

**Rockford Public Schools, District 205**  
**Facilities Master Plan 2025 - 2030**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**West Middle School**  
**Wednesday, September 20, 2023**

Michael Phillips, COO opened the meeting at 7:05 p.m. and gave a brief overview of what has been accomplished and what the future holds.

2020 – Completed a comprehensive Facilities Condition Assessment to gain a deeper understanding of the overall condition of our buildings, and a Building Utilization Assessment to get insight into how our buildings are being used and their functional capacity.

2022 – Completed the last 10-year Facilities Master Plan (FMP). Over \$279 million was invested in our facilities.

Summers of 2022 & 2023 – District has been upgrading the HVAC systems, including air conditioning in the classrooms. This work will be completed in the summer of 2024 with a total investment of \$160 million paid for with ESSER-II and ARP Esser grant funds.

February 2023 – District-wide Security Audit performed to identify our sites and building vulnerabilities.

The Facilities Condition Assessment, Building Utilization Analysis and the Security Audit will be used to help inform the Master Plan process.

Over the past two years new building needs have emerged such as supporting student restorative and therapeutic care with refocus, reset and restore rooms. Or support service space for Social Workers, Title I staff, and Pathologists. These are examples of suggestions that have been shared through Let's Talk and will be elevated for discussion and consideration during the planning process.

The DLR Group, an award-winning human experience through design firm, tasked with bringing our vision to life, introduced themselves.

Scott Pashia, AIA – Senior Project Manager  
Keri Vansant, AIA – Project Manager/Senior Associate  
Korey White, AIA – Senior Associate  
Leanne Meyer-Smith – K-12 Education Leader/Principal

DLR Group is an employee owned and operated company with 1300 employees and 30 locations worldwide. The representatives gave a presentation explaining what a Long-range Facilities Plan is, and how the process works which includes input from students, staff, parents, administrators, and community.

The presentation included a web-based engagement exercise that audience members participated in using their phones. Below are the answers to various questions posed.

What is your relationship to the District?

Parent/Caregiver	8
Educator	28
Community Partner	2
Alumni	4
Other	4

In a few words, what are the strengths of your community?

Collaborative	Inclusivity	Performing and visual art
Strong	Caring	Hard-working staff
Family	Technology	Pride
Opportunity	Dedicated Staff	Collaborative
Friendly	Working together	Community
Diversity	Equity focus	Inclusive
Involvement	Strong Leadership	Caring faculty
Educators	Dedicated teachers	Compassion
Positivity	Loyal	Neighborhood
Communication	Curious students	Supportive
Inventive	Love	Care
Partnerships	Safety	Teachers
Good	Dedicated	Great
Involved	Powerful	Innovative
Attendance	Students	Arts-driven
Resilience		

What are the opportunities for positive change?

Faith	Listen to teachers' needs	Hearing everyone voice
Smaller classes	Involve neighborhood	Investment in structure
Less bureaucracy	Smaller classrooms	Equality west to east
Involve parents	Fewer Administrators	Listening and believing
Bell free	Better equity focus	Accountability of Admin
Special needs	HVAC upgrades	Administration

Involvement	Bell Free	Student community engagement
Outdoor greenhouse	Cross curricular	More outdoor activities
Student center	Proper equipment	More inclusive restrooms
Self-efficacy	Help students in crisis	Help families with trauma
Collaboration space	funds allocated	teacher voice
Diversity	Equity	Women of color teachers
Balance of resources	accountability	Consistency
Inclusiveness	Collaboration	Educator collaboration
Update buildings	Safety of all in building	Space (more/variety/usable) (6)
Inclusive prenatal-12	Families	Size
Updated	Togetherness	Modern clean bathrooms
Families	Focus on parent's role	Bathrooms special needs
Communication	Listening	Understanding
Modern equipment	Tech cell service	Admin support
Truancy	Attendance	Student flexibility
Respecting staff	Safety	Closer parking at School
Recruit and retain staff	Achievement	Trust
Stop cellphones	Stern	Down

Who should we hear from as part of this planning process?

Students (14)	Parents (12)	Administrators
Community (8)	Teachers/Educators (12)	Staff (5)
Principal (1)		

The people closest to the work

The teachers need to be involved in changes to their buildings

Please come to schools to talk with staff and students

Educators that are in a classroom

Staff across the district, not just school building staff

Special Program staff and students (2)

Those who are actually working and utilizing the administrative spaces

Willingness of parents to get involved and assume responsibility

It is most important to speak with teachers as we use these spaces daily. We do not want a company to just come in and say this furniture works best.

More from teachers and students aside from administration. Listen to the people in the trenches, in the classroom

EC department, Prevention initiative

What are your biggest concerns as you look towards the future of the District?

Security	Flexibility	Building capacities
Waste	Resistance to Change	Inequity/equity (3)
Safety/security (3)	Overcrowding	Disengagement
Equity of funds	Layout	That layout won't work
Lack of space for EC	Having enough space (2)	Taking walls down
Focusing on wrong things	Listening to educators	Honest open communication
Teacher/staff Shortage (2)	Focus on Students	Facilities
Fad changes	Flexibility	Building capacity (2)
Code of Conduct	Resistance to change (2)	Elimination of and discrediting Programs
Accountability	Blame	Divisions
Expenses	Communication	Unsustainable building
Bad lab design	Buy in	Moving
Kids will not understand	Tech support staff	Tech training for student
Harder to learn	What about the basics	Attracting innovation (2)
Code of Conduct	Alternative Education	Ability to solve problems
Education	Improve attendance	Treating disciplined kids
Violence	Consider parental input	Class size
School closures	Number of buildings	Healthy work environments
Job likeability	Top heavy administration	Sneaky administration
AI takeover		

Are there certain programs that you see as being important for students to have access to in their RPS school?

Arts/Music (6)	Career & Tech Ed (6)	Mental Health – Social/Emotional (6)
CAPA	Home Economics	Consumer Ed
Special Programs (2)	Better teacher training	Parent education and support (2)
Computer Programming	Project based learning	Computer Programming/Tech (3)
Medusa creation	Maker spaces (2)	Interventions (Behavioral/Academic)
Special programs (2)	Prevention initiative	Robotic, engineer, cyber space
Outdoor Learning	Greenhouses	

Alternative programs that cater to students' needs. SEL programs, Bridge programs

Access video explaining handbook

Collaboration spaces that don't get turned into offices

History we know about but they don't teach about

In a few words, what does success look like for this planning process?

Needs of the student	Student centered	Happy kids, teachers & parents (4)
Student engagement (2)	More disciplined students	Self driven student
Student success	Student motivation	Family centered
Fun	Involvement	Safety (2)
Teachers feeling valued	Teacher support	Teacher needs met
Educator buy in (2)	Staff centered	Staff comfort
Inclusion/one (3)	Many voices	Involving everyone's input
Utilizing input	Informed decisions	Goals
Teachers feel valued	Understanding	More teachers
Everyone feels heard	Partnership	Plan with those in space
Equity	Equity of funds	Smaller classes
Adequate space (4)	Healthy spaces	Storage
Many voices	Voices heard	Adding
Higher graduation rate	Higer GPA	Pass aptitude test
All needs considered	Growth	Valuable learning opportunity
Updated	Modern spaces (2)	Future ready facilities
Expanding buildings	On the cusp	Roosevelt building exists
Staying in budget	Budget friendly	

Ongoing processes in preparing a plan for the District will include:

Input from community meetings

Input from Let's Talk submissions

Educator and Staff Survey about the facilities

Educational suitability walks through the schools

Review of previous assessments: facilities, condition, utilization and capacity, enrollment

Curriculum & Instructor workshops

Student workshops

As we move through the process, the presentations, videos, and minutes will be available on the District website under the Community Tab, Master Facilities Plan.

Michael Phillips, COO thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting at 7:05.