



River Valley School District Strategic Plan 2023-2028

COMMUNITY PLANNING WORKSHOP RESULTS

Spring Green

February 27, 2023

The purpose of this and other similar workshops was to gain input on strategic issues that participants believed the River Valley School District (RVSD) is and will be confronting over the next year to five years, and potential strategies to address key issues.

Two community members, one Board member, the Superintendent, and the RVSD's strategic planning consultant attended this workshop. Because of the modest number of attendees, the workshop was organized as a discussion in which issues and strategies were freely shared. The following were the identified issues (numbered) and strategies related to the issue (lettered—though there was not always a strategy tied to an issue). The issues and strategies are organized below by strategic plan category of interest, not in order of importance or when they were discussed during the workshop.

Student Achievement and Instruction

1. How can the RVSD best communicate to teachers where they have curriculum flexibility, and encourage broader perspectives where possible (e.g., key women in history)?
2. What are the educational objectives of the high school? College-prep? Work training? Both?
 - a. Staff should be trained and prepared to support both paths.

Student Engagement and Support

3. Younger student behavior and achievement, and teacher satisfaction, may be negatively affected by limited in-building support.
 - a. Provide more in-class assistance for younger grades.
4. How can the RVSD take what it learned during the pandemic, and apply it to hybrid and virtual learning going forward, such as to deal with snow days and extended student absences?

Facilities

5. How can we plan for facilities in light of recent and projected enrollment decreases?
 - a. New facility investments should be flexible enough to respond to ebbs and flows in enrollment.
6. Having the Early Learning Center (ELC) in a different village than River Valley Elementary School creates challenges, perhaps especially for transportation.

7. Elementary School lacks adequate gym, cafeteria, kitchen, storage, and break-out room spaces.
8. What is the future of the space at the Elementary School originally intended as a STEM lab, but not being used for before- and after-school care?
 - a. Continuing before- and after-school care is important, but not using this newer space as it was originally intended may make it harder to justify other new spaces if proposed.
9. If the Plain ELC is discontinued, how can its space be retained or repurposed to address community needs (e.g., housing)?
10. Can the RVSD school kitchens be made available for community use in the summer, such as for kitchens to support food trucks?
 - a. How might this be perceived as benefitting community outside of Spring Green?
11. If school facility improvements are focused at the current campus, how can the facility and/or strategic plan offer improvements that clearly benefit other communities in the RVSD?
 - a. Better/quicker transportation? High-speed internet?
12. How can the RVSD address student safety and security associated with an open campus, which is valuable to not having to duplicate certain spaces across schools (e.g., wood shop)?

Community Communications and Engagement

13. Residents and landowners often confuse what the RVSD does versus villages and towns, and how the RVSD and other school district's budget.
 - a. Need to help people understand differences, but also that RVSD is as integral to the community as towns and villages.
14. How can RVSD better connect with its 55+ population and others without kids in school?
 - a. Home News remains an important information source; weekly Superintendent article gets regular response.
 - b. "RV Forward" provided referendum support.
 - c. Offer Superintendent or School Board member reports at Village and Town Board meetings, at which relationships can be established to build support when needed in future (would need to generate more Village/Town interest based on past experience).
15. RVSD is challenged by having lots of absentee landowners with vacation homes and acreage, which challenges the housing shortage (homes often used very infrequently).
16. How best can the RVSD connect with parents? There does not seem to be enough parent and community involvement in the schools and with children.
 - a. Skyward (across buildings) and Seesaw (in buildings) provide communication tool, though number of "hits" not always clear.
 - b. Should clearly communicate expectations to parents in the ELC and Elementary School.

- c. School-based events are important opportunities to build parent and community connections.
17. How can the RVSD community be more accommodating to outsiders moving or considering moves here?

Finance and Operations

18. School district funding formula and lack of consistent State representative support is an impediment to reasonable RVSD funding.
19. How flexible/active is RVSD in obtaining funds from other sources in a manner that does not reduce State funding?
- a. Stadium project had significant private fundraising component.
 - b. RVSD Foundation support focuses on funding innovative projects nominated by teachers.
 - c. Increase outreach to raise money, including from beyond regular or historical donors (“time to reopen the phone book”).
 - d. Make sure all RVSD residents are informed of how they can donate, and to what programs and efforts. For example, Web page could have guide to where money is needed by specific program, facility, etc., in addition to general funding support opportunity.
20. How should the RVSD best recruit and retain teachers and other staff, including those who would provide additional diversity?
- a. Offer competitive salaries.
 - b. Enhance student teacher program, including transportation from students from UW-Platteville and/or Madison (program from Platteville will occur this spring).
 - c. Increase on-campus outreach, including at UW-Madison, for teaching candidates.
 - d. Visibly celebrate teacher accomplishments.