



SUITABILITY AND TECHNOLOGY READINESS REPORT

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Richland County School District 1

Submitted by:

MGT

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EDUCATIONAL SUITABILITY ASSESSMENT

Introduction

MGT was contracted by Richland County School District 1 (RCSD1) to conduct Educational Suitability assessments in elementary, middle, and high schools to measure the extent to which instructional and non-instructional spaces sufficiently support the educational and operational functions that are housed in those spaces. In order to determine the educational suitability for each assessed space, MGT assessors meet with RCSD1 personnel to review state and district educational specifications and develop an *Educational Suitability Guide* document based on those specifications and used by each of the MGT assessors during their school site visits. The guide informs the work of the assessors to facilitate consistent data collection. Every RCSD1 school receives an overall educational suitability score that is used to calculate budget estimates for mitigating facility deficiencies.

Overview

Richland County School District 1 (RCSD1) contracted MGT to assess the educational suitability and technology readiness of its schools. These assessments evaluate how well school spaces support educational programs, focusing on environment, size, location, and equipment, and result in scores that guide facility improvements and capital planning.

- **Assessment Framework:** MGT developed an Educational Suitability Guide with RCSD1 leadership to standardize evaluations across various school spaces, including classrooms, specialized areas, support spaces, and site features like traffic and parking. Technology readiness was also assessed, covering communication, power, and network infrastructure.
- **Suitability Scoring System:** Each school receives a weighted score on a 100-point scale reflecting the proportion of space types and additional categories like access, wayfinding, and technology. Scores range from Unsatisfactory (<60) to Excellent (90+), providing a clear rating scale for facility conditions.
- **Overall Suitability Results:** The majority of RCSD1 schools scored highly, with 77% rated Excellent and 21% Good. No schools scored Fair or below, indicating strong alignment with educational needs district wide.
- **School Type Scores:** Elementary schools averaged a suitability score of 94, middle schools 93, and high schools 91, with ranges generally spanning Good to Excellent. These results reflect consistent quality across grade levels.
- **Technology Readiness:** Across elementary, middle, and high schools, technology readiness averaged 97, with many schools achieving perfect scores. Some schools scored below average, highlighting areas for focused technology improvements to ensure equitable access.
- **Qualitative Evaluations:** Instructional spaces such as classrooms, science labs, and arts areas mostly received Excellent or Good ratings. Support spaces like restrooms and staff lounges showed more variability and lower ratings, especially in middle and high schools.

Educational Suitability Guide

The *Educational Suitability Guide* is a resource that details the educational specifications for school environments for RCSD1. The development of the educational suitability guide is the work product of a series of collaborative sessions with RCSD1 academic and operational leadership prior to the start of MGT's assessments of the schools. These sessions clarified the purpose and goals of the learning environments and resulted in a quantifiable evaluation tool that was used during the assessment process. Discussions with RCSD1 personnel resulted in educational suitability guidelines for the following types of spaces:

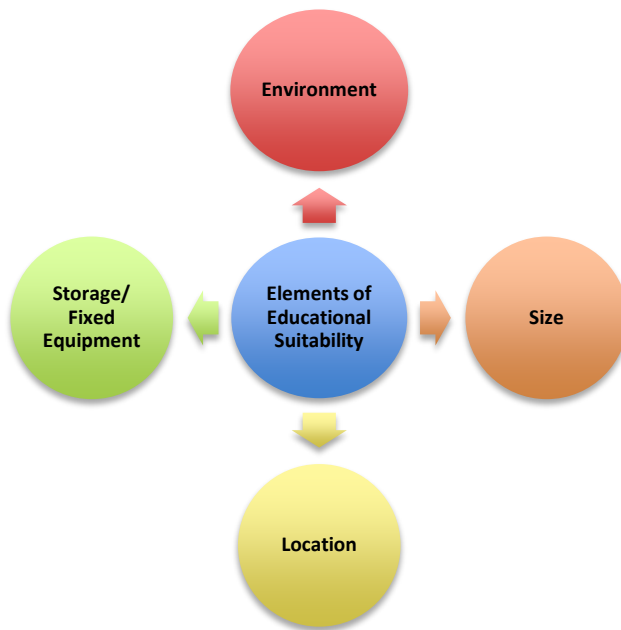
- General Classrooms
- K-1 Classrooms
- Computer Labs
- Physical Education
- Science
- Visual Arts
- Performing Arts
- Music
- Band
- Orchestra
- Chorus
- CTAE
- Self-Contained SPED*
- Administration
- Clinic
- Cafeteria
- Food Prep
- Student Support
- Counseling
- Custodial
- Student Restrooms
- Faculty Workspaces
- Vehicular Traffic
- Pedestrian Traffic
- Parking
- Play Areas

**This space was only assessed in schools with programs with the accompanying specialized requirements for the Location, Size, and Storage/Fixed Equipment elements.*

The *Educational Suitability Guide* also provides guidance for the assessment of Access and Wayfinding, and Technology Readiness. The assessed features for each of these areas are shown below:

- Access and Wayfinding
- Signage and Wayfinding
- Ease of Supervision
- Technology Readiness
- Communication/IT
- Electrical Power
- Cooling
- Network Connectivity
- Network Performance
- Voice Distribution
- Video Distribution
- Faculty Technology

MGT assessed four components of educational suitability for each type of school space:



- **Environment:** Each space should provide an inviting and stimulating environment for learning. Assessed elements include lighting, HVAC, acoustics, and aesthetics.
- **Size:** Each space should meet the size standards specified in the state/district educational specifications.
- **Location:** The space should be appropriately located based on the program's needs, e.g., noisy spaces such as the band room should not be adjacent to academic classrooms.
- **Storage/Fixed Equipment:** The space should have appropriate fixed equipment and sufficient storage for teacher and student materials for each instructional program.

Suitability Scoring

MGT educational suitability assessors' evaluation of each school results in an educational suitability score based on a 100-point scale developed as a percentage of possible points for all scored suitability categories. The possible score for each space type was weighted based on that space type's proportion of the total area of the school model. Consequently, general classrooms in an elementary school receive more possible points than general classrooms in a high school, since they represent a greater proportion of the total space.

The suitability scoring system includes additional educational suitability categories that cannot always be weighted based on simple square footage. Some examples of these categories include Access and Wayfinding (e.g., ease of supervision, signage, and wayfinding, etc.) outdoor spaces (e.g., pedestrian and vehicular traffic, parking, etc.) and technology readiness (network connectivity, electrical power, cooling, etc.). The weightings of these categories were determined through field work by experienced educators and architects/engineers and reflect each category's relative importance in that particular model. The points assigned to a specific educational suitability category in one model may differ from another model. A comparison of the points assigned to specific educational suitability across models is not appropriate because the size and proportion of spaces will be different based on the type of school. For example, an auditorium is typical at a high school, but elementary and middle schools may have multi-purpose spaces (i.e., "cafeteriums"). The points assigned to these spaces are likely to be different. Suitability scores for all of these spaces are interpreted as follows:

RICHLAND COUNTY SCHOOLS
SUITABILITY ASSESSMENT RATING SCALE

90+	Excellent: The facility is designed to provide for and support a majority of the educational program offered. It may have minor suitability issues but overall, it meets the needs of the educational program.
80-89	Good: The facility is designed to provide for and support the educational program offered. It may have minor suitability issues but generally meets the needs of the educational program.
70-79	Fair: The facility has some problems meeting the needs of the educational program and may require some remodeling.
60-69	Poor: The facility has numerous problems meeting the needs of the educational program and needs significant remodeling, additions, or replacement.
Below 60	Unsatisfactory: The facility is unsuitable in support of the educational program.

Educational Suitability Overview

Richland County School District 1 demonstrates a high level of alignment between its school facilities and the district’s educational framework. Of the 44 schools assessed, 14% earned a rating of *Excellent*, 43% received a rating of *Good*, 41% were categorized as *Fair*, and 2% were deemed Unsatisfactory in overall educational suitability. Notably, no schools were rated *Poor*, underscoring the district’s strong commitment to creating learning environments that are well-designed, functional, and conducive to 21st-century instruction. These results reflect thoughtful planning, strategic investment, and a clear focus on instructional alignment, ensuring that the quality of educational spaces supports academic excellence and equity across all grade levels. The consistency of high performance across elementary, middle, and high schools indicates a strong commitment to creating positive learning experiences for all learners.

EDUCATIONAL SUITABILITY ASSESSMENTS

KEY FINDINGS

Each school is assigned an educational suitability score that assesses how effectively various spaces support the educational program. Furthermore, each school is provided with a comprehensive educational suitability score, encompassing the following categories:

- The overall school environment should provide a safe, engaging, and positive setting for learning.
- The flow and interaction between pedestrian and vehicular traffic, along with the suitability of site facilities and signage, must be considered.
- Facilities and spaces should be available to support the educational program, including general classrooms, specialized learning areas such as music rooms, libraries, and science labs, as well as support areas like administrative offices, counseling centers, reception areas, kitchens, and health clinics.
- Instructional and programmatic spaces must be adequately sized to meet the needs of students and staff.
- Spatial relationships and adjacencies should be appropriate—for example, physical education areas should be separated from quiet zones.
- Utilities, built-in equipment, storage, and interior finishes such as flooring, acoustical treatments, and wall surfaces must be suitable and well-maintained.
- Access points and wayfinding features within the facility should support ease of movement.

Suitability Finding #1: Educational Suitability Assessment: Score Range and Average Score by Facility Type

The exhibit below displays the high and low range of educational suitability scores for each school type, as well as the average educational suitability score for each school level. For elementary schools, there is a 43-point range between the minimum and maximum scores, from Unsatisfactory to Excellent. On average the facilities are in the Good category. Middle schools have an 11-point range from Fair to Good. The average educational suitability score for these school levels is also Good. High schools show a 17-point range between the minimum and maximum scores, ranging from Fair to Excellent, with an average score rating of Good.

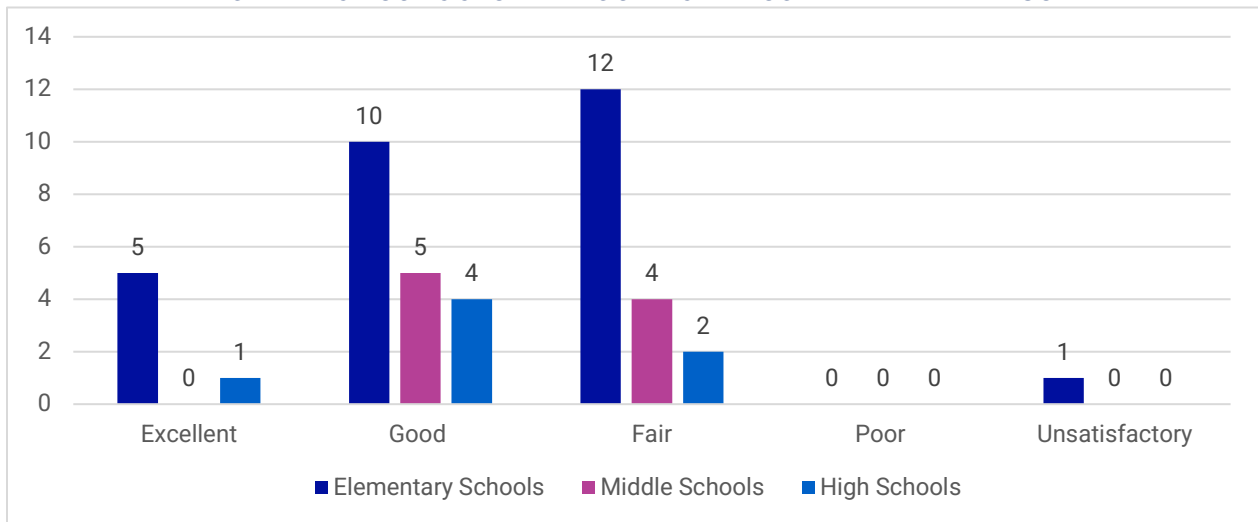
RICHLAND COUNTY SCHOOLS
EDUCATIONAL SUITABILITY SCORES BY SCHOOL TYPE

Educational Suitability Scores			
School Type	Low	High	Average
RCSD1 District	56.96	99.74	81.98
Elementary	56.96	99.74	82.04
Middle	78.47	89.25	81.04
High	75.92	92.70	82.54

Suitability Finding #2: Educational Suitability Assessment: Overall Suitability Score by Facility Level

The following shows a summary of all the 44 RCSD1 schools that were assessed. As shown in the exhibit, a total of 6 schools (14%) scored Excellent, 19 (43%) scored Good, 18 schools (41%) scored Fair, and 1 school (2%) scored Unsatisfactory. Of note, no schools had an overall suitability score of Poor.

RICHLAND COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT 1
NUMBER OF SCHOOLS BY EDUCATIONAL SUITABILITY RATINGS



Suitability Finding #3: Educational Suitability Assessment: Overall Educational Suitability Ratings at Building Level

MGT conducted educational suitability and technology readiness assessments for 47 (44 schools and 3 district related facilities) Richland County School District 1 (RCSD1) sites using the *Educational Suitability and Technology Readiness Assessment Guide* as the evaluation rubric. Each instructional space was evaluated based on four core components: learning environment, size, location, and storage/fixed equipment. These assessments focused on how well school facilities support instructional programs, rather than their physical condition, emphasizing the intentional design and functionality of learning spaces. Key instructional areas assessed included general classrooms, art, music, libraries, career and technical education (CTE), early childhood education (ECE), and instructional resource rooms. In addition, the assessments addressed safety and security features such as controlled entrances, visible signage, and effective supervision measures to ensure a safe learning environment.

Scoring for both educational suitability and technology readiness were based on a 100-point scale that is outlined below.

Scoring Scale

Excellent	> 90
Good	80 - 89
Fair	70 - 79
Poor	60 - 69
Unsatisfactory	< 60

Elementary Schools

Richland County elementary schools are demonstrating a good overall performance, with an average score of 82.26. Scores range widely from 56.96 to 99.74, reflecting both areas of excellence and campuses with significant needs. There are 15 schools that meet or exceeded the district average, while 5 schools achieved Excellent scores between 90.41 and 99.74, underscoring the district’s capacity to deliver highly effective learning environments. At the same time, approximately 13 schools, including Brennen Elementary with the lowest score of 56.96, highlight pockets where facility conditions fall short of district expectations.

School Name	Educational Suitability
A.C. Moore Elementary School	80.08
Caughman Road Elementary School	93.72
Gadsden Elementary School	78.46
Hopkins Elementary School	78.52
Horrell Hill Elementary School	78.76
Meadowfield Elementary School	87.83
Mill Creek Elementary School	83.17
Rosewood Elementary School	73.74
South Kilbourne Elementary School	77.83
Webber Elementary School	79.86
Bradley Elementary School	80.10
Brennen Elementary School	56.96
W. Clark Brockman Elementary School	79.12
Annie Burnside Elementary School	84.28
Burton-Pack Elementary School	99.74
Carver-Lyon Elementary School	80.00
A.J. Lewis Greenview Elementary School	87.72
Satchel Ford Elementary School	87.39
Watkins-Nance Elementary School	96.01
Arden Elementary School	80.54
E.E. Taylor Elementary School	79.33
Forest Heights Elementary School	83.26
H.B. Rhame Elementary School	77.57
Hyatt Park Elementary School	78.79
John P. Thomas Elementary School	77.20
Logan Elementary School	77.06
Pine Grove Elementary School	95.74
W.S. Sandel Elementary School	90.41
Elementary School Averages	82.26

Middle Schools

Richland County middle schools demonstrate good overall educational suitability, with an average facility score of 81.04. Scores range from 78.47 to 89.25, reflecting a narrower distribution than at the elementary level but still showing room for targeted improvement. Of the 9 campuses, 5 schools met or exceeded the district average, while the remaining 4 schools fell into the Fair category, signaling opportunities for reinvestment in facilities at this critical transitional stage. The results suggest that while middle school environments generally support student learning and developmental needs, some campuses require modernization to achieve greater consistency across the district.

School Name	Educational Suitability
Hand Middle School	81.07
Hopkins Middle School	78.52
Southeast Middle School	80.33
Crayton Middle School	81.75
W.A. Perry Middle School	78.47
W.G. Sanders Middle School	89.25
Alcorn Middle School	79.29
Heyward Gibbes Middle School	79.78
St. Andrews Middle School	80.94
Middle School Averages	81.04

High Schools

Richland County high schools demonstrate good educational suitability, with an average facility score of 82.54. Scores range from 75.92 to 92.70, with most schools (5) meeting or exceeding the district average. Only 2 campuses, including A.C. Flora High School and Eau Claire High School, achieved scores of in the Fair category, highlighting areas where facility improvements are needed to match the performance of stronger peers. At the upper end, W.J. Keenan High School achieved a score of 92.70, exemplifying how well-designed facilities can align with instructional priorities.

School Name	Educational Suitability
Dreher High School	84.82
Lower Richland High School	80.29
A.C. Flora High School	75.92
C.A. Johnson High School	81.28
W.J. Keenan High School	92.70
Columbia High School	83.46
Eau Claire High School	79.28
High School Average	82.54

Suitability Finding #4: Technology Readiness Assessment: Overall Technology Readiness Ratings at Building Level

Elementary Schools

Technology readiness across the district's 28 elementary schools is notably excellent, with an overall average score of 92.80. A total of 9 schools (32%) achieved a perfect score of 100, reflecting advanced infrastructure and broad digital access for younger learners. However, 7 schools (25%) scored in the Good or Fair category, with the lowest score being 74.10 at W. Clark Brockman Elementary School. This variation suggests that while many elementary campuses are fully equipped, some require targeted investment to ensure equitable technology access.

School Name	Technology Readiness
A.C. Moore Elementary School	100.00
Caughman Road Elementary School	90.00
Gadsden Elementary School	95.00
Hopkins Elementary School	95.00
Horrell Hill Elementary School	95.00
Meadowfield Elementary School	90.00
Mill Creek Elementary School	90.00
Rosewood Elementary School	100.00
South Kilbourne Elementary School	100.00
Webber Elementary School	100.00
Bradley Elementary School	100.00
Brennen Elementary School	83.30
W. Clark Brockman Elementary School	74.10
Annie Burnside Elementary School	92.50
Burton-Pack Elementary School	100.00
Carver-Lyon Elementary School	100.00
A.J. Lewis Greenview Elementary School	87.50
Satchel Ford Elementary School	81.58
Watkins-Nance Elementary School	100.00
Arden Elementary School	90.00
E.E. Taylor Elementary School	95.00
Forest Heights Elementary School	85.80
H.B. Rhame Elementary School	95.00
Hyatt Park Elementary School	100.00
John P. Thomas Elementary School	92.50
Logan Elementary School	95.00
Pine Grove Elementary School	81.58
W.S. Sandel Elementary School	89.47
Elementary School Averages	92.80

Middle Schools

The district's 9 middle schools have an excellent technology readiness score of 96.11. There were 3 schools that achieved perfect scores of 100, while the remaining 6 schools persisted within the Excellent category, signaling strong technology infrastructure throughout this grade band. The lowest score, 90.00 at W.G. Sanders Middle School, still falls within the Excellent range, underscoring the consistency of digital preparedness across campuses.

School Name	Technology Readiness
Hand Middle School	92.50
Hopkins Middle School	95.00
Southeast Middle School	100.00
Crayton Middle School	95.00
W.A. Perry Middle School	100.00
W.G. Sanders Middle School	90.00
Alcorn Middle School	100.00
Heyward Gibbes Middle School	95.00
St. Andrews Middle School	97.50
Middle School Averages	96.11

High Schools

Technology Readiness across the district's 7 high schools is excellent, with an overall average score of 91.39. Only 2 of the schools, 29%, achieved perfect scores of 100, demonstrating exemplary digital infrastructure and full alignment with instructional technology needs. An additional 2 schools scored in the Good category. The lowest score of 77.50 was assessed at C.A. Johnson High School. These results reflect a clear opportunity for targeted upgrades. The remaining campuses fell within the Excellent category, reinforcing that most high schools are well-prepared to support digital learning.

School Name	Technology Readiness
Dreher High School	87.50
Lower Richland High School	100.00
A.C. Flora High School	97.50
C.A. Johnson High School	77.50
W.J. Keenan High School	82.50
Columbia High School	94.74
Eau Claire High School	100.00
High School Average	91.39

Details on the educational suitability and technology readiness assessments are included in individual school reports produced by MGT. These reports provide narrative descriptions of all assessed elements that received a rating of Fair, Poor or Unsatisfactory.

Suitability Finding #5: Educational Suitability Assessment: Overall Scores

Elementary Schools

Richland County’s elementary schools demonstrate a good overall performance, with an average score of 87.92. Scores range from 78.18 to 99.18, reflecting both consistency and pockets of excellence across the district. All but 1 campus met or exceeded the district average, underscoring broad alignment with instructional and operational priorities. Only 1 school fell into the Fair category, highlighting that deficiencies at the elementary level are limited and isolated.

School Name	Score
A.C. Moore Elementary School	89.97
Caughman Road Elementary School	83.57
Gadsden Elementary School	83.83
Hopkins Elementary School	80.85
Horrell Hill Elementary School	87.37
Meadowfield Elementary School	89.45
Mill Creek Elementary School	86.96
Rosewood Elementary School	90.16
South Kilbourne Elementary School	86.07
Webber Elementary School	86.10
Bradley Elementary School	78.18
Brennen Elementary School	80.89
W. Clark Brockman Elementary School	87.70
Annie Burnside Elementary School	81.90
Burton-Pack Elementary School	99.18
Carver-Lyon Elementary School	93.33
A.J. Lewis Greenview Elementary School	92.36
Satchel Ford Elementary School	88.47
Watkins-Nance Elementary School	97.48
Arden Elementary School	87.04
E.E. Taylor Elementary School	90.23
Forest Heights Elementary School	89.47
H.B. Rhame Elementary School	86.07
Hyatt Park Elementary School	90.25
John P. Thomas Elementary School	87.12
Logan Elementary School	91.11
Pine Grove Elementary School	89.63
W.S. Sandel Elementary School	87.03
Elementary School Averages	87.92

Middle Schools

Richland County's middle schools are performing at an Excellent level, with an average combined score of 90.40. Campus scores span from 78.16 to 93.39, demonstrating both high achievement and areas of needed attention. Almost all schools met or exceeded the district average, reinforcing the strength of facilities at this critical transitional stage for students. Only one school fell into the Fair category, making it an exception rather than the norm.

School Name	Score
Hand Middle School	89.66
Hopkins Middle School	92.37
Southeast Middle School	93.39
Crayton Middle School	91.67
W.A. Perry Middle School	90.54
W.G. Sanders Middle School	91.88
Alcorn Middle School	93.06
Heyward Gibbes Middle School	92.88
St. Andrews Middle School	78.16
Middle School Averages	90.40

High Schools

Richland County high schools are demonstrating a good overall performance, with an average score of 87.52. Scores range from 84.91 to 91.60, showing a narrower band of performance compared to other grade levels and a consistently solid foundation across campuses. All schools met or exceeded the district average, underscoring that high school facilities are generally reliable and supportive of instructional needs. While no schools fell into the Fair category, the clustering of scores suggests limited variation and opportunities for targeted enhancements to push more campuses into the Excellent range.

School Name	Score
Dreher High School	87.76
Lower Richland High School	87.01
A.C. Flora High School	84.91
C.A. Johnson High School	86.41
W.J. Keenan High School	91.60
Columbia High School	89.13
Eau Claire High School	85.79
High School Average	87.52

Suitability Finding #5: Educational Suitability Assessment:

Key Findings

Richland County School District One's facilities demonstrate strong alignment with instructional needs and district priorities. The majority of schools perform well in both educational suitability and technology readiness, with most campuses scoring in the "Good" to "Excellent" range. The district's investments in digital infrastructure are evident, but maintaining high standards across all schools will require focused attention on equity and long-term planning.

1. High Overall Suitability Across Grade Levels

Educational suitability scores reveal that RCSD1 schools are, on average, well positioned to support instructional programs. Elementary schools averaged 82.26, middle schools 81.04, and high schools 82.54, with no schools rated "Poor." About 57% of campuses scored "Good" or higher, underscoring thoughtful facility planning and alignment with district goals. The data indicates that while a few outliers exist, the district overall provides adequate to excellent environments for student learning.

2. Technology Readiness Is a District Strength

With districtwide averages exceeding 90 across elementary, middle, and high schools, technology readiness is a clear success. Many schools, especially at the elementary level, achieved perfect scores, reflecting modern infrastructure and a strong foundation for digital learning. Nonetheless, a few campuses scored notably lower, highlighting equity concerns that must be addressed to ensure consistent digital access and instructional quality.

3. Variation Within and Across School Levels

Score ranges reveal notable disparities: elementary schools span Unsatisfactory (56.96) to Excellent (99.74), while middle and high schools are more tightly clustered but still show gaps. This uneven distribution suggests that while many schools are thriving, others require targeted intervention to meet district standards. Addressing these disparities is key to advancing facility equity across all schools.

Implications

Richland County School District One is well positioned, with strong technology infrastructure and generally positive educational suitability scores. However, maintaining excellence will require proactive attention to areas of weakness. Strategic investments in equity of access across campuses will be critical to sustaining positive learning environments. Addressing disparities between high and low performing schools will also help ensure all students benefit from consistent opportunities. As educational practices evolve and technology continues to advance, the district must remain committed to continuous facility upgrades, equity-driven planning, and alignment with instructional goals to support long-term success.