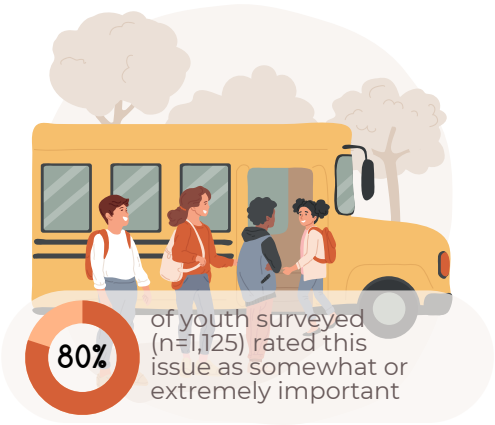


Youth Perspectives on:

School Conditions that Support Student Wellbeing

Overview

This subtheme, which emerged more than 455 times, reflects how students experience the physical conditions of their schools and the operational systems that structure the school day, including transportation, lunch services, scheduling, maintenance, and campus logistics. While some students appreciate improvements like newer buildings, many describe environments that feel overstimulating, inconvenient, or in need of attention.

WHY IT MATTERS

Facilities and operations play a significant role in shaping how students feel and function at school. Clean spaces, accessible bathrooms, and nutritious meals with enough time to eat them create the foundation for learning. When students are uncomfortable, rushed, or navigating logistical barriers, their ability to focus, connect, and succeed is compromised.

WHAT THE DATA SAY

Although students are allotted **30 minutes** for lunch, a 2024 *Theogony* article reported that cafeteria procedures, including scanning into the cafeteria with a Minga student ID, waiting in line for food, and the time it takes to walk to and from class, leave students with only **19 minutes** to actually eat.

WHAT YOUTH WANT

20+ mentions

Maintenance & Custodial Services

"Bathrooms are always open and clean."

"Recycling at school."

A school environment that is consistently clean, safe, and well-maintained, where bathrooms are sanitary, stocked, and accessible and classrooms and common areas are free of trash and pests.

50+ mentions

Physical Conditions & Infrastructure

"Less crowded hallways."

"Free and accessible student parking."

"Having a separate room for prayer (Muslims)."

A school environment that is spacious, clean, and welcoming, featuring inclusive spaces for all students, and enough affordable parking for students who drive.

20+ mentions

School Bus Transit & Intercampus Transportation

"One connected campus - transportation issues solved."

Reliable transportation where drivers are valued, campuses are connected safely and efficiently, and students don't lose learning time to long, late, or unnecessary commutes.

130+ mentions

School Lunch Services

"Longer lunches"

High-quality, nutritious, and culturally inclusive meals with adequate time to eat.

WHAT YOUTH EXPERIENCE

45+ mentions

Maintenance & Custodial Services

"Bathrooms are disgusting."

Concerns about cleanliness and upkeep, especially in restrooms. Missing supplies, closed bathrooms, and general maintenance issues were cited as everyday frustrations.

40+ mentions

Physical Conditions & Infrastructure

"It's super overwhelming and overstimulating. The hallways are so packed in."

Crowded hallways, limited space, uncomfortable furnishings, and inconsistent temperature control. While some praise newer buildings, many say current conditions can feel overwhelming and overstimulating.

45+ mentions

School Bus Transit & Intercampus Transportation

"The campus switching is awful and takes so long."

"I am always late because of school buses"

The two-campus high school model creates logistical challenges for students. The back-and-forth between campuses can be disruptive, especially for students with disabilities. Late, limited, or crowded buses contribute to missed instructional time and reduced opportunities for field trips.

95+ mentions

School Lunch Services

"Lack of lunch and learn = lack of equity"

Food quality, variety, and timing could be improved. Short lunch periods leave little time to eat, connect with teachers, or recharge.