

REIMAGINING EDUCATION. REINVIGORATING SCHOOLS.



Facility Planning Committee
DES MOINES PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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WHAT PROBLEM ARE WE TRYING TO SOLVE?



PROBLEM STATEMENT:

The school district faces a complex challenge characterized by a declining student enrollment and reduced supplemental state aid, which significantly impact the district's spending authority according to the Iowa State Education Funding Formula. This convergence of factors creates a pressing financial strain, limiting the district's ability to maintain educational standards and allocate resources adequately.

The decreasing enrollment figures not only directly impact the current financial allocations but also forecast a bleak trajectory for future funding. As per the Iowa funding formula, the district's financial support is intricately tied to student enrollment, implying that the ongoing decline will persistently curtail the district's budget in subsequent years. This situation poses an imminent threat to the district's ability to maintain educational standards, adequately compensate staff, offer essential resources, and address emerging needs within the educational landscape.

Furthermore, the low supplemental state aid exacerbates the financial strain, leaving the district with limited options to bridge the funding gap. The current economic climate compounded by the state's funding allocation structure presents a multifaceted challenge that jeopardizes the district's capacity to provide a well-rounded education to its students.

The convergence of declining student enrollment, diminished supplemental state aid, and the resulting impact on the district's spending authority underscores a pressing need for proactive measures and sustainable solutions to ensure the continued provision of quality education within the constraints of the Iowa State Education Funding Formula. Addressing this issue is crucial to safeguarding the educational experience and opportunities for the students while maintaining the district's fiscal stability and operational efficacy



OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT:

However, amidst these challenges lies an opportunity within the District's Facility Plan. The strategic reduction of overall square footage and associated maintenance and operational costs presents an avenue to bridge the funding gap. This plan offers the Des Moines Public Schools (DMPS) a unique opportunity to not only address financial constraints but also to prioritize investments in people and programs over bricks and mortar.

By strategically optimizing the district's facilities, streamlining square footage, and reducing maintenance and operational expenses, the DMPS can reallocate resources to vital areas such as staff compensation, educational programs, and student services.

This shift in focus from infrastructure to human resources and academic enhancements aligns with the district's commitment to providing a quality education while maximizing available funding.

The Facility Plan, if executed effectively, holds the potential to not only mitigate the financial constraints caused by declining enrollment and reduced state aid but also to reshape the district's resource allocation strategy. By emphasizing investments in people and programs, the DMPS can enhance the overall educational experience for students and ensure the sustainability of crucial educational initiatives within the confines of the Iowa State Education Funding Formula.

Leveraging the Facility Plan to prioritize funding towards human capital and educational programs not only serves as a pragmatic response to the funding challenges but also aligns with the district's overarching goal of delivering a transformative education that transcends boundaries, disrupts legacy thinking, and prepares students for their future. This strategy positions the DMPS to navigate the financial constraints while preserving and enhancing the 4 core elements of its educational mission:

1. Immersive multi-cultural Learning experiences preparing students for real-world connections fostering empathy
2. Access to world-class Career and Technical Education (CTE) preparing students for careers
3. Access to rigorous academic suite preparing students for Post Secondary Education
4. Wrap-around, holistic Child Development Programs and supports preparing students to become mature, well-rounded individuals

