

# Long-Range Facilities Plan – High School Input Report

## Key Findings

1. Students and staff respondents at East discussed updates to utilities and bathrooms as exciting– and essential– aspects of the building plan, but want to preserve the building’s historic architecture.
2. At La Follette, respondents suggested a refresh of the building auditorium and basic renovations to utility systems and bathrooms.
3. Memorial respondents requested improvements to facilities used for athletics and the arts, especially music.
4. Students and staff at West found overcrowding of classrooms and the parking lot and unsafe pool conditions to be the most pressing facilities issues.

## Background

The Research & Program Evaluation Office (RPEO) was asked by Building Services to assist with data collection, analysis, and communication of findings from student and staff input on the Long-Range Facilities Plan. This report contains an explanation of methods and findings for each of the four comprehensive high schools.

## Data & Methods

### Data Collection

This report summarizes student and staff input using two types of data:

- **Focus Groups** occurred at SBLT Meetings and Student Leadership Meetings in early March. Building Services facilitated these meetings, while an RPEO staff member took notes. During both the SBLT and Student Leadership meetings, members reviewed a condensed version of the building priorities before engaging in a semi-structured group discussion.
- An electronic **Survey** was sent to all staff and students in the comprehensive high schools 24 hours after a scheduled office hour day with the building plan architect, and remained open for approximately two weeks.

Both types of data sources asked similar questions, but the question wording varied slightly by data source and respondent type. The table below crosswalks the questions asked across data sources:

Question	Focus Groups	Staff Survey	Student Survey
What are you excited about?	X	X	
What is essential to the building plan?	X	X	
What is the greatest area of need?			X
What is missing?	X	X	
What’s unique about your school that could be amplified through building renovations?	X	X	X

Because of their thematic similarity, the questions “What is essential to the building plan?” and “What is the greatest area of need?” were combined in the analyses and presentation of findings.

**Number of Respondents**

The number of students and staff providing input varied by school and data source. The sample of student respondents is diverse by grade, gender, and race/ethnicity; respondents in the SBLT focus groups skew white, reflective of MMSD’s current workforce. The following table presents the number of respondents participating by school for both the focus groups and surveys.<sup>1</sup>

School	SBLT Focus Group	Student Focus Group	Total Focus Group	Staff Survey	Student Survey	Total Survey
East	6	11	17	42	99	141
La Follette	10	20	30	30	111	141
Memorial	10	23	33	41	196	237
West	7	17	24	39	234	273
<i>MMSD Total</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>71</i>	<i>104</i>	<i>152</i>	<i>640</i>	<i>792</i>

**Qualitative Analysis**

After data collection, responses from focus groups and the surveys were imported into NVivo qualitative data analysis software. An analyst then coded the data thematically, applying a set of a priori descriptive codes to each response and creating new codes to capture themes that emerged from the data. The data was also coded to indicate which question the data pertained to, the respondents’ roles (e.g. student or staff), and the respondents’ schools to enable the analyst to disaggregate the data by these categories. The analyst then looked for emergent themes and trends in the coded response data.

To meet the threshold for inclusion in this report, a theme is considered a finding if it was mentioned by at least 20% of respondents in at least one data source (e.g. mentioned by at least 20% of students in Student Focus Group at La Follette). This method was chosen due to significantly larger numbers of respondents to the survey relative to focus groups, and to ensure that both types of data sources have similar weight.

**Findings**

Because each MMSD high school is unique and the facilities plan details different components and updates for each school, findings from this analysis are presented on the following page by school. Each set of findings is organized by question, with most common findings across data sources presented in heatmap tables. Tables are shaded to indicate that a particular theme was mentioned by at least 20% of respondents in that group, thus meeting the threshold for inclusion.

<sup>1</sup> Focus group respondents may have also been included as survey respondents; as such, findings from these data sources are presented separately, rather than pooled.

**East**

**Key Findings:**

1. Students and staff respondents at East discussed updates to utilities and bathrooms as exciting-- and essential-- aspects of the building plan.
2. East’s unique, historic architecture is a source of pride for student and staff, which they believe should be accentuated through building renovations.

**Findings by Question:**

*What are you excited about?*

Theme	Staff FG (n=6)	Student FG (n=11)	Staff Survey (n=42)	Student Survey (n=99)
Classrooms	33%	27%	31%	N/A
Utilities & basic infrastructure	50%	9%	33%	N/A
Entrances, exits	33%	36%	12%	N/A
Athletics Facilities	17%	45%	2%	N/A

Students and staff at East discussed a wide number of plan elements they found exciting. Renovations to classrooms were most commonly discussed theme, including basic upkeep, e.g. “all of our classrooms being retouched with new tiling and paint” (East Student), and upgrades to the equipment and physical space in science labs and CTE rooms.

Students and staff both also discussed their interest in plans for the building entrance and Welcome Center. “The relocation of the Admin Offices to actually welcome people to our building without them having to wander through a maze of hallways and stairwells,” was a component that excited one staff survey respondent.

Staff respondents also frequently discussed upgrades to the building’s utilities, specifically emphasizing eagerness for functioning heating/cooling systems. Meanwhile, students were more likely to mention excitement over plans for athletics facilities, including locker room upgrades.

*What is essential to the building plan?*

Theme	Staff FG (n=6)	Student FG (n=11)	Staff Survey (n=42)	Student Survey (n=99)
Utilities & basic infrastructure	67%	91%	43%	27%
Bathrooms	17%	27%	10%	21%
Classrooms	50%	9%	19%	16%
Athletics Facilities	17%	36%	2%	12%
Building architecture	0%	27%	5%	1%

Across data sources, students and staff at East agreed that updates to the building’s utilities, including heating/cooling and plumbing systems, to be the most critical component of the building plan. As one student survey respondent described, “Air conditioning please! It gets very hard to concentrate when it’s warm out.” This sentiment was corroborated with staff responses, as one staff member explained, “Addressing the building’s inadequate and inconsistent heating/cooling needs is an essential part to student learning.” Students also discussed updates to the building’s plumbing and bathrooms to be a critical need.

Common among staff respondents was the need for updates to classrooms, while students more frequently mentioned upgrades to locker rooms and changing spaces part of the school’s athletics facilities.

Around a third of student focus group respondents noted that retaining the historic elements of the building’s architecture was an essential component of any updates to the facility. One student shared “the outside look” should be preserved while another added it is essential to “keep [the] character [...] so that East stays East”

**What is missing?**

Theme	Staff FG (n=6)	Student FG (n=11)	Staff Survey (n=42)	Student Survey (n=99)
'None' or no response	33%	45%	7%	N/A
Parking	17%	45%	5%	N/A

When asked to describe any elements missing from the plan, the most common response across respondents and data types was 'none.' Of the respondents who suggested components missing from the plan, several, especially students, described updates to parking. Around half of student focus groups members pinpointed additional student parking as an area that required attention from the new facilities plan.

No other theme was mentioned by more than 20% of any respondent group or data source.

**What is unique about your school that could be amplified through building renovations?**

Theme	Staff FG (n=6)	Student FG (n=11)	Staff Survey (n=42)	Student Survey (n=99)
Building architecture	83%	45%	38%	15%

Overwhelmingly, student and staff respondents discussed the historic architecture of East High School as an element they wanted to preserve and celebrate through renovations to the building. Many respondents commented on the unique exterior of the building, the “castle” aesthetic, forum and mall areas, high ceilings in the classrooms, and the building’s towers. According to two staff respondents, “the exterior architecture is magnificent [...] it’s an important landmark for the East Side Community,” and “The feel of the ‘castle’ is also extremely important!” Many responses to this question requested keeping the building structurally preserved while modernizing some components, such as two staff survey respondents: “[the building] is a classic and should be thought of that way from the exterior, but needs an update on the inside,” and “update for now and the future, but let the original designs come through.”

No other theme was mentioned by more than 20% of any respondent group or data source.

**La Follette**

**Key Findings:**

1. La Follette students and staff viewed the school’s auditorium as a unique part of their school that could be improved through updates.
2. Respondents from La Follette believe basic renovations to the facility’s bathrooms and heating/cooling systems are necessary.

**Findings by Question:**

**What are you excited about?**

Theme	Staff FG (n=10)	Student FG (n=20)	Staff Survey (n=30)	Student Survey (n=111)
Arts Facilities	30%	35%	13%	N/A
Athletics Facilities	20%	30%	13%	N/A
Bathrooms	20%	20%	13%	N/A
Utilities & basic infrastructure	20%	5%	20%	N/A
Entrances, exits	60%	0%	7%	N/A
Grounds	50%	0%	10%	N/A

Around a third of La Follette students and staff participating in focus groups expressed excitement regarding the plan’s upgrades to arts facilities, especially the auditorium. Slightly fewer mentioned athletics facilities, including “the idea of expanding and connecting the gyms together,” and changes to the football field.

Students and staff also mentioned being excited about maintenance to the school’s bathroom facilities; as one staff respondent articulated, they were looking forward to having “bathrooms no longer from the Kennedy/LBJ administration.” Similarly, respondents shared hopes for updates to air conditioning and heating systems in the building.

In the staff focus group, staff mentioned themes not commonly discussed in other data sources. Staff were excited about the plan for the building entrances, including creating an “expanded, truly welcoming Welcome Center.” Half of staff also mentioned plan for the school grounds– filling in “the pit”–was exciting.

**What is essential to the building plan?**

Theme	Staff FG (n=10)	Student FG (n=20)	Staff Survey (n=30)	Student Survey (n=111)
Bathrooms	20%	25%	17%	31%
Utilities & basic infrastructure	20%	10%	20%	28%
Arts Facilities	20%	25%	3%	14%
Classrooms	20%	0%	20%	12%
Athletics Facilities	20%	20%	0%	9%

The most frequent response across respondent types and data sources was that updates to La Follette’s bathrooms are essential. When discussing bathroom updates, several respondents discussed the importance of creating gender neutral facilities. Respondents also frequently mentioned basic upgrades to air conditioning/heating and new ceiling tiles as critical pieces of the plan.

Students and staff also discussed updates to arts facilities, specifically the auditorium, and athletics facilities, including to locker rooms and the “spec gym.” Staff respondents also mentioned essential changes to classroom and instructional space, including adding walls to some classrooms and renovations to science labs.

**What is missing?**

Theme	Staff FG (n=10)	Student FG (n=20)	Staff Survey (n=30)	Student Survey (n=111)
Parking	20%	55%	3%	N/A
Teacher Space	40%	0%	17%	N/A
Arts Facilities	40%	5%	3%	N/A

Parking was cited most frequently as a missing component of the facilities plan across respondent types and data sources. Several respondents specifically requested additional exits and entrances to improve the flow of the parking lot; as one student respondent explained, “as of now it’s hard to get out the parking lot.”

Staff focus group respondents were more split regarding missing components of the facilities plan. Approximately equal numbers of staff discussed teachers-only space, including a Mother’s Room and collaboration spaces, as well as updates to arts facilities.

**What is unique about your school that could be amplified through building renovations?**

Theme	Staff FG (n=10)	Student FG (n=20)	Staff Survey (n=30)	Student Survey (n=111)
Arts Facilities	10%	20%	3%	21%
Grounds	0%	5%	27%	6%
Murals	0%	50%	3%	4%

When discussing unique aspects of La Follette, student respondents tended to discuss arts programming and facilities, especially elements of the auditorium to both retain and upgrade. Shared students, “Auditorium is a unique place in our

school. But I think it needs renovations since it has wooden chairs.” “Our auditorium is nice, but the stage needs to be fixed,” and “I feel like the auditorium shouldn’t be changed too much. It should have the same kind of look because it’s a staple of the school.”

In addition, students discussed La Follette’s murals as a cherished element that should be highlighted in the midst of building renovations. As one student stated, “We have a lot of diversity, and keeping our mural that is by the spectator gym that is key to keeping it.”

The most common response among staff was that the outdoor areas on school grounds have potential, and plans to fill in “the pit” present a unique opportunity. No other theme emerged by more than 20% of respondents in at least one data source.

### **Memorial**

#### **Key Findings:**

1. Respondents discussed improvements to facilities used for athletics and the arts, especially music, to support their strong programs.
2. Students and staff at Memorial highlighted the need for renovations to the school’s bathroom facilities and utilities.

#### **Findings by Question:**

##### *What are you excited about?*

Theme	Staff FG (n=10)	Student FG (n=23)	Staff Survey (n=41)	Student Survey (n=196)
Arts Facilities	30%	43%	15%	N/A
Bathrooms	0%	30%	29%	N/A
Athletics Facilities	10%	43%	17%	N/A
Classrooms	20%	13%	24%	N/A
Utilities & basic infrastructure	10%	4%	22%	N/A

Both students and staff at Memorial commonly mentioned improvements to arts facilities (particularly renovations to the band and orchestra facilities and to the auditorium) and bathrooms at Memorial. In addition, improvements to athletics facilities, such as locker room updates and the addition of a turf field, were common among student focus group respondents.

Staff respondents specifically expressed excitement regarding upgrades to classroom and instructional spaces. Many of these comments referred to the need for soundproofed walls separating classrooms and/or specific upgrades to science and STEM labs.

A smaller number of staff and student respondents discussed excitement over basic maintenance to utilities and infrastructure: as one staff survey respondent explained, “I am excited by the essential improvements that are so very necessary: efficient heating/cooling, ceiling and roof repairs, plumbing and electrical upgrades.”

**What is essential to the building plan?**

Theme	Staff FG (n=10)	Student FG (n=23)	Staff Survey (n=41)	Student Survey (n=196)
Bathrooms	20%	52%	12%	54%
Utilities & basic infrastructure	80%	43%	24%	13%
Arts Facilities	30%	22%	17%	15%
Classrooms	60%	13%	27%	11%
Athletics Facilities	0%	39%	20%	8%

Common to both student and staff respondents was the need for basic maintenance to the building’s bathrooms and utilities. Regarding bathrooms, many students described leaky plumbing and dysfunctional stall doors, and as one student summarized, “We really need new bathrooms, the ones we have now are broken, dirty and nasty.”

Arts and athletics facilities were also mentioned frequently by both students and staff. Regarding arts facilities, many respondents mentioned music wing and auditorium updates. One respondent claimed, “The band rooms don’t have enough space to practice [...] Orchestra has similar needs.” Regarding athletics facilities, a new weight room, locker rooms, and turf field were common responses.

In addition, staff respondents described updates to classrooms as essential to the facilities plan. In particular, they mentioned larger rooms, building walls between classrooms, and updating technology and scientific equipment.

**What is missing?**

Theme	Staff FG (n=10)	Student FG (n=23)	Staff Survey (n=41)	Student Survey (n=196)
Classrooms	20%	4%	29%	N/A
Athletics Facilities	0%	35%	7%	N/A
Light, windows	10%	30%	5%	N/A
Teacher Space	40%	0%	2%	N/A

Staff in the focus group at Memorial noted that they would have liked to see classroom updates and dedicated spaces for teachers to collaborate highlighted in the plan. Meanwhile, students more commonly noted that some upgrades to athletic facilities, such as the pool, and natural lighting in the building were missing from the plan.

**What is unique about your school that could be amplified through building renovations?**

Theme	Staff FG (n=10)	Student FG (n=23)	Staff Survey (n=41)	Student Survey (n=196)
Arts Facilities	10%	39%	17%	20%
Athletics Facilities	20%	39%	7%	8%
Grounds	10%	30%	12%	4%

In discussing unique aspects of their school, many students and staff discussed high performance in arts and athletics programming, and noted that facilities should be upgraded to reflect that excellence. A student survey respondent explained, “Memorial has a very strong performing arts program. We could flourish even more if we had sufficient practice rooms, spacious classrooms, and a proper auditorium,” while a student focus group respondent summarized, “We have a really strong arts/sports program so we should be able to show that off.”

Respondents including around a third of student focus group respondents discussed the expansive grounds and outdoor space surrounding the school as a unique area of the Memorial campus that could be accentuated through improvements to the building.

**West**

**Key Findings:**

1. West respondents discussed alleviating crowding through renovations to the building, including to classrooms and the parking lot.
2. Students and staff expressed concern about unsafe conditions due to inadequate ventilation system in the pool area.

**Findings by Question:**

*What are you excited about?*

Theme	Staff FG (n=7)	Student FG (n=17)	Staff Survey (n=39)	Student Survey (n=234)
Parking	29%	76%	36%	N/A
Classrooms	86%	18%	18%	N/A
Athletics Facilities	0%	53%	15%	N/A
Bathrooms	43%	12%	10%	N/A
Arts Facilities	0%	24%	5%	N/A

The most common response shared by West respondents across data sources was excitement for plans regarding expanded parking. One student survey respondent exclaimed, “More parking spaces - this is super important!”

Staff in focus groups frequently discussed excitement over classroom renovations and bathroom upgrades. When discussing classrooms, many respondents shared that they believed rooms to be overcrowded and were in need of additional space. As one staff survey respondent explained, “West is so crunched for instructional space (especially in science) that it negatively impacts teaching and learning.”

Students, on the other hand, more commonly mentioned being excited over the plans for athletics and arts facilities renovations.

*What is essential to the building plan?*

Theme	Staff FG (n=7)	Student FG (n=17)	Staff Survey (n=39)	Student Survey (n=234)
Bathrooms	14%	35%	10%	44%
Athletics Facilities	29%	29%	15%	15%
Utilities & basic infrastructure	43%	29%	15%	13%
Classrooms	57%	12%	18%	6%
Parking	0%	47%	26%	3%

Students in focus groups and on the survey discussed that refreshments to the school’s bathrooms, including ensuring functioning plumbing and stall door locks, were an area of great need and an essential update in the building plan. Updates to the building utilities, especially the building’s water, was also a common theme. “Although it would be nice to have big renovations, what we need most are things like bathroom locks and safe drinking fountains,” one student survey respondent stated.

Student and staff also discussed needed athletics renovations, particularly in terms of adding space, improving locker rooms, and ventilation in the school’s natatorium. “Right now, the pool is barely vented at all,” one staff survey respondent explained, adding, “Anyone who has swam at West in the last decade will tell you that the air quality borders on dangerous.”

Classroom updates and additional parking also emerged as common themes staff and students viewed as essential to the building plan.



**What is missing?**

Theme	Staff FG (n=7)	Student FG (n=17)	Staff Survey (n=39)	Student Survey (n=234)
Athletics Facilities	0%	35%	10%	N/A
Cafeteria	43%	29%	5%	N/A
Parking	14%	35%	5%	N/A
Classrooms	29%	6%	13%	N/A
Arts Facilities	0%	24%	5%	N/A

The most common response shared by students and staff in focus groups was that updates to the cafeteria were missing from the plan. Several respondents noted there was a need for basic renovations as well as expansion of space for students to eat and congregate.

Staff mentioned a variety of classroom improvements they found missing from the plan, including additional space, changes to classroom layout, and new classroom furniture. Students also added that updates to athletics facilities, student-specific parking spaces, and arts facilities should receive more attention from the plan.

**What is unique about your school that could be amplified through building renovations?**

Theme	Staff FG (n=7)	Student FG (n=17)	Staff Survey (n=39)	Student Survey (n=234)
Athletics Facilities	0%	29%	8%	15%
Arts Facilities	14%	35%	5%	13%
Interior décor, wood paneling	57%	18%	18%	2%
Building architecture	43%	6%	10%	4%
Light, windows	43%	0%	5%	3%

Students in focus groups suggested that West’s need for updated and expanded arts and athletics facilities were unique aspect of their school. Students also emphasized successful arts and athletics programming deserving of improved facilities.

Staff more commonly discussed unique, aesthetic aspects of West that they hoped would be amplified through building renovations. These included the wood paneling in the hallways and building interior, building exterior architecture, and the amount of natural lighting in the building.