

The Nashua School District (NSD) Facilities Master Planning Group (FMPG) met virtually for the first of three Educational Visioning Workshops from 6:00 – 8:45 PM on August 6, 2025. The FMPG is a group of approximately 32 participants that includes NSD district and school leadership, as well as NSD teachers, students, parents, and community members. Visioning Workshops are being facilitated by Harriman Architects and New Vista Design, with the goal of leading participants through a step-by-step visioning process aimed at capturing their best thinking about NSD's current and future educational goals and priorities and connecting them to best practices and possibilities in future-thinking school facility design. If you have questions about the workshops or would like to add additional priorities to the list below, please email them to NSD Superintendent Mario Andrade at andradem@nashua.edu.



Most Important Things to Know

When asked what it is most important for the Design Team to know about NSD as the approach the creation of a long-term Facilities Master Plan, workshop participants offered the following responses which have been grouped by like-themes.

Doing More with What We Have

- Doing more with the space we have is essential. We need to add more versatility and adaptability
- The majority of our facilities are maintained but show their age. They are not 21st century buildings

Future Orientation and Innovation

- We are future-oriented, so forward thinking facilities are important
- We need to be current, and our facilities need to be able to grow into the future
- Do the facilities we have now prepare students for college and jobs?

Diversity and Inclusion

- We are a very diverse community of learners, educators, and families
- Our population changes over time
- Challenges differ across the district
- We need to create an environment for all learners
- Keep the staff community in mind, in addition to the student community

Flexibility and Adaptability

- Facilities should be adaptive, simple and engaging
- Buildings must be safe and flexible for various uses for now and the future while keeping in mind taxpayers
- Consider creating areas that can be versatile and easily adapted in individual student needs
- Flexible seating will help with adaptability
- We need flexible and agile learning spaces
- We need maximum flexibility

Most Important Things to Know *Continued*

Learning Environments and Pedagogy

- Lots of natural light
- Open spaces are needed
- Quiet spaces are important
- We want to create an environment that naturally promotes critical thinking and self-discovery
- How do we take more of a hands-on approach for our students?

Outdoor and Alternative Learning Spaces

- Outdoor classrooms and learning spaces are important and should be considered

Fiscal Responsibility

- Cost and financial impact are important
- Buildings must be safe and flexible for various uses for now and the future while keeping in mind taxpayers

Project Priorities

The following Educational, Architectural, and Community Priorities for NSD were brainstormed by workshop participants during Workshop One. Responses have been grouped by like-themes. This list will continue to develop throughout the upcoming Educational Visioning workshops.

Educational Priorities

Equity, Access, and Welcome

- Equitable for all populations
- Ensuring not a one size fits all or all students learn the traditional way
- Accessible, open, and welcoming for all
- Welcoming for students, parents and community members

Academic Rigor and Excellence

- Rigorous and engaging
- Future ready students and learning organization
- Student engagement and ownership of learning

Student-Centered and Personalized Learning

- Student empowerment and agency
- Opportunities for growth and discovery
- Opportunities for students to problem solve without adult micromanaging or dictating
- Adaptable to individual needs
- Making sure that students master particular benchmark skills before moving on
- Students owning their learning and growth

Social-Emotional Learning and Student Wellness

- Social emotional learning
- Self-respect; self-esteem
- Independent thinking
- Free thinkers

Creativity, Exploration, and Play

- Play-based elementary programming
- Leaving room for teacher innovation
- Presentations and communication

Flexible and Adaptive Learning

- Inquisitive and flexible thinking and doing
- Flexible workspaces – large group, small group, etc.
- Adaptability, hands-on approach
- Sustainability

Real-World Readiness

- Real-world preparation and application
- Lifelong skills and learning
- Skill-ready students
- Career Technical Education Spaces
- Partnership with community leaders and employers
- Partnerships with farms and community amenities
- How to help student gain skills after school?

Educational Priorities *Continued*

Collaboration and Community Connections

- Collaboration between students & staff
- Collaborative within and across grades, classrooms, and community
- Students working collaboratively

Technology and Innovation

- Tech forward
- Opportunities to use technology interactively
- Current tech for innovative programs that allow world-wide collaboration
- Communication with and without technology

Architectural Priorities

Safety and Comfort

- Passive and active safety features
- Safe space to work and learn
- Air conditioning and heat for thermal comfort
- Sound segregation and good acoustics
- Lunchroom entrance and egress for ease of transitions

Differentiated, Adaptive, and Personalized Learning Environments

- Differentiated workspace and seating for all students
- Opportunity for teachers to meet different ways of learning more easily
- Self-directed learning spaces
- Flexible and vibrant learning and workspaces – large group, small group, etc.
- Learning facilities that reflect diverse learning for diverse career paths
- Open, flexible, multi-use space
- Ability to split spaces
- Different spaces/furniture to meet internal needs throughout the day
- Movable walls
- Rolling chairs/desks

Inclusion and Accessibility

- Accessibility for wheelchair users etc.
- More single use bathrooms in the "pods"
- Incorporated technology supporting hearing impaired students
- Updated playgrounds/ADA playgrounds

Hands-On and Play-Based Learning

- Hands-on learning
- Play-based learning
- Access to workshops

Natural Elements and Light

- A lot of natural light
- Outdoor classrooms
- Updated playgrounds

Gathering and Community Spaces

- Space for whole school and large gatherings
- Accessible to community

Right Sized and Purpose-Built

- Right sized for student population
- Simplicity in architecture
- Color of the space is critical
- Quality

Sustainability and Environmental Responsibility

- Sustainable
- Simplicity in design to support energy and resource efficiency

Technology Integration

- Self-directed learning spaces with embedded tech supports

After Hours and Community Use

- After school access
- Partnerships with other schools and Nashua amenities

Storage and Resources

- Good storage
- Resources for teachers
- Bookshelves in every classroom

Community Priorities

Safety and Security

- Safe and secure facilities that meet today's standards
- Areas for families to safely gather

Safe Community Use and Access

- Ease of safe access for the community
- Spaces that are convenient for parents and community to gather, including parking, fields, and gymnasiums
- On-site community support services integrated into the school
- Having bathrooms in outdoor areas near sports venues

Maximized and Flexible Use of Space

- Maximizing space and avoiding unused classrooms
- Multiple-use spaces that support a range of programs and activities
- Supportive of extended day or after-school programs

Inclusion, Diversity, and Belonging

- Schools should reflect the diversity within our community
- The school should feel welcoming to all
- Ability to focus on the whole student, including their home, school, and community life

Accessibility and Equity

- Accessibility for all users, including those with mobility needs
- Walkable school locations for families without cars

Sustainability and Environmental Responsibility

- Sustainability
- Cost-efficient design that considers long-term environmental impact

Modern and High Quality Facilities

- Focused on high-quality education
- Feels exciting and motivating for students
- Clean, bright environments where students want to be
- Modern, updated facilities that reflect pride in education
- Bringing in excellent teachers to support student success
- Well-built schools that are durable and long-lasting
- Would love to see a modern school in our inner city corridor

Communication and Engagement

- Consistent and clear communication
- The community feels welcome
- Opportunities for family events

Community Partnerships

- Ability to use school facilities for various community partners, such as sports, clubs, and local groups
- Integration with local businesses and community organizations
- Agricultural learning opportunities connected to the community
- Sharing resources and access with other public amenities

Affordability and Fiscal Responsibility

- Affordable for the district and families
- Cost impact on taxpayers should be considered
- Cost to maintain facilities and their long-term budget impact

Arts, Culture, and Expression

- Having appropriate areas for the arts that attract families and community members
- Space that supports performances, exhibits, and creative programming

Play and Outdoor Facilities

- Updated playgrounds for student and community use
- Outdoor areas that are both functional and inviting

Impact On Community

- Locations and planning should consider what happens before, during, and after construction and how that impacts the broader community

NSD Culture of Teaching and Learning

When asked to share three words that best describe NSD's culture of teaching and learning, workshop participants created the following Word Cloud.

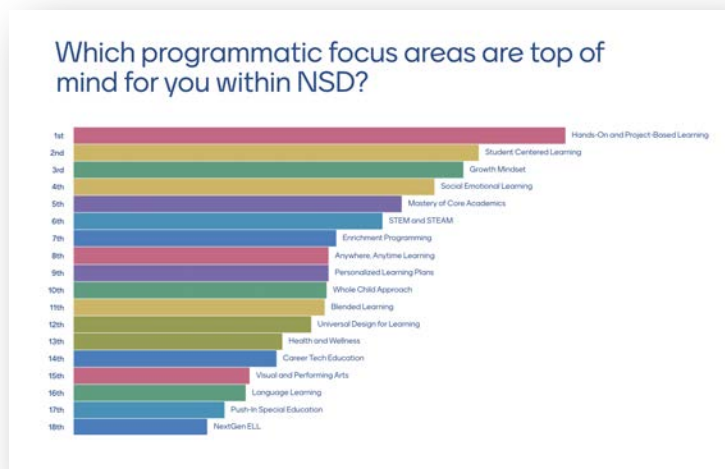


- Collaborative (7 mentions)
- Supportive (7)
- Caring (3)
- Fun (3)
- Challenging (2)
- Family (2)
- Open Minded (2)
- Diverse (2)
- Communicative (1)
- Hard Working (1)
- Accountability (1)
- Research Based (1)
- Teaming (1)
- Welcoming (1)
- Engaging (1)
- Passionate (1)
- Commitment (1)
- Stagnant (1)
- Resourceful (1)
- Inquisitive (1)
- Valued (1)
- Respect (1)
- Collaboration (1)
- Partnership (1)
- Innovation (1)
- Together (1)
- Kind (1)
- Frustrating (1)
- Changing (1)
- Rewarding (1)

NSD Priority Educational Focus Areas

The following initial listing of priority educational focus areas for NSD schools was brainstormed during Workshop One which, like the list created by the Educational Leadership Team during the Kick-Off Workshop on May 14, 2025, places Social Emotional Learning, Hands On and Project Based Learning, and Student-Centered Learning within their top four priority focus areas. This is an incomplete list and not meant to prioritize one focus area over another, but rather to take a quick snapshot of district aspirations.

1. Hands-On and Project-Based Learning
2. Student-Centered Learning
3. Growth Mindset
4. Social Emotional Learning
5. Mastery of Core Academics
6. STEM and STEAM
7. Enrichment Programming
8. Anywhere, Anytime Learning
9. Professional Learning Communities
10. Whole Child Approach
11. Blended Learning
12. Universal Design for Learning
13. Health and Wellness
14. Career Tech Education
15. Visual and Performing Arts
16. Language Learning
17. Push in Special Education
18. NextGen ELL



When asked what additional Educational Focus Areas were most important to them or should be further emphasized, workshop participants responded with the following thoughts.

Accountability and Academic Standards

- Establishing clear academic accountability systems, especially for K-8, to monitor and support student progress
- Encouraging student responsibility and accountability as key components of personal and academic development
- Measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of educational strategies to ensure they are producing desired outcomes and improving over time

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

- Driving innovation in curriculum, instruction, and systems to respond to evolving student needs and societal changes
- Committing to continuous improvement through data-driven reflection, experimentation, and adaptation across all levels of education

Student Well-Being and Wellness

- Prioritizing health and wellness as essential to learning by ensuring students feel safe, nourished, and supported both in and outside the classroom
- Providing resources and strategies to support students' physical, mental, and emotional well-being across all school environments

Additional Priority Educational Focus Areas *Continued*

Educator Support and Professional Growth

- Offering continued support and high-quality professional development opportunities tailored to all educators
- Creating professional communities for teachers to collaborate, share best practices, and grow collectively
- Expanding access to better staff development to improve teaching effectiveness and job satisfaction
- Fostering teacher engagement through inclusive decision-making, recognition, and meaningful involvement in school improvement efforts

Equitable and Resource Allocation

- Ensuring equitable funding so that all schools have the resources necessary to provide high-quality education regardless of socioeconomic status
- Providing budget and cost support aligned with the needs of both students and educators, especially in underserved communities

Family and Community Engagement

- Increasing parent support and involvement in education to strengthen school-home partnerships and enhance student success
- Promoting the element of interconnected priorities by aligning efforts across families, educators, and communities for holistic educational impact

NSD Priority Educational Focus Areas in Practice: Now and Future

When asked what these Priority Educational Focus Areas look like in practice within NSD, either NOW, or in an aspirational FUTURE, workshop participants shared the following thoughts.

Educational Focus Areas Now and Future

NSD Portrait of a Learner: Now

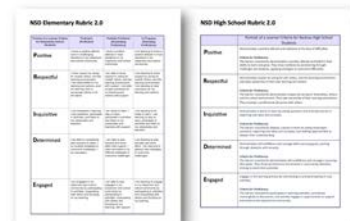
- NSD POL is new to elementary and middle schools
- Pockets of excellence exist, but not systemically
- There is big variability in schools across the district
- Consistently inconsistent across the district
- Able to flip the space based on the next big thing (e.g., the Internet in 1991, to smartphones, to cybersecurity, to AI today)

NSD Portrait of a Learner: Future

- POL consistent in all schools and eventually across our community
- Students owning their learning and being invested in making goals to move forward
- More student voice and choice
- Students have the means to drive their learning
- More students have the basic building blocks to make aspirations a reality
- Concentrating on skills and competencies
- Exposure to real world opportunities

NSD Portrait of a Learner

- Positive
- Respectful
- Inquisitive
- Determined
- Engaged



NSD Elementary Rubric 2.0		NSD High School Rubric 2.0	
Positive	Students demonstrate a positive attitude and are respectful of others.	Positive	Students demonstrate a positive attitude and are respectful of others.
Respectful	Students demonstrate respect for others and follow school rules.	Respectful	Students demonstrate respect for others and follow school rules.
Inquisitive	Students demonstrate curiosity and ask questions.	Inquisitive	Students demonstrate curiosity and ask questions.
Determined	Students demonstrate persistence and effort.	Determined	Students demonstrate persistence and effort.
Engaged	Students demonstrate active participation and interest in learning.	Engaged	Students demonstrate active participation and interest in learning.

Priority Educational Focus Areas in Practice: Now and Future *Continued*

Student-Centered Learning: Now

- Teacher-centric more than student at times
- Limited student-based problem solving without teacher intervention
- Resistance around “new” shifts
- We need to work more to get kids out of their seats

Student-Centered Learning: Future

- Building student-centered learning systems that are nimble to meet diverse student needs
- Student-centered environment for all students to be welcomed
- Teacher as facilitator and guide
- Opportunities for students to show their learning in different ways
- More student talk, engagement and project work
- Focus on community building as a part of curriculum
- Education should be fun
- Family involvement and support

Student-Centered and Lifelong-Learning

- Agency
- Higher Order Thinking
- Proactive Learning
- Varied Learning
- Problem Solving
- Organizational Skills
- Communication
- Confidence



Academic Growth Mindset: Now

- Obstacles to implementation of growth-focused approaches
- Need more administrative support when it comes to behaviors
- Sometimes it is tough to cover all the curriculum; teachers feel rushed and have to give up SEL daily practices in order to save time
- In grades K–8, we have social promotion

Academic Growth Mindset: Future

- Teaching growth mindset; schools living growth mindset
- Challenging every student in the way they learn best
- Students making and owning goals
- Abilities to be more proactive than reactive environment
- Reduction in parent rescuing
- Reduced burnout

Hands-On Learning: Now

- Hands-on learning needs to be increased
- Experiential learning opportunities are important
- Hands-on learning exists mostly in pockets, typically in CTE, Arts, and PE—needs expansion into core academic areas
- Too many standard classrooms; need more for hands-on learning
- Get kids out of their seats

Hands-On Learning: Future

- Hands-on learning for all grade levels
- Hands-on learning in more spaces, including core academic areas
- Updated playgrounds and outdoor classrooms
- Hands-on learning is important. Graduates from college are already having trouble attaining jobs, and high school students, if they choose not to go, need job-ready skills

Hands-On Learning

- Project-Based Learning
- Extended Learning Opportunities
- Service Learning
- Community Contexts
- Authentic Assessment
- Life Skills



Priority Educational Focus Areas in Practice: Now and Future *Continued*

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) : Now

- A lot of PLC chats
- PLCs are used differently with various focuses
- PLCs happening more often than before
- PLCs are not consistent throughout the schools
- Increase professional learning communities for teachers

Professional Learning Communities: Future

- More time for teacher collaboration
- Opportunities for teachers to create PLCs
- More opportunities for teachers to share their ideas with building principals
- Teachers and administration sharing a vision and drive to improve
- Reduced burnout through shared professional support

Professional Learning Communities

- Teacher Teaming
- Cross Discipline Instructions
- Teacher and Student Collaboration



Mastery of Core Academics: Now

- Canned curricula are obstacles to innovation and mastery
- Sometimes covering all curriculum takes priority over deep understanding
- Social promotion may hinder true mastery in K–8

Mastery of Core Academics: Future

- Benchmark skills mandatory for advancement, particularly in early grades
- Teachers have materials to teach the curriculum without having to make all the resources
- Concentrating on skills and competencies to support academic mastery

Mastery of Core Academics

PreK - 12 standards-based curriculum that scaffolds to expectations for graduation and is aligned to state standards.

- Complex Text
- Academic Language
- Evidence from Text
- Building Knowledge
- Content-Rich Nonfiction



- Concepts and Skills
- Problem Solving
- Thinking Across Grades
- Conceptual Understanding
- Fluency
- Application

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) : Now

- Some facilities are outdated, making universal access harder
- A lot of abbreviations and complexity in implementation can be barriers
- I'm not sure if we have the staff to use these best practices effectively
- How much access do special education and ELL students really have?

Universal Design for Learning (UDL): Future

- Increased UDL practices to support diverse learners
- Opportunities for students to show their learning in different ways
- Classroom spaces that adapt to all types of learning

Universal Design for Learning

Identifying students' individual needs, removing barriers to access, and providing appropriate accommodations for those students who need them.



Recognition Networks
The "what" of learning



Strategic Networks
The "how" of learning



Affective Networks
The "why" of learning

Multiple Means of Representation, Expression and Engagement

- Universal Design for Learning
- Varied Delivery Methods
- EL Programming
- Hands-On Learning
- Action and Expression

Priority Educational Focus Areas in Practice:

Now and Future *Continued*

Push-In / Differentiated Instruction: Now

- Push-in is rare but needed
- I know the district has struggled with the push-in method; unclear if there are plans to improve
- Good teacher assistance programs for elementary exist, but may not be consistent
- Great “play pal” program before kindergarten

Push-In / Differentiated Instruction: Future

- Push-in to support all students in an inclusive manner
- Small group spaces for learning
- Ability to challenge every student in the way they learn best



Career Tech Education: Now

- Opportunities for CTE
- Hands-on learning in CTE is a strength but not yet widespread across content areas
- Intermittent CTE opportunities exist but need expansion
- CTE programs are available for high school students
- Additional CTE offerings would support more diverse student interests
- Expanding CTE collaborations such as partnerships between business and art design

Career Tech Education: Future

- CTE programs are important
- Expansion of career and tech ed opportunities that keep pace with the changing world
- More robust integration between CTE and core academic subjects
- New, innovative collaborations across different CTE offerings could lead to realistic, future-oriented opportunities
- Real world applications and internships supported by more flexible student scheduling



Social Emotional Learning: Now

- SEL curriculum exists but there need to be more opportunities for real-world application
- SEL has faded away, especially beyond the elementary level
- Time for SEL is limited and often squeezed in
- Lack of SEL support staff and dedicated spaces
- Need more social workers and psychologists to support students with trauma

Social Emotional Learning: Future

- Social Emotional Learning is integrated into all areas and should focus on meeting student needs
- All schools should have robust SEL spaces and sufficient support staff to meet student needs
- Training in a consistent SEL program is needed, along with dedicated time to implement it across the day or week
- Better connections with families will improve SEL outcomes, especially when students’ basic needs are not being met
- Replication at school and home—students thrive when SEL approaches are consistent in both settings
- Minimal social media and electronic distractions help students focus emotionally and mentally

Priority Educational Focus Areas in Practice:

Now and Future *Continued*

Whole Child Approach: Now

- Teaching for enrichment, not just teaching to the test
- Some teachers do a good job with hands-on learning and innovative approaches, but consistency is lacking
- Too much variation across the district makes equity difficult
- Opportunities for families to improve social-emotional and academic skills at home—not just the school's responsibility

Whole Child Approach



Whole Child Approach: Future

- Developing strong purpose and “why” behind learning is key to student engagement
- Supportive community relationships are essential to a whole child strategy
- Music lessons and creative outlets support holistic development
- More play-based learning opportunities foster exploration and well-being
- Looking at the whole child includes ensuring students are both socially and academically prepared
- Better communication with families about overall approaches can improve student support
- More sport opportunities in elementary and middle schools support development of teamwork, movement, and identity

Anywhere, Anytime Learning: Now

- More “learn anywhere” or real-world application opportunities needed at the high school level
- Love to see anywhere, anytime learning translate into meaningful at-home learning, not just book work as homework
- 1:1 devices are in place, but there is mixed quality in how they are used
- Some obstacles exist due to rigid or inadequate learning spaces

Anytime, Anywhere Learning

- Flip Classrooms
- Virtual Delivery
- MOOCs
- Gaming



Anywhere, Anytime Learning: Future

- Teachers are blending flipped classrooms, hands-on projects, and student-choice to create dynamic learning
- Updated tech should be available for all students to support flipped classroom and blended learning models
- Less structure in student schedules allows them to engage in real world learning such as internships
- Multiple learning formats beyond sit-and-listen help students learn anytime, anywhere
- Flexible spaces and seating support combination learning methods and flipped classrooms

Personalized Learning Plans: Now

- Some support exists for personalized learning but is often focused on students who are behind
- There are varied pathways to graduation and signs of personalization, but they are not consistent
- There is a belief in these personalized practices, but they are not consistently implemented in reality

Personalized Learning Plans: Future

- More training and time are needed for teachers to co-develop personalized learning plans with students
- Student-centered learning should be prioritized, empowering students to shape their educational experience
- Developing consistent practices and strategies for personalization across schools is essential

Priority Educational Focus Areas in Practice:

Now and Future *Continued*

Health and Wellness: Now

- Health and wellness are underprioritized in practice
- School lunches are inadequate to support student wellness, undermining health initiatives

Health and Wellness: Future

- Physical activity should be integrated throughout the day, not only as a designated class
- More time for students to move and play supports cognitive, physical, and emotional health
- Access to after-class activities enhances wellness and social engagement
- Fixed transportation challenges (e.g., bus access) can limit student participation in wellness opportunities
- Tight budgets are a challenge—yet addressing health and wellness must remain a priority



STEM and STEAM: Now

- Big push for STEM and STEAM across the district
- More STEM and STEAM opportunities are becoming available
- Some teachers used to do more STEAM activities; would like to bring those back
- STEM and STEAM are present but still inconsistent in availability and depth

STEM and STEAM: Future

- The focus on STEM is strong, but should not be provided to every student—there should be balance and multiple pathways
- More resources are needed for teachers to obtain STEM materials
- Not every student is interested in tech fields; we still need pathways for people-centered careers like social work and teaching



Enrichment Programming: Now

- Enrichment opportunities at the elementary level are limited and inconsistent
- There is more emphasis on athletics than on general enrichment programming
- DOE minutes do not support these activities during the day, and after-school enrichment is not fully accessible in all schools
- Playground spaces vary significantly in enrichment value and opportunity
- Middle schools often lack adequate resources to offer robust enrichment during a critical developmental period
- Bicentennial hosts great community events, showcasing strong enrichment potential
- Some PTOs host engaging events for students and families, helping to fill enrichment gaps
- Parental involvement and support are needed to expand enrichment opportunities for all children



Priority Educational Focus Areas in Practice:

Now and Future *Continued*

Enrichment Programming: Future

- Introduction to enrichment opportunities should begin at the elementary level
- Much more access is needed to enrichment programs like music, choir, and arts
- Equal opportunity, space, and funding for all enrichment programs is essential
- After-school enrichment should be offered at all schools
- Bring enrichment programming into K–5 schools more intentionally
- Accessible after-school opportunities must include transportation, snacks, and support for families without cars
- 'Free play' should be integrated at all three levels to encourage creativity and exploration
- Budget and cost impact on enrichment programming needs to be addressed to ensure sustainability
- Standardized PTO/PTA structures could help reduce funding inequities across schools

Language Programming: Now

- Great ESL support exists at the elementary level
- The district has invested heavily in expanding the ELL program in recent years
- Despite ELL expansion, it remains unclear whether English learners are accessing the full range of school opportunities

Language Programming: Future

- Continue strong support for ELL programs
- Improved preparation and collaboration for co-teaching of ELL students is needed
- ELL programs should be more integrated into general education settings
- Language classes should be offered for K–5 students

Language Programming

- World Language
- ESL
- Biliteracy
- Academic Success
- Cultural Competence
- Sheltered English Immersion
- SLIFE (Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education)



Blended Learning: Now

- Technology is being used across classrooms, but not always to promote higher-level thinking or academic rigor
- Use of blended learning varies by school and grade level, with inconsistent implementation

Blended Learning: Future

- Training on more effective and consistent use of technology is needed
- Tech-assisted learning
- Classroom spaces that support both tech-enabled and low-tech learning
- Safe and large instructional spaces should be equipped with updated technology
- Stronger collaborative relationships within each school will support differentiated instruction and blended models
- Some classes should be technology free

Blended Learning

- Technology Integration
- Online and Virtual Delivery
- Production of Technology and Information



Priority Educational Focus Areas in Practice: Now and Future *Continued*

Visual and Performing Arts: Now

- Visual and performing arts are often deprioritized compared to sports
- Strong support for athletics presents an opportunity to build equal support for performing and visual arts
- Arts/theatre programming is better supported in middle school than in elementary
- Schools are competing for limited and sometimes inappropriate performance spaces
- Elementary schools lack arts access due to staffing and time constraints
- Arts and athletics should be valued equally as essential parts of student growth



Visual and Performing Arts: Future

- More spotlight and celebration opportunities for performing arts; Friday night lights shouldn't be limited to sports
- More appropriate and effective space is needed for arts instruction and performances
- Elementary students should have access to performing and visual arts regardless of their PTO or local funding
- Integrating performing arts into classroom lessons can enhance engagement and learning

Athletics and Sports: Now

- The district has great athletic program offerings
- Athletics receive more consistent support and emphasis than arts or enrichment
- Very odd scheduling patterns in middle and high school impact student access to full athletic and arts offerings

Athletics and Sports: Future

- Equity is needed in access to sports programs for elementary students, not based on school-specific resources
- The Presidential Fitness Test is not an inclusive measure of student fitness and may discourage participation
- Sports should be better integrated into academic instruction to support student engagement
- Physical education opportunities should not define the totality of a school's athletics program



Priority Educational Focus Areas in Practice: Now and Future *Continued*

Community Schools: Now

- Many community connections exist to support student needs and after-school programming
- Safety concerns continue to be a barrier to maximizing community involvement and use of school spaces
- Limited space and outdated playgrounds restrict full community and family engagement
- Middle and high schools face persistent structural and scheduling challenges
- Balanced programming across school types is a goal, but difficult to achieve with current constraints



Community Schools: Future

- A better, well-rounded school district community should reflect and support the city's diversity
- Outdoor classrooms, updated playgrounds, and access to nature expand learning beyond traditional spaces
- Better partnerships and engagement with parents and local businesses can enhance learning and support
- Ensuring proper staffing across all departments and improving retention is critical for sustainable community schools

NSD Portrait of a Learner (POL): Implications for Programming and Facilities

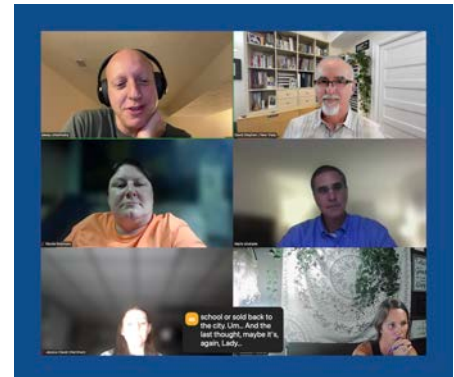
Workshop participants worked within facilitated breakout groups of 4-6 people to discuss NSD Portrait of a Learner and its implications for the design of NSD educational programs and facilities. The following information represents a collection of small group feedback which has been organized thematically.

Most Important Future Ready Learning Goals for NSD Students

The following learning goals and priorities for Nashua School District students reflect the most recurring and emphasized ideas from the small group discussion that took place during the NSD Facilities Master Plan Workshop One. They highlight the skills of **adaptability, communication, collaboration, respect, life-long learning, and real-world readiness**. A strong emphasis is also placed on developing the whole student—socially, emotionally, and intellectually—with accessible, relevant learning experiences.

Adaptability & Flexibility

- Adaptability and flexibility are vital as the world evolves quickly; students must learn to adjust to change.
- Adaptive and collaborative skills enable students to thrive in uncertain or shifting environments.
- Perseverance is important. Students need to work through problems, not expect immediate answers.
- Students must be determined and resilient, which aligns with SEL goals.



Collaboration & Teamwork

- Collaboration is a current strength in the district and should be continually supported.
- Students should be able to work together productively, using empathy and respect.
- Students must demonstrate soft skills such as teamwork, kindness, and collaboration in both academic and social settings.
- Adaptive and collaborative: learning to work with others in evolving environments is critical.

Communication Skills

- Communication is a district strength and must be emphasized across grade levels.
- Communicate effectively and appropriately with anyone through writing, speaking, and listening.
- Communication includes the use of accessible technology and visual or digital communication forms.
- Parent/teacher communication is a key strength; fostering early and ongoing relationships with families is crucial.

Respect, Empathy & Citizenship

- Respect is a major focus, particularly in middle school—respect for others, community, and school spaces.
- Students should be held accountable to foster respectful behavior and responsibility.
- Human and empathetic skills are necessary to create inclusive, supportive learning environments.
- SEL should develop respectful, inclusive, and empathetic adults.
- Understanding of civics and community/government responsibilities is essential.

Most Important Future Ready Learning Goals for NSD Students

Continued

Engagement & Accountability

- Engagement in learning is critical; many middle school students are disengaged and don't see the value.
- There should be increased accountability—students need to understand that their efforts matter.
- Students should be organized and ready to learn.
- Accountability should be supported by consistent expectations and consequences.

Critical Thinking & Problem Solving

- Critical thinking: students must process and evaluate complex information effectively.
- Problem-solving involves analyzing options, solving conflicts, and choosing effective responses.
- Creative and critical thinking are both essential for adapting to novel situations.
- Students must be inquisitive, willing to explore ideas deeply rather than rush to conclusions.

Creativity & Expression

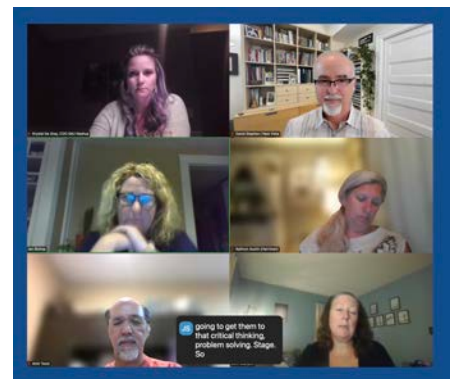
- Students should be creative and able to express themselves in diverse ways.
- Creativity fosters personalized learning pathways that reflect students' interests.
- Project-based learning supports creative thinking by providing hands-on experiences.

College, Career & Real-World Readiness

- Skills for real-world functioning: financial literacy, independence, and self-sufficiency.
- Exposure to various career pathways is necessary, especially for students who don't envision college.
- CTE and project-based learning should be accessible to all students.
- Students need to be technologically ready for modern academic and workplace demands.
- Technology use must be developmentally appropriate and purposeful.

Life-Long Learning & Self-Awareness

- Foster a life-long learner mindset—students must seek out and apply knowledge independently.
- Life-long learning includes identifying passions, interests, and self-reflection on learning preferences.
- Interconnectivity of learning skills is key—traits and skills are stronger when used together.
- Students should be aware of how they learn best and apply that self-awareness to new challenges.



POL Implications for Educational Programming

The implications for NSD programming emphasize the importance of **flexibility, staff support, technology integration, SEL inclusion, and equitable access**. There is a strong call for **future-focused curriculum and instruction**, supported by **professional development** and **collaborative structures** that help educators adapt to the evolving educational landscape. Additionally, the system must address student engagement by aligning teaching strategies with SEL, critical thinking, and real-world relevance—especially in preparation for an interconnected global workforce.

Flexible & Future-Ready Learning Environments

- Maintain maximum flexibility in learning models to stay nimble amid future uncertainties.
- Support flexibility in instructional delivery: interest-based learning, flexible seating, diverse teaching modalities, and assessment options.
- Embed flipped classroom models, understanding the planning and pedagogical investment required.
- Use curriculum time and structure to allow for both content delivery and SEL integration.
- Make effective use of meetings and scheduling to support flexibility and efficiency.

Technology as an Enabler

- Ensure technology is an enabler—not an inhibitor—of 1:1, interactive learning experiences.
- Include technology-based learning outcomes (e.g., POLs) on high school report cards.
- Increase accessibility to technology and relevant training for both students and teachers.
- Support staff in navigating and integrating tools like AI, coding, and data analysis into instruction.

Supportive Staffing & Professional Development

- More staff and stronger buy-in are needed to expose students to a wide range of professional and academic experiences.
- Attracting additional support staff is essential, though financial constraints exist.
- A robust support staff enables teachers to better meet specific student needs.
- Ongoing, differentiated professional development should match the needs of all staff members.
- Lifelong learning for teachers should be modeled and supported at all levels.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Integration

- SEL should be embedded in academic instruction rather than treated as an add-on.
- Fast-paced curriculum must allow leeway to meaningfully teach SEL skills.
- A consistent SEL curriculum and instructional approach is necessary across grade levels.
- Elementary parent/teacher conferences should continue to focus on social-emotional development as an early-year priority.

Equity in Access & Opportunities

- Ensure equitable programming across all schools—consistent access to field trips, music, technology, afterschool programs, etc.
- Technology equity across schools is crucial for fair learning opportunities.
- Expose all students, regardless of background or school, to career and technical education (CTE) experiences.

POL Implications for Educational Programming *Continued*

Curriculum Integration & Relevance

- Look to the future of work to shape curriculum—AI, coding, data analytics, and skills like critical thinking and problem-solving must be prioritized.
- Curriculum writing needs adequate time and collaboration to connect content areas and develop interdisciplinary learning.
- Hands-on and project-based learning should be central to instruction.
- Instruction must be rigorous and engaging to promote deep learning and real-world application.

Collaboration & Planning Structures

- Collaboration requires protected time for staff to meet, plan, and co-create effective instructional strategies.
- Time allocation must support meaningful collaboration, not just compliance-based meetings.
- School structures should support curriculum integration, cross-disciplinary teaching, and shared goal-setting.

Family Engagement & Student-Centered Learning

- Engage families in conversations about student learning styles and needs early and consistently.
 - Build strong home-school partnerships that begin with SEL and evolve to include academic collaboration.
 - Promote student-centered learning by involving students and parents in decisions about instructional approaches.
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POL Implications for Facility Design

As educational priorities evolve, the Nashua School District must align its facility design with the demands of modern teaching, learning, and wellness. Future-ready schools should be **flexible, tech-integrated, inclusive, and inspiring**, providing environments where students and educators can thrive. Thoughtful facility design supports **anywhere, anytime learning**, fosters **deeper academic engagement**, enhances **social-emotional development**, and empowers **authentic learning and assessment**. These spaces should be adaptable to both individual and group needs, promote health and safety, and reflect the district's commitment to **equity, innovation, and community connection**. The following themes outline the essential implications for facility planning and investment.

Anywhere, Anytime Learning

- Flexible classrooms and learning environments that accommodate large group, small group, lecture-style, and quiet breakout spaces.
 - Moveable walls, furniture, and dual-use spaces to adapt to changing needs and support technological advancement.
 - Adaptable spaces designed for both current and future instructional models.
 - Outdoor classrooms and playgrounds that extend learning beyond the traditional classroom.
 - Tech-ready infrastructure to support digital instruction and student access.
 - Common areas and learning pods that support collaboration and mobility in learning.
 - Built-in bookcases and flexible tables (rather than fixed chairs) to accommodate different learning configurations.
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POL Implications for Facility Design *Continued*

Authentic Assessment

- Spaces that promote inquisitive, group, and conversational learning to support performance-based and real-world assessments.
- Common spaces (e.g., reimagined libraries or career centers) intentionally designed for hands-on learning and student presentations.
- Collaboration spaces that allow for interdisciplinary projects and student-led demonstrations of learning.

Health and Wellness

- Prioritize safety in all forms—physical, mental, emotional, and perceived—so that students can focus and thrive.
- Clean, vibrant, and well-maintained environments that promote student pride, comfort, and a sense of belonging.
- Accessibility for all students, with facilities that meet diverse needs and minimize the need for out-of-district placements.
- Opportunities for indoor play to build social-emotional skills like cooperation, turn-taking, and emotional regulation.
- Outdoor learning and recreation areas to support physical activity and mental well-being.

Academic Growth Mindset

- Classrooms that support hands-on, SEL-integrated, and exploratory activities to promote persistence, curiosity, and reflection.
- Smaller schools with larger, flexible classroom spaces to allow for diverse instructional practices.
- Facilities that align with the evolution of educational delivery and technology integration.
- School environments that support inquisitive learning and academic risk-taking.

Professional Learning Communities

- Dedicated collaboration spaces for staff to engage in planning, data analysis, and professional growth.
- Maximize dual-use and shared spaces to support teacher teams and interdisciplinary collaboration.
- Design infrastructure that enables effective use of time for ongoing educator learning and reflection.

Athletics and Sports

- Indoor play and activity spaces that support physical development and cooperative play.
- Outdoor recreational and physical education areas integrated into school grounds.

Deeper Learning

- Flexible and collaborative environments that support project-based learning and cross-disciplinary experiences.
- Reimagined spaces such as career centers and libraries designed to foster innovation, exploration, and real-world application.
- Learning environments that support student voice, choice, and ownership of learning.
- Facility planning that encourages bold thinking and long-term impact (“what if” spaces that inspire deep engagement).
- Financial and infrastructure decisions should prioritize daily educational impact and visibility for students and staff.