



**River Valley School District Strategic Plan 2023-2028**  
**HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT COUNCIL WORKSHOP RESULTS**  
**March 13, 2023**

The purpose of this workshop was to gain input from issues that student council members believed the River Valley School District (RVSD) is and will be confronting over the next year to five years, and potential strategies to address these issues. Eighteen student council members participated in the workshop.

After an introduction, students were asked to respond individually to the following question:

Imagine yourself on the School Board, or as the Superintendent or Principal. Thinking about the above categories, what would you do to support, change, or improve the River Valley School District today or over the next few years?

Students were asked to consider ideas in the following strategic plan categories: student achievement and instruction, student engagement and support, facilities, community communications and engagement, and finance and operations. Students shared one idea per post-it note. When they were done, they grouped their post-its together within these five categories. Each then had three votes to identify their top ideas. The workshop ended with students elaborating on the top vote getters. The following are the results.

**Student Achievement and Instruction**

- Science Department-We have limited course options and a wider variety of options would be helpful for different careers in science. 7 votes. Discussion:
  - Only two senior options.
  - Health care fields growing; need science as lead-in
  - May be too many options in some non-science areas
  - Want an AP Biology option
- More engaging lessons – try to stray from solely book work. 4 votes. Discussion:
  - 80 minute classes are long; focus fades
  - Need more activity
  - 5 minute breaks would be good, but they may have been abused by some
- More AP/honor classes. Maybe a survey asking students what would be helpful in their career? 2 votes.
- Option to test out of required classes (after one semester?). 1 vote.
- More incentive/opportunity for teachers to be trained to teach AP/dual credit courses. 1 vote.
- Offer more classes e.g., AP Bio (maybe independent classes). 1 vote.
- Have teachers be more aware of why they are assigning tests. 1 vote.
- Earth and space science shouldn't be a graduation requirement

- Teachers in the science department need to focus more on teaching their own classes instead of curriculum being self-taught. It's unproductive.
- More college planning help starting freshman year to help students know what classes they need to take.
- Different language classes. Spanish isn't enough.
- Very few science classes. Bring back AP bio.
- Asynchronous virtual snow days.
- Keep teachers in loop on everything so they can effectively relay messages to students.
- Strengthen Blackhawk Rules or offer study halls for students who take a heavy load of classes or feel they need one.
- Weighted GPA with AP classes.
- After a unit in a class, maybe look into more options to put that learning into practice (field trips, someone coming in to talk).
- I think overall the curriculum that we are taught is good and I wouldn't change anything about it. I think that it has and is giving me a good foundation for later in life.
- More classes (AP and in general).
- More class choice (AP/honors courses).
- Offer more classes.
- Wider variety of options for high school classes.
- More class choices/opportunities in ag department. Example: vet science classes.

### **Student Engagement and Support**

- Give us study halls again. 3 votes.
- If a student feels they need the restroom for any reason they shouldn't be denied access. 2 votes.
- Better system in place for students to share concerns/thoughts on their teachers or how well they think they are learning in a class.
- Reward students who put in effort. SOAR cards not really given to high achieving students.
- Better food for school lunch.
- Better computers and internet.
- Look more into clubs; what clubs people want to add.
- Improve/diversify school lunch options.
- Better system in place for discipline in the high school.

### **Facilities**

- New seating options in classrooms instead of sitting in a desk 7 hours every day. 3 votes.
- Build an auditorium. 3 votes. Discussion:
  - Current music space "rammed in a corner"
- Updated building/grounds. 2 votes.

- Higher ceilings in hallways. 2 votes.
- Better facilities/space in the music department. 2 votes.
- Build an auditorium for presentations, assembly, band, choir, theater.
- Build an auditorium.
- Auditorium especially because we are a theater town.
- Facility improvements in the music area.
- Updated classrooms.
- Building condition.
- Improved locker rooms.
- Possibly join all 3 schools together? Best financially? Or have remodels to all 3 schools.
- More equipment for the weight room.
- Have hot water in all parts of the school.
- Hot water.
- Vending machines for food and drinks.
- Building an auditorium for musicals/plays and large meetings.
- Middle school redo building.

### **Community Communications and Engagement**

- Constantly post/email any schedule changes – make A & B days known.
- More open house options for the community to come in & talk to staff/principal.
- Better advertisement or awareness of sporting events and activities.
- More programs for students to interact and serve in the community.

### **Finance and Operations**

- Lower cost for parking passes and sports. 7 votes. Discussion:
  - \$100/year parking pass seems too expensive
  - How would the District make up the funding if this were reduced?
  - Opportunities for refund if only use a partial semester
  - Where are the funds funneled?
- Closer teacher evaluation – implement student surveys at end of each semester. 4 votes. Discussion:
  - A couple of teachers do this now, but not many
  - No school-wide end-of-year or semester survey
- More money for student resources.
- I wish teachers were maybe given more money/resources to do things with students.
- Teacher salary increases.
- Start fundraisers to prepare for building/educational improvements.
- More accessible student discipline.