for external review 	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum adoption process three year phasing (research, review and pilot, adopt) 	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	



GUIDING PRINCIPLE III: DISTRICT RESOURCES

Objective: Devote key resources to support the recruitment and retention of staff members, and the physical and programming growth of the district.

Strategy 3.1: Promote the support and benefits provided by the district to recruit high quality staff members to the district.

Recommended Performance Indicators:

- a. Communicate long-term staffing needs to the board to allow for the necessary allocation of resources.
- b. Develop partnerships with identified institutions and community entities to create consistent pools of high-quality applicants

Strategy 3.2: Working transparently with the community, prioritize and devote resources toward current and anticipated facility needs to provide functional learning space and tools for expanded student learning opportunities.

Recommended Performance Indicators:

- a. The board, in collaboration with administration, will continually examine community and district data as it relates to facilities, course offerings and student achievement.
- b. The board will engage in a long-term facilities plan of the district, giving consideration to enrollment trends and new course offerings.



DISTRICT RESOURCES

Strategy 3.1: Promote the support and benefits provided by the district to recruit high quality staff members to the district.			
Alignment Areas:		NASB Guiding Principle: District/Building Climate & Culture	
Performance Indicator	Target Date	Responsible	Progress Updates
a. Communicate long-term staffing needs to the board to allow for the necessary allocation of resources.	Ongoing	Supt and Principals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option Capacity adoption each October Budget process communicating the cost of employees so budget can be adequately funded for staffing
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">
b. Develop partnerships with identified institutions and community entities to create consistent pools of high-quality applicants	ongoing	Supt and Principals HS Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Metro Community College: Dual Credit Instructors to support course offerings Student teachers from Midland, UNO, and Wayne Industry Connections for alternatively certificated teaching candidates
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">



DISTRICT RESOURCES

Strategy 3.2: Working transparently with the community, prioritize and devote resources toward current and anticipated facility needs to provide functional learning space and tools for expanded student learning opportunities.			
Alignment Areas:		NASB Guiding Principles: Access to Educational Opportunities; Board Governance	
Performance Indicator	Target Date	Responsible	Progress Updates
a. The board, in collaboration with administration, will continually examine community and district data as it relates to facilities, course offerings and student achievement.	Annually in January	Board and Supt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Engagement
	TBD through year	Board committees and principals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum Committee during review and adoption cycles, and to meet American Civics requirement Buildings and Grounds/Transportation Committee meet as needed to plan for future facilities, summer projects, and review upkeep
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">
b. The board will engage in a long-term facilities plan of the district, giving consideration to enrollment trends and new course offerings.	Ongoing	Admin Team, Board of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with DLR to prepare for future facilities updates and renovations
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">



BOARD GOVERNANCE

Objective: Create a highly effective governance process that promotes accountability internally, the integration of community perspectives, and the advancement of student learning.

Strategy 4.1: Continuously engage the community in district developments to ensure the community has opportunities to provide input.

Recommended Performance Indicators:

- a. The board will re-engage district patrons annually/biannually to provide timely updates on the progress of the Strategic Plan, including results of feasibility studies and data collection.
- b. Seek out additional opportunities to receive stakeholder feedback surrounding district goals and priorities.
- c. Ensure continuous engagement with community stakeholders is included in any district communication plans. (See Strategy 2.1)

Strategy 4.2: Ensure board meetings are student-focused by receiving updates, reports, and data to validate program impact on instruction and learning and ensure alignment with long-term district goals.

Recommended Performance Indicators:

- a. Establish clear expectations for program review reports to verify effective use of district resources.
- b. Align the board meeting agenda to Strategic Plan items allowing for regular progress updates during board meetings.

Strategy 4.3: Create an annual advocacy plan/process to engage with local and state officials.

Recommended Performance Indicators:

- a. Consider the formation/implementation of an advocacy committee and include an advocacy update on the regular meeting agenda.
- b. The board will seek opportunities to engage with local representatives (village board, county commissioners, state legislature) to share the story of APS and develop a reciprocal relationship resulting in the district and the representatives working toward the common good of public education.



BOARD GOVERNANCE

Strategy 4.1: Continuously engage the community in district developments to ensure the community has opportunities to provide input.			
Alignment Areas:	NASB Guiding Principle:		
Performance Indicator	Target Date	Responsible	Progress Updates
a. The board will re-engage district patrons annually/biannually to provide timely updates on the progress of the Strategic Plan, including results of feasibility studies and data collection.	Annually in January	Supt and Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Engagement Meeting
	Quarterly	Admin team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of Board Goals and Strategic Plan in Board Meeting Annual Board Retreat for deep review of goals
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">
b. Seek out additional opportunities to receive stakeholder feedback surrounding district goals and priorities.	Ongoing	Board Admin Team All Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey of parents and Community members Community Engagement Meeting Annually Surveys of specific populations (SPED, graduating seniors, etc.) Survey of Staff and Stakeholders for frameworks accreditation
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">
c. Ensure continuous engagement with community stakeholders is included in any district communication plans. (See Strategy 2.1)	Schedule for January of each year	Board and Supt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual CEM
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">



BOARD GOVERNANCE

Strategy 4.2: Ensure board meetings are student-focused by receiving updates, reports, and data to validate program impact on instruction and learning and ensure alignment with long-term district goals.

Alignment Areas: | NASB Guiding Principle:

Performance Indicator	Target Date	Responsible	Progress Updates
a. Establish clear expectations for program review reports to verify effective use of district resources.	Implemented	All Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Present on a rotation to board of education monthly ● Principal and Supt reports monthly
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●
b. Align the board meeting agenda to Strategic Plan items allowing for regular progress updates during board meetings.	TBD	Supt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●



BOARD GOVERNANCE

Strategy 4.3: Create an annual advocacy plan/process to engage with local and state officials.			
Alignment Areas:	NASB Guiding Principle:		
Performance Indicator	Target Date	Responsible	Progress Updates
a. Consider the formation/implementation of an advocacy committee and include an advocacy update on the regular meeting agenda.	TBD	Board and Supt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Lewis attending Legislative updates with NRCSA and NCSA • Review and report on legislative activity regularly during and after session
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board members provided with contact information for our district senator
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
b. The board will seek opportunities to engage with local representatives (village board, county commissioners, state legislature) to share the story of APS and develop a reciprocal relationship resulting in the district and the representatives working toward the common good of public education.	TBD	Board and Supt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication with Village Chairperson Travis Kraemer regarding community events
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •



ANNUAL DISTRICT GOALS

GOAL AREA: BUDGET

GOAL: Maximize district resources to provide quality educational programs and facilities.

OBJECTIVES:

1. APS will explore innovative funding mechanisms.
2. APS will continue to strive for developing capacity for financial optimization.
3. APS will maintain broad concept planning based on foreseeable budget and summative needs assessment.
4. APS will devote key resources to support the recruitment and retention of staff members, and the physical and programming growth of the district.

STRATEGIES:

1. Identify alternative funding sources including corporate sponsorship.
2. Assist the Arlington Education Foundation in developing alternative funding sources.
3. Coordinate the financial planning with the Facility Plan that is developed.
4. **Managing the Board Adopted Budget Responsibly**
 - **Per Pupil Cost below state average**
 - Engage with DLR to develop plan for next facility steps after community engagement meeting, begin planning for those possible projects financially
 - Stable levy, within authority, below postcard threshold
 - Use of remaining QCPUF Funds for School security upgrades (cameras, quality, coverage, and storage)

ANNUAL DISTRICT GOALS

GOAL AREA: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

GOAL: APS will collect meaningful feedback and input from district citizens for continuous improvement efforts to strengthen family, school, and community partnerships.

OBJECTIVES:

1. APS will develop outreach opportunities that reinforce learning and engage the community in support of all educational and extracurricular endeavors.
2. APS board of education, in collaboration with administration, will continually examine community and district data as it relates to facilities, course offering and student achievement. (PI 3.2a)
3. APS will continuously engage the community in district developments to ensure the community has opportunities to provide input. (Str. 4.1)
4. APS will create an advocacy plan to engage with local and state officials (Str 4.3)

STRATEGIES:

1. Examine current practices to promote periodic community engagement session(s).
2. Utilize community collaborators in the process of strategically planning for a 5-10 year facility enhancement plan.
3. Provide education and training for parents and guardians to promote school readiness.
4. Provide support for community childcare providers in their efforts to enhance quality services to children and families.
5. Education Foundation Outreach
6. Community members involved in external team interviews and DLR focus group meetings

ANNUAL DISTRICT GOALS

GOAL AREA: FACILITIES

GOAL: Provide up-to-date facilities to allow for continuous improvement and benefit to students in educational and extracurricular programs.

OBJECTIVES:

1. APS will provide a safe and secure learning environment.
2. APS will collaborate with the Washington County Agricultural Society and the Village of Arlington and other external entities to most effectively use shared space(s).
3. The board will engage in a long-term facilities plan of the district, giving consideration to enrollment trends and new course offerings. (PI 3.2b)

STRATEGIES:

1. Evaluate and implement recommendations from the safety committee.
 2. Examine existing transportation program and plan for future comprehensive needs.
 3. Maximize the use of energy efficient technology to address financial challenges.
 4. Examine current space to gain additional educational spaces for addition of sections if needed prior to any new facility project
 5. Maintaining current facilities to improve parking conditions at football field
 6. Develop practical use of "office space" in Bus Barn facility
- Engage with DLR to develop plan for next facility steps, begin planning for those possible projects financially
 - Work at the bus barn to eliminate unused stored items, add space for a donated golf simulator, and vision for the remaining space
 - Vision emerging from CE and NASB, will partner with DLR to move forward
 - Three focus group meetings and community engagement at parent teacher conferences

ANNUAL DISTRICT GOALS

GOAL AREA: STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Goal 1: Amplify the academic program by providing the necessary supports, systems, and opportunities for all to engage meaningfully in the education process. (***Academic Learning and Success*** Objective)

Goal 2: Foster a positive culture of high expectations that pushes all students and staff members toward connection and excellence. (***District/Building Climate and Culture*** Objective)

OBJECTIVES:

1. APS will consistently score above the state average and score in the top 20% of identified schools* at each grade level in reading, math, and science utilizing a 5-year average.
2. Maintain interest and increase participation in career and college ready courses. as measured by a) number of students completing career pathways, b) number of students successfully completing college courses (dual enrollment).
3. Maintain cohort graduation rates of 94% or higher.
4. APS will assist students in transitioning from secondary education into careers and/or post-secondary studies.
5. Enhance students' knowledge and exposure to emerging technologies and technical career opportunities.

Through PD and staff collaboration, staff will clarify and develop the components of the instructional program (instructional frameworks, curriculum mapping, alignment, scope and sequence) to build common instructional practices district-wide. (Strat 1.2)

STRATEGIES:

1. Develop and articulate curriculum that is aligned with state standards and with the Nebraska Standards for Career Ready Practice: Preparation for College and Career into all courses.
2. *Provide meeting time for certified staff to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional supports through the MTSS Process, using data to ensure all students are provided with necessary support and enrichment. (Strat 1.1)*
3. Continue to utilize the Arlington Instructional Model based on the Marzano Framework Fully implemented, formal observation summative tool approved by the state, teachers working on creating Student Learning Objectives (SLO).
4. Utilizing revised evaluation tool aligned to the Arlington Instructional Model.
5. Implement a district-wide (common) formative assessment system where data analysis informs instruction to ensure student achievement growth.
6. Expand use of and access to interactive tools and technology to support and improve PK-12 learning and innovation.
7. Research and add technology based courses and extra-curricular opportunities.
8. Add interventions through MTSS for progress toward TSI MS MTSS team has been developed Intervention scheduling - dedicated time/not stealing time from courses ACT Prep - providing the full John Baylor program, dedicated time/not stealing time from courses

- Adoption of iReady for assessment/screener

- Preparing for first NE Frameworks Accreditation visit in 2025-2026
- Assessment scores continue to be above state average
- JAG and Counselors Office exposing more students to career and college opportunities earlier
- AQuESTT Report has APS ranked EXCELLENT 22-23, 23-24, and 24-25

ANNUAL DISTRICT GOALS

GOAL AREA: BEHAVIORAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

Goal: Research, develop and implement a school-wide plan to support mental, emotional, and behavioral health concerns of all students.

Objectives:

1. APS will implement A System of Supports for staff to report behavioral, mental, and emotional concerns of students
2. APS will implement a program for safe reporting for students
3. APS will partner with area resources to support families
4. APS will identify and support students with behavioral and emotional health issues

STRATEGIES

- Continue Partnership with Arbor Family Counseling
 - analysis data shows usage increased
- Introduction of community programs by outside agencies that will support student mental/emotional health
- Expansion of Region 6, Systems of Care, and Communities that Care grants, including adopting universal mental health screener, to meet students needs.
- Room of Requirement now in use;
- Introduced Access Period
- Regularly screening students for mental health and behaviors through SAEBRS
- student connection to community and school (pride and belonging) growing
- The board and administration will seek opportunities to recognize staff and will engage community partners to support the recognition program (Strat 2.1)

December Elementary Principal Board Report 2025

Carnival- Students and families participated in fun games, activities, food, bounce houses, face painting, and so much more! It was a great night for all and we raised around \$1,800.



All-State Children's Choir

Arlington students participated in the All-State Children's Choir held in Lincoln, NE this year! Congratulations on a great event!

iReady/MAP Testing – We have begun our second round of iReady/MAP K-6 testing. We look forward to analyzing the results and creating a plan of intervention for all students going forward with the second semester.

Kinder-1st-2nd Grade Concert - Students performed many holiday songs for the audience. Families were able to cheer on their budding musicians this past Tuesday, December 2nd! 5th and 6th Grade band will be performing Monday, December 15th.



SNOW - The first snow of the year! Students enjoy the great outdoors as long as it is 10 degrees!



S.O.A.R (Safe, Owning It, Active Learning, Respect) - Recently, we honored our November winners of the SOARing Eagle Award.

Our November honorees were: Kody Vincent, Eli Falk, Maelynn Thayer, Reece Jensen, Alayna Fastenau, Dylan Krepel, and Nate Von Seggern



James Shada
December
Board Report

Student Participation in Winter Activities

We currently have 16 Girls out for Wrestling, 20 Boys out for Wrestling, 29 Boys out for Boys Basketball, and 21 girls out for Girls Basketball. We also have 19 cheerleaders and 10 dance team members. The middle school boys' basketball team has 17 student-athletes out.

Fall Wrap Up

- Activity passes: The fall of (2024-2025) school year we sold \$13,155. This year to date we have sold \$12,100 in activity passes.
- On 11/29 the band played in the Village Point Lighting Ceremony
- On 12/8 @ 7:00 will be the High School Winter Concert and the Middle School Winter Concert is on 12/15 @ 7:00pm.
- One Act Play is at Ashland for Districts on Friday, December 5th!





Anna and August

A One Act Play by Don Zolidis

“Anna is the smartest girl in the school. She's also a purple belt in Tae Kwon Do and has a devastating punch. Strangely enough, she has trouble meeting boys. Except one: August, who seems to appreciate her weirdness. Unfortunately, the course of weird love never did run smooth.”

Cast

(in order of appearance; indicates AHS Senior*)

Anna... Honora Andreasen

August... Jax Tighe

Jake... Rafa Magnino

Anna's Father... Wyatt Flesner*

Holly... Maddie Martens*

Mr.. Jim... Zady Lambert

Mrs. Jim and Anna's Mother... Katy Douglas*

Crew & Ensemble

Stage Manager... Mana Rhea

Light Technician... Izzy Credeur

Spotlight... Chloey Keen

Jensen Lorsch

Addison Hill

Maddie Larsen

Jaxlynn Johnston

Ethan Woods

Video Board Update

- Carson Wealth Management – Unable to commit this year.
- Wholestone Farms on 10/16 – We will revisit the conversation in the spring. A better time of year for their business.
- Lauritsen Farms on 10/16, 12/4 – Jason Arp – No commitment at this time.
- Arlington Pet Hospital on 10/21, 12/4 – No commitment at this time

- Memorial Community Hospital and Health System 10/22 – They have agreed to become an Anchor Sponsor \$25,000! They plan to send their first payment this week.
- Rosenbauer on 12/4 – Started a Conversation
- Brainard Chiropractic- talked with them many times in the last two months. Hopeful they will have an answer for us.

Secondary Principal Report For the December 2025 Board Meeting

Metro Numbers - Student Enrollment Profile

	Unduplicated Headcount	Total Credit Hours	Concurrent Enrollment Credit Hours	GtC Credit Hours	Career Academy Credit Hours	CollegeNow! Credit Hours	Kickstart Online Credit Hours
2019-20	52	896	639.5	13.5	13.5	229.5	N/A
2020-21	59	1,105	513.5	22.5	27	132.5	409.5
2021-22	72	1301.5	625	0	12	16.5	648
2022-23	75	1279.5	676	0	0	185	418.5
2023-24	83	1462.5	544.5	0	19	120.5	778.5
2024-25	95	1722	499	0	13.5	101	1108.5

- **Career Academy** provides an opportunity for high school juniors and seniors to learn specific career knowledge and skills prior to high school graduation. Career Academy programs culminate in a career certificate or specialist diploma.
- **CollegeNOW!** is designed for high school students to offer a jumpstart on their college education. Students enroll into sections taught by MCC faculty on campus or online.
- **Kickstart Online** is a series of MCC general education courses for high school students. KSO courses count toward most MCC degrees and are transferable.
- **Concurrent Enrollment** is a partnership between MCC and high school districts. Concurrent Enrollment courses are taught by MCC approved High School faculty who meet postsecondary faculty requirements. Students earn both high school credit and college credit simultaneously while attending their scheduled course in the high school classroom.
- **Gateway to College** is a nationally recognized dual-credit high school diploma completion program. The program serves students ages 16-20 years old who would like an educational setting that is individually tailored for student success.

Arlington Concurrent Enrollment Offerings

Teacher	Course
Hart	EDUC 1110
Koger	FINA 1000; ENTR 1050; ECON 1000/1100; BSAD 1000/2000
Tierney	MATH 1425, 1430, 2410
Klein	Nebraska Math Readiness

End of Semester

Finals are December 18th and 19th with a 8:05 start time and a 1:30 dismissal time on both days.

Vocal Music - All State

Congratulations to our All-State Vocal Music honorees Clio Flatt and Clayton Coe.



Economic Education Award

Brantley Fullner was recently recognized by the Nebraska Council on Economic Education for placing first in the statewide Stock Market InvestWrite Essay Contest!



One Act Play

The Arlington One Act Play performed at NCC and Districts at the end of November and beginning of December. Congratulations to the cast and crew for all of their hard work!

ANNA & AUGUST
CAST
ANNA... HONORA ANDREASEN
AUGUST... JAX TIGHE
HOLLY... MADDIE MARTENS
JAKE... RAFA MAGNINO
ANNA'S FATHER... WYATT FLESNER
ANNA'S MOTHER & MRS. JIM... KATY DOUGLAS
MR. JIM... ZADYN LAMBERT
CREW:
STAGE MANAGER... MANA RHEA
LIGHT TECHNICIAN... IZZY CREDEUR
JENSEN LORSCH
ADDISON HILL
MADDIE LARSEN
JAXLYNN JOHNSTON
ETHAN WOODS
SPOTLIGHT... RILEY WOODS
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 7:30PM IN THE OLD GYM
TICKETS - \$5 FOR ADULTS
FREE WILL DONATION FOR STUDENTS
WRITTEN BY DON ZOLDIS
DIRECTED BY MS. MEGAN PORRAS

Arlington Public Schools

Facilities Planning



December 2025
10-25126-01

ARLINGTON
PUBLIC SCHOOLS





Contents

Introductions	4
Research Informed Design	10
Educational Visualization	18
Vision	38
Macro Organization	46



01

Introductions

INTRODUCTIONS

Acknowledgments

On Behalf of our entire DLR Group team, we would like to acknowledge the following individuals and groups of people that have supported the team's efforts with information, data and professional perspective and opinions that were invaluable to producing this document.

DLR Group Team

- Darin Hanigan AIA ALEP
- Haley Herman
- Dr. Tonya Merrigan

INTRODUCTIONS

Mission & Vision Statements

Arlington Public Schools' Mission:

The mission of Arlington Public Schools is to empower all students to develop skills for life-long learning and responsible decision making in order to contribute to a global society.

Arlington Public Schools' Vision:

For all students to discover a Passion, feel a sense of Purpose, and find or create a Pathway.

INTRODUCTIONS

Project Schedule



02

Research Informed Design

Adoption Rate to Reach 25% of U.S. Population

Electricity	45 years
Telephone	36 years
Radio	31 years
Television	26 years
PC	16 years
Mobile Phone	13 years
Internet	7 years
iPad	2.5 years
TikTok	4 months

“We are currently preparing students for jobs that don’t yet exist, using technologies that haven’t been invented, in order to solve problems, we don’t even know are problems yet. In schools designed before the advent of color television.” - Richard Riley, Former United States Secretary of Education



Why should we care about school design?

What impacts student learning progress?



[1] Hattie, John. "Visible learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement." (2008) Nye, Barbara, Spyros Konstantopoulos, and Larry Hedges. "How large Are Teachers effects?" Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis 26, no. 3 (2004): 237-57

[2] Barrett, Peter, Fay Davies, Yufan Zhang, and Lucinda Barrett. "The impact of classroom design on pupils' learning: Final results of a holistic, multi-level analysis." Building and Environment 89 (2015): 118-133.

Innovative Learning Environments

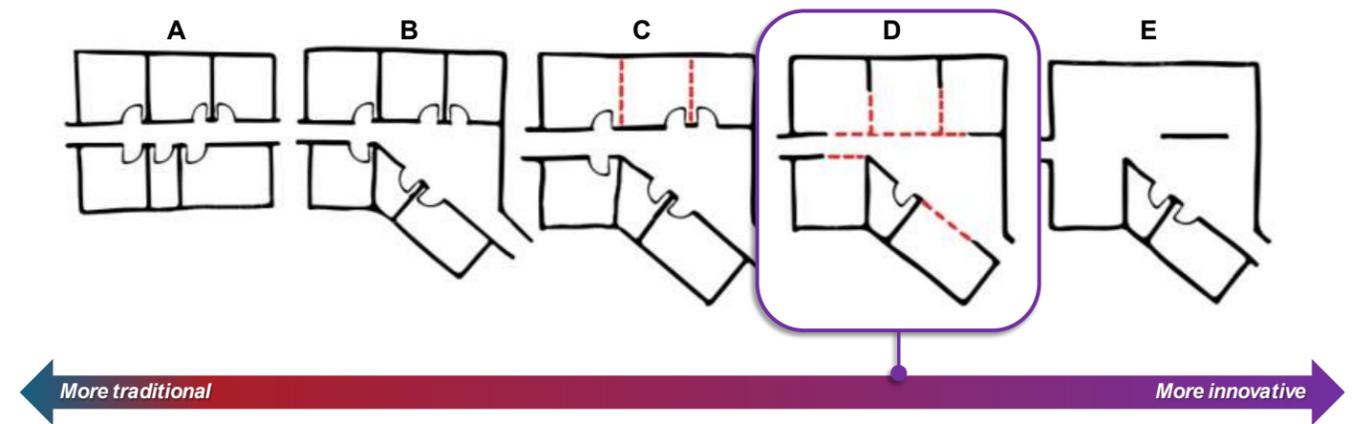
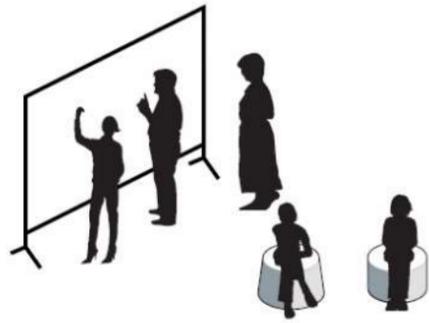


Illustration
Graph adapted from Imms, Mahat, Byers, & Murphy (2017)

RESEARCH INFORMED DESIGN
FINNS Framework

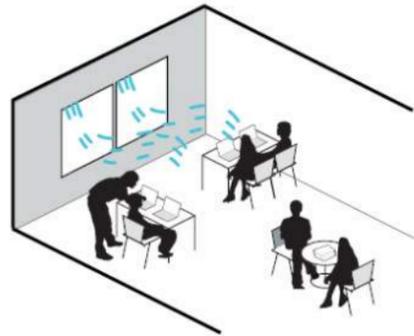
Activating Design Research to Empower Learners



Flexibility & Operability
Movement Matters



Individualization
Physical Needs are Unique



Naturalness & Nature
Health & Comfort are Critical



Stimulation
Activate the Senses



Flexibility & Operability



Individualization



Nature & Naturalness



Stimulation

P.Barrett (2018) Well designed classrooms can boost learning, case study on EPSRC Lens on Research and Innovation webpage: <https://epsrc.ukri.org/newsevents/casestudies/well-designed-classrooms-can-boost-learning/>

Illustration
Graph adapted from Imms, Mahat, Byers, & Murphy (2017)



03

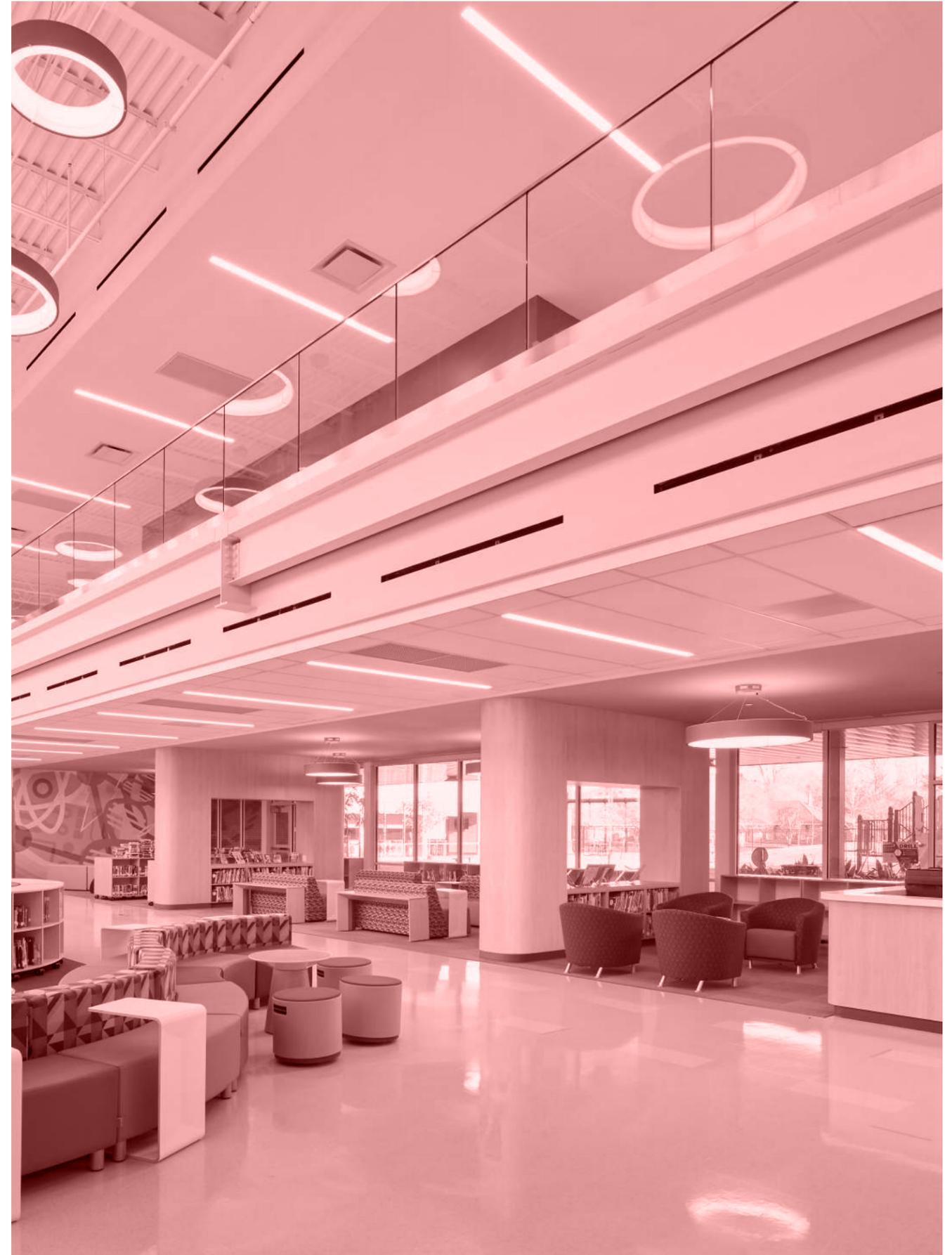
Educational Visualization

EDUCATIONAL VISUALIZATION

Participants & Their Hopes for the Project

Project Aspirations

- Updating
- Modernization
- Community space
- Growth for academics
- Increased learning
- Support for students
- Future growth
- Create an environment to nurture kids
- Daylighting
- Outdoor spaces
- Student experience
- Better auditorium
- Increased storage
- Thinking of the future
- Growth
- Playing catch-up
- More space
- Equal facilities for every sport and organization
- Wrestling room
- Focus on students and staff
- School pride
- Taking care of all the kids and programs



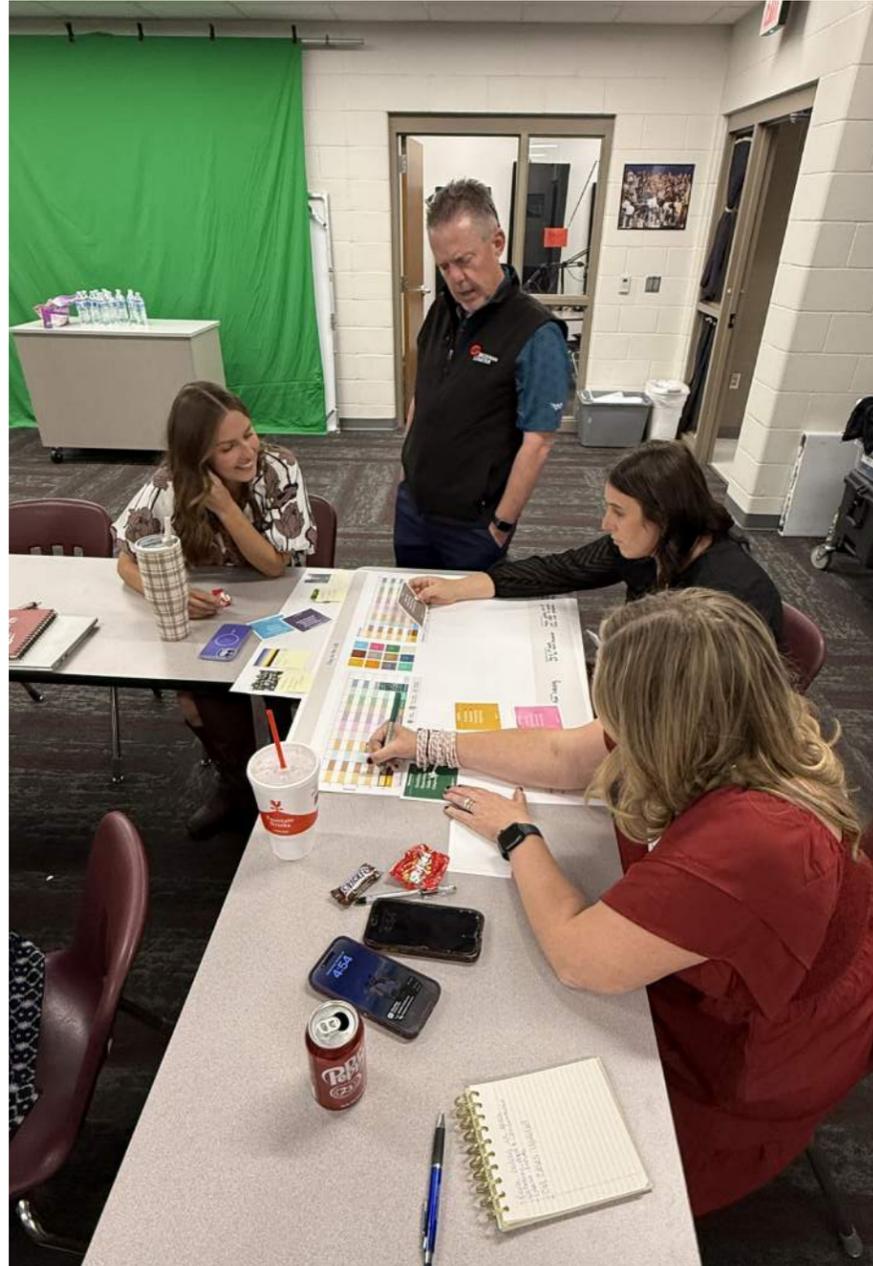
EDUCATIONAL VISUALIZATION

A Day in the Life Activity

Although we cannot predict with certainty the types of jobs that will exist in the future, we know that today's students will need a variety of skills to be successful in life. Knowing this, we must ask what learning experiences will provide students with the essential skills to be prepared for the ever-changing world. Taking this into account, The Day in the Life Activity is designed to investigate and discuss what a day of education might look like in the future. User groups start by developing a student persona and then discuss how a day of learning might look like when barriers are removed and students are engaged in the learning activities that prepare them for their futures. Finally, the percentage of time within these learning activities are identified. This activity results in informing space implications for designers to use within the design of the learning environment.

Our Takeaways

All 4 students spent more of their day collaborating, connecting, creating and presenting while maintaining time to listen, practice and transition between activities. There was a need for individual, small, medium, and large spaces as well as outdoor learning options for all 4 students.



EDUCATIONAL VISUALIZATION

Learning Connections

Before discussing the built environment, we must acknowledge changes are occurring in teaching and learning as there is an ongoing shift from the teacher-centered to the students-centered model of education. Giving attention to the process of how the facility will support learning and teaching, the Learning Connections Activity assists in developing educational priorities to maintain a clear focus on what is important.

The user groups begin with selecting an activity card to represent how learning will be facilitated in their new environment. Then the user groups select the teaching methodology that will support that type of learning. Continuing the process, spaces are selected that will enable engaging experiences from the selected learning and teaching models. Finally, furniture, technology, and safety/security priorities are identified to embrace the educational vision.

These selections made by user groups prompt guiding principles of design – the north star by which our designers integrate throughout the development of the final product. The Learning Connections Activity bridge between teaching and learning and the spaces and tools. Ultimately, this informs the design process by establishing an expectation of teaching and learning and how the space can be crafted as the ultimate tool.

Our Takeaways

All 4 groups were aligned in their desire to have a more student-directed learning process and to have teachers utilize approaches that supported the individual student's growth. Teachers engaged in this type of teaching help students identify, investigate, and research issues in order

to respond to challenges and complex problems. Spaces needed for this type of learning include those that can be used for a variety of things such as presentations, are adaptable and flexible, and include outdoor spaces as well as traditional and smaller classrooms. Furniture and Technology had common responses from all groups including the ability for it to be flexible and fit the needs of the individual student. Finally, safety/security focused on the need for students to have connections both in the school and the community.



EDUCATIONAL VISUALIZATION

Desired Types of Learning

VISIBLE LEARNING

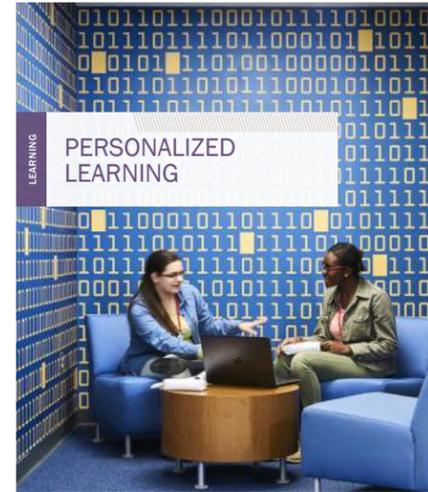
- Visible actions of learning; students understand their task, show their thinking and creating process, and reflect on their learning.

PERSONALIZED LEARNING

- Learning is tailored to the preferences, interests, and passions of the learners. Instruction is paced to the learner's unique needs. Learners set goals with educator's support.

AUTHENTIC/REAL WORLD LEARNING

- Learners explore, discuss, and meaningfully construct concepts and relationships in contexts that involve real-world problems and projects that are relevant to the learner.



EDUCATIONAL VISUALIZATION

Types of Teaching to Support Desired Learning



INQUIRY-BASED TEACHING

- A dynamic form of active learning that begins with inquiry, problems, or scenarios. Learners then identify, investigate, and research issues and respond to challenges or complex problems.

WORKSHOP MODEL TEACHING

- A pedagogy that promotes learning, growth, and reflection through collaboration and small group instruction.

TEACHING THROUGH INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

- An instructional process in which digital-age skills and pedagogy support learning, communication, and creativity in a technology-rich environment.

DIFFERENTIATED TEACHING

- A practice where the content, process, and resources are tailored to meet individual needs.

Spaces that Facilitate Teaching and Learning



SPACES
LARGE GROUP SPACES



SPACES
SPACES THAT CAN BE EASILY ADAPTED/CHANGED



SPACES
OUTDOOR SPACES



SPACES
LEARNING SUITE



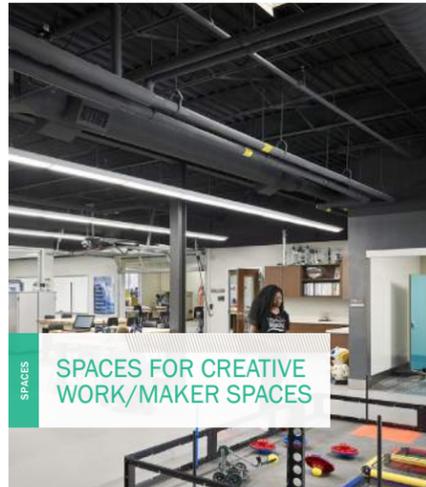
SPACES
MEDIA/IDEA LAB



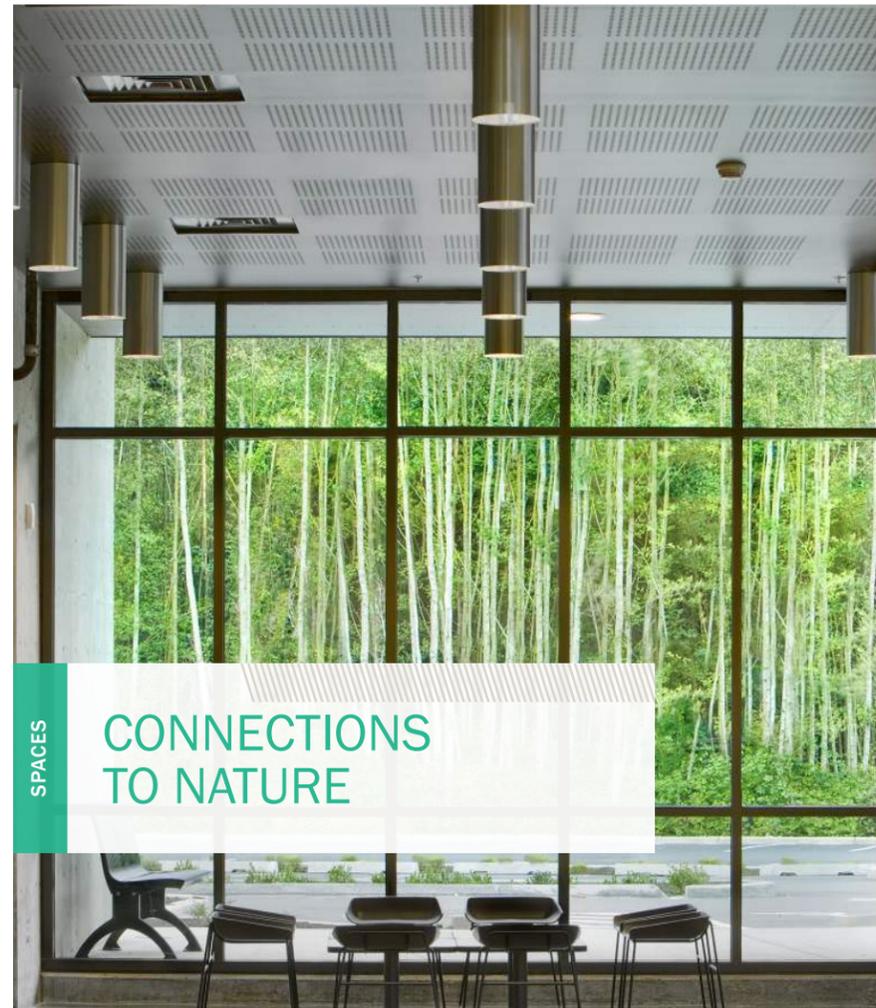
SPACES
SPACES THAT ALLOW FOR MOVEMENT



SPACES
PRESENTATION SPACES



SPACES
SPACES FOR CREATIVE WORK/MAKER SPACES



SPACES
CONNECTIONS TO NATURE

LARGE GROUP SPACES

- Large learning areas that will encompass a minimum of a full class size.

SPACES THAT CAN BE EASILY ADAPTED/CHANGED

- Walls that can be modified/moved to create different sizes or configurations of learning environments.

OUTDOOR SPACES

- Spaces that allow for outdoor learning such as gardens, outdoor creative spaces, nature walks, and play areas.

LEARNING SUITE

- Multiple learning spaces shared by multiple educators vs separate classrooms. Spaces are flexible for use in diverse activity settings.

MEDIA/IDEA LAB

- A shared space with books, technology, and maker spaces where learners are free to research and create.

SPACES THAT ALLOW FOR MOVEMENT

- Spaces that are conducive to movement and provide opportunities for learners to walk, exercise, or simply move from one area or activity to another.

SPACES FOR CREATIVE WORK/MAKER SPACES

- Specific spaces that are designed for creation and innovation such as a creation station, maker space, or lab.

PRESENTATION SPACES

- Areas that allow for individual or group presentations such as learning stairs, tiered areas, and shared presentation areas.

CONNECTIONS TO NATURE

- Bringing elements of nature indoors, such as natural light, visibility to the outdoors, and graphics or products that mimic nature.

EDUCATIONAL VISUALIZATION

Furniture that Facilitates Teaching and Learning

ERGONOMIC FURNITURE

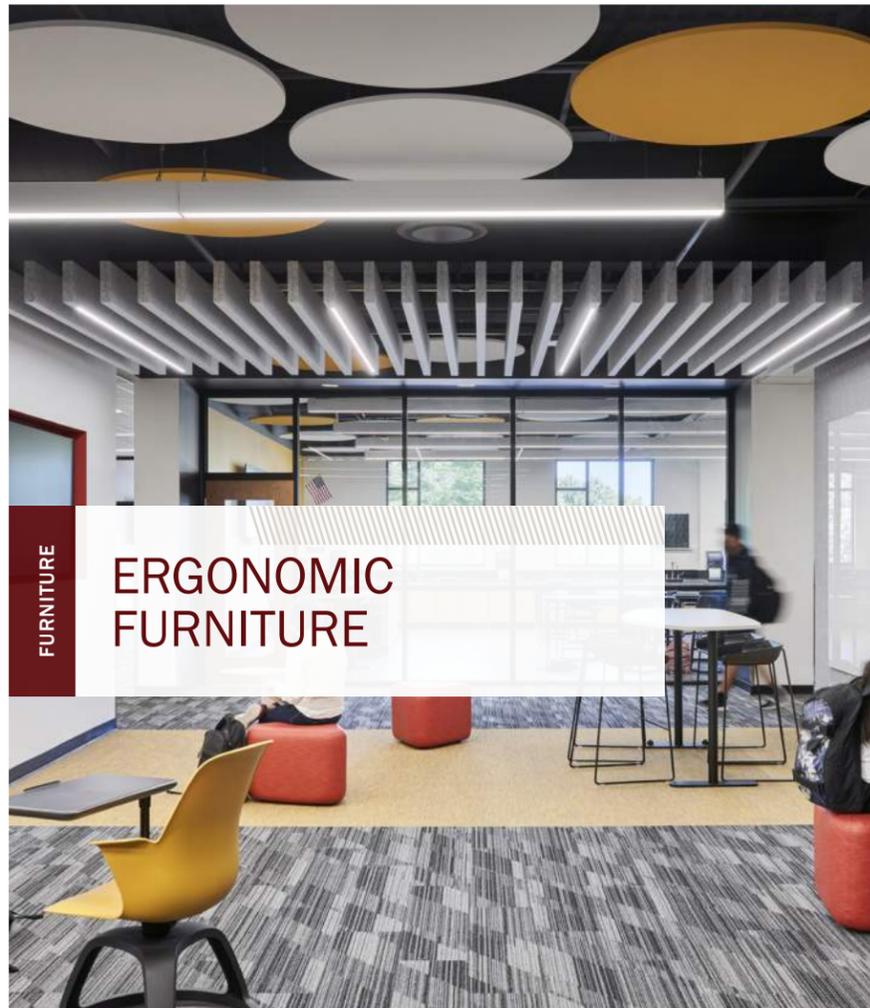
- The making of the furnishings and materials with the purpose of right-sized furniture that adapts to the body to eliminate discomfort and optimize human well-being.

FLEXIBLE/ADAPTABLE FURNITURE TYPES

- Furniture that is easily moved to form different groupings, offers different heights, and fuels creativity.

FURNITURE THAT SUPPORTS INDIVIDUALS

- Furniture that allows for choice in posture, movement, and adjustment to meet individual needs.



EDUCATIONAL VISUALIZATION

Technology that Facilitates Teaching and Learning



FLEXIBLE TECHNOLOGY

- Mobile technology that allows for use on different surfaces and in numerous ways.

EDUCATIONAL VISUALIZATION

How We Create Safe, Equitable Environments that Support All

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

- Strategies that promote health and well-being, such as ensuring air quality, providing natural light and access to plant life, and creating spaces for movement/exercise.

OPTIONAL PRIVACY

- Items that allow for privacy in transparent environments such as drop-down screens, frosted glass, or acoustical curtains and other mobile objects that can strategically obscure the line of sight.

COMMUNITY/BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

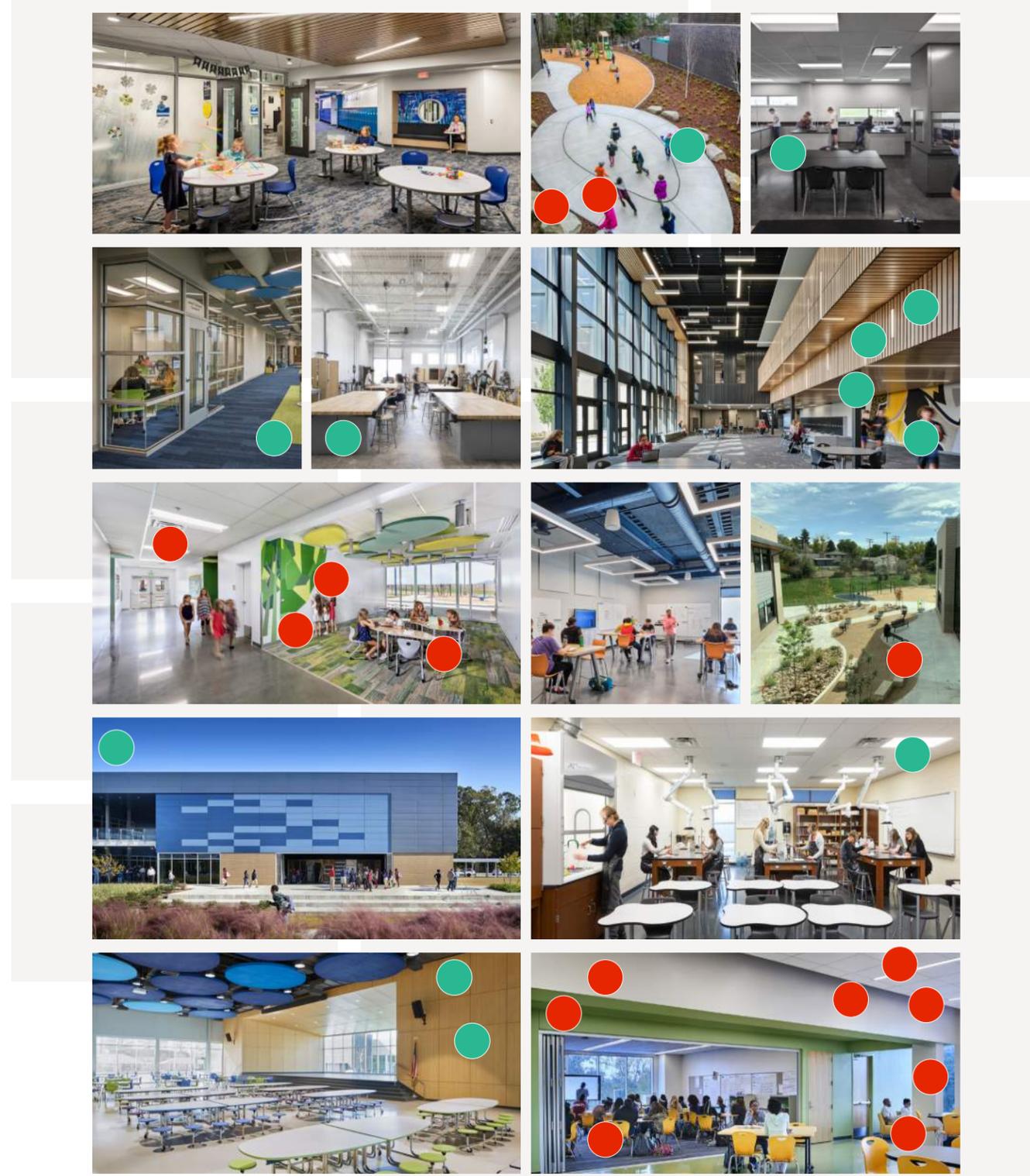
- Providing spaces and activities that promote positive connections and interaction between schools, the workplace, and the community at large.



EDUCATIONAL VISUALIZATION

Visioning Photo Exercise

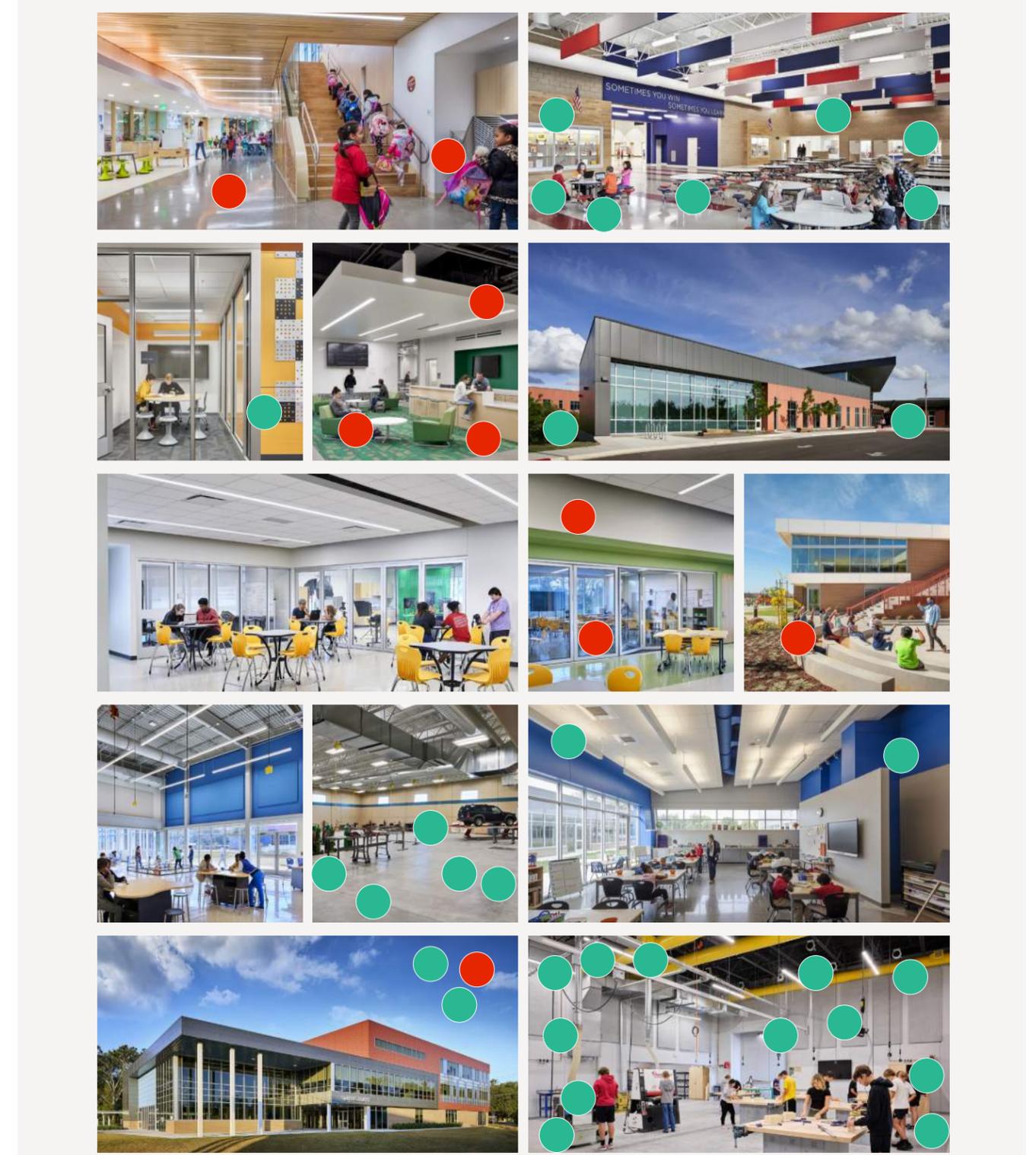
● Likes ● Dislikes



EDUCATIONAL VISUALIZATION

Visioning Photo Exercise

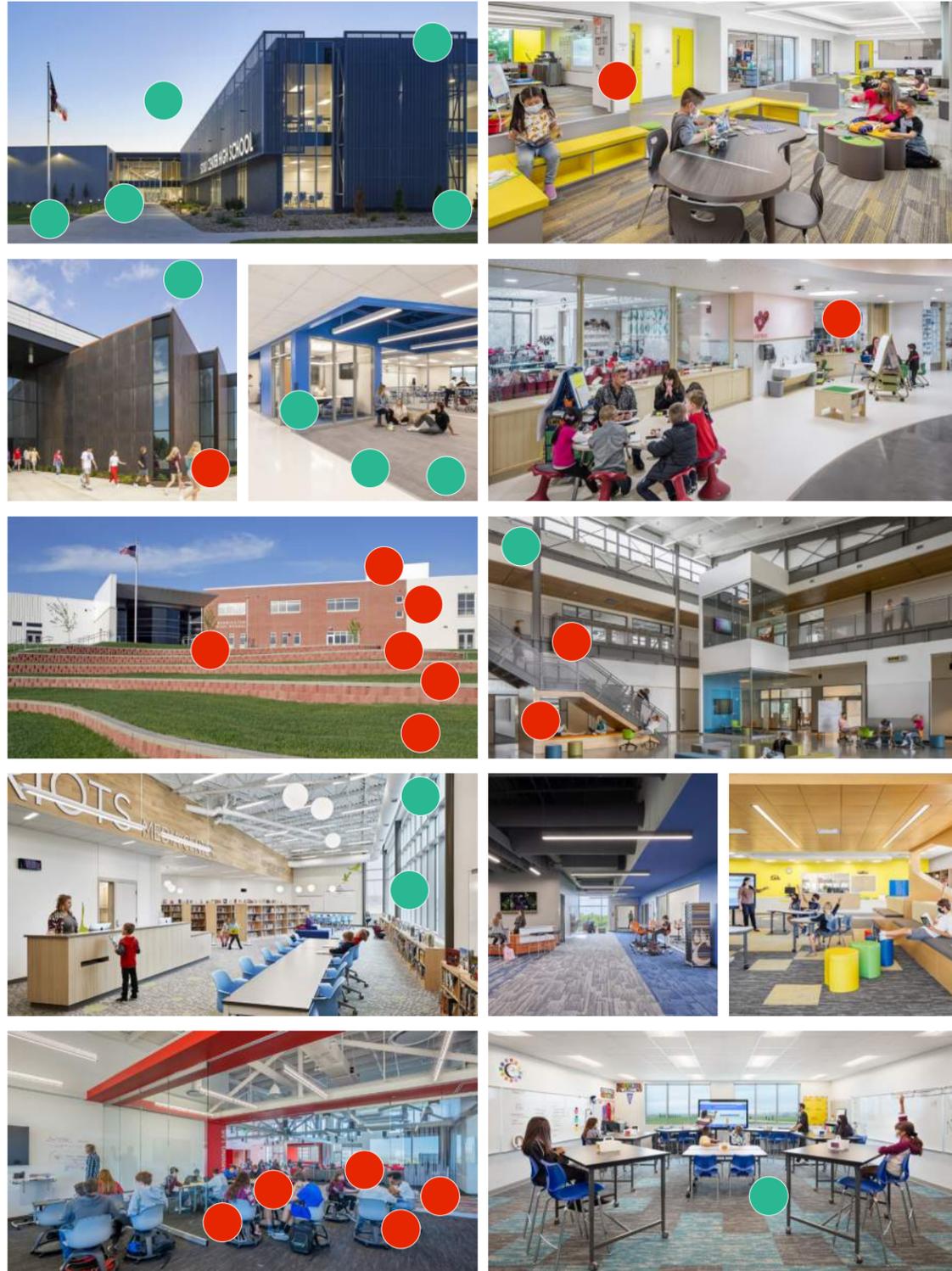
● Likes ● Dislikes



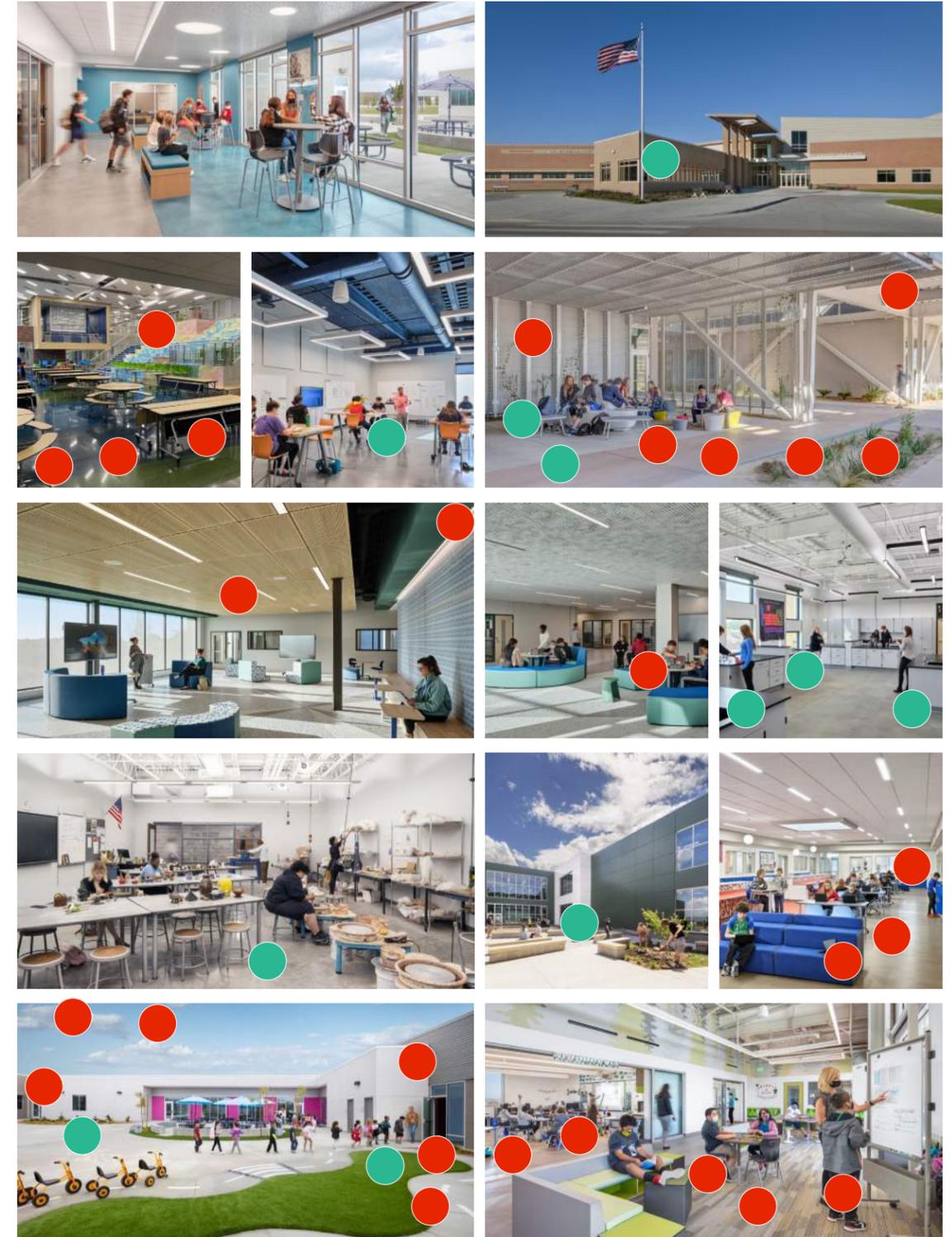
EDUCATIONAL VISUALIZATION

Visioning Photo Exercise

● Likes ● Dislikes



● Likes ● Dislikes





04

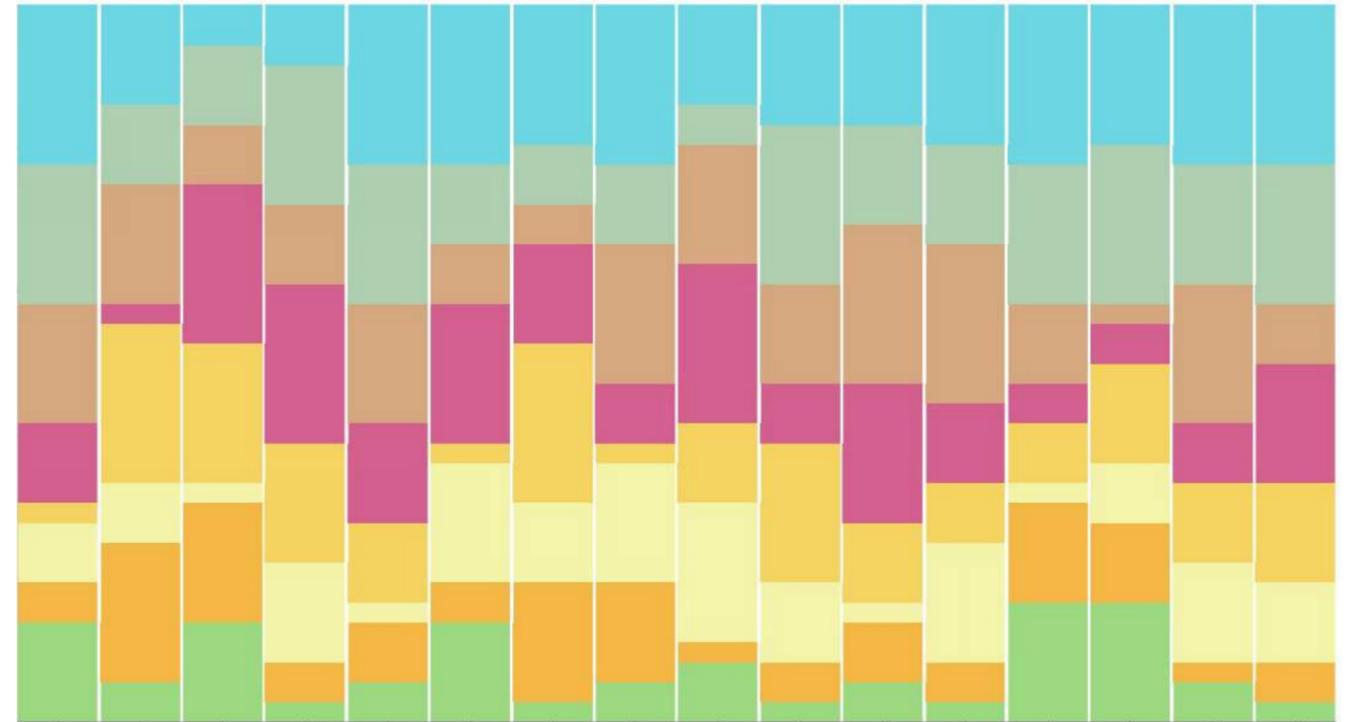
Vision

VISION

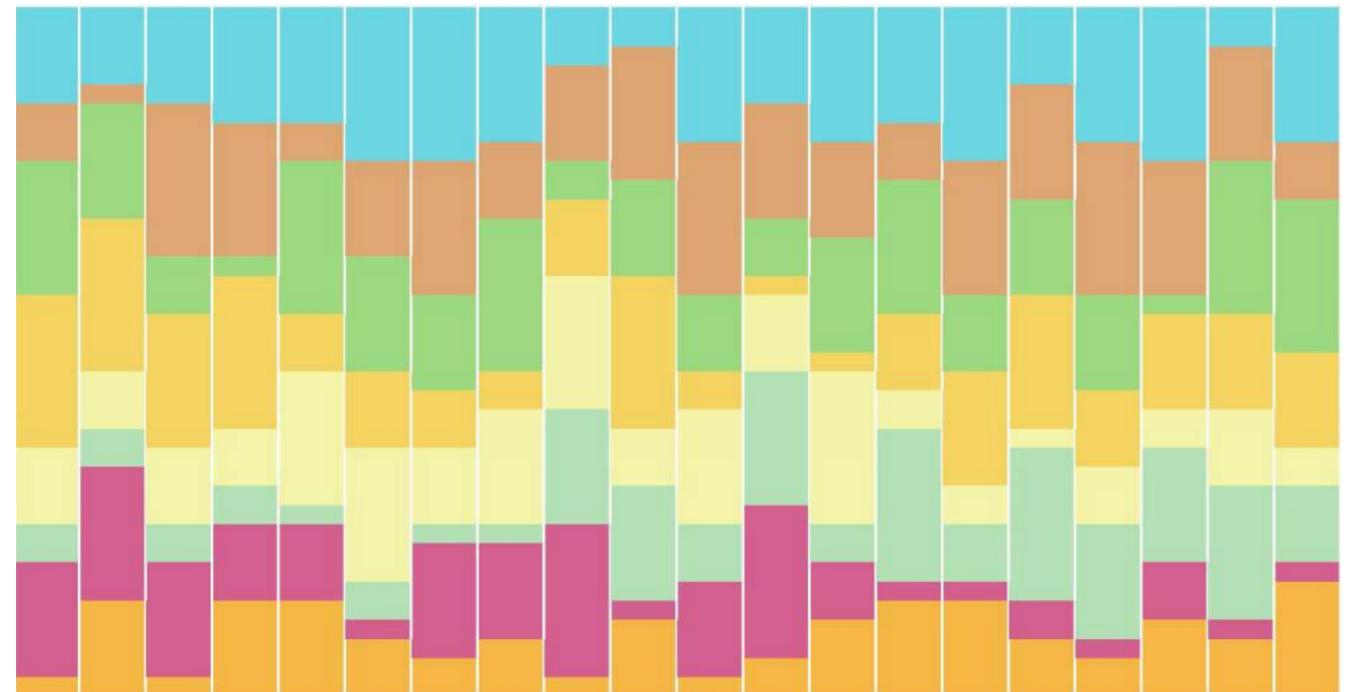
Participant Priorities

Arlington staff, faculty, parents, and community members were asked to rank their top priorities for the project's overall success to gain a further understanding of the communities needs. Nine unique priorities were provided based on information previously gathered from teacher interviews. Each participant ranked the priorities in order from high to low based on the individual's definition of success.

EXPANDED ACADEMIC PATHWAYS (CTE RENO)	ACTIVITIES ENTRY IDENTITY & EXPANDED COMMONS	FLEXIBLE LEARNING & COLLABORATION SPACE
FINE & PERFORMING ARTS EXPANSION	EXPANDED ATHLETIC SPACE (WRESTLING ROOM)	SPECIAL EDUCATION & RESOURCE SPACE
LOCKER ROOMS & RESTROOMS	PARKING AND SITE CIRCULATION	OTHER (WRITE IN)



Priority rankings following the first workshop with the community. Expanded academic pathways, activities entry identity, and flexible learning space ranked as the top three priorities.

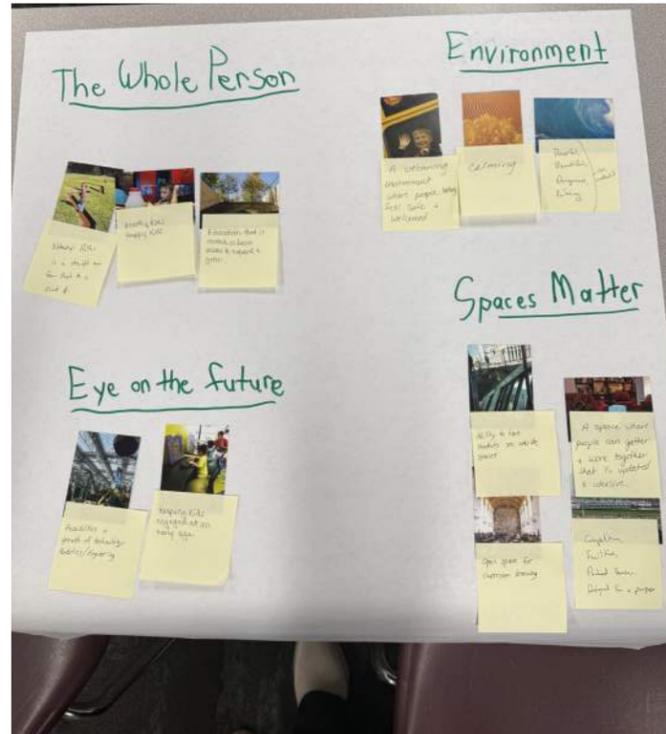


Priority rankings from students, parents, and teachers following parent-teacher conferences. Expanded academic pathways and flexible learning and collaboration space remained in the top three priorities with the addition of parking and site circulation

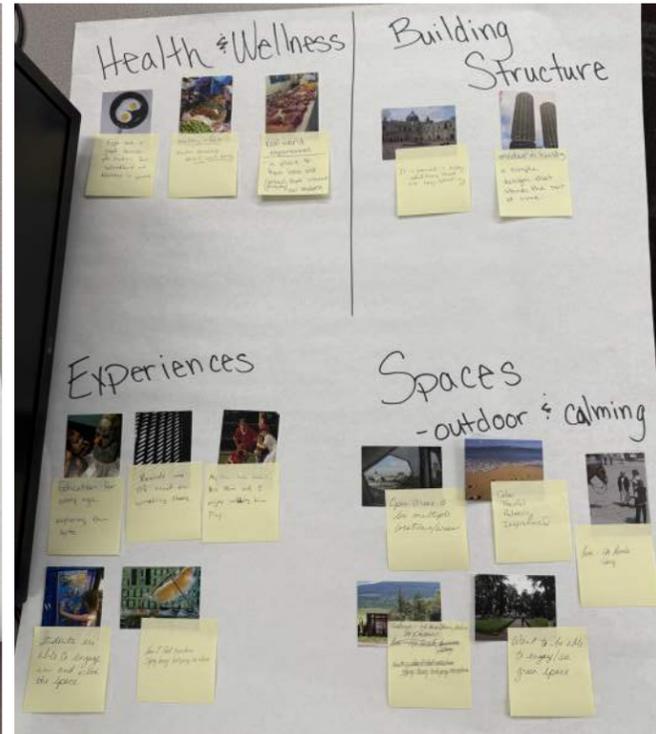
VISION

Guiding Principles

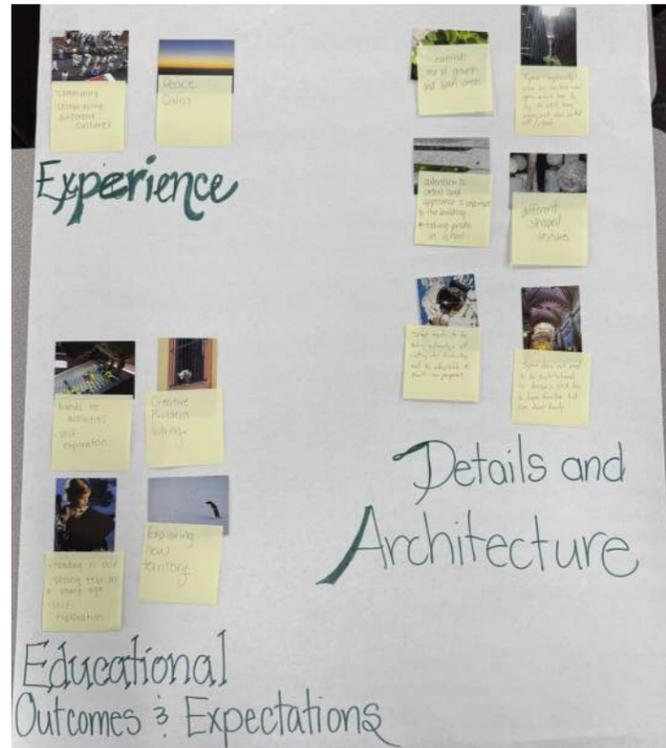
Team 1



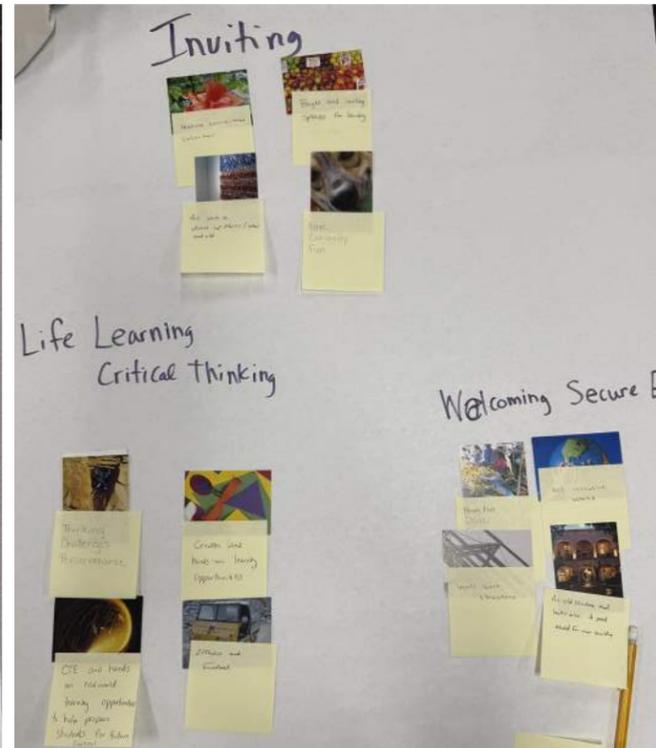
Team 2



Team 3



Team 4



The next activity of the evening was to discuss and begin developing guiding principles of design for Arlington Public Schools. These principles will serve as a filter through which important decisions are made, act as a compass for the project, keep the project on track and should reflect the values of the community. A Picture is Worth 1000 words is the activity that was used to get the data for these principles. Each person selected 3 images out of hundreds presented that spoke to them and identified on a sticky note, why it spoke to them and how it tied to school spaces. Each group then reviewed all their pictures/sticky notes and categorized them into common themes. The results are listed below as well as the comments on each of the sticky notes.

INVITING

- Nature connection, colorful
- Art used to dress up places, new and old
- Bright and inviting spaces for leaning
- Love, curiosity, fun

LIFE LEARNING AND CRITICAL THINKING

- Thinking, challenges, perseverance
- Creative and hands-on learning opportunities
- CTE and hands-on real-world leaning opportunities to help prepare students for future careers
- Efection and functional

WELCOMING SECURE ENVIRONMENTS

- People feel safe
- Well-built structures
- All-inclusive world
- An old structure that looks nice
- Calming
- A welcoming environemtn where people belong, feel safe and welcomed
- Powerful, beautiful, dangerous, relaxing - we can contradict and still find value

THE WHOLE PERSON

- Nobody's path is a straight one from point A to point B
- Healthy kids, happy kids,
- Education that is rooted in basic values to expand and grow

SPACES MATTER

- Ability to have students see outside spaces
- Open space for classroom learning
- A space where poeple can gather to work together that is updated and cohesive
- Competition, facilities, packed house, designed for a purpose

EYE ON THE FUTURE

- Possibilities in growth of technology, robotics, and engineering
- Keeping kids engaged at an early age

BUILDING STRUCTURE

- It is grounded in history, traditions that are long standing
- Modern building with a simple design taht stands the test of time

EXPERIENCES

- Education for every age, exploring the arts
- Students are able to engage in and with the space

SPACES OUTDOOR AND CALMING

- Open areas to see multiple locations
- Calm, peaceful, relaxing, inspirational
- Want to be able to engage/see green space
- Landscape - nature with no electronics

Welcoming and Inclusive: Create environments where every person feels safe, valued, and invited.

Foster Experiential Learning: Design for curiosity, creativity, and hands-on, real-world engagement.

Support Well-Being and Nature Connection: Promote health, calm, and whole-person development through nature-rich, wellness-centered design.

Design with Purpose and Future Vision: Build functional, timeless spaces that are adaptable, innovative, and grounded in community heritage.

VISION

I See | We See Statements

I SEE STATEMENTS

- I see continued growth in size
- I see continued interest in trades and CTE classes
- I see enhanced facilities we are proud of
- I see students who see the value in doing their work, communicating in person, and having a desire to care for and make our world a better place
- I see APS better than similar size schools
- I see a more modern, all inclusive school

WE SEE STATEMENTS

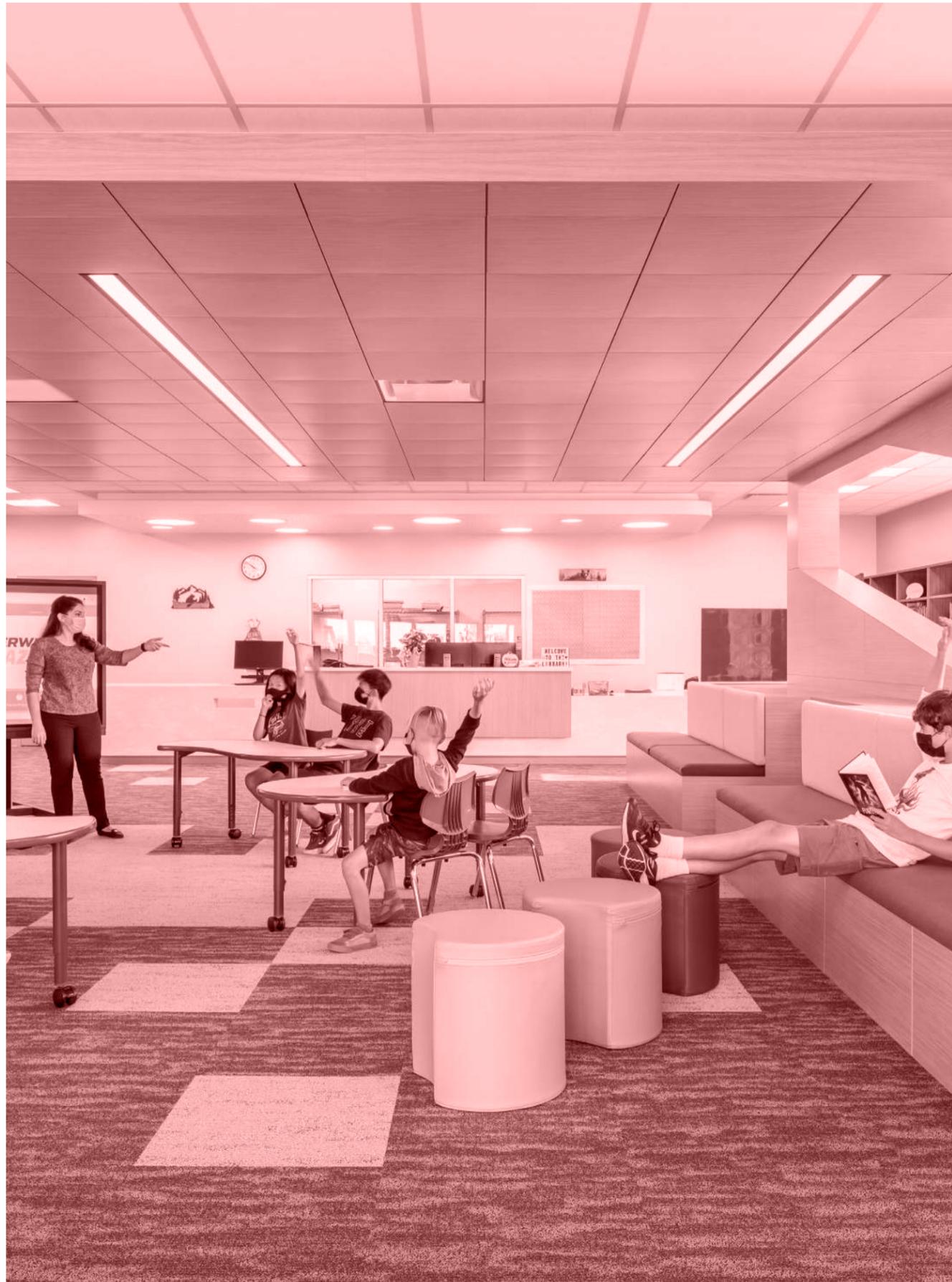
- We see a new building, specifically elementary. A building and student body that is still rural in makeup. We see a building that is open to the community for use.
- We see an improved facility filled with students learning how to appreciate their value. Continued growth and interest in developing real world skills to impact society.
- We see a school that students and the community are proud of. A place that inspires learning, connection and growth where students prepare for their future education and a variety of secondary paths, equipped with the skills and confidence to succeed in an updated and functional space that supports learning, creativity and pride.

We See Statement

We see Arlington Public Schools with modern facilities that stay true to our rural roots—an inviting, community-centered place where students feel valued, build real-world skills, and grow with confidence in a functional, inspiring space.

06

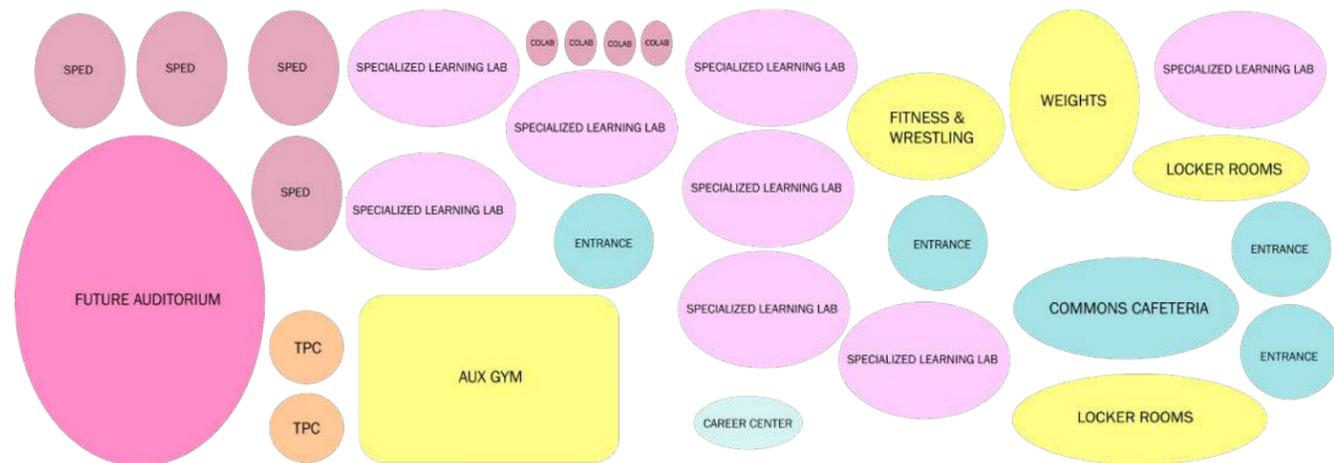
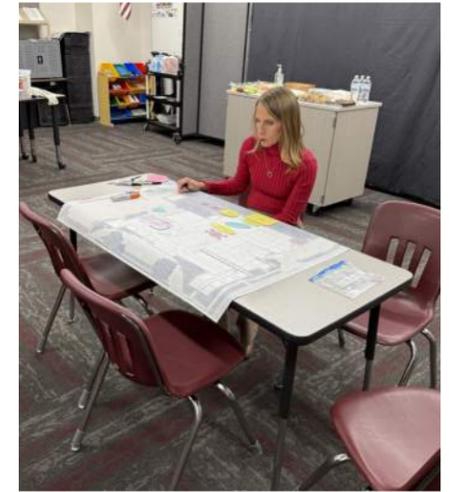
Macro Organization



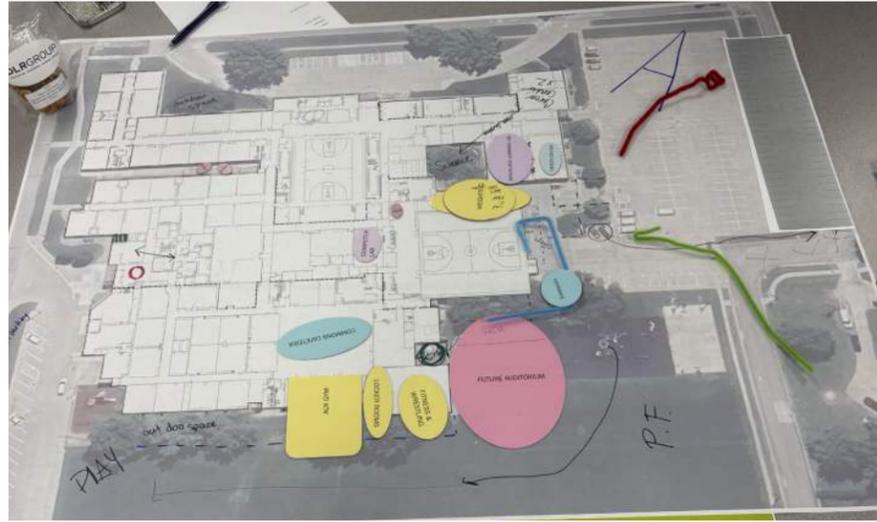
MACRO ORGANIZATION

Design Your Dream School

The Arlington team was supplied with the site plan as well as manipulatives labeled with all the items on the priority list. They were instructed to utilize these pieces and put them on the site where they thought they should be and to make sure to include adjacencies as well as any notes. At the conclusion each group presented to the entire committee and addressed any questions. Each committee member was asked to identify items they liked and did not with each plan and to pick their 2 favorite options

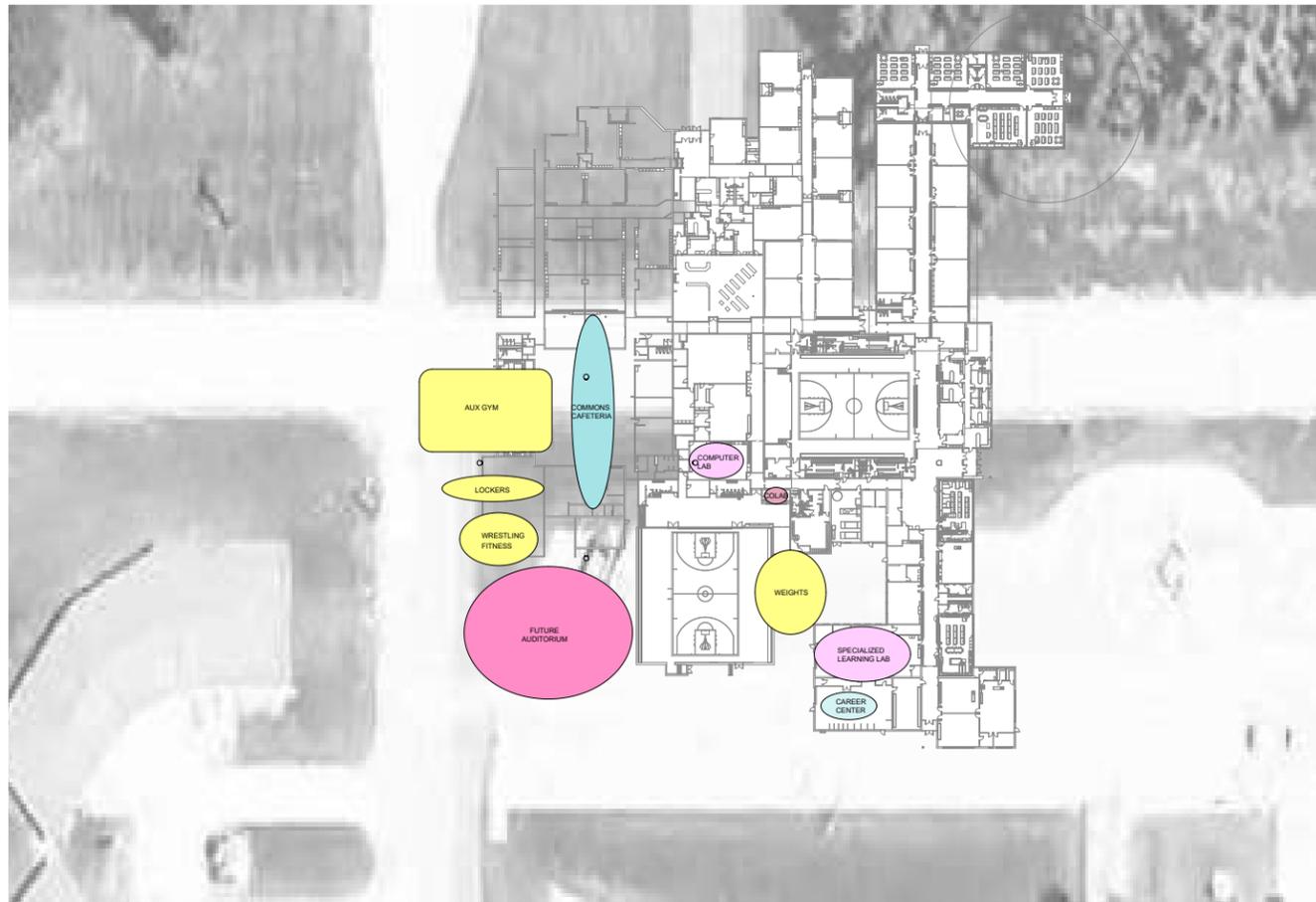


MACRO ORGANIZATION



Option A Synthesis

- Option A received positive feedback related to traffic flow, athletics, and CTE improvements, but generated significant concern around moving science rooms.



MACRO ORGANIZATION

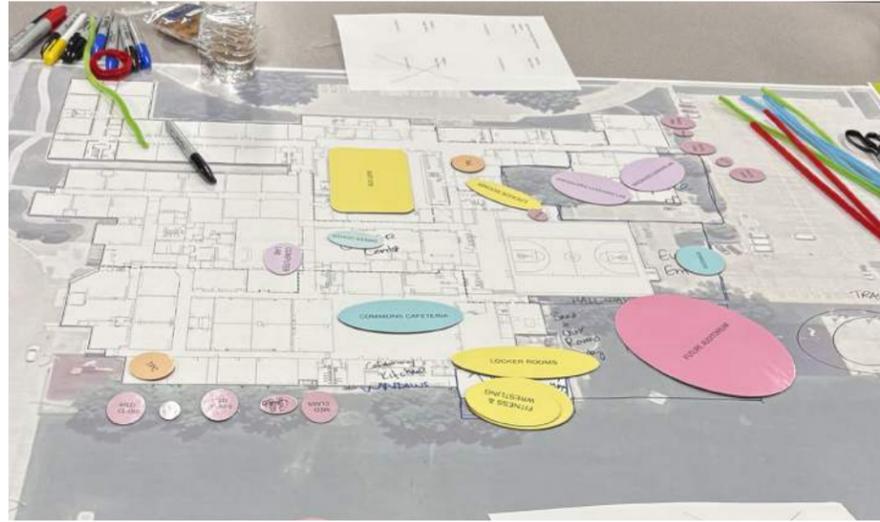


Option B Synthesis

- Option B emerged as the strongest choice, primarily due to its improved auditorium placement, expanded parking, and effective reuse of space.



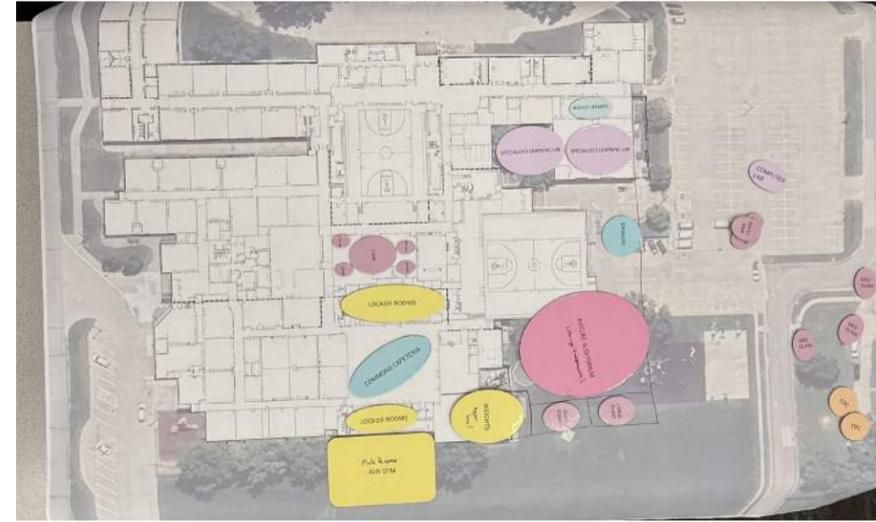
MACRO ORGANIZATION



Option C Synthesis

- Option C, while praised for its elementary classroom expansion, fitness space improvements, and Blue Gym repurposing, was consistently criticized for providing no additional parking and introducing several undesirable academic space shifts.

MACRO ORGANIZATION





December 2025
10-25126-01

Superintendent Leave Log 2025-2026					
		Sick Days	Bereavement Days	Vacation Days	Floating Holidays
Carryover		45	per contract per occurrence	10 (unpaid/unused from previous years)	
Starting Balance		55		20	3
Date	Description				
8-1-2025	vac			1	
11/3/25	vac			1	
11/7/25	vac			1	
11/26/25	vac			1	
11/28/25	Floating Thanksgiving				1
Ending Balance		55		16	2
On Duty Out of Office					
Admin Days	Kearney	July 22-24	2.5 Days		
Commissioner Advisory Committee	Hershey	Sept 15	1 Day		
ESU3/NASA Rgn 2 Meeting	LaVista	Sept 30	.5 day		
Labor Relations Conference	Lincoln	Oct 2	1 day	Had responsibilities as NASA president this year	
NCSA Exec Board	Lincoln	Oct 22	.5 day		
ATSI Team Training	York	Nov 4	1 day		
SAC and NASA Exec Meeting	Omaha	Nov 19	.75 day		
State Board of Ed Conference	Omaha	11/20 (.75), 11/21 (.5)	1.25 Days	Responsibilities	

NASB BOARD QUICKS

A MONTHLY E-UPDATE OF KEY DATES FROM THE NEBRASKA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS

2,000,000 Nebraskans 329,000 Students 1,700 Locally Elected School Board Members 260 Member Districts/ESUs ONE NEBRASKA

To register for an NASB event, click on the 'My Membership' link, then navigate to the 'Events' dropdown and select 'Register'. If you do not have an email and password to log in or have forgotten it, please contact NASB at 402-423-4951 for assistance. All Dates & Locations Tentative & Subject to Change

JOIN US!

LEARN MORE!

Events & Networking - <https://members.nasbonline.org/events>

Where Will NASB Be This Month?*



Ainsworth

Kearney

Lexington

Lincoln

Loup City

Omaha

Paxton

Perkins County

Red Cloud

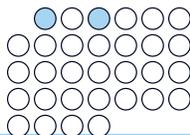
Weeping Water

Winside

For ... Advocacy, Board Retreats, Engagement, Events, Strategic Planning, and more!

*Items currently scheduled

SMTWTF S



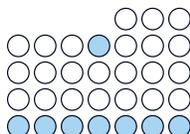
DECEMBER 2025



Governor's School Finance Commission Report Due - Monday, December 1

New Board Member Workshop - Wednesday, December 3 - Kearney

SMTWTF S



JANUARY 2026

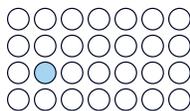


1st Day of the 2026 Legislative Session - Wednesday, January 7, 2026

School Board Member Week in Nebraska - January 25-31, 2026

Legislative Issues Conference - January 25-26, 2026 - Lincoln

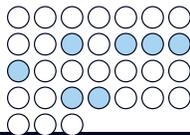
SMTWTF S



FEBRUARY 2026

President's Retreat - Monday, February 16 - Kearney

SMTWTF S



MARCH 2026

Budget & Finance Workshop - Tuesday, March 10 - Seward

COSSBA Annual Conference - March 12-15 - Louisville, KY

Budget & Finance Workshop - Tuesday, March 24 - West Point

NAEP State Convention - March 24-25 - Kearney



Continued on Page 2

Leadership

Innovation

Vision

Engagement

#liveNASB

NASB BOARD QUICKS

A MONTHLY E-UPDATE OF KEY DATES FROM THE NEBRASKA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS

2,000,000 Nebraskans 329,000 Students 1,700 Locally Elected School Board Members 260 Member Districts/ESUs ONE NEBRASKA

PAGE 2



Budget & Finance Workshop - Tuesday, April 7 - Ogallala

Amplified Budget & Finance Workshop - Wednesday, April 8 - Kearney

NSBA Annual Conference - April 10-12 - San Antonio, TX

Final Day of the 2026 Legislative Session - Friday, April 17

2026 NASB Federal Advocacy Fly-In - April 26-29 - Washington, DC

School Law Seminar/NASB Member Golf Outing - June 10-11 - Kearney

ALICAP Workshops & Candidate Workshops - Summer TBD

Area Membership Meetings - August through September

State Education Conference - November

New Board Member Workshops - December

YOUR 2025 PLATINUM AFFILIATES

If your business would like to become an Affiliate Member of NASB, please visit: <https://members.nasbonline.org/about-us/affiliate-members>

Leadership

Innovation

Vision

Engagement

#liveNASB



Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association

Member Update

December 4, 2025



www.nrcsa.net

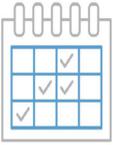


www.twitter.com/NRCSA1980



www.facebook.com/nrcsahome/

NRCSA Calendar



NRCSA Events

NRCSA Legislative Forum

February 26, 2026

Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln

[More about this event](#)

NRCSA Spring Conference

March 18 & 20, 2026

Crowne Plaza & Younes North Convention Center in
Kearney

[More about this event](#)

NRCSA Golf Tournament

July 28, 2026

Meadowlark Hills Golf Course in Kearney

[More about this event](#)

Committee Meetings

NRCSA Executive Committee

9:30 AM January 20, 2026

Via Zoom

NRCSA Legislative Committee

9:30 AM Thursdays during hearings

Via Zoom

NRCSA Scholarship & Recognition Committee

February 26 & 27, 2026

NCSA Conference Room

At the NCSA Building in Lincoln

NRCSA Executive Committee

3:00 PM March 18, 2026

Bronze 5 Room

At the Crowne Plaza in Kearney

NRCSA Search Service



Please let Jack Moles know where superintendent vacancies occur, so that NRCSA Superintendent Search can make direct contact. We need to hear as soon as possible in anticipation of getting promotional materials specific to that board of education ready. It is critical that Board Presidents have the NRCSA contact information so that if they choose to consider a Superintendent Search Service, NRCSA is one they hopefully will consider.



Axtell Community Schools
Search Complete



Sandy Creek Public Schools
[Notice of Vacancy](#)
[Apply for this Vacancy](#)
Application Deadline: **Dec. 15, 2025**
Finalists Selected: **Jan. 5, 2026**
Interviews: **Jan. 10, 2026**
Contract Starts: **July 1, 2026**



Bancroft-Rosalie Community Schools
Application Process Complete
Finalists Selected: **Nov. 17, 2025**
Interviews: **Dec. 6, 2025**
Contract Starts: **July 1, 2026**



Hampton Public Schools
Application Process Complete
Finalists Selected: **Nov. 21, 2025**
Interviews: **Dec. 6, 2025**
Contract Starts: **July 1, 2026**



Hayes Center Public Schools
Search Complete



Potter-Dix Public Schools
Search Complete



Red Cloud Community Schools
Interim Search

Access the Members area of www.nrcsa.net anytime.

Login: member Password: learning

NRCSA Updates

From NRCSA Executive Director Jack Moles: At the NRCSA Executive Committee's meeting on November 19, I informed the Committee of my intention to retire at the end of the current school year. While we don't know an exact end date, it will likely be sometime this coming summer. The Executive Committee will utilize the NRCSA Superintendent Search Service in conducting a search for my replacement. I would encourage anyone who has interest in the position to contact me and I will provide as much information about the position as possible.

I will write more at a later date, but I do want all to know that being the Executive Director of NRCSA has been one of the topmost highlights of my professional career. I truly loved being a teacher, a coach, a Principal, and a Superintendent, but I believe this has been my favorite role in education.

I plan to do all I can to assist the Executive Committee in the search, short of actually taking a role in choosing my replacement. That is the job of the NRCSA elected leadership and I will support them all that I can. I am already making plans on how to support the next NRCSA Executive Director.

Application information for NRCSA Scholarships and nomination information for NRCSA Awards were sent out right after Thanksgiving. One change to the Scholarships was approved by the NRCSA Executive Committee at its November 19th meeting. We are increasing the number of NRCSA scholarships for students entering the field of education when they go to college. We have been awarding 20 such scholarships for the past several years, but will now increase the number of scholarships to 23. These scholarships will remain at \$2,000 per recipient. We will still offer two Gary Fisher Fine Arts Scholarships in the amount of \$2,000. That means that NRCSA will be awarding a total of \$50,000 in scholarships to 25 students from NRCSA-member districts! Please help by making sure that students are aware of the scholarships. We did send notice of the scholarships to each member district's high school Counselor.

Each year NRCSA recognizes several individuals with our "Outstanding" Awards to a worthy Board of Education Member, Superintendent, Principal, Elementary Teacher, Secondary Teacher, Music Teacher, ESU Staff Member, and Classified Staff Member. You all have outstanding individuals in your schools—please consider nominating them for these awards.

Each year, one of the recipients of one of the Outstanding Teacher Awards (Elementary, Secondary, and Music) is chosen to be NRCSA's nominee for the Nationals Rural Education Associations Rural Teacher of the Year Award. NRCSA's nominee for the 2025 award was Kari Schroder of Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca. Kari was the runner-up for the NREA Award this year. She was awarded a teacher's bell by the NREA.

NRCSA Leadership

Chris Kuncl, President.
Mullen Public Schools

Dr. Heather Nebesniak, Past Pres.
Ord Public Schools

Stephanie Kaczor, Pres-Elect.
Riverside Public Schools

Jeremy Braden, Secretary.
Doniphan-Trumbull Public Schs

District Representatives:

Ginger Meyer, West
Chadron Public Schools

Dale Hafer, North Central
Ainsworth Community Schools

Daryl Schrunk, Northeast
Randolph Public Schools

Andrew Havelka, Southeast
Freeman Public Schools

Jon Davis, South Central
Alma Public Schools

Jane Davis, Southwest
Hershey Public Schools

Executive Director:

Jack Moles

Lobbyists:

Jon Edwards
Scott Moore
Russell Westerhold

Legislative Co- Chairs:

Dr. Jason Dolliver
Pender Public Schools

Bryce Jorgenson
Southern Valley Schools

Scholarship & Recognition Co Chairs:

Jessica Bland,
Oakland-Craig Public Schools

Jim Widdifield
Minden Public Schools



KARI SCHROEDER (CENTER), WITH SYRACUSE ADMINISTRATION & NRCSA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JACK MOLES

NRCSA held all of its committee meetings on Wednesday, Nov. 19 in conjunction with the NASB/NASA Education Conference in Omaha. Some of the outcomes from these committee meetings include:

The Executive Committee:

- approved a move to add three \$1,000 NRCSA Scholarships which go to students from NRCSA-member schools. The students must be entering the field of education.
- approved the adoption of an “event cancellation policy”. The policy, which will be shared in the January Member Update, lays out the procedures for late cancellations of those who are signed up for events. NRCSA must commit to meals prior to hosting events. The policy will address how refunds are made for cancellations.
- agreed to partner with the Holocaust Learning Experience. This group provides free teacher materials that can be used in meeting Rule 10 requirements in teaching the Holocaust and other genocides. More information will come out later.
- accepted an invitation from the University of Kansas Literacy Grant. Member schools that choose to participate will receive grants and participating teachers will receive stipends.

The Scholarship and Recognition Committee made a recommendation to make terms on the committee three years instead of two. This will serve to make terms the same as those on the Executive and Legislative Committees. The Executive Committee will vote to approve the move at its January meeting.

The Legislative Committee discussed several “rumored” legislative issues.

The Closing the Achievement Gap Committee is working on a plan which would ask for districts to apply for recognition of their intentional work in closing the achievement gap between students in poverty and students not in poverty. More information will come later.

SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH & PLANNING

As Boards of Education and Superintendents start to plan for the future, there may be a change in Superintendent approaching your district. We would like to remind you that NRCSA has an outstanding Superintendent Search Service and I would encourage your Board of Education to closely consider these services if you are in need of a Superintendent.

NRCSA has already helped the Axtell, Hayes Center, and Potter-Dix Boards of Education identify their next Superintendent. We are currently assisting Hampton, Bancroft-Rosalie, and Sandy Creek Boards of Education with their searches. We are also assisting Red Cloud in a search for an Interim Superintendent.

One of the more outstanding features of the NRCSA Superintendent Search Service is that the consultants who assist Boards of Education with their searches are all retired rural school Superintendents who experienced great success in their careers. They know what it takes to be successful in a rural school district and community, and how to work closely with a rural school Board of Education. Our current consultants are: Jim Havelka, Fred Helmink, Robin Stevens, Rob Hanger, Caroline Winchester, Curtis Cogswell, Mike Cunning, Paul Sheffield, Mo Hanks, and Jay Bellar.

If your district finds a need to locate your next school leader, please be sure to keep the NRCSA Superintendent Search Service in mind. For more information you can contact Executive Director Jack Moles at jmoles@nrcca.net or by phone at 402-335-7732.

Another service that is offered is a planning service. It is a common practice for Boards of Education and the Superintendent to develop short and long-term plans. We are currently assisting Anselmo-Merna in their planning process. NRCSA does provide a quality service using experienced consultants. If you are interested in more information, please contact Executive Director Jack Moles.

[**NRCSA Search Service Brochure**](#)

[**NRCSA Planning Support Brochure**](#)

The School Financing Review Commission, which was created last Spring by the Unicameral, has had four meetings thus far. Information on the meetings can be found on the NDE website at <https://www.education.ne.gov/commissioner/school-financing-review-commission/>. The committee has presented its preliminary report to the Unicameral.

The Commission is made up of 18 individuals and is chaired by Commissioner of Education, Dr. Brian Maher. Senators on the Commission include Sen. Dave Murman, Sen. Jana Hughes, and Sen. Eliot Bostar, as well as former State Senators Lou Ann Linehan, Tom Briese, and Fred Meyer. Individuals from the Education world include Brady Superintendent Ann Foster, Pender Superintendent (and NRCSA Legislative Co-Chair) Jason Dolliver, Bennington Superintendent Aaron Plas, Millard Superintendent John Schwartz, Lincoln Associate Superintendent Liz Standish, Lakeview Board of Education President Keith Runge, Omaha Board of Education member Shavonna Holman, and Chancellor of the Nebraska State College System, Dr. Paul Turman.

The Nebraska Statewide Workforce & Educational Reporting System (NSWERS) has released a new research brief examining chronic absenteeism in Nebraska's K–12 schools and its effect on student outcomes, including assessment scores, graduation rates, and college enrollment.

The analysis highlights that chronic absenteeism—defined as missing 10 percent or more of the school year for any reason—has risen sharply in Nebraska since the COVID-19 pandemic and remains persistently high. Rates jumped from 10 percent in 2019–2020 to nearly 24 percent the following school year and have since remained

above 20 percent statewide.

Key Findings from the NSWERS brief:

- Nebraska’s chronic absenteeism rate has stabilized but remains elevated at more than one in five students.
- Disparities exist across student race/ethnicity, with Indigenous/Native American and Black students showing the highest rates of chronic absenteeism.
- Chronically-absent students consistently score lower on statewide assessments (NSCAS and ACT) compared to their peers.
- Chronic absenteeism greatly reduces the likelihood of graduating on time; students with regular attendance are nearly six times more likely to graduate high school than their chronically-absent peers.
- College-going rates show a significant divide: nearly 71 percent of non-chronically absent graduates enroll in postsecondary education compared to just 49 percent of chronic absentees.

“These findings underscore the lasting impact of chronic absenteeism on students’ academic progress and future opportunities,” said Dr. Jay Jeffries, author of the brief. “Addressing absenteeism requires not only monitoring the type of absence but also understanding the characteristics of students who are chronically absent.”

The full report, NSWERS Brief on the Impact of Chronic Absenteeism on Academic Outcomes in Nebraska, is available at:

<https://insights.nswers.org/briefs/2025-chronic-absenteeism>

A year ago, NRCSA introduced a new initiative to assist rural schools in educating their communities about digital citizenship. Our partnership with A.Plum Creative will provide members with ready-to-use, research-based resources designed to help districts promote responsible technology use among students and families.

The program has its origins out of a goal by the Hershey Board of Education and Superintendent Jane Davis to work on digital citizenship in their district. The district worked with A.Plum Creative on the initiative, then shared information on the program with the NRCSA Executive Committee.

This research based, legally vetted campaign includes monthly social media graphics and captions that focus on key topics like online safety, respectful communication, digital wellness and appropriate tech use. All content is designed to engage school communities and support districts in meeting digital citizenship education goals.

We offer a set of tiered service options for NRCSA Member Districts:

- Tier 1 – NRCSA Branded Content (\$2,500/school year): Monthly graphics and captions with NRCSA branding, aligned to seasonal themes and events.
- Tier 2 – District-Branded Content (\$5,000/school year): Customized graphics and captions tailored to your district’s brand and messaging.
- Tier 3 – Custom Content + Consultation (\$7,500/school year): District-branded content plus three planning calls per year with A.Plum Creative.
- Tier 4 – Full Social Media Management (\$10,000/school year): District-branded content, full posting and scheduling, community engagement and monthly performance reports.

This campaign is available exclusively to NRCSA member districts. To learn more or reserve your spot, contact Anna Weber at anna@a-plum.com or visit www.a-plum.com.

[Good Life EDU Podcast Featuring Anna Weber & Jane Davis](#)

Recently, Minden Superintendent Jim Widdifield contacted the NRCSA office to see if we could be in assistance in helping him conduct a survey concerning Early Childhood programs in our rural schools. We assisted him with dissemination of the survey and he recently shared results.

From Jim: I have finally completed putting this together for those who filled out the survey. I received a good response from 87 schools. I appreciate all the schools that took the time to complete the survey. I did not include the specific schools in the results, but instead grouped them by size.

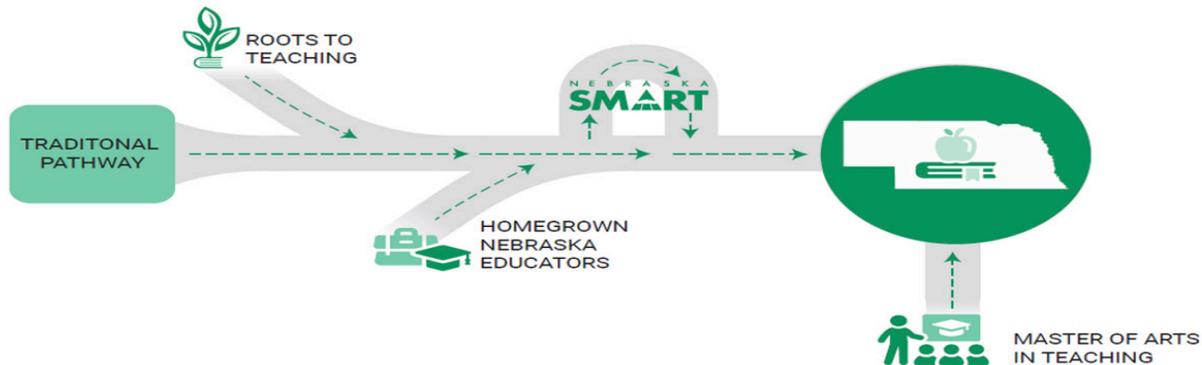
I share this information with you, not only because it has some very good information on Early Childhood programs, especially as it pertains to age groups, numbers of staff, and funding sources, but also to remind you that if you are wanting to research something please keep NRCSA in mind. Sometimes we already have compiled the information you are looking for. Also, if you want to do surveys, we can help you to disseminate the survey materials.

Nebraska Pre-School Programs

I recently had a communique from a member Superintendent as to the history of Equalization Aid in his district. That is something we keep track of on an annual basis for all districts, so his request for help was very easily filled. Again, at NRCSA we may have already compiled information you might be wanting to find. All you need to do is ask!

Expanding the Educator Pipeline through Innovative Nebraska State College Initiatives.

Educator Preparation Pathways



The Nebraska State Colleges (Chadron, Peru, and Wayne) are proactively addressing the growing teacher shortage across the state, particularly in rural communities. With their evolution beginning as Normal Schools to present, and approximately 28% of undergraduate students majoring in teacher education (the largest comprehensive major system-wide), the Colleges have long played a central role in preparing future educators.

However, as Nebraska faces increasingly urgent staffing shortages in K–12 classrooms, especially in high-need areas such as special education, early childhood, and STEM, the State Colleges continue to evolve to meet this challenge through four strategic initiatives.

Nebraska Roots to Teaching (NRT), seeks to offer a high school-to-career educator pathway modeled after Washington State’s successful Recruiting Washington Teachers (RWT) program. Anchored in Wayne State College’s STEP (Students to Teachers through Educator Pathways) program, NRT is expanding dual credit options in education across the three colleges. High school students (especially first-generation and underrepresented learners) will be able to complete introductory education courses for dual credit, participate in campus-based experiences, and receive mentorship from teacher-mentors and college “navigators” throughout their transition into college and early teaching careers. Flexible modalities, financial incentives, and future paraeducator

credentialing further broaden access for rural students.

The **Homegrown Nebraska Educators Apprenticeship Program** seeks to leverage new flexibility under Nebraska Department of Education Rules 20 and 21 to provide an alternative pathway to certification for paraprofessionals and place-bound adults. Building on Chadron State College's pilot model, this initiative allows candidates to remain employed in their local districts while completing a bachelor's degree and teacher certification. Courses are fully online and asynchronous, ensuring flexibility for working adults. The program emphasizes district-identified endorsement areas, such as special education and elementary education, and uses a competency-based credit model to reward relevant experience.

The **Nebraska SMART (Success Made Accessible through Rural Tutoring)** initiative connects teacher education candidates from the three State Colleges with K–12 students in their home districts through virtual tutoring. Focused on supporting rural schools, SMART offers academic help during afternoons and evenings while providing early, meaningful field experience for teacher candidates. By allowing candidates to serve students in their own communities, the program strengthens local ties and broadens access to educational support. SMART not only improves outcomes for K–12 learners but also enhances the preparation of future educators committed to serving Nebraska's rural schools and communities.

Lastly, the **Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT)** is a distinct, graduate-level program designed for individuals who hold a bachelor's degree in a core content area and seek teacher certification in Nebraska. Delivered fully online, the 18-credit core of the program ensures that individuals fully meet certification requirements and provides a flexible path to licensure, while the additional 18 credits of the graduate program provide options to complete the required content courses to qualify for teaching dual credit courses or work toward specific endorsement requirements. Individuals can choose to complete the core course which lead to certification without committing to the MAT; however, the completion of the MAT graduate program assists individuals in completing elective coursework that moves them toward their career goals. Unlike the Homegrown Nebraska Educators apprenticeship model, which supports paraprofessionals pursuing a bachelor's degree, the MAT serves adult career changers and professionals seeking a direct, advanced entry into the teaching profession. Together, these initiatives form a comprehensive ecosystem of entry points into the teaching profession. From high school dual credit options and rural tutoring roles to full apprenticeship models and flexible graduate pathways, the Nebraska State Colleges are creating scalable solutions to address Nebraska's critical teacher shortage, ensuring every community has access to well-prepared, locally rooted educators for years to come.

Chris Proski, formerly the Superintendent at Southern and now at Hastings, has shared a sample Superintendent Checklist that he uses. I thought this was a great instrument, one that I wished I had available to me when I was in the Superintendentcy. It can be especially helpful as you head into the new school year! Thanks to Chris for sharing this! You can access the updated checklist here:

[**Superintendent Check List**](#)

NRCSA has had the great privilege to work closely with Open Sky Policy Institute over the years. They provide great information on the fiscal impact of legislation that is very helpful to me in my work as NRCSA's chief lobbyist. I would encourage Superintendents and Board of Education members to sign up to receive Open Sky's email updates.

Open Sky has developed some awesome **Nebraska Public School District Profiles** instruments. The instruments provide much information that can be used to tell the story of your district in comparison to other districts when discussing school finance. The instruments can be accessed at:

[**https://www.openskypolicy.org/school-district-profile/**](https://www.openskypolicy.org/school-district-profile/)

The mission of OpenSky Policy Institute is to provide impartial and precise research, analysis, education and

leadership on fiscal policy-improving opportunities for all Nebraskans. Subscribe to their email updates at <https://bit.ly/OpenSkyUpdates> or contact Todd Henrichs at thenrichs@openskypolicy.org.

As we head into the new legislative session, Open Sky has shared a few more tools that can be especially helpful. A message from Rebecca Firestone, Executive Director for Open Sky shares:

Dear friends,

On behalf of the team at OpenSky, I want to thank you for the work you have done to prepare for the important policy work ahead for all of us this year.

We wanted to take an opportunity to share a few quick reference materials we have developed that we think will be especially useful this session (attached).

- 1. A one-page guide to TEEOSA, the K-12 public school funding formula. With significant changes promised to the formula in pursuit of property tax relief, we felt it was important to share the current state of play.*
- 2. A guide on the budget process, including a timeline, who is involved, and a breakdown of important components of the state budget. With a significant deficit heading into session, lawmakers will grapple with complex decisions regarding spending. At OpenSky, we are ready to work towards a budget that reflects the priorities of Nebraskans and allows everyone a shot at The Good Life, and we look forward to partnering with you in this work.*

I also wanted to introduce you to some new members of our team who you may interact with during the upcoming session:

Lillian Butler-Hale joins our team as Outreach and Engagement Director. She replaces Joey Adler Ruane, who will continue to support OpenSky for some time from his new role with the lobbying firm Lindsay Harr MacDonald. Lillian was most recently in the office of Senator Jen Day and will be a great asset to the team during this session. Please make sure to say hello when you see her in the rotunda.

Noah Rhoades just joined us in a new role as Outreach and Engagement Manager. He will support our legislative work as well as community engagement and outreach efforts, including coalition building. We are excited to have him on board.

We are also launching a refreshed website at www.openskypolicy.org, and last, but not least, we have moved! Same building, bigger office. Please make note that our new address is 1325 H Street, Suite 200 Lincoln, NE 68508. We look forward to welcoming you to our new space soon, when we are a little more settled.

We are excited to work alongside all of you this session, and here to be a resource. Don't hesitate to reach out to me or anyone on the team if you need us.

*Onward,
Rebecca*

[Open Sky TEEOSA Guide](#)
[Open Sky Budget Process Guide](#)

NRCSA is pleased to be in a partnership with New Leaf Teletherapy. New Leaf provides mental health teletherapy services for both staff and students. I became very interested in this possibility especially in terms of staff services. I know our members are working hard to provide services for their students, but there does not appear to be that same capability when looking at staff services.

I look at this service as helping to bolster what your district is already doing, not to take the place of those efforts. I believe this can be a cost effective means of furthering your efforts.

NRCSA hosted three introductory Zoom meetings with Mark Goldman and Deb Romano of New Leaf to have them explain what the program would look like. Below you can access the slide show from those meetings, as well as a recording of one of the meetings.

[New Leaf PowerPoint Presentation](#)

[New Leaf Zoom Meeting](#) (recording)



[New Leaf Flyer](#)

If you would like to be in contact with Mark Goldman or Deb Romano, please feel free to call or email me and I can help make that happen.

One of the more outstanding student academic activities that I've had the pleasure of working with is Academic Decathlon. The nation-wide program provides a prescribed course of study each year. Teams are made up of students of different academic abilities. Students with an "A" average compete against other students with an "A" average, students with a "B" average compete against other students with a "B" average, and students with a "C" average compete against other students with a "C" average. Schools can choose how they prepare for competitions. Some teams meet after school or in the evenings, while some schools offer a class.

There is a regional competition in January, with the State Championships being held in February. Students compete for medals at both events. Scholarships are awarded to members of teams who are successful in the competitions. Three of my four children competed in Academic Decathlon and between them were awarded thousands of dollars in scholarships.

This past year, two NRCSA-member schools qualified for the State Championship: Amherst and Johnson County Central.

Each year there is a central theme for the Academic Decathlon curriculum. For the 2025-26 school year, the theme is "The Roaring 20's". Music, art, and literature will cover the Jazz Age.

If you would like get more information on the Nebraska Academic Decathlon, please contact NRCSA Executive Director Jack Moles of one of the Nebraska Academic Decathlon Co-Executive Directors:

Ardis Moody ardis.moody@gmail.com

Cris Hay-Merchant chaymerchant@bellevue.edu



JOHNSON COUNTY CENTRAL ACADEMIC DECATHLON TEAM



AMHERST ACADEMIC DECATHLON TEAM

The NRCSA Executive Committee has made a positive move to assist non-traditional educators move toward full teaching certification. As a result of this move, new scholarship opportunities were created for paras who are in a “para to teacher program” and for transitional educators. NRCSA will provide three \$1,000 scholarships for the fall semester and three \$1,000 scholarships for the spring semester for the 2024-25 school year. Applicants for the scholarships must be current employees of a NRCSA-member district or ESU. Applicants must be enrolled for that semester in one of two types of programs: (1) in a recognized “para to teacher” program such as is offered by the three State Colleges (Chadron State, Peru State, or Wayne State), or (2) a transition to teaching program in which a person with a minimum of a bachelor’s degree who is employed to teach in a member school while working through a transitional program, such as offered by the University of Nebraska-Kearney. The applicant could currently be teaching under a transitional certificate. Application materials for Spring scholarships were distributed to member Superintendents and ESU Administrators, who were then asked to share with potential candidates in their buildings. The NRCSA Scholarship and Recognitions Committee selected the three Spring semester scholarship winners.

Applications for the Spring semester were received and the three recipients have been selected. They will be notified over the next couple of weeks.

NRCSA has developed a “resource” document to assist members when they want insight on a particular topic. Often we are contacted and asked if we know of a school that has experience in a topic of interest. Many times we can point them in the right direction, but often we need to put out a request for information to the members. We have developed a list to begin from and already have some contact information on some of the topics. The plan is to feature this list in each of our monthly updates. Below is a link to a copy of the list. If you would be willing to be listed as a resource or if you would like to suggest other topics for inclusion, please contact Jack Moles.

[NRCSA School Programs](#)

We urge you to consider participation in the NRCSA Partner OneCard program as a tool for you in managing school expenditures, both large and small. Certainly, the card can help reduce/eliminate any issues relative to unverified cash expenditures. You decide who uses it, can get cards for each of those users, keep all cards wherever you wish, determine the amount to load on each individual card, and how long the time frame of use is. It is a terrific management tool and clearly identifies each expenditure/name/date/amount. Whether small purchases or very large purchases, the card is a terrific tool. NRCSA owns the state contract, so liability for misuse falls to NRCSA, not the district user. We have only had three circumstances of fraud and all three have been the theft of the card number information, not any district employee misuse. For 2024-25, over 100 districts/ESUs participated in the program. We currently have **109** entities using the program. In talking with some districts, there is a chance there could be upwards of 112 entities participating. Great job by all participating districts in protecting the card and program! Don’t forget, the NRCSA rebate from the transaction fee paid by businesses that choose to accept plastic is used for scholarship, awards, and special needs. For 2024-25, the rebate was over \$34,000 to NRCSA, showing that use is increasing, and large purchases are being included. WIN, WIN, WIN! If you are considering joining the program and need more information, please contact Jack Moles (jmoles@nrca.net) or Jeff Bundy (jbundy@nrca.net).

U.S. Bank provided two webinars for those considering using the program or for those who are currently using it, but want to find out more about the program. The slides from the webinar are available below.

[U.S. Bank Commercial Card Program](#)

Board of Education meeting visits. Beginning in December, 2019, I started attending Board of Education meetings in member school districts/ESUs. Since then, I have attended 140 such meetings. I most recently attended the Board meetings at Creighton on Monday, Nov. 10, Doniphan-Trumbull on Tuesday, Nov. 11, and

Syracuse on Monday, Nov. 17.

I am scheduled to attend the following Board of Education meetings in the near future:

Monday, December 8: Superior

Tuesday, December 9: Riverside

Monday, December 15: Blue Hill

I have really enjoyed this venture and am willing to attend Board meetings when I can. I take a few minutes to cover NRCSA news and offerings, as well as a legislative update. When I am going to be in a specific area on Board meeting days I may send out a notice to near-by Superintendents to make an offer to visit. I'd like to be able to schedule two or three in the same evening if I can.

If you would be interested in me attending a future Board meeting, please contact me to start the arrangements. I would also be willing to "attend" your Board meetings via Zoom if you preferred. I would still only do one at a time but would be able to do several in the same evening. Let me know and we will try to make the connection.



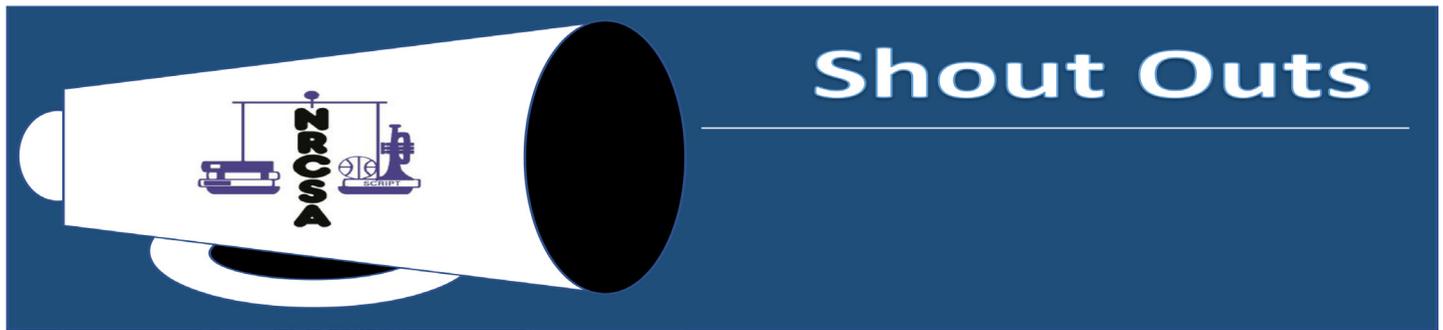
CREIGHTON BOARD OF EDUCATION AND ADMINISTRATION



DONIPHAN-TRUMBULL BOARD OF EDUCATION AND ADMINISTRATION



SYRACUSE-DUNBAR-AVOCA BOARD OF EDUCATION AND ADMINISTRATION

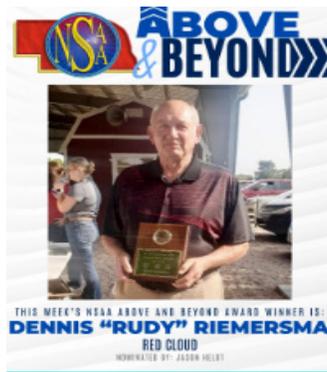


NRCSA wishes to share in the celebration of the special accomplishments and recognitions going on in our member schools and ESUs.

December 2025:

*** The NSAA’s Above and Beyond program is designed to recognize and celebrate the outstanding individuals who make a meaningful impact within their communities. Whether it’s a student, coach, community member, or parent, this award honors those who go the extra mile to support and uplift others. The NSAA recognizes an individual each week. Individuals from NRCSA member school districts who have been recognized to date are:**

- November 12: Five individuals from different communities acted quickly at the State Cross Country Meet when a spectator went into cardiac arrest. The NSAA cited Brady Principal Samantha Pavelka, Jodi Erikson of Blue Hill, Creighton Principal Ryon Nilson, Kari Nilson of Creighton, and Thedford Principal Adam Kuntz for having a hand in helping to revive the spectator and coordinate contact with first responders and notifying the spectator’s family.
- November 5: Dennis “Rudy” Riemersma of Red Cloud.
- October 29: Natasha Haupt of Leyton.



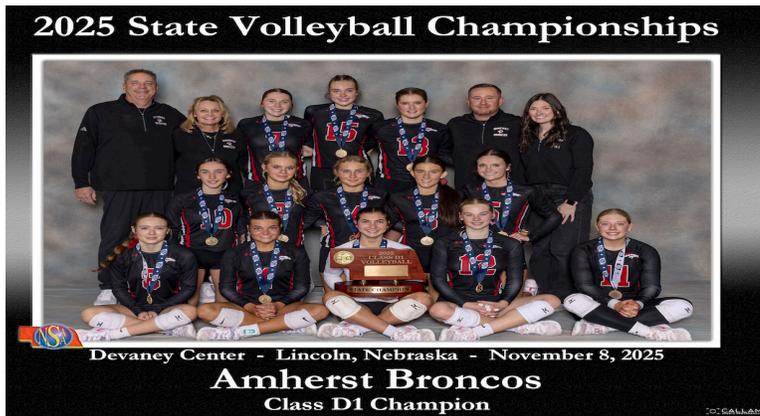
*** Milford won the Class C1 State Volleyball Championship. Holdrege was the Runner-up.**

*** Freeman was the Class C2 State Volleyball champion. Laurel-Concord-Coleridge was the Runner-up.**



FREEMAN FALCONS, CLASS C2 STATE VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONS!

* Amherst won the Class D1 State Volleyball Championship. Overton was the Runner-up.



* Wynot was the Class D2 State Volleyball champion. Cambridge was the Runner-up.



* Four students from NRCSA-member schools were selected to play in the Nebraska Coaches Association's Senior Softball Showcase. They are: Rylie Beethe (Johnson-Brock, but playing for Nebraska City), Payton Burbach (Central City), Libby Loman (Northwest), and Jolie O'Hara (Northwest)

* Several students from NRCSA-member schools received first team All-State recognition for softball in the Omaha World-Herald (OWH) and/or the Lincoln Journal-Star (LJS). They were:

- ALL CLASS: Graelyn Simmons, Northwest (OWH)
- CLASS B: Graelyn Simmons, Northwest (OWH), Abby Dinkelman, Northwest (OWH), Becca Dinkelman, Northwest (OWH), Bella Zach, DC West (OWH)
- CLASS C: Payton Burbach, Central City (OWH), Jordyn Campbell, Yutan/Mead (OWH), JLee Van Driel,

Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association

Twin River, OWN, Lauren Suntych, Centura, (OWH), Izabelle Greenough, Fort Calhoun (OWH), Juno Ryan, Central City (OWH), Emma Jacobs, Centura (OWH), Emma Brandes, Central City (OWH)

*** NEBpreps and Hurrdat Sports recently announced their outstanding players for each class in volleyball. Those from NRCSA-member schools who were honored include:**

CLASS D2:

- Player of the Year and Hitter of the Year: Taryn Arbuthnot, SEM
- Setter of the Year: Haley Wieseler, Wynot
- Libero of the Year: Jaylin Geisen, Wynot

CLASS D1:

- Player of the Year: Daisy Ryan, Overton
- Hitter of the Year: Kaydence Haase, EMF
- Setter of the Year: Aspen Billeter, Southwest
- Libero of the Year: Breckyn Veskerna, Amherst

CLASS C2:

- Player of the Year: Briar Ray, Oakland-Craig
- Hitter of the Year: Ashley Beethe, Johnson County Central
- Setter of the Year: Riley Wellensiek, Johnson County Central
- Libero of the Year: Keisllyn Poss, St. Paul

CLASS C1:

- Player of the Year and Hitter of the Year: Shayla Rautenberg, Milford
- COACH OF THE YEAR: Erin Heath, Holdrege

*** The Nebraska Coaches Association recently released Super State and Class All State Teams for Boys and Girls Cross Country, Boys Tennis, and Girls Golf. Students from NRCSA-member schools who were recognized included:**

- SUPER STATE GIRLS GOLF: Peyton Hartman (Adams Central), Mia Hiebner (Heartland), Daleni Knust (West Holt), KayLynn Jorgensen (Minden), Macy Jorgensen (Minden), Julia Messere (Aurora)
- SUPER STATE BOYS CROSS COUNTRY: Isac Portillo-Munoz (Lexington), Trevor Zurn (Alliance), Tyler Hetz, (Gothenburg), Elijah Goodell (Perkins County), Kaser Johnson (Doniphan-Trumbull)
- SUPER STATE GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY: Scout Bell (Gothenburg), Avery Arens (Crofton)
- CLASS B ALL STATE BOYS CROSS COUNTRY: Isac Portillo-Munoz (Lexington), Trevor Zurn (Alliance)
- CLASS C ALL STATE BOYS CROSS COUNTRY: Tyler Hetz, (Gothenburg), Avery Carter (Milford), Nolan Gartner (Syracuse), Trevin Huskey (Johnson County Central), Samuel McQuistan (Holdrege), Bryson Neels (Gothenburg)
- CLASS C ALL STATE GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY: Scout Bell (Gothenburg), Macie Carter (Milford), Addison Hauxwell (Chase County), Hailey Hengtgen (Palmyra), Tayla Hurner (Wayne), Emma Williams (North Bend Central)

Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association

- CLASS D ALL STATE BOYS CROSS COUNTRY: Elijah Goodell (Perkins County), Kaser Johnson (Doniphan-Trumbull), Hector Bonilla (Wood River), Samuel Holsing (Tri County)
- CLASS D ALL STATE GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY: Avery Arens (Crofton), Kayleigh Betka (McCool Junction), Rarity Cournoyer (Gordon-Rushville), Sage Holtmeier (Tri County), Reagan Moody (Ainsworth), Delani Runnels (Niobrara/Verdigre), Madison Shaw (Sandy Creek)

*** The Nebraska Coaches Association and HUDL recently announced their coaches of the year for some of the fall sports. Coaches from NRCSA–member districts who were recognized include:**

- SOFTBALL: Mitch Sadd, Northwest
- BOYS CROSS COUNTRY: Corey Hatt, Doniphan-Trumbull
- GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY: Troy Hauxwell, Chase County



*** Several NRCSA-member schools won the Sportsmanship Award for the State Volleyball Tournament. The award is annually presented by the Nebraska Coaches Association and Currency. Winning the award were:**

- CLASS D2: Dundy County-Stratton
- CLASS D1: Southwest
- CLASS C2: Johnson County Central
- CLASS C1: Malcolm



* Morgan Harms of Broken Bow was presented the 2025 NFHS Outstanding High School Music Educator Award.

* Southwest was the Class D6 State Football runner-up.

* Sandy Creek was the Class D1 State Football Champion. They are a repeat champion from last year. Crofton was the runner-up.



* Wynot won the Class D2 State Football Championship.



* Holdrege's Erin Heath is the 2025 NebPreps Volleyball Awards Coach of the Year.



* Several students from NRCSA-member schools were honored by Governor Jim Pillen and Nebraska Commissioner of Education Brian Maher at the annual Commissioner's Recognition for Excellence in Nebraska Career and Technical Education ceremony in the State Capitol. Students were recognized for being national level officers in their organizations or placing at the organization's national conference. They include:

- EDUCATORS RISING: Layryn Breitreutz (Centennial), Riley Hopkins (Bayard), Amy Albro (Bayard),

Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association

Shayla Jacobsen (Plainview)

- **FBLA:** James Fletcher (Litchfield), Maria Adle (Chase County), Tara Buzek and Austin Schmidt (Heartland), Braxton Soll, Lucas Chappelle, Wyatt Flesner, Trent Koger (Arlington), August Burns and Joe Burns (Arlington), Mia Deras (Fairbury), Sarah Lange (Raymond Central), Georgia Ramsey and Heidi Taylor (Wayne State College), Braxton Dalton (Wayne State College), Mekenna Fisher (Chadron State College), Lander Imbimbo (Peru State College)
- **FCCLA:** Jaiden Ertzner, Alaina Rogat, Presley Wolf (Battle Creek), MaHaylee Dotson-Monroe (Cross County), Clara Preister (Twin River), Lynn Miner (O'Neill), Brittin Fink and Madisyn White (Medicine Valley), Clare Holoubek and Chloe Indra (Clarkson), Layla Borowiak and Lausyn Matthes (Twin River), Zuri Booth and Brylee Ramaekers (Twin River), Jazy York (O'Neill), Addilyn Doke (Ainsworth), Quinn Ross (Elmwood Murdock), Jailyn Romesser (O'Neill), Aracely Negrete and Lillie Shoemaker (Ord), Mary Licking and Emerson Pettit (Thedford), Gracen Eckert (Boyd County), Charlotte Welsh (O'Neill), Brooklyn Eckert (Boyd County), Cheney Dishman, Angel Johnson, Kaygan Witthuhn (Callaway), Kiarra Kennedy (O'Neill), Klayton Rinne (Dundy County-Stratton)
- **FFA:** Claire Woeppel (Chambers, now at UNL), Reece Steiner (Elm Creek), Katelyn Melvin (Johnson-Brock), Ashley Beethe and Catherine Wendt (Johnson County Central), Craig Anthony (Johnson-Brock), Elizabeth Olson and Ansley Cadwallader (West Holt), Molly Weber and Saige Rother (Johnson County Central), Erika Donahue, Kiarra Eppenbach, Marissa Tvrdy, Carlee Wolfe (Raymond Central), Carson Reiman (Gothenburg), Mason Dutro, Toby Orvis, Parker Walahoski, Paige Walahoski (Overton), Bela Jedlicka, Abigail Reyna, Addison Vavricek, Allison Vavricek (Schuyler), Cora Hoffschneider (Centennial), Sam Wells (St. Paul)
- **HOSA:** Emma Baldeh (Dundy County-Stratton)
- **SKILLS USA:** Roger Meraz (Wayne State College), Levi Vaughan (Central City), Jackson Nordhues, Joe Grone, Brett Staab (Wayne State College), Delainey Mumm (Thayer Central), Hailey Hoffman, John Mann (Wayne State College)



O'NEILL FCCLA



*ASHLEY BEETHE, CATHERINE WENDT, MOLLY WEBER,
SAIGE ROTHER OF JOHNSON COUNTY CENTRAL*



LEVI VAUGHN, CENTRAL CITY

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Shelton Public Schools



Mascot: Bulldogs

Enrollment: 280 students

Location(s): Shelton, NE

Superintendent: Rodney Engel



Principal(s): Jeff Kenton, Elementary & Amy Hostetler, High School

Board of Education: *Shelton Public Schools Board Members (Left to right):* Back row - **Levi Rogers, Chuck Wiese, Dana Tompkin** Front row- President **Kay Johnson**, Secretary **Emmy Power**, Vice President **Lisa Stewart**



Programs:

FFA:

The Shelton FFA Chapter is an important part of the academic strength of Shelton Public Schools. Chartered in 2016, the chapter has had its share of accomplishments in the past ten years. The FFA Chapter proudly boasts 40-50 members each year in grades 7-12, with membership hitting its highest number yet in 2025 with 56 members. 46% of eligible students in the high school are FFA members, and 56% of the 7-12 student body is enrolled in an agriculture education class!

Many are surprised to learn that Shelton hasn't always had an agriculture program, being that it is a rural community. Shelton had an ag program and an FFA chapter in the 60s, but it was discontinued and replaced with industrial technology. When the industrial technology teacher departed in 2016, the administration and school board saw it as the perfect opportunity to revive the program. The program has grown, not only in the number of students, but also in the variety of courses offered and other opportunities. In 2019, with the help of the Shelton FFA Booster Group and other local donors, the school was able to build a large outdoor greenhouse, which is utilized by the agriculture program and FFA chapter for hands-on learning opportunities all year long! The agriculture program offers courses in animal science, veterinary science, agronomy, floriculture, landscaping, agribusiness, ag sales, and welding!

Students in the FFA chapter have been able to learn about the agriculture industry through these courses, FFA competitions, and their Supervised Agriculture Experiences (SAE), which take place outside of the classroom. Students in Shelton have a diverse range of SAE projects, from working for local producers to managing their own livestock, crops, or produce. The community and school are proud of the many accomplishments the chapter has garnered in the past ten years, including a State Champion Livestock Management CDE Team in 2022 and producing an FFA State Officer in 2022! The chapter has been honored at the Nebraska FFA Convention for awards in Livestock Evaluation, Meat Evaluation, Livestock Management, Veterinary Science, Dairy Cattle Evaluation, Proficiency Award Finalists, State Star Farmer Finalists, and over 20 State Degree Recipients. In the past four years, the chapter has had six American FFA Degree Recipients, and is looking to increase that number in the future!

In 2023, Miss Horak was awarded the Nebraska Farm Bureau Agriculture Educator of the Year! She was the advisor who first chartered the program in 2016 and continues to be at the forefront of its success.

Volleyball:

The Shelton Volleyball team has built an impressive legacy over the past four seasons, earning four consecutive trips to the Nebraska State Tournament and showcasing the program's growth, resilience, and competitive excellence. Their run began with a standout 3rd place finish in 2022, followed by another strong performance as State Qualifiers in 2023. The team reached a historic milestone in 2024, capturing the D-2 State Championship and bringing home the program's first state title. In 2025, the Bulldogs moved up a class and still delivered a remarkable season, finishing 4th at State.

FFA:



Volleyball:



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Elba Public Schools



Mascot: Bluejays

Enrollment: 108 students

Location(s): Elba, NE

Interesting Fact Something that immediately sets Elba Public Schools apart is our mascot: the Purple Bluejay. Over the years, I've noticed that people around the state are often puzzled by why our Bluejays are purple. Curious, I asked around and heard several interesting theories and stories from longtime community members and alumni—but no one seemed to know the real answer, just rumors passed down over time. While I may not know the full history, here is my take on why we are the Purple Bluejays.

Elba Public Schools' mascot, the Purple Bluejay, is more than just a symbol—it represents the spirit and pride of our school community. Bluejays are known for their intelligence, energy, and strong sense of community, qualities we want our students to embody every day. The purple color makes our Bluejay unique and bold, standing out just like our students do in academics, athletics, and the arts. Whether on the court, the stage, or in the classroom, the Purple Bluejay reminds everyone at Elba to work hard, support each other, and take pride in being part of something bigger.

Superintendent: Bobby Kelley

Principal: Tim Potter

Board of Education: Left to Right: Robyn Rasmussen (Secretary), Travis Frederick, Ryan Rasmussen, Terry Spilinek (President), Jim Thompson (Vice President), Brittany Christensen (Treasurer)



Programs:

Elba Public Schools House Program

The House Program at Elba Public Schools is built around the idea that students thrive when they feel connected, supported, and part of a team. Every student and staff member belongs to one of our character-based houses, and those houses stay with them throughout their time at Elba. Each house focuses on a core trait we want our students to grow in, and the goal is to create smaller “families” across the building where older students mentor younger ones, everyone has a sense of belonging, and positive behavior is consistently reinforced.

For example, Respect House focuses on what it means to treat others well, listen, communicate, and show appreciation for our school and community. Students in this house often lead by example—modeling how to handle disagreements, how to work with others, and how to take pride in their actions. Other houses follow the same idea, each highlighting a different character strength such as Responsibility, Integrity, Leadership, Service, or Perseverance (adjust these to match your actual house names if needed). Students earn points for their houses through positive behavior, participation, academics, and showing those character traits in action.

Throughout the year, we hold House competitions, group activities, and service projects. These events give students a chance to work as a team while building relationships across grade levels. Over time, the houses have created a stronger school culture—students look out for each other, celebrate each other’s wins, and take real pride in the house they represent. It’s been a powerful way to grow character and community at the same time.

Elba Athletics and Fine Arts Programs

At Elba Public Schools, our athletic and fine arts programs are thriving and giving students countless ways to grow. Our athletes compete in basketball, volleyball, track, and more, learning teamwork, leadership, and perseverance every step of the way. Meanwhile, our fine arts programs—like one-act, band, and choir—allow students to explore their creativity, build confidence, and shine in front of the community. Together, these programs help students discover their talents, work hard, and take pride in their accomplishments.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Tri-County Public Schools



Mascot: Trojans

Enrollment: 435 students

Location(s): DeWitt, NE

Interesting Fact: Tri County Public Schools cover approximately 270 square miles.



Superintendent: **Brian Rottinghaus**

Principal(s): **Ryan Clark**, Secondary Principal; **Jesse Gronemeyer**, Elementary Principal; **Caleb Armstrong**, AD & Assistant Principal

Board of Education:

Brian Quackenbush, Brian Scherling, Annette Weise, Derrick Damrow, Dustin Gronemeyer & Tom Koch



Programs:

Tri County has become a major partner in the Southeast Community College Career Academy Partnership (SENCAP) welding program. Through our partnership with this program, students are able to graduate high school with certification and welding. Over the past eight years, an average of 19 students each year have participated in the program. Over that time frame, a total of 53 have received dual-credit certificates in welding through SENCAP.



Tri County has been a leader in its music program. Over the past two decades, Tri County has received the Best Community for Music designation by The National Association of Music Merchants 13 times. That is more than any other school in Nebraska and among the top 167 school districts nationwide. These designations are given to districts demonstrating an exceptionally-high commitment to music education acquisition.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Ponca Public Schools



Mascot: Indians

Enrollment: 447 students

Locations: 3-12 Campus in Ponca, PK-2 Campus in Jackson

Interesting Fact: Ponca High School has won an incredible seven NCA Sportsmanship Award trophies from various state tournaments in recent years. This reflects not only how our athletes compete and our school community supports them, but also how our kids demonstrate leadership, respect, resilience, and class on the biggest stages.

Superintendent: Brendan Calahan



Principal(s): Allison Stansberry (7-12), John Stroud (PK-6)

Board of Education: Front Row (L-R): **Casey McGhee** (Vice President), **Phil Kramper**, **Christina Luebe**. Back Row (L-R): **Richard Dohma** (President), **Jerod Davis**, **Julie Schamp**



Buddy Program: Our 7th Grade Buddy Program pairs incoming junior high students with dedicated upperclassmen who help guide their transition into Ponca High School. These student mentors serve as positive role models, offering support, encouragement, and practical guidance as 7th graders navigate new routines, expectations, and opportunities. Through regular check-ins, group activities, and a focus on building strong relationships, the program helps younger students feel welcomed, confident, and connected from day one. This mentorship model not only eases the transition to high school but also strengthens our school community by empowering older students to lead with empathy and purpose.



Student Leadership Team: The Student Leadership Team is a flagship opportunity for Ponca High School students to step into meaningful leadership and make a real impact on school culture and the broader community. Through this program, students collaborate to strengthen school pride, promote positive relationships, and lead initiatives that bring people together. Members take on projects that support a welcoming, inclusive environment and serve as ambassadors of our district's values both inside the school and out in the community. By applying their voices, creativity, and service-minded approach, Student Leadership Team members help shape the experiences of their peers and leave a lasting mark on not just our school, but the community as a whole.



2026 NRCSA Legislative Forum

The 2026 NRCSA Legislative Forum will be held on Thursday, February 26, 2026, at the Cornhusker Marriott Hotel in Lincoln.

This year's program will feature remarks by many educational policy leaders.

There will again be the opportunity to discuss issues of local interest with senators over lunch. This provides an invaluable opportunity to network and discuss issues with your senator.

Be sure and make plans to attend!!

Room Reservations

There are rooms available at the Cornhusker Hotel at a discounted rate of \$119.00 per night for Wednesday February 25, 2026. The Cornhusker is a Marriott Hotel; they have instructed customers to use the central reservation line or the link below to reserve a room.

*Cornhusker Marriott Hotel: 1-866-706-7706

The deadline to reserve from NRCSA's room block is **February 5, 2026**

Program Highlights

Thursday February 26, 2026

8:20 A.M. - Welcome & Announcements

8:30 A.M. - Committee Chair or Rural Senator

9:00 A.M. - Committee Chair or Rural Senator

9:30 A.M. - Committee Chair or Rural Senator

10:00 A.M. - Committee Chair or Rural Senator

10:30 A.M. - Committee Chair or Rural Senator

11:00 A.M. - Committee Chair or Rural Senator

11:30 A.M. - Committee Chair or Rural Senator

12:00 P.M. - Lunch with Senators

1:10 P.M.- Jack Moles & Russ Westerhold;
NRCSA Executive Director & Lobbyist

1:45 P.M.- Closing & Adjourn

Please note: The schedule is subject to change.

2026 NRCSA Spring Conference

The 2026 NRCSA Spring Conference will be held on March 18 to 20, 2026, at the Crowne Plaza and Younes North Convention Center in Kearney.

There will be many informative and timely sessions regarding law, TEEOSA, school finance, curriculum development, updates from the Department of Ed, staff and board development, updates regarding current federal and state legislation and others. Sessions highlighting special programs and initiatives are always a plus. A total of 35 sessions will be provided at the conference. As always, the general sessions will feature music groups, speakers on Thursday and Friday, scholarships, awards, recognitions, and the traditional meals that have become a mainstay of the conference.

As usual, there will be many opportunities for networking and informal discussions with attendees from other schools!

Be sure and make plans to attend!!

Room Reservations

There are several hotels in and around the area. Attendees will need to make room arrangements for the conference.

These hotels participate in group rates for Spring Conference

Crowne Plaza (308) 238-7000
Hampton Inn (308) 234-3400

These hotels do NOT participate in group rates

Holiday Inn (308) 237-5971
Comfort Inn & Suites (308) 236-3400
La Quinta Inn & Suites (308) 237-4400
America Inn & Suites (308) 234-7800
Fairfield Inn (308) 236-4200
Holiday Inn Express (308) 234-8100
Microtel Inn & Suites (308) 698-3003
New Victorian Inn & Suites (308) 237-5858
Wingate Inn (308) 237-4400

Program Highlights

Wednesday March 18, 2026

10:00 AM Pre-Conference: The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People

Presented by:



6:30 PM Exhibitor Check-In and Set-Up

7:00 PM Early Registration and Hospitality Rooms Open

Thursday March 19, 2026

7:15 AM Registration & Exhibit Hall Open

8:00 AM General Session

11:00 AM – 11:50 AM Select-a-Session I

12:00 PM General Session

2:20 PM - 3:10 PM Select-a-Session II

3:35 PM - 4:25 PM Select-a-Session III

6:00 PM Country Buffet

7:00 PM Hospitality Rooms Open

Friday March 20, 2026

7:30 AM Registration Open

8:00 AM - 8:50 AM Select-a-Session IV

9:00 AM – 9:50 AM Select-a-Session V

10:00 AM Brunch

10:50 AM Closing Session

12:50 PM Gifts, Prizes, & Giveaways

Updates from Members & Other Entities

From NRCSA Executive Director Jack Moles: *NRCSA is backing the work of the Nebraska State College System and the Nebraska SMART program. This is a unique approach to providing free tutoring services to your students. Information on the program is provided below. This program is beneficial on many levels. Among them are:*

- *The program is FREE for kids and families.*
- *The program provides valuable experience for prospective teachers.*
- *The program provides a paying job for prospective teachers.*
- *The program provides another great connection between Chadron State, Peru State, and Wayne State with NRCSA member school districts. All three of the State Colleges are NRCSA members.*
- *The program provides an opportunity to connect prospective teachers with rural schools. Some of the tutors did not attend rural high schools and this provides an opportunity for them to connect with rural.*
- *The program provides an opportunity to connect YOUR school with prospective teachers. You may be in the market to hire one of these tutors in the future and this connection could help!*



Nebraska SMART Update

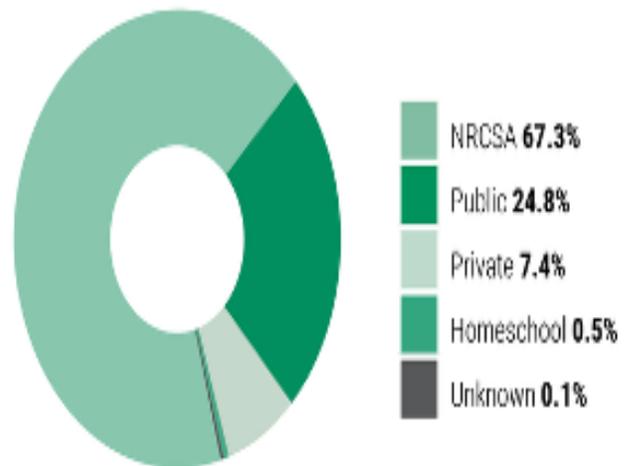
Free One-on-One Tutoring Now Available for All Nebraska Students

Nebraska SMART is helping students across the state reach their full academic potential through free, online tutoring available to all K–12 students. The program connects students with trained college tutors who provide personalized, one-on-one support in core subjects.

To date, Nebraska SMART tutors have completed more than **2,171** tutoring sessions, serving **868** students statewide. The program’s success is possible thanks to strong partnerships with schools and organizations across Nebraska like NRCSA. These partnerships ensure that students, no matter where they live, have access to high-quality academic support.

868 STUDENTS SERVED

Since February 2024, 868 students have registered for free online tutoring with Nebraska SMART. The chart shows the distribution of students registered based on school type.

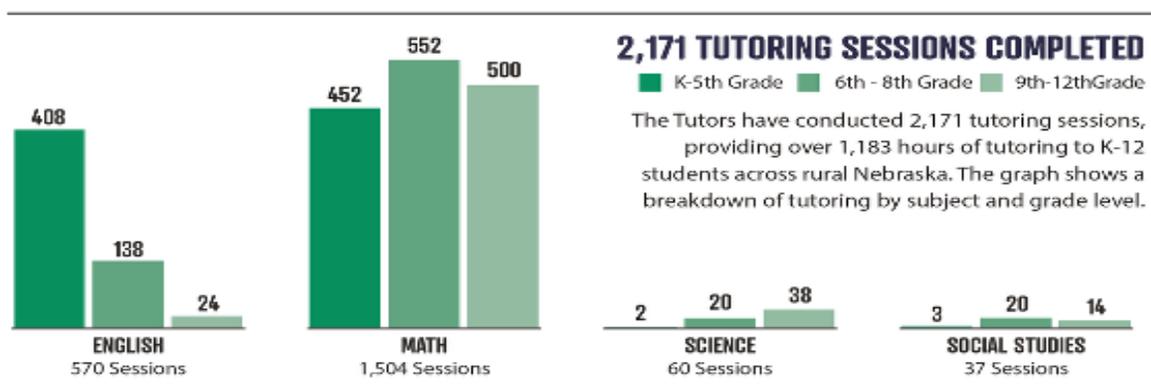


How to Access Tutoring

To access tutoring, parents need to register their student(s) through our website. After registering, parents and students can log in to schedule tutoring appointments or request on-demand tutoring with a Tutor. Students are encouraged to provide the homework or assignment for which they need help. Assignments can be uploaded to the secure classroom, sent to the Tutor in advance via message, or a picture can be taken of the assignment when connected to the Tutor in the classroom.

For NRCSA schools, Nebraska SMART offers a meaningful way to extend learning beyond the classroom without adding extra cost or staff burden. Teachers and school leaders are encouraged to share this opportunity with students and families and to remind them that free, one-on-one tutoring is just a click away. Please help promote this free service to your students and families by sharing our [flyer](#) (also available in [Spanish](#)).

Together, the Nebraska State Colleges, the Nebraska Department of Education, and NRCSA schools are making a statewide impact, helping every student build confidence, master challenging subjects, and stay on the path to success.



Together, the Nebraska State Colleges, the Nebraska Department of Education, and NRCSA schools are making a statewide impact, helping every student build confidence, master challenging subjects, and stay on the path to success.

To learn more or help your students get started, visit www.nscs.edu/nebraskasmart or contact Judi Yorges at [jyorges@nscs.edu](mailto: jyorges@nscs.edu).

As we hear concern from rural districts concerning moves in the national front regarding the Department of Education, the National Rural Education Association (NREA) and the National Education Association (NEA) have combined to share a website outlining the amount of federal funding that goes to public schools. The website can be accessed here:

[How Much Funding Does My Public School Get from the Federal Government](#)

Dr. Steven Johnson, a member of the NREA Executive Committee, provided a document entitled, “Strengthening Rural Communities Through Public Education”. Many of you had an opportunity to meet Steve at the NRCSA Spring Conference. His article may be accessed here:

[Strengthening Rural Communities Through Public Education](#)

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, along with the Food Research and Action Center, has drawn attention to the possibility that the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) might be substantially altered. This change

could have a negative impact on several school districts in Nebraska. The following website provides a great overview of the concern and allows the viewer to go specifically to Nebraska to see how the change could affect districts.

[State by State Fact Sheet](#)

The ESUCC and ESU 3 have shared a document which outlines all of the trainings and mandates that are required of districts. The document, “School District Plans, Policies, and Annual Trainings Requirements”, is a handy reminder for districts. Thanks to ESUCC Executive Director Kraig Lofquist and ESU 3 Administrator Dan Schnoes for developing and distributing this handy tool. The document may be accessed here:

[School District Plans, Policies, & Annual Trainings](#)

Jeremy Braden, Superintendent at Doniphan-Trumbull, has developed a useful agenda for onboarding new Board of Education members. Many of our districts will bring on new Board members in January. Jeremy’s instrument could be a nice template for Superintendents and Board Presidents to use in working with new Board members. It may be accessed here:

[Board Member Onboarding](#)

From Rebecca Vogt, UNL

Today we are releasing the first of the reports from the 2024 Rural Poll, focusing on the well-being of rural Nebraskans. The report can be accessed online. The press release for this report can be found here.

[Well Being of Rural Nebraskans](#)

From Jay Martin, NDE Director of School Safety & Security

Hello All,

Time for the home stretch to the end of another school year! I hope it all goes well with all the events planned this spring.

Below you will find the School Safety Newsletter and information. The main question to look for is a Threat Assessment Survey. We are gaging schools’ interest in future Threat Assessment trainings. The last page has a breakdown of the three Threat Assessment trainings offered by UNLPPC. Please take a moment to complete this survey by April 15, 2025.

Remember to apply for your Diamond status Safety Badge to display at your school letting your school community know you “Place School Safety First!”

Thanks for all you do in school safety.

[School Safety Newsletter Spring 2025](#)

UNL Extension Center: Embracing Innovation: Exploring the Dynamics of New Partnerships

Developing business & Industry, organizational, and postsecondary partnerships with school districts can play a pivotal role in enriching the educational experience, supporting student achievement, and strengthening

connections between schools and their communities. By leveraging external resources, expertise, and support, schools can create a more inclusive, engaging, and supportive learning environment for all students. While partnerships within school districts can bring numerous benefits, there are also challenges that may be encountered. These can be overcome by fostering a culture of collaboration, prioritizing communication and relationship-building, seeking creative funding solutions, and promoting equity and inclusivity in partnership efforts. Additionally, leveraging support from district leadership, community stakeholders, and external resources can help schools overcome obstacles and maximize the benefits of collaborative partnerships.

We in the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR), specifically the College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources (CASNR) and Nebraska Extension 4-H, believe this strategy for K-12 partnerships will result in a strong learning innovation network of support for every learner and every educator in the state of Nebraska. The world of higher education is evolving, driven by changes in technology, demographics, workforce demands, and societal expectations. To meet the needs of today's learners in the 21st century and prepare them for the challenges of tomorrow, we are embracing innovation, collaboration, and a student-centered approach.

In recent years, CASNR has created two new positions to help in this work. Dr. Tammy Mittelstet (tmittelstet@unl.edu) is serving as the CASNR Statewide Education and Career Pathways Coordinator and Bailey Feit (bailey.feit@unl.edu) serves as the LPS/CASNR Early College and Career Pathways Coordinator. They engage in co-creating education and career pathways for students and supporting teachers by:

- creating opportunities and minimizing barriers for all learners in the exploration of education and career pathways,
- investing in and supporting teachers to innovate and integrate cross-curricular concepts of Food, Energy, Water, and Societal Systems (FEWSS) throughout K-12 education,
- encouraging our higher education institutions to share content expertise to build curriculum that will inform best practices in the areas of FEWSS and mentor future systems thinkers for the continuum of learners through our higher education institutions,
- connecting and developing a team of community leaders to build partnerships that combine resources to support student and teacher innovation, and
- building a workforce of tomorrow with the support of the industry of today by developing work-based learning opportunities.

If you would like to get monthly updates, consider signing up for the L.I.N.K.S. newsletter at <https://casnr.unl.edu/k-12-partners>.

Nebraska Extension brings University of Nebraska expertise and research in 8 key areas of impact directly to Nebraskans from all walks of life in each of the state's 93 counties. Nebraskans turn to Nebraska Extension to strengthen their families, inspire their communities, empower young people, conserve and protect natural resources and advance their farms, ranches and businesses. Nebraska 4-H represents one of the eight key areas, and has been a leader in the career and college readiness field by being one of the first in the country to support a statewide educator position and team to provide leadership in program development and delivery.

The National Rural Education Association (NREA) is proud to release Why Rural Matters 2025—the 11th edition in a long-standing series of reports that examine the contexts and conditions of rural education across all 50 states. This report continues the critical mission of drawing attention to the urgent need for policymakers, educators, and communities to address rural education challenges and opportunities within their own states.

Since its inception, the Why Rural Matters series has sought to make publicly available data more accessible and actionable. The overarching goal remains clear: to promote informed, civil dialogue about our shared civic responsibility to ensure that every student—rural or urban—has access to high-quality educational opportunities.

New in this year's edition is the inclusion of Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) schools. In his topical essay, Alex

Red Corn provides critical insights into the significance of BIE schools, which educate students from multiple tribes and nations with unique histories and cultures. The report carefully distinguishes between “states” proper and BIE schools while underscoring their shared place in the broader rural education landscape. The analyses and data presented in *Why Rural Matters 2025* are intended to inform policy discussions, guide decision-making, and inspire action. The report highlights states that have demonstrated measurable progress over time, highlighting examples where thoughtful policy interventions have led to improved outcomes for rural students. These stories of progress offer valuable lessons and serve as evidence that strategic, context-sensitive policies can make a tangible difference in the lives of rural learners.

Data used in *Why Rural Matters 2025* come from public sources: the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the United States Department of Education, the U.S. Health Resources & Services Administration, and the U.S. Census Bureau.

The National Rural Education Association is proud to launch the 2025 *Why Rural Matters* report, a project with a more than 20-year history of shaping the conversation about rural education. First conceptualized by the Rural Schools and Community Trust, the report has evolved into a vital resource for policymakers, educators, and communities. Today, NREA carries this important work forward, ensuring that the voices, needs, and strengths of rural schools and students remain at the forefront of education policy and practice nationwide. We are also grateful to the Rural Schools Collaborative, whose continued support strengthens NREA’s work on behalf of rural schools, educators, and students across the country.

I would encourage you to take a look at WHY RURAL MATTERS, which can be accessed here:

[Why Rural Matters 2025](#)

The National Rural Education Association (NREA) partnered with AASA in producing a report on REAP. REAP is a program that benefits many of our smaller districts. The report can be accessed here:

<https://www.aasa.org/docs/default-source/resources/reports/rural-education-achievement-program-survey-report.pdf>

[Understanding REAP](#)



The NCA & Proactive Coaching partner to bring Coach Bruce Brown's legendary insights about the parent's role in education-based athletics to your school & community.

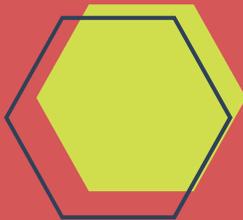
Book your School's Presentation

Parent Meetings or Special Events

THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN EDUCATION-BASED ATHLETICS

PRESENTED BY DARIN BOYSEN, NCA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

"Outstanding information, well delivered. There were times I thought he was talking directly to me, which is a sign of a great communicator. I personally feel I'm better today than yesterday as a sports parent because I was able to listen to this message." – Parent & School Board Member



Before the Season

What do Athletes/Kids Really Want?

Releasing Your Son/Daughter to the Experience

Parental Red Flags

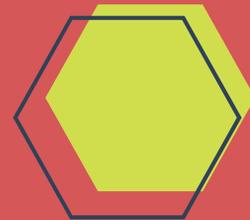


During the Game/Event

Modeling Appropriate Behavior

Big Picture

One Instructional Voice



After the Game/Event

Time & Space

Confidence Building

Relationship Building

Six Powerful Words

NEBRASKA COACHES ASSOCIATION

500 Charleston St, Ste 2, Lincoln, Nebraska 68508

402-310-5472 | darin@ncacoach.org

Official Association Endorsements as of September 1





Nebraska School Administrators & School Board Members,

The Nebraska Coaches Association (NCA) is excited to announce a partnership with Proactive Coaching to bring Coach Bruce Brown's legendary insights about **"The Role of Parents in Education-Based Athletics"** to your school and community. Please see the attached flyer for highlights/focus of the in-person presentation.

NCA Executive Director, Darin Boysen, will begin travel across Nebraska multiple times throughout the 2024-2025 school year to deliver this powerful and passionate message. The NCA, Proactive Coaching and Darin are partnering to bring this message to your school at a **50% discounted rate from the standard Proactive Coaching in-person booking fee.**

Presentation Details:

45-Minute Parent Presentation with One School or Combined Schools

- Single school presentations are recommended but not required
- One presentation = one fee (no additional fee for schools merging)

Audio/Visual Requirements from the Host School:

- Overhead Projector with HDMI Connection
- Screen or Scoreboard Display
- Microphone

Cost – Payable the Day of Presentation:

- Within 75 miles of Lincoln/150 miles Round Trip
 - \$750 flat rate
- Beyond 75 miles of Lincoln/150 miles Round Trip
 - \$750 flat rate
 - 50 Cents per mile Round-Trip -OR- Cost of a Rental Vehicle/Gas
 - In some cases, a rental car may be cheaper for longer distances
 - Hotel Expense – if needed
- **Please Note:** Working together with other area schools to book separately on consecutive days of the week can greatly save travel and lodging expenses

The following booklets authored by Bruce Brown will be available for purchase for \$5 each (15% discount) after the presentation or ordered by the school in advance:

- *The Role of Parents in Athletics*
- *Playing with Confidence*
- *Life Lessons for Athletes*

Please let us know if you have any questions regarding the presentation or booking a date.
All the best,

Darin Boysen

Darin Boysen
Nebraska Coaches Association

Official Association Endorsements – as of September 1



The National Rural Education Association, of which NRCSA is a member, works closely with the the Committee for Education Funding (CEF) on federal policy issues. Following is an update on education issues on the federal level from CEF:

I. Policy Intelligence and Education News

Department of Education's website is periodically offline – The Department of Education's (ED's) website (www.ed.gov) has been repeatedly offline today, with some of the career and technical education and adult education sites down since last night. I asked the education authorizing committee and Appropriations Committee staffers if this is related to the government shutdown and having no staff there to fix a technical problem or is this a statement of the Administration's intention to close ED; apparently it is an inadvertent technical issue. I wouldn't normally assume nefarious intentions, but this year has demonstrated that the Administration is working to dismantle ED from within. The website glitches serve to as a reminder that if there is information on the ED website that you regularly use, you should download it and save it elsewhere.

Judge extends order halting layoffs of federal employees during the shutdown – Yesterday a federal judge extended her original order that temporarily stopped the Administration from firing federal employees during the shutdown, which had included about 465 employees at ED. The Administration is now prohibited from making a reduction in force (RIF) during the government shutdown. So those employees given RIF notices in early October now likely have their jobs for the time being but most are furloughed and not being paid. See [CNBC article](#) for details.

Government shutdown continues – The government has been mostly shut down for more than four weeks now, with apparently no high-level talks about how to resolve the conflicts; the House has been in recess since mid-September. Proposals to pay specific groups of federal employees – those still working, or those at specific agencies – and to continue funding specific programs – such as SNAP benefits – have not passed the Senate. The impacts of the shutdown will be felt more widely this week as federal employees except for troops get no October paycheck, the Administration is not using a contingency fund to pay SNAP benefits on November 1 so 42 million beneficiaries will be without income for food, some federally supported programs that had been kept open this month with leftover funds will shut down, and Obamacare health care premiums for 2026 get posted that do not include a subsidy that

is expiring. These actions result from choices that Congress and the Administration are making. When there is a will to spend federal funds – for instance, for billions of dollars of tax breaks in Republicans' bill this summer, for an emergency response or financial bailout – or to cut funds – for instance, for student loans, for research, for SNAP benefits or Medicaid - Congress can pass legislation that spends more or cuts funding, or that provides a tax break or tax increase.

Fact sheets from House Appropriations Committee Republicans and Democrats – Yesterday both House Appropriations Committee Democrats and Republicans posted material that bolster their opposing positions:

Republican press release listing 300+ groups supporting the House-passed funding bill to reopen the government – The [press release](#) lists hundreds of organizations that support the House-passed bill, including many representing agricultural and business interests, the airline industry, chambers of commerce, veterans groups, and conservative interest organizations.

Democratic [fact sheet](#) about how Administration actions “make their shutdown more painful” – The Democratic fact sheet lists three ways that the Administration's actions are making the shutdown more painful for Americans: the mass layoffs announced in early October (now paused due to the District Court judge mentioned above, but I'd expect the Administration to appeal); executive orders to cancel funding to specific cities or state led by Democrats; and delaying or withholding funding for programs that have a source of funding available, like SNAP and some emergency assistance programs.

Three years ago, NRCSA began a Principal Search Service. This service is patterned after our successful Superintendent Search Service. Two options are available. Both options will involve NRCSA consultants recruiting candidates for the position. One option will involve the NRCSA consultant making background calls, while the reduced version of the service will place that role with the Superintendent. If you are interested in getting more information about the service now, please contact Jack. Here is a brochure outlining the service.

[NRCSA Principal Search Brochure](#)

Chadron State College Special Education Para-to-Teacher Program Initiative.

Purpose: This “Grow Your Own” Special Education Teacher program is designed to provide school districts with the opportunity to cultivate and participate in the training of their para-professionals who wish to continue their education to become special education teachers.

Who: Any individual who holds a minimum of an Associate’s Degree (or equivalent credit hours) from an accredited higher education institution, and who is employed as a para-professional within a school district. **What:** Chadron State will provide required course work and enrichment activities via online, face-to-face (via Zoom), and on the job experiential learning, leading to a Bachelor’s in Education Degree, and a Nebraska Teaching Certificate with an endorsement in Special Education (grades PK-12). With administrator input, program course work will be tailored to best fit your district practices and expectations. Each course will be offered in an 8-week format, with 12-13 credit hours to be completed each 16 week semester.

How: Program participants will be advised, monitored, and supported by CSC faculty/staff, and a CSC Education Program liaison is specifically assigned to facilitate their progress. District para-professionals may enter the program at any time in the academic year.

When: once participants reach their senior academic year they will embark on completing their capstone course work, via online and Zoom class sessions. This course work has been pared down considerably with the understanding and assumption that these student teachers will be learning “on-the-job”. For example, one section covers classroom management practices. Clearly, one can argue and attest that these student teacher interns are learning more about managing a classroom from being mentored by veteran teachers within your school, and observing them in action. This is the belief and learning approach embraced during this senior year. However, to ensure and assess concept learning, Chadron State faculty will be meeting with your student teacher cohort twice per week for 1.5 hours, via Zoom conferencing technology.

Graduation: At the completion of this program students/candidates graduate from Chadron State College, and apply for teaching licensure resulting in a valid initial teaching certificate with and endorsement in PK-12 Special Education. Chadron State’s education program is nationally and State accredited. As such, interstate certification reciprocity is not a problem.

Things for your consideration:

- 1) To qualify for this program participants must hold at least an Associate’s Degree or the equivalent in college credit hours. *(CSC will work with those applicants to provide them with the needed coursework leading up to program entry).*
- 2) Districts must agree to maintain para-professional employment throughout the course of the program—including during the student teaching experience.

Please contact Dr. Adam Fette for more program information, at afette@csc.edu.

The UNL Department of Educational Psychology has received a grant from the Swanson Foundation which allows them to offer mental health services to rural schools.

From Dr. Michael Scheel, Chair of the UNL Department of Educational Psychology:

The UNL Department of Educational Psychology would like to offer counseling and psychological services, as well as consultation services to the schools and communities of Southeast Nebraska. We run a mental health counseling and therapy clinic and we are offering counseling and consultation services to teachers, administrators, students, and community members of Southeast Nebraska. Services will be provided through remote and confidential means (i.e., Zoom conferencing). We are hoping that schools, families, and individuals contact us to schedule an appointment for a telehealth counseling or consultation session.

We have recently learned that a donor will support our work with individuals living in rural Southeast NE by paying all fees for services. Thus, whoever seeks out our services will simply have to indicate they live in Southeast Nebraska, and any services we provide will be paid for through the UNL Foundation. Individual, couple, and family counseling will be provided without financial expense. Additionally, we can provide teachers, school administrators, school counselors, and school social workers consultation services for students of their schools without charge.

We are very excited to enter a partnership with schools and communities of SE Nebraska to promote mental health and well-being. We are aware of the mental health counseling disparities that exist in Nebraska

rural areas, and our department, our College of Education and Human Sciences, and UNL are highly interested in offering our expertise and resources with the goal of enhancing the well-being of SE Nebraska individuals, schools, and communities. We are a group comprised of licensed psychologists and psychology graduate students who regularly provide services through our clinic to the Lincoln community. We are seeking to reach beyond Lincoln to connect more with surrounding rural areas. We also are acutely aware of the importance of addressing mental health concerns right now as we all are experiencing the stress of going through the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Counseling and School Psychology Clinic is a training clinic in which graduate students in counseling and school psychology work with clients under the supervision of licensed psychologists. Services are available to all on a sliding scale. For clients from SE Nebraska communities, services will be paid for through UNL Foundation funds supplied by a donor who cares deeply about the welfare of schools and communities in SE Nebraska. Counseling services are offered to improve well-being, improve academic and behavioral issues, stabilize mood, manage stress, and improve life-adjustment issues.

For more information, please visit our clinic website:

<https://cehs.unl.edu/edpsych/clinic/>

A common theme from some of the decision makers on the state level is that “out of control” local spending is to blame for the property tax problem. NRCSA, along with many other educational entities, maintains that we do not have a school spending issue, but instead have a school funding issue. Attached are two reports, one from NRCSA, the other from Open Sky, that discuss the myth of “out of control” school spending. It is my hope that administrators and Board of Education members will read, then use these reports to counter those claims. When you do please tell your district’s story as that is the most powerful way to get this message across.

[NRCSA Spending Study](#)

[A Look at School Spending in NE from Open Sky](#)

NRCSA developed a corporate sponsorship/partnership program. The program is designed to provide our corporate partners with more opportunities for contact with the decision makers in our member school districts, ESUs, and the colleges through increased exposure. Corporate partners are able to choose among three levels of sponsorship: Purple Ribbon Partners, Blue Ribbon Friends, and Red Ribbon Sponsors. Different forms of contact with our members are made available in each of the three levels.

We are very pleased to partner with our corporate sponsors, and NRCSA is so very thankful that each of you has chosen to partner with us.



Rural school districts across Nebraska continue to balance the challenge of delivering high-quality education with the realities of aging buildings, evolving programs, and limited staffing resources. Even with strong maintenance teams in place, the ongoing demands of facility care, long-term planning and compliance requirements can place a significant strain on district capacity. At Wilkins ADP, we understand that every building decision a district makes, whether small repairs or major capital improvements, impacts students, staff, and the community for years to come. Our team partners closely with rural districts to develop clear and practical strategies rooted in both current facility conditions and long-range goals. A key component of these strategies is helping districts navigate funding and financing options for their facility projects. Our team has extensive experience guiding districts through successful bond efforts and helping communities understand the facility needs behind those initiatives. At the same time, we recognize that passing a bond has become far more challenging in today's environment. Because of this, we also help districts explore alternate financing options that may be available to schools such as QCPUF (Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking Fund) and Lease-Purchase for certain types and sizes of projects, ensuring each district can find the most practical path forward for their needs.

Careful facility planning is an essential step in making these funding decisions effective. By understanding the condition, use, and long-term needs of their facilities, districts can align projects with available resources and prioritize investments that deliver the greatest impact. A customized facility planning process goes beyond identifying deficiencies and considers how educational programs are changing, how each building supports student learning, and what investments will provide the greatest long-term value. Our architects and consulting engineers work side by side with district leaders to evaluate buildings, discuss growth or decline trends and map out phased and budget-conscious solutions. We regularly assist districts with understanding the life cycle of building systems, estimating replacement timelines, evaluating instructional spaces for flexibility and safety, identifying opportunities to improve energy performance, exploring renovation and addition scenarios, and preparing clear planning documents that support future decision-making.

Thoughtful facility planning does not have to be overwhelming or expensive. With the right guidance, districts can confidently prioritize projects, extend the life of their buildings, and make the most of their available resources. Wilkins ADP remains committed to supporting rural schools throughout Nebraska as they navigate both daily facility needs and long-term planning efforts. To learn more about how we can assist your district, visit wilkinsadp.com or call us at **(308) 237-5787**.



Purple Ribbon Partners



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Purple Ribbon Partners



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construction | the people you build with

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TRANE

TRANE
TECHNOLOGIES

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WILKINS

ARCHITECTURE | DESIGN | PLANNING

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Legislative Contacts

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[Pete Ricketts](#)

U.S. House of Representatives

[Don Bacon](#)

[Mike Flood](#)

[Adrian Smith](#)

Nebraska Governor

[Jim Pillen](#)

NE State Senators

[Bob Andersen, Dist 49](#)

[John Arch, Dist 14](#)

[Christy Armendariz, Dist 18](#)

[Beau Ballard, Dist 21](#)

[Carolyn Bosn, Dist 25](#)

[Eliot Bostar, Dist 29](#)

[Tom Brandt, Dist 32](#)

[Tom Brewer, Dist 43](#)

[John Cavanaugh, Dist 9](#)

[Machaela Cavanaugh, Dist 6](#)

[Robert Clements, Dist 2](#)

[Stan Clouse, Dist 37](#)

[Danielle Conrad, Dist 46](#)

[Wendy DeBoer, Dist 10](#)

[Barry DeKay, Dist 40](#)

[Myron Dorn, Dist 30](#)

[Robert Dover, Dist 19](#)

[George Dugan, Dist 26](#)

[John Fredrickson, Dist 20](#)

[Dunixi Guereca, Dist 7](#)

[Bob Hallstrom, Dist 1](#)

[Ben Hansen, Dist 16](#)

[Brian Hardin, Dist 48](#)

[Rick Holderoft, Dist 36](#)

[Jana Hughes, Dist 24](#)

[Megan Hunt, Dist 8](#)

[Teresa Ibach, Dist 44](#)

[Mike Jacobson, Dist 42](#)

[Margo Juarez, Dist 5](#)

[Kathleen Kauth, Dist 31](#)

[Loren Lippincott, Dist 34](#)

[Dan Lonowski, Dist 33](#)

[Dan McKeon, Dist 41](#)

[Terrell McKinney, Dist 11](#)

[Glen Meyer, Dist 17](#)

[Mike Moser, Dist 22](#)

[Dave Murman, Dist 38](#)

[Jason Prokop, Dist 27](#)

[Dan Quick, Dist 35](#)

[Jane Raybould, Dist 28](#)

[Merv, Riepe, Dist 12](#)

[Victor Roundtree, Dist 3](#)

[Rita Sanders, Dist 45](#)

[Tony Sorrentino, Dist 39](#)

[Ashlei Spivey, Dist 13](#)

[Tonya Storer, Dist 43](#)

[Jared, Storm, Dist 23](#)

[Paul Strommen, Dist 47](#)

[Brad Von Gillern, Dist 4](#)

[Dave Wordekemper, Dist 15](#)

Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association



“Quality Rural Schools”

www.nrcsa.net



NRCSA Programs

[New Leaf Teletherapy](#)

[Planning Support Service](#)

[Scholarship and Awards Programs](#)

[Superintendent Search Service](#)

[USBank OneCard Program](#)



NRCSA Rural Community Schools Association
440 S 13th St, Suite B
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Arlington Public Schools

Facilities Planning



December 2025
10-25126-01

ARLINGTON
PUBLIC SCHOOLS





Contents

Introductions	4
Research Informed Design	10
Educational Visualization	18
Vision	38
Macro Organization	46



01

Introductions

INTRODUCTIONS

Acknowledgments

On Behalf of our entire DLR Group team, we would like to acknowledge the following individuals and groups of people that have supported the team's efforts with information, data and professional perspective and opinions that were invaluable to producing this document.

DLR Group Team

- Darin Hanigan AIA ALEP
- Haley Herman
- Dr. Tonya Merrigan

INTRODUCTIONS

Mission & Vision Statements

Arlington Public Schools' Mission:

The mission of Arlington Public Schools is to empower all students to develop skills for life-long learning and responsible decision making in order to contribute to a global society.

Arlington Public Schools' Vision:

For all students to discover a Passion, feel a sense of Purpose, and find or create a Pathway.

INTRODUCTIONS

Project Schedule



02

Research Informed Design

Adoption Rate to Reach 25% of U.S. Population

Electricity	45 years
Telephone	36 years
Radio	31 years
Television	26 years
PC	16 years
Mobile Phone	13 years
Internet	7 years
iPad	2.5 years
TikTok	4 months

“We are currently preparing students for jobs that don’t yet exist, using technologies that haven’t been invented, in order to solve problems, we don’t even know are problems yet. In schools designed before the advent of color television.” - Richard Riley, Former United States Secretary of Education



Why should we care about school design?

What impacts student learning progress?



[1] Hattie, John. "Visible learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement." (2008) Nye, Barbara, Spyros Konstantopoulos, and Larry Hedges. "How large are teachers effects?" Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis 26, no. 3 (2004): 237-57

[2] Barrett, Peter, Fay Davies, Yufan Zhang, and Lucinda Barrett. "The impact of classroom design on pupils' learning: Final results of a holistic, multi-level analysis." Building and Environment 89 (2015): 118-133.

Innovative Learning Environments

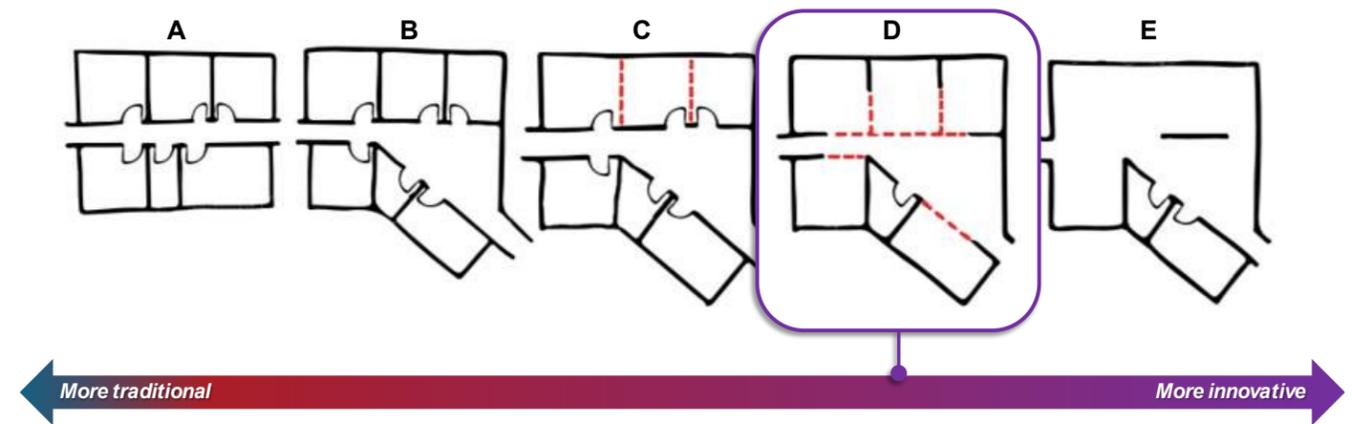
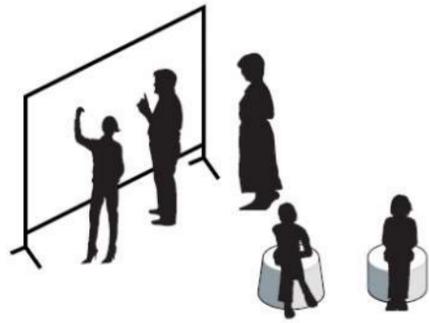


Illustration
Graph adapted from Imms, Mahat, Byers, & Murphy (2017)

RESEARCH INFORMED DESIGN
FINNS Framework

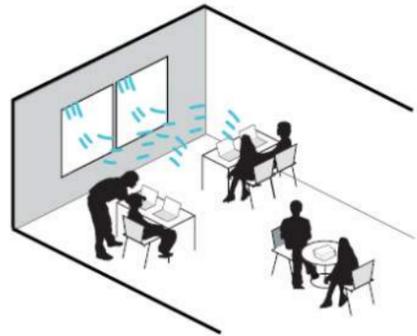
Activating Design Research to Empower Learners



Flexibility & Operability
Movement Matters



Individualization
Physical Needs are Unique



Naturalness & Nature
Health & Comfort are Critical



Stimulation
Activate the Senses



Flexibility & Operability



Individualization



Nature & Naturalness



Stimulation

P.Barrett (2018) Well designed classrooms can boost learning, case study on EPSRC Lens on Research and Innovation webpage: <https://epsrc.ukri.org/newsevents/casestudies/well-designed-classrooms-can-boost-learning/>

Illustration
Graph adapted from Imms, Mahat, Byers, & Murphy (2017)



03

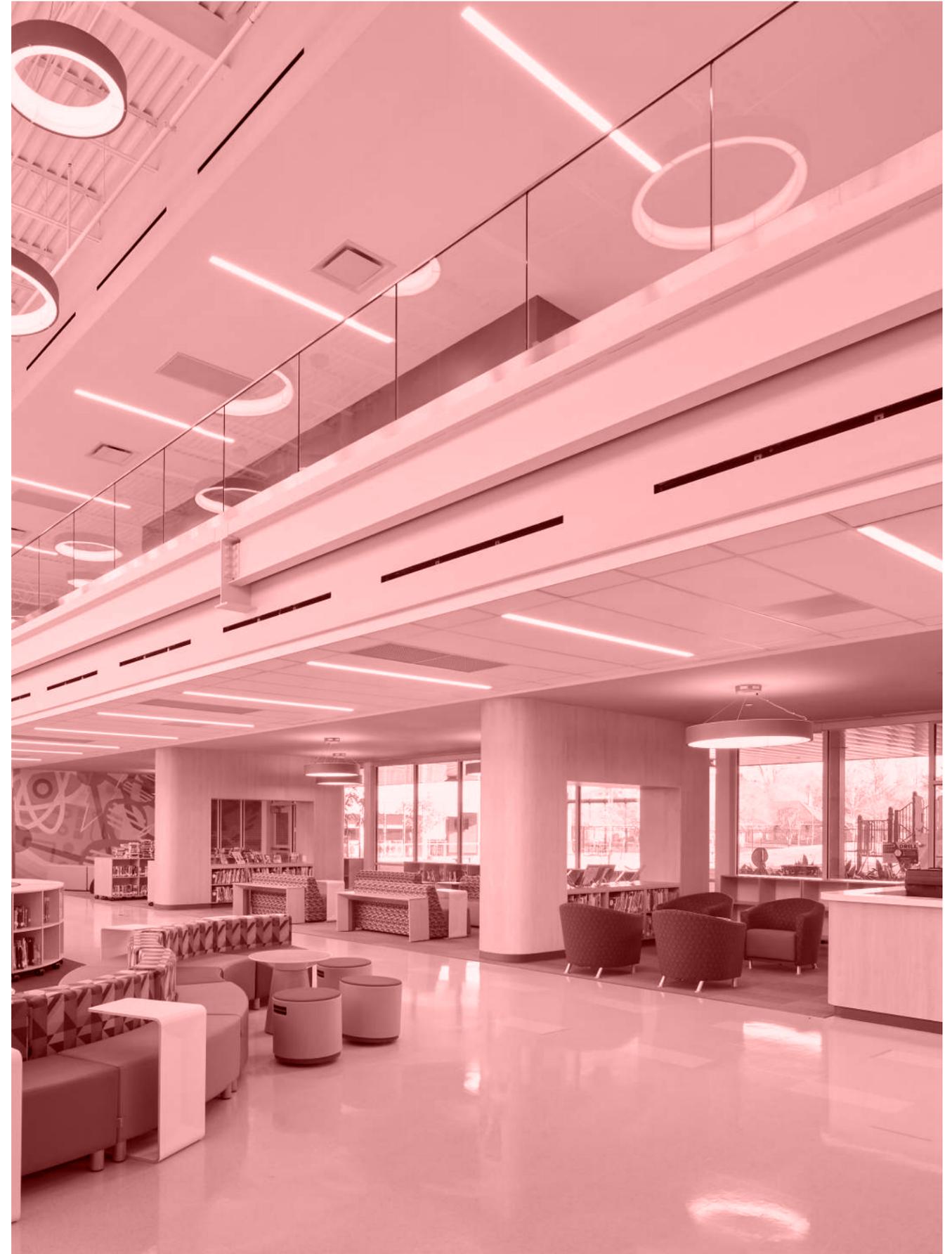
Educational Visualization

EDUCATIONAL VISUALIZATION

Participants & Their Hopes for the Project

Project Aspirations

- Updating
- Modernization
- Community space
- Growth for academics
- Increased learning
- Support for students
- Future growth
- Create an environment to nurture kids
- Daylighting
- Outdoor spaces
- Student experience
- Better auditorium
- Increased storage
- Thinking of the future
- Growth
- Playing catch-up
- More space
- Equal facilities for every sport and organization
- Wrestling room
- Focus on students and staff
- School pride
- Taking care of all the kids and programs



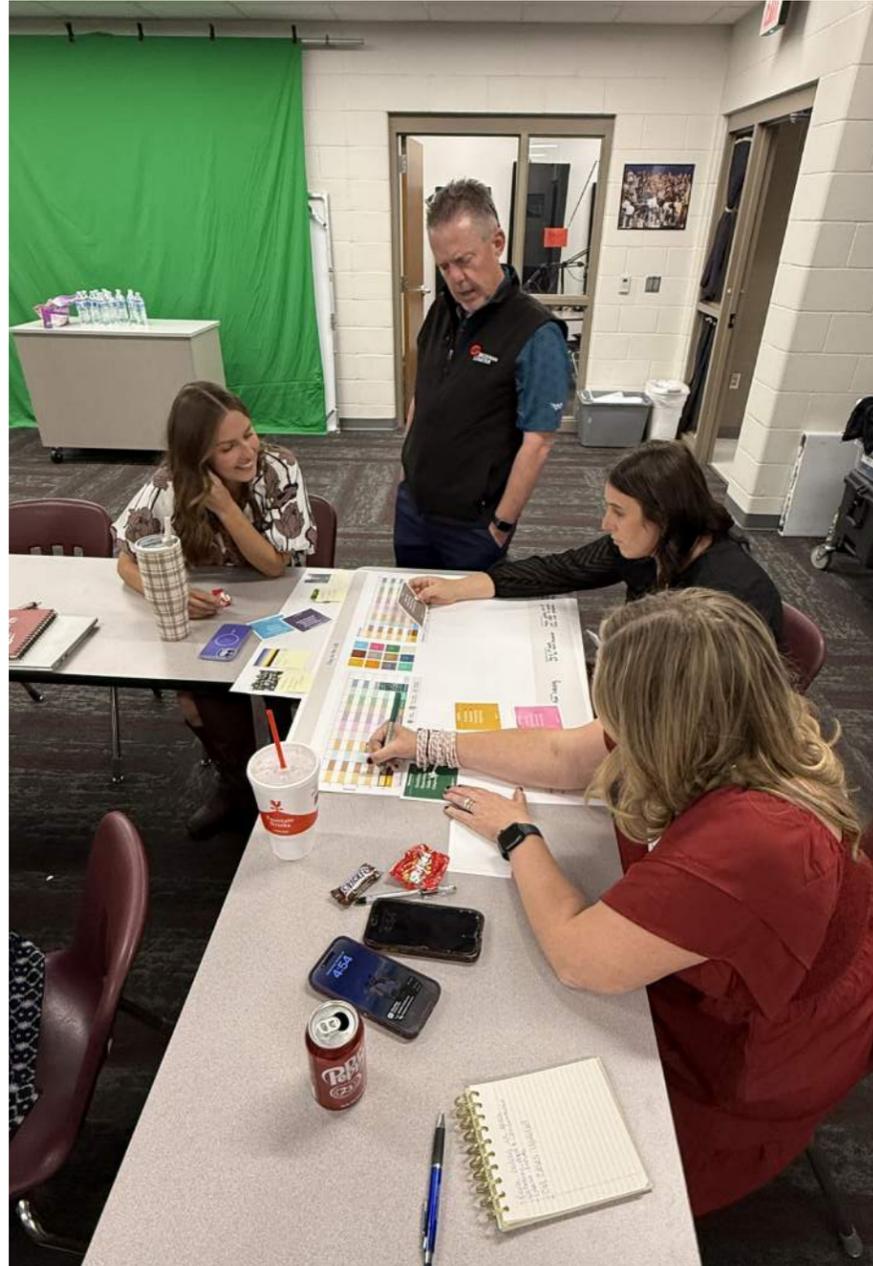
EDUCATIONAL VISUALIZATION

A Day in the Life Activity

Although we cannot predict with certainty the types of jobs that will exist in the future, we know that today's students will need a variety of skills to be successful in life. Knowing this, we must ask what learning experiences will provide students with the essential skills to be prepared for the ever-changing world. Taking this into account, The Day in the Life Activity is designed to investigate and discuss what a day of education might look like in the future. User groups start by developing a student persona and then discuss how a day of learning might look like when barriers are removed and students are engaged in the learning activities that prepare them for their futures. Finally, the percentage of time within these learning activities are identified. This activity results in informing space implications for designers to use within the design of the learning environment.

Our Takeaways

All 4 students spent more of their day collaborating, connecting, creating and presenting while maintaining time to listen, practice and transition between activities. There was a need for individual, small, medium, and large spaces as well as outdoor learning options for all 4 students.



EDUCATIONAL VISUALIZATION

Learning Connections

Before discussing the built environment, we must acknowledge changes are occurring in teaching and learning as there is an ongoing shift from the teacher-centered to the students-centered model of education. Giving attention to the process of how the facility will support learning and teaching, the Learning Connections Activity assists in developing educational priorities to maintain a clear focus on what is important.

The user groups begin with selecting an activity card to represent how learning will be facilitated in their new environment. Then the user groups select the teaching methodology that will support that type of learning. Continuing the process, spaces are selected that will enable engaging experiences from the selected learning and teaching models. Finally, furniture, technology, and safety/security priorities are identified to embrace the educational vision.

These selections made by user groups prompt guiding principles of design – the north star by which our designers integrate throughout the development of the final product. The Learning Connections Activity bridge between teaching and learning and the spaces and tools. Ultimately, this informs the design process by establishing an expectation of teaching and learning and how the space can be crafted as the ultimate tool.

Our Takeaways

All 4 groups were aligned in their desire to have a more student-directed learning process and to have teachers utilize approaches that supported the individual student's growth. Teachers engaged in this type of teaching help students identify, investigate, and research issues in order

to respond to challenges and complex problems. Spaces needed for this type of learning include those that can be used for a variety of things such as presentations, are adaptable and flexible, and include outdoor spaces as well as traditional and smaller classrooms. Furniture and Technology had common responses from all groups including the ability for it to be flexible and fit the needs of the individual student. Finally, safety/security focused on the need for students to have connections both in the school and the community.



EDUCATIONAL VISUALIZATION

Desired Types of Learning

VISIBLE LEARNING

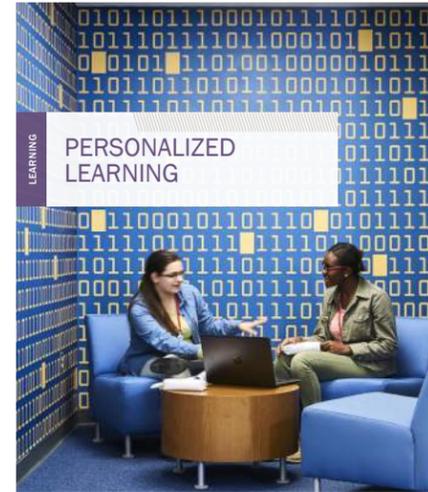
- Visible actions of learning; students understand their task, show their thinking and creating process, and reflect on their learning.

PERSONALIZED LEARNING

- Learning is tailored to the preferences, interests, and passions of the learners. Instruction is paced to the learner's unique needs. Learners set goals with educator's support.

AUTHENTIC/REAL WORLD LEARNING

- Learners explore, discuss, and meaningfully construct concepts and relationships in contexts that involve real-world problems and projects that are relevant to the learner.



EDUCATIONAL VISUALIZATION

Types of Teaching to Support Desired Learning



INQUIRY-BASED TEACHING

- A dynamic form of active learning that begins with inquiry, problems, or scenarios. Learners then identify, investigate, and research issues and respond to challenges or complex problems.

WORKSHOP MODEL TEACHING

- A pedagogy that promotes learning, growth, and reflection through collaboration and small group instruction.

TEACHING THROUGH INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

- An instructional process in which digital-age skills and pedagogy support learning, communication, and creativity in a technology-rich environment.

DIFFERENTIATED TEACHING

- A practice where the content, process, and resources are tailored to meet individual needs.

Spaces that Facilitate Teaching and Learning



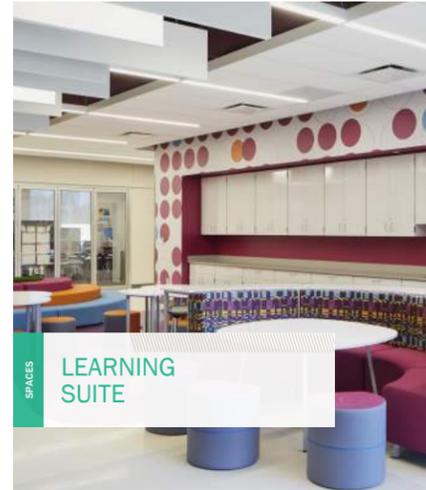
SPACES
LARGE GROUP SPACES



SPACES
SPACES THAT CAN BE EASILY ADAPTED/CHANGED



SPACES
OUTDOOR SPACES



SPACES
LEARNING SUITE



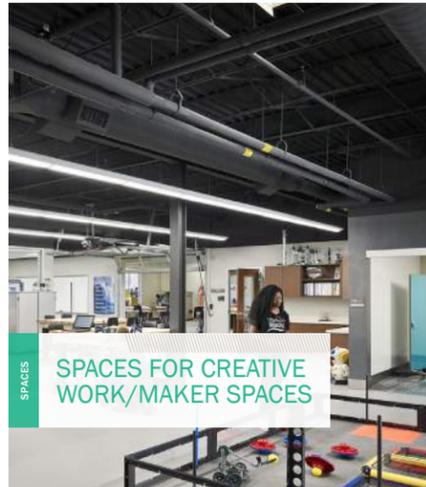
SPACES
MEDIA/IDEA LAB



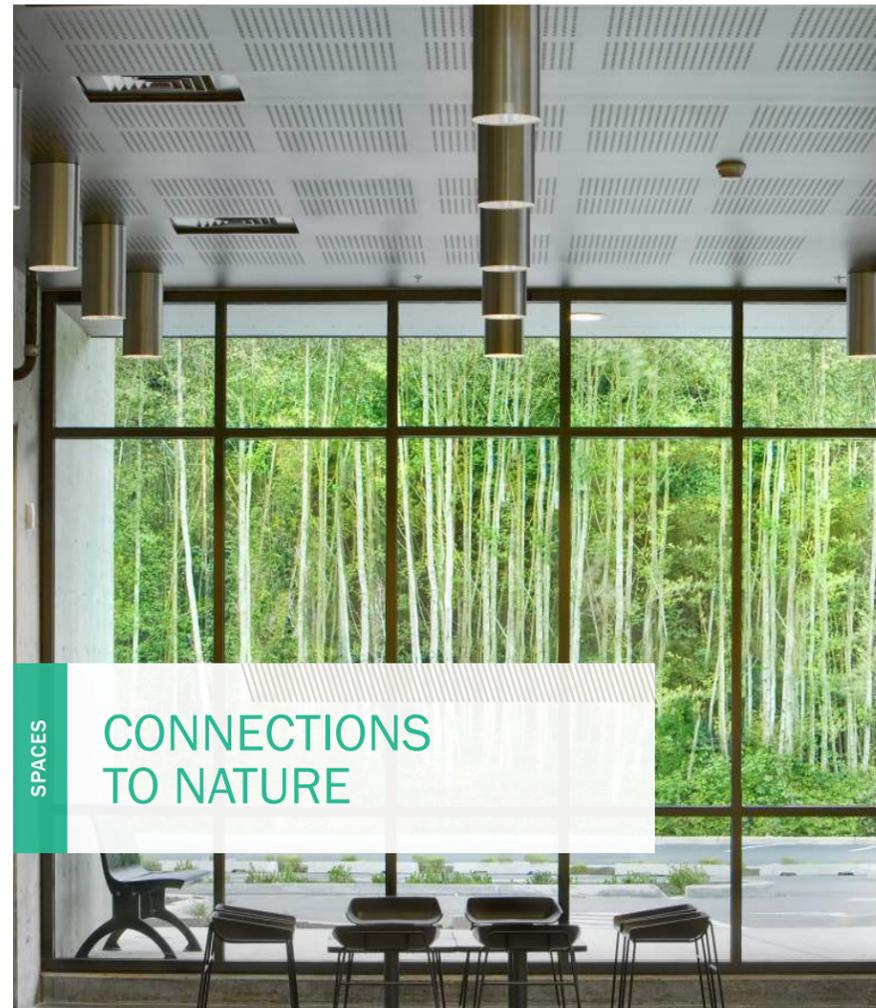
SPACES
SPACES THAT ALLOW FOR MOVEMENT



SPACES
PRESENTATION SPACES



SPACES
SPACES FOR CREATIVE WORK/MAKER SPACES



SPACES
CONNECTIONS TO NATURE

LARGE GROUP SPACES

- Large learning areas that will encompass a minimum of a full class size.

SPACES THAT CAN BE EASILY ADAPTED/CHANGED

- Walls that can be modified/moved to create different sizes or configurations of learning environments.

OUTDOOR SPACES

- Spaces that allow for outdoor learning such as gardens, outdoor creative spaces, nature walks, and play areas.

LEARNING SUITE

- Multiple learning spaces shared by multiple educators vs separate classrooms. Spaces are flexible for use in diverse activity settings.

MEDIA/IDEA LAB

- A shared space with books, technology, and maker spaces where learners are free to research and create.

SPACES THAT ALLOW FOR MOVEMENT

- Spaces that are conducive to movement and provide opportunities for learners to walk, exercise, or simply move from one area or activity to another.

SPACES FOR CREATIVE WORK/MAKER SPACES

- Specific spaces that are designed for creation and innovation such as a creation station, maker space, or lab.

PRESENTATION SPACES

- Areas that allow for individual or group presentations such as learning stairs, tiered areas, and shared presentation areas.

CONNECTIONS TO NATURE

- Bringing elements of nature indoors, such as natural light, visibility to the outdoors, and graphics or products that mimic nature.

EDUCATIONAL VISUALIZATION

Furniture that Facilitates Teaching and Learning

ERGONOMIC FURNITURE

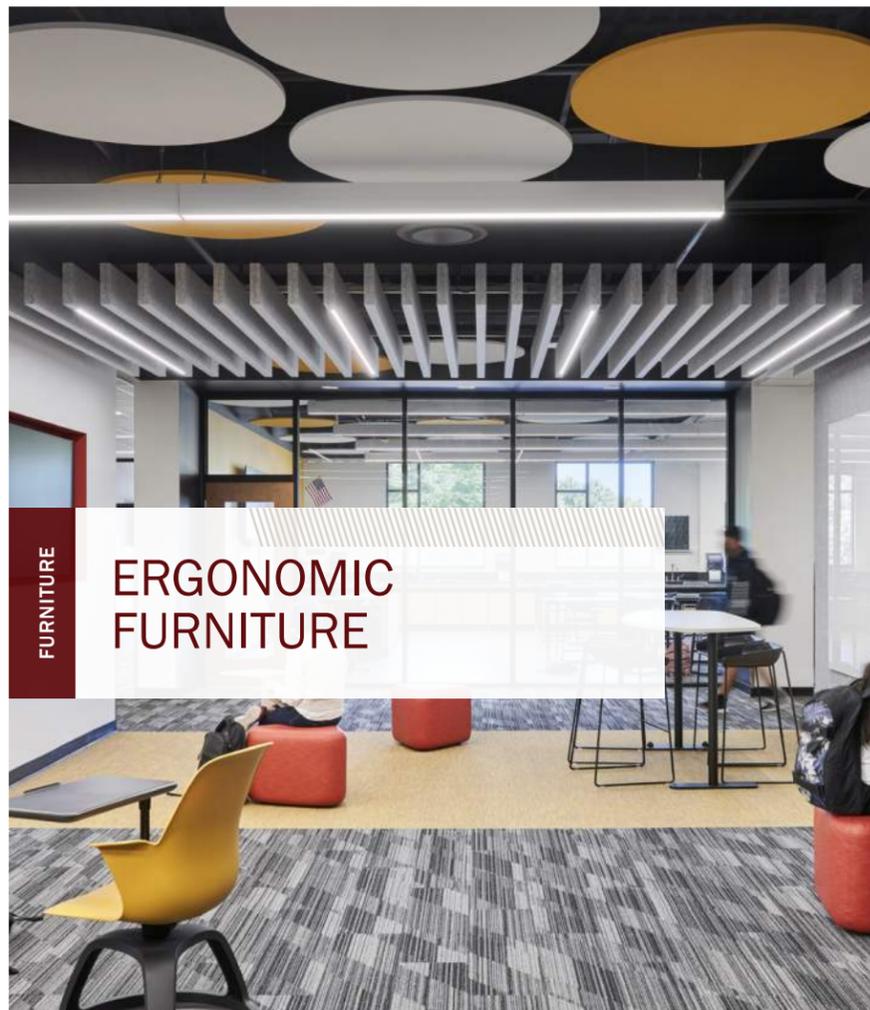
- The making of the furnishings and materials with the purpose of right-sized furniture that adapts to the body to eliminate discomfort and optimize human well-being.

FLEXIBLE/ADAPTABLE FURNITURE TYPES

- Furniture that is easily moved to form different groupings, offers different heights, and fuels creativity.

FURNITURE THAT SUPPORTS INDIVIDUALS

- Furniture that allows for choice in posture, movement, and adjustment to meet individual needs.



EDUCATIONAL VISUALIZATION

Technology that Facilitates Teaching and Learning



FLEXIBLE TECHNOLOGY

- Mobile technology that allows for use on different surfaces and in numerous ways.

EDUCATIONAL VISUALIZATION

How We Create Safe, Equitable Environments that Support All

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

- Strategies that promote health and well-being, such as ensuring air quality, providing natural light and access to plant life, and creating spaces for movement/exercise.

OPTIONAL PRIVACY

- Items that allow for privacy in transparent environments such as drop-down screens, frosted glass, or acoustical curtains and other mobile objects that can strategically obscure the line of sight.

COMMUNITY/BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

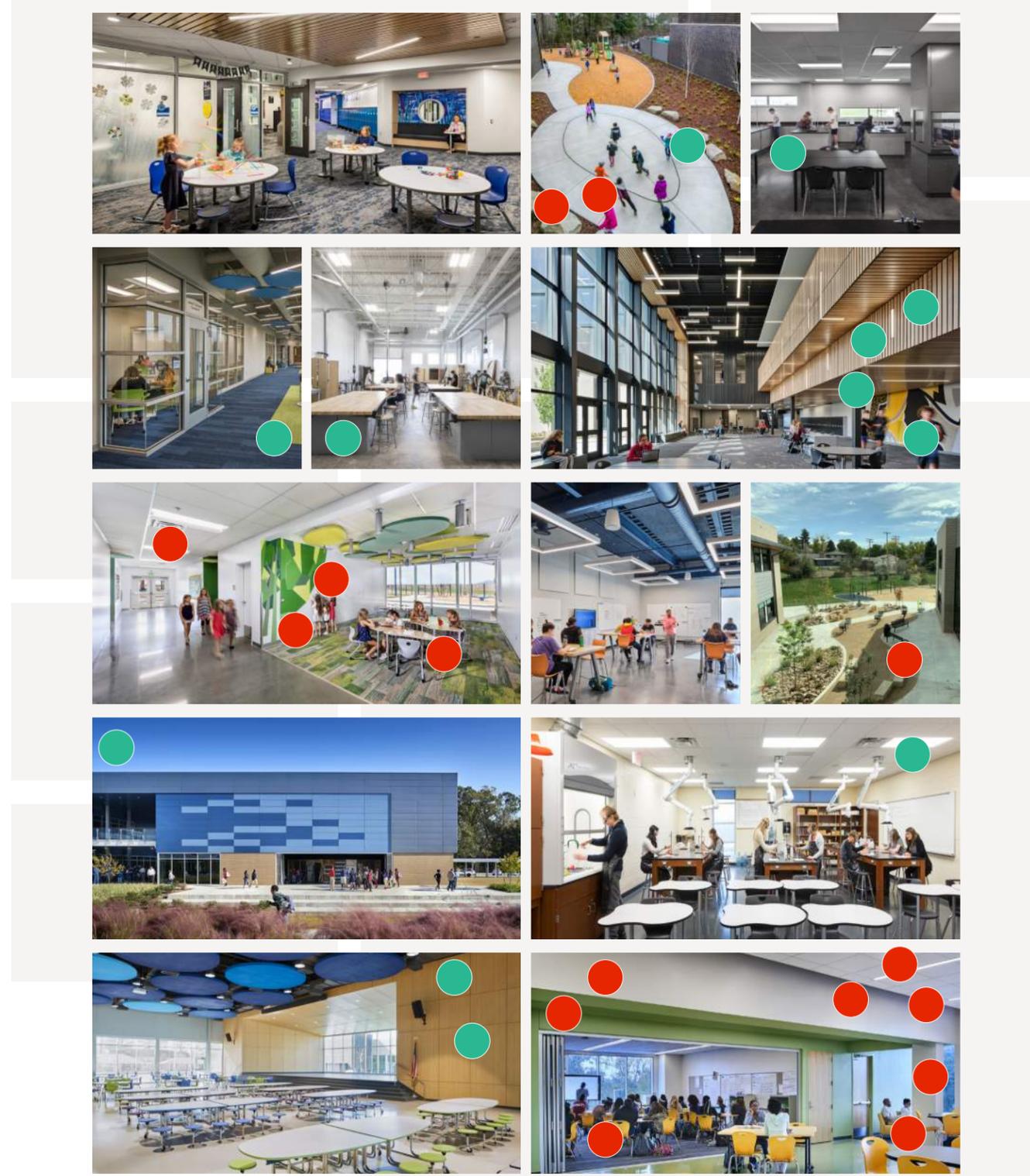
- Providing spaces and activities that promote positive connections and interaction between schools, the workplace, and the community at large.



EDUCATIONAL VISUALIZATION

Visioning Photo Exercise

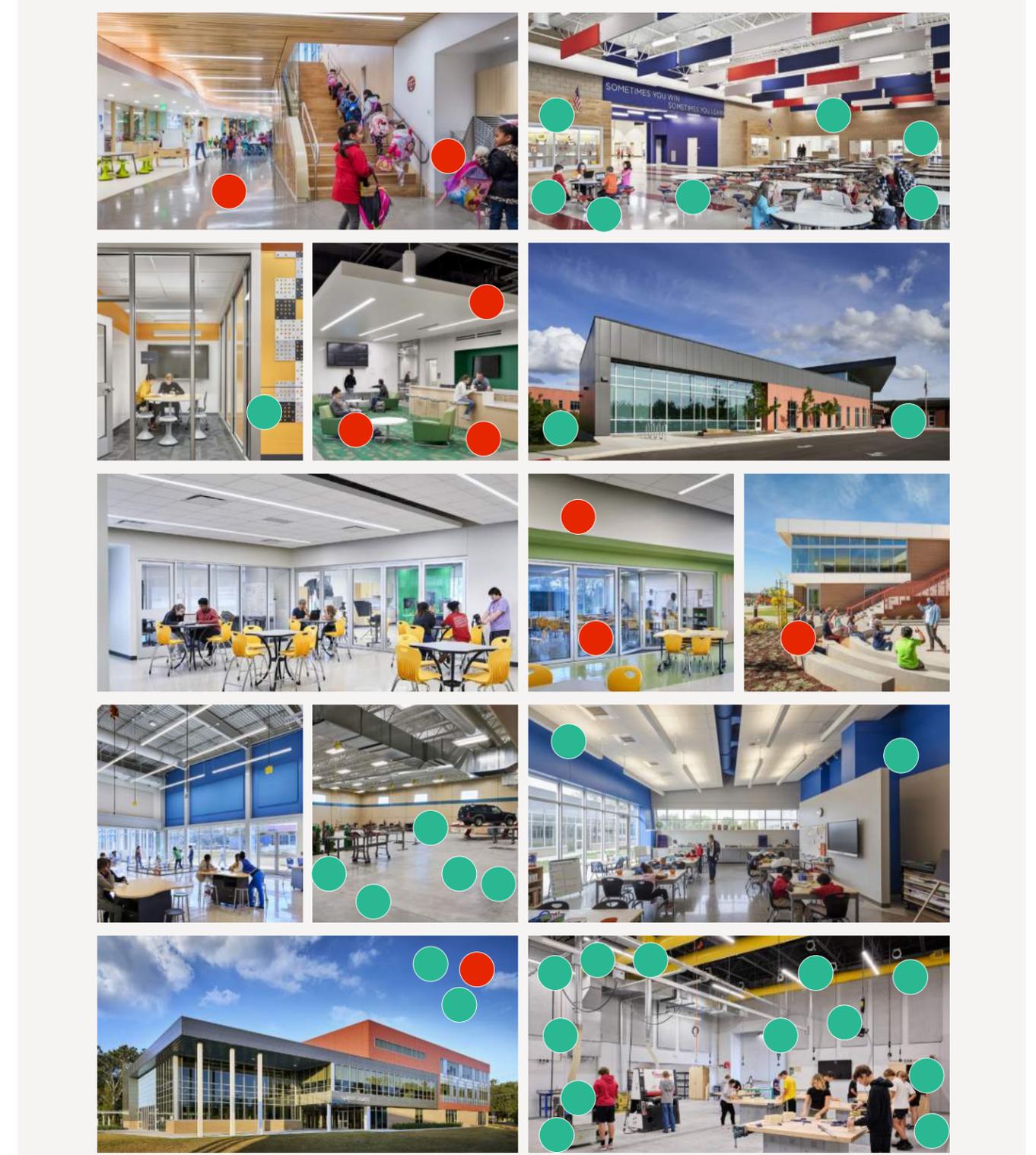
● Likes ● Dislikes



EDUCATIONAL VISUALIZATION

Visioning Photo Exercise

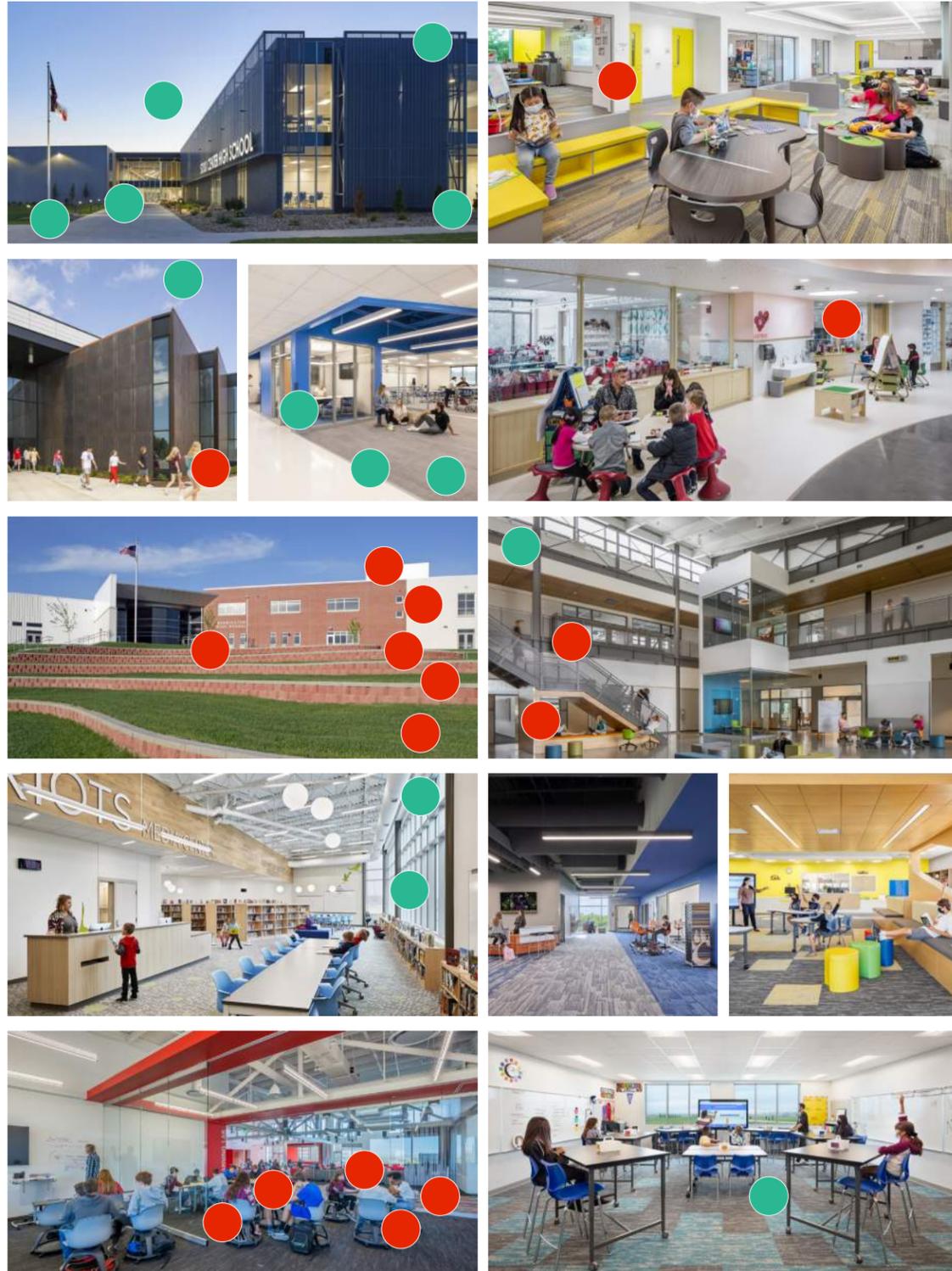
● Likes ● Dislikes



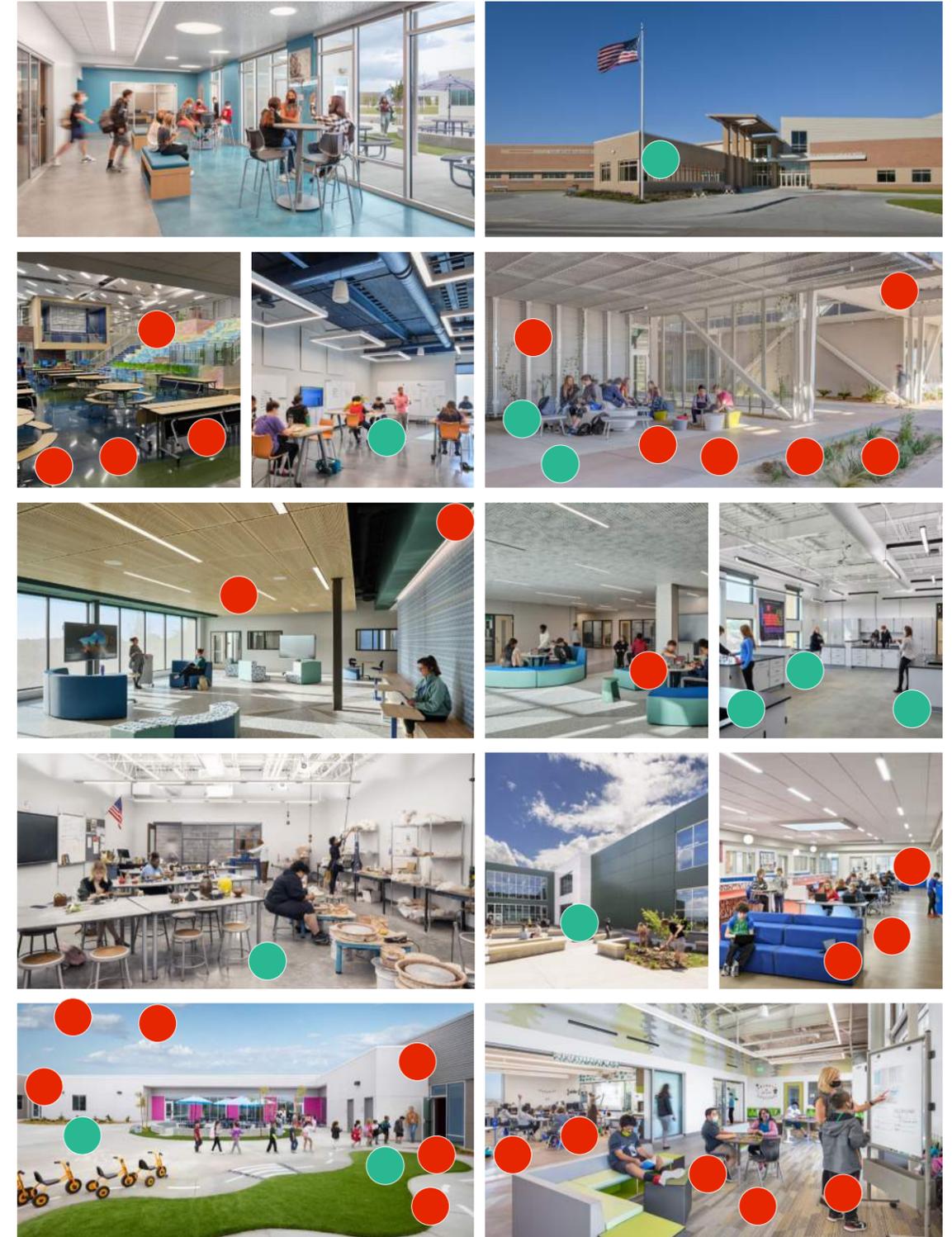
EDUCATIONAL VISUALIZATION

Visioning Photo Exercise

● Likes ● Dislikes



● Likes ● Dislikes





04

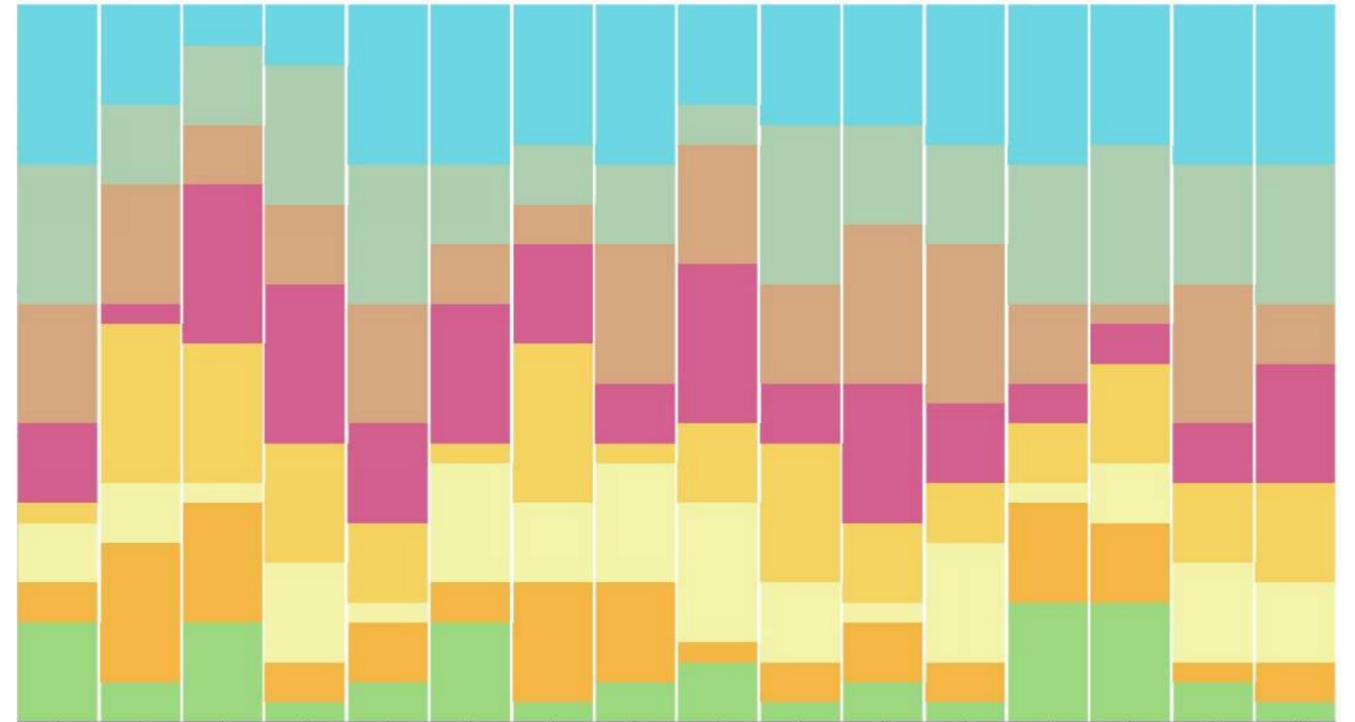
Vision

VISION

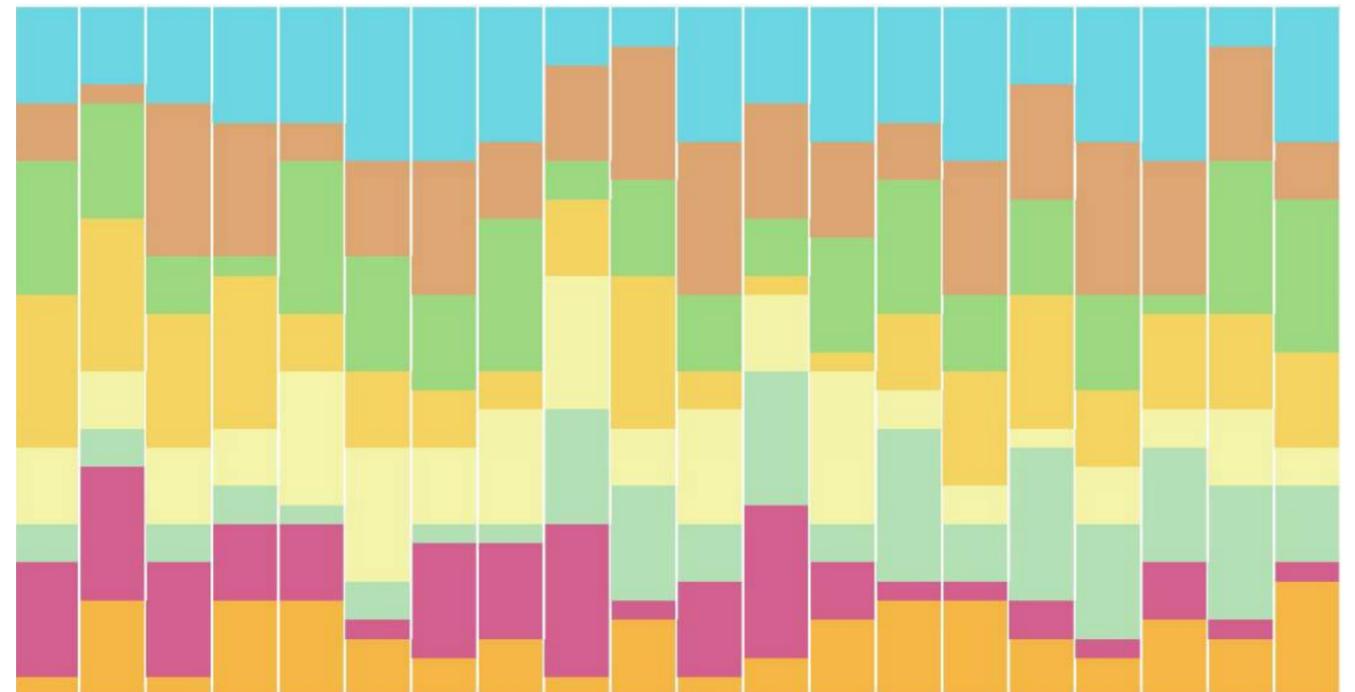
Participant Priorities

Arlington staff, faculty, parents, and community members were asked to rank their top priorities for the project's overall success to gain a further understanding of the communities needs. Nine unique priorities were provided based on information previously gathered from teacher interviews. Each participant ranked the priorities in order from high to low based on the individual's definition of success.

EXPANDED ACADEMIC PATHWAYS (CTE RENO)	ACTIVITIES ENTRY IDENTITY & EXPANDED COMMONS	FLEXIBLE LEARNING & COLLABORATION SPACE
FINE & PERFORMING ARTS EXPANSION	EXPANDED ATHLETIC SPACE (WRESTLING ROOM)	SPECIAL EDUCATION & RESOURCE SPACE
LOCKER ROOMS & RESTROOMS	PARKING AND SITE CIRCULATION	OTHER (WRITE IN)



Priority rankings following the first workshop with the community. Expanded academic pathways, activities entry identity, and flexible learning space ranked as the top three priorities.

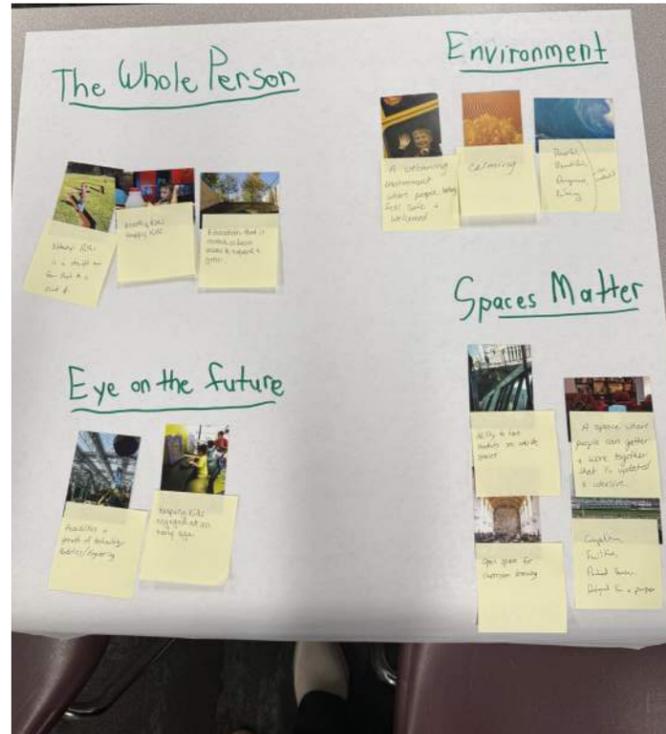


Priority rankings from students, parents, and teachers following parent-teacher conferences. Expanded academic pathways and flexible learning and collaboration space remained in the top three priorities with the addition of parking and site circulation

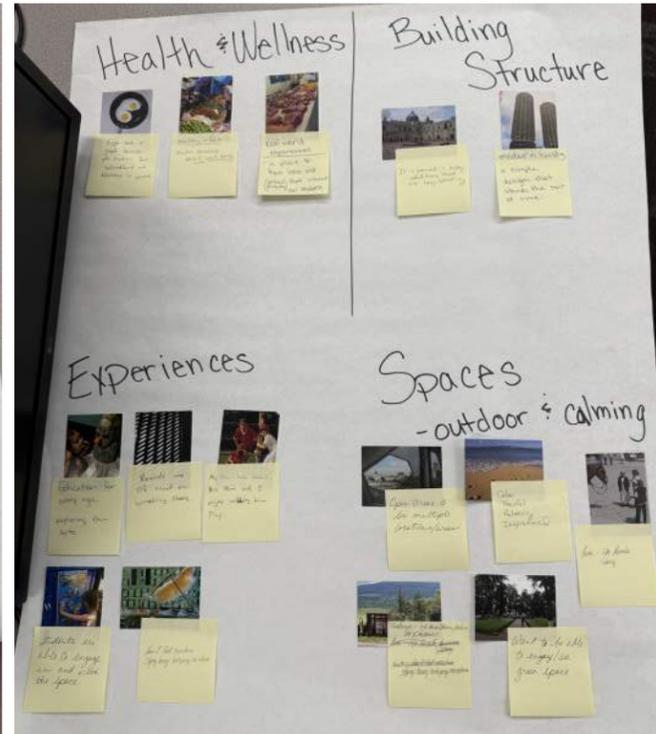
VISION

Guiding Principles

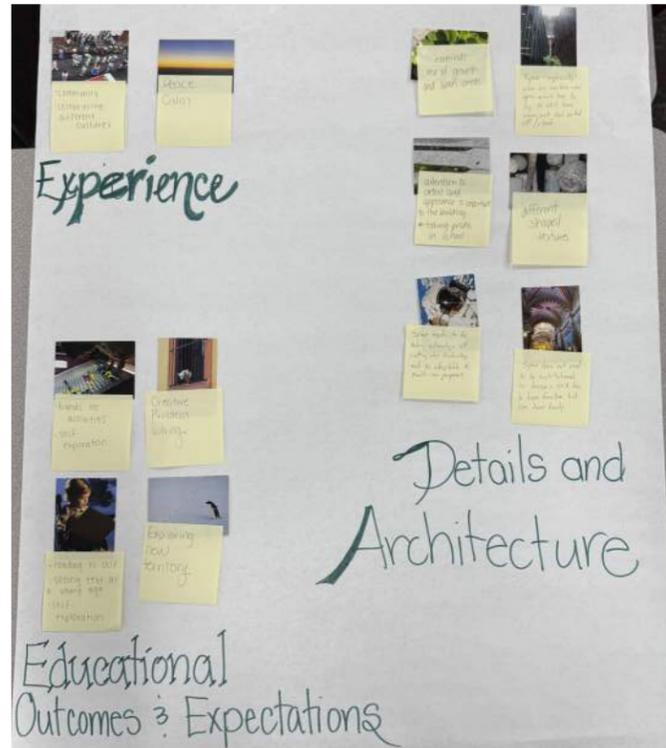
Team 1



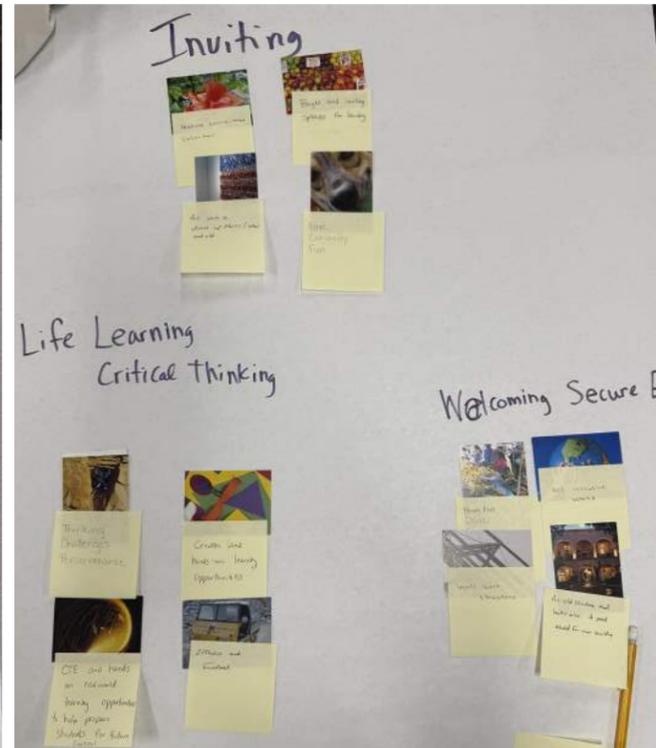
Team 2



Team 3



Team 4



The next activity of the evening was to discuss and begin developing guiding principles of design for Arlington Public Schools. These principles will serve as a filter through which important decisions are made, act as a compass for the project, keep the project on track and should reflect the values of the community. A Picture is Worth 1000 words is the activity that was used to get the data for these principles. Each person selected 3 images out of hundreds presented that spoke to them and identified on a sticky note, why it spoke to them and how it tied to school spaces. Each group then reviewed all their pictures/sticky notes and categorized them into common themes. The results are listed below as well as the comments on each of the sticky notes.

INVITING

- Nature connection, colorful
- Art used to dress up places, new and old
- Bright and inviting spaces for leaning
- Love, curiosity, fun

LIFE LEARNING AND CRITICAL THINKING

- Thinking, challenges, perseverance
- Creative and hands-on learning opportunities
- CTE and hands-on real-world leaning opportunities to help prepare students for future careers
- Efection and functional

WELCOMING SECURE ENVIRONMENTS

- People feel safe
- Well-built structures
- All-inclusive world
- An old structure that looks nice
- Calming
- A welcoming environemtn where people belong, feel safe and welcomed
- Powerful, beautiful, dangerous, relaxing - we can contradict and still find value

THE WHOLE PERSON

- Nobody's path is a straight one from point A to point B
- Healthy kids, happy kids,
- Education that is rooted in basic values to expand and grow

SPACES MATTER

- Ability to have students see outside spaces
- Open space for classroom learning
- A space where poeple can gather to work together that is updated and cohesive
- Competition, facilities, packed house, designed for a purpose

EYE ON THE FUTURE

- Possibilities in growth of technology, robotics, and engineering
- Keeping kids engaged at an early age

BUILDING STRUCTURE

- It is grounded in history, traditions that are long standing
- Modern building with a simple design taht stands the test of time

EXPERIENCES

- Education for every age, exploring the arts
- Students are able to engage in and with the space

SPACES OUTDOOR AND CALMING

- Open areas to see multiple locations
- Calm, peaceful, relaxing, inspirational
- Want to be able to engage/see green space
- Landscape - nature with no electronics

Welcoming and Inclusive: Create environments where every person feels safe, valued, and invited.

Foster Experiential Learning: Design for curiosity, creativity, and hands-on, real-world engagement.

Support Well-Being and Nature Connection: Promote health, calm, and whole-person development through nature-rich, wellness-centered design.

Design with Purpose and Future Vision: Build functional, timeless spaces that are adaptable, innovative, and grounded in community heritage.

VISION

I See | We See Statements

I SEE STATEMENTS

- I see continued growth in size
- I see continued interest in trades and CTE classes
- I see enhanced facilities we are proud of
- I see students who see the value in doing their work, communicating in person, and having a desire to care for and make our world a better place
- I see APS better than similar size schools
- I see a more modern, all inclusive school

WE SEE STATEMENTS

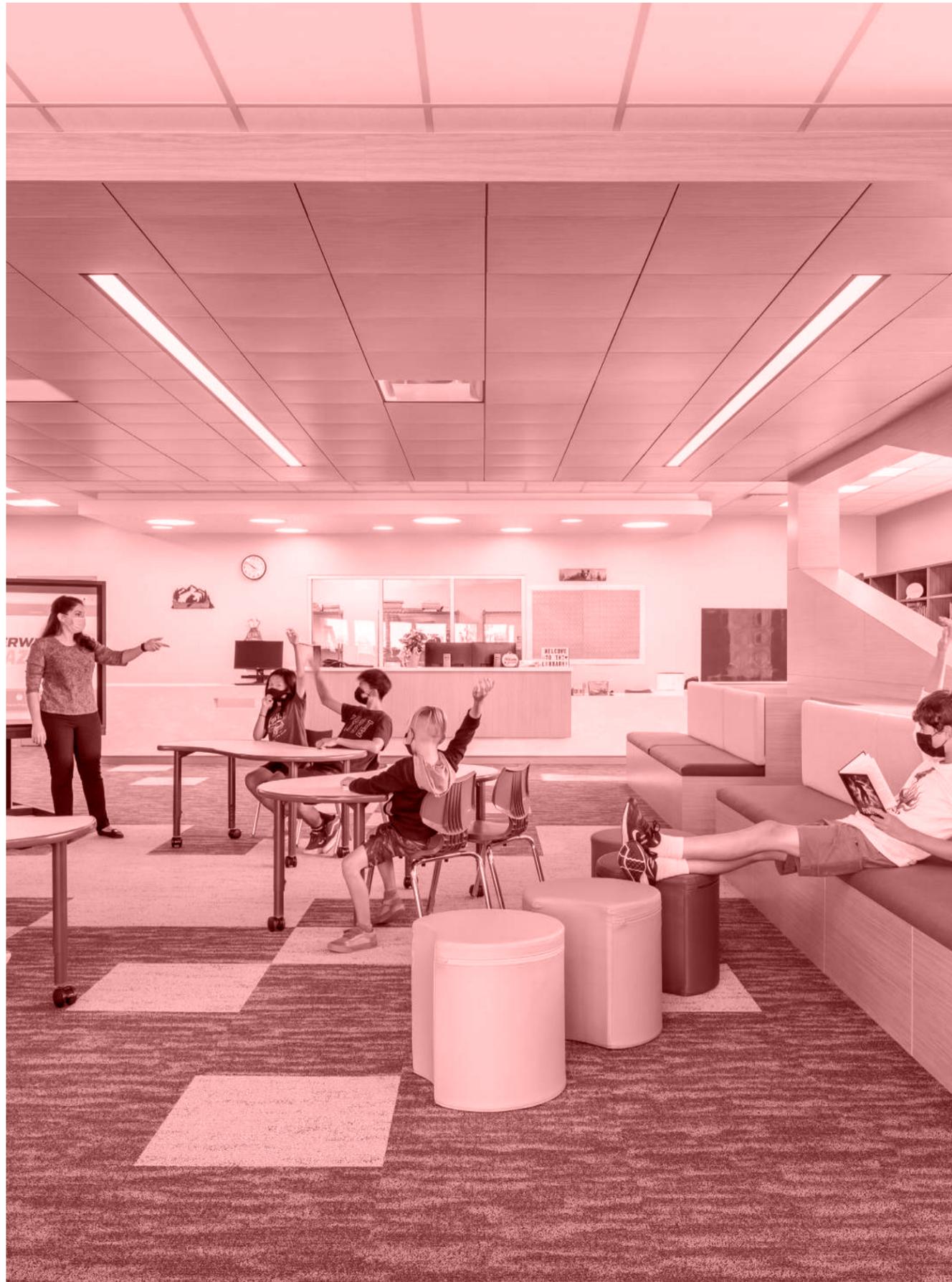
- We see a new building, specifically elementary. A building and student body that is still rural in makeup. We see a building that is open to the community for use.
- We see an improved facility filled with students learning how to appreciate their value. Continued growth and interest in developing real world skills to impact society.
- We see a school that students and the community are proud of. A place that inspires learning, connection and growth where students prepare for their future education and a variety of secondary paths, equipped with the skills and confidence to succeed in an updated and functional space that supports learning, creativity and pride.

We See Statement

We see Arlington Public Schools with modern facilities that stay true to our rural roots—an inviting, community-centered place where students feel valued, build real-world skills, and grow with confidence in a functional, inspiring space.

06

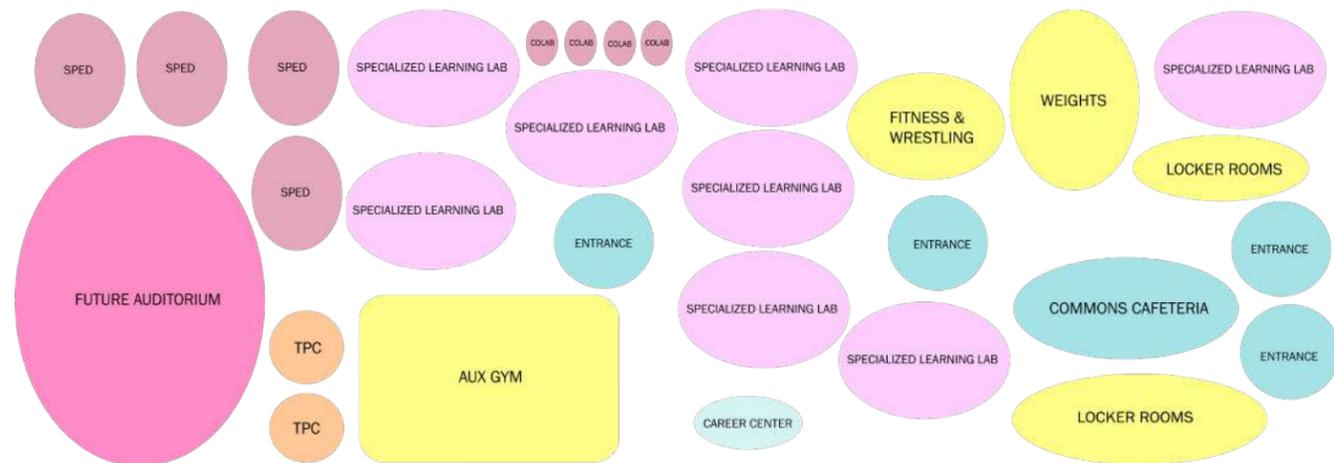
Macro Organization



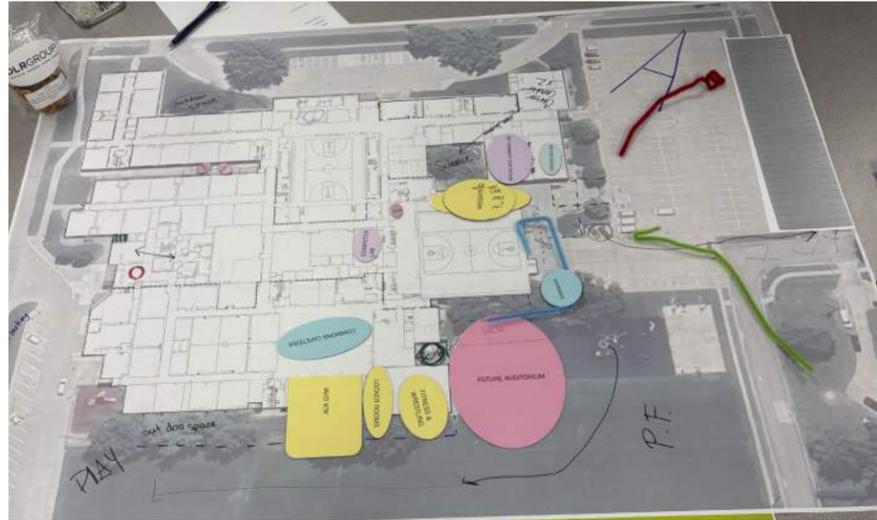
MACRO ORGANIZATION

Design Your Dream School

The Arlington team was supplied with the site plan as well as manipulatives labeled with all the items on the priority list. They were instructed to utilize these pieces and put them on the site where they thought they should be and to make sure to include adjacencies as well as any notes. At the conclusion each group presented to the entire committee and addressed any questions. Each committee member was asked to identify items they liked and did not with each plan and to pick their 2 favorite options

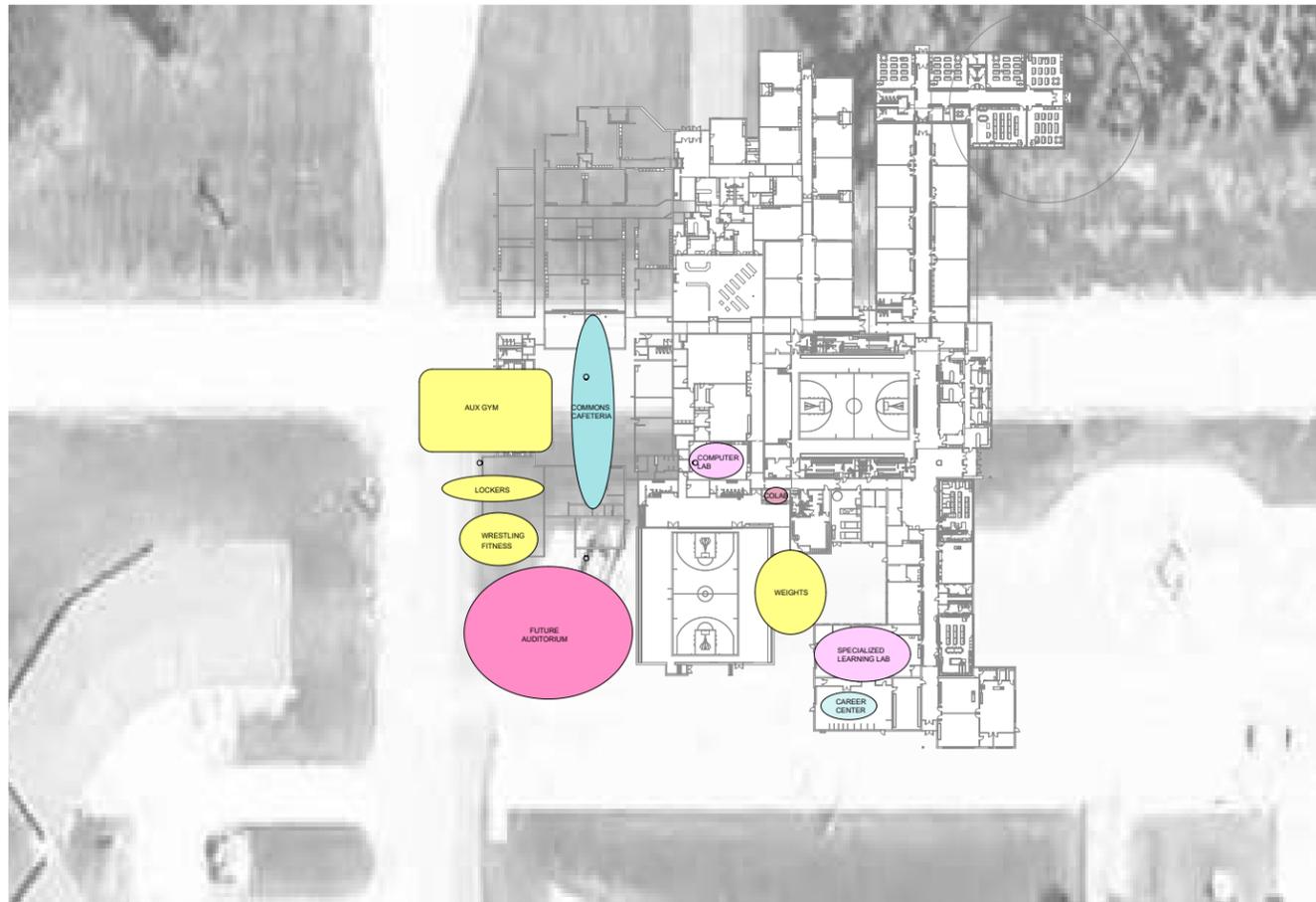


MACRO ORGANIZATION

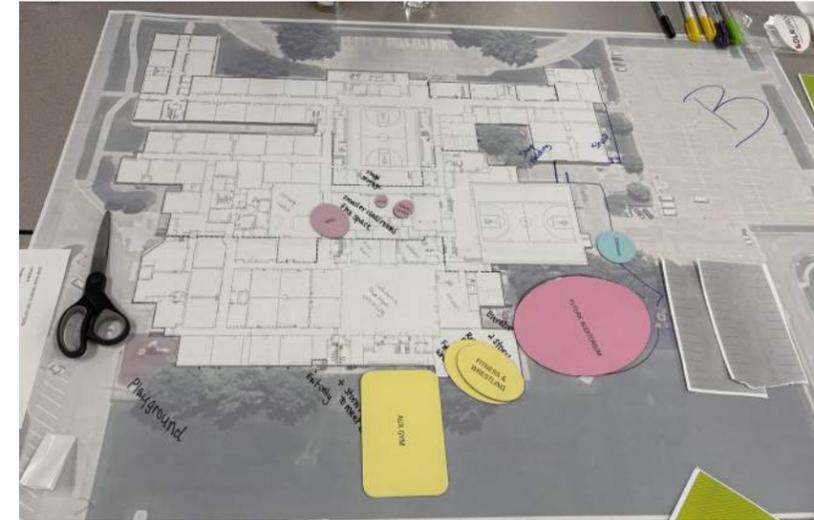


Option A Synthesis

- Option A received positive feedback related to traffic flow, athletics, and CTE improvements, but generated significant concern around moving science rooms.



MACRO ORGANIZATION

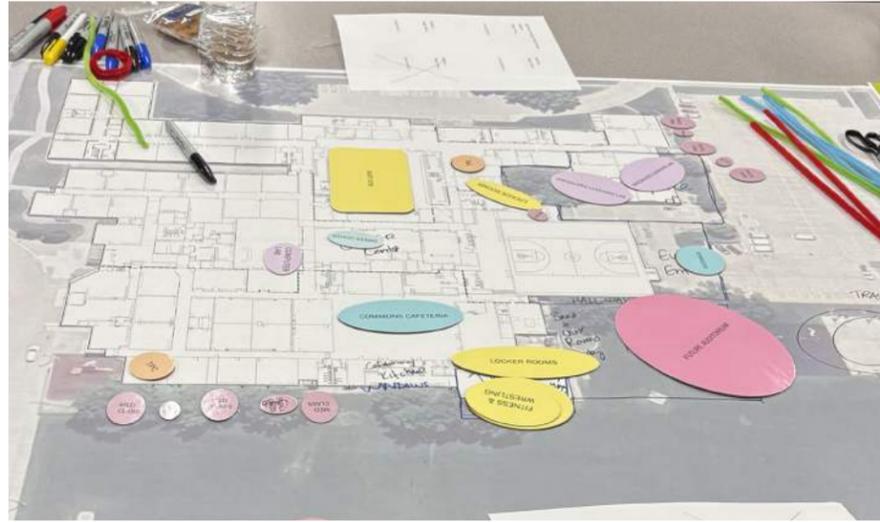


Option B Synthesis

- Option B emerged as the strongest choice, primarily due to its improved auditorium placement, expanded parking, and effective reuse of space.



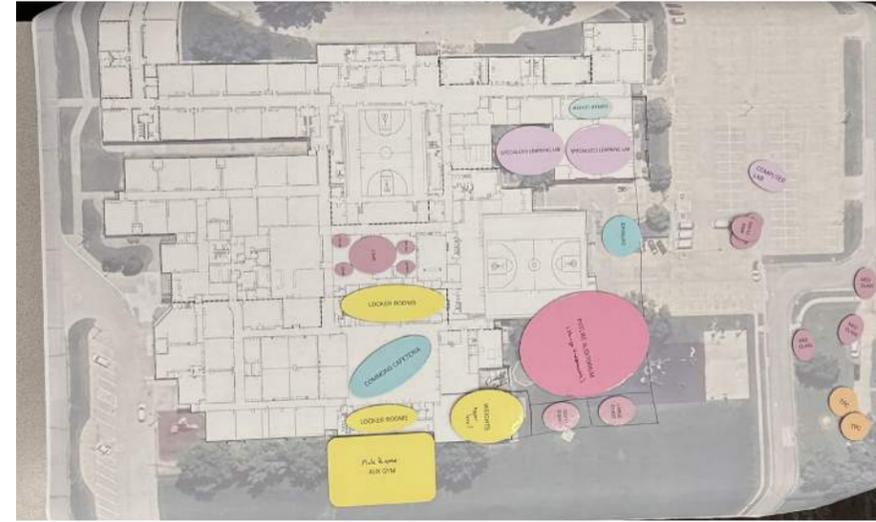
MACRO ORGANIZATION



Option C Synthesis

- Option C, while praised for its elementary classroom expansion, fitness space improvements, and Blue Gym repurposing, was consistently criticized for providing no additional parking and introducing several undesirable academic space shifts.

MACRO ORGANIZATION





December 2025
10-25126-01