

Barriers to Improvement

Students identified several interconnected conditions that make it harder to improve their daily school experience. Deeper engagement in 2025–26 showed that these challenges are shaped not only by facilities and resources, but also by schedules, school operations, adult responses, communication, and how much voice students have in decisions that affect them.

Physical Conditions, Access, and Capacity

Students described dirty or locked bathrooms, broken fixtures, missing supplies, overcrowded hallways and cafeterias, poor ventilation, and other facility challenges. They also noted differences between campuses. When basic spaces are inaccessible or poorly maintained, students can lose class time, feel stressed or uncomfortable, and receive the message that their needs are not a priority.

"Minnie Howard is always clean, stocked, and accessible... King is not."

Time, Scheduling, and Transportation Pressures

Short lunch periods, long food lines, rushed passing periods, campus transitions, and unreliable or overcrowded transportation can leave students hungry, late, stressed, and distracted. Students emphasized that logistical problems outside of their control can still affect their attendance, learning, and interactions with adults.

"Short lunch periods give me no time to eat, so hunger distracts me from learning."

Inconsistent Rules and Adult Responses

Students described different expectations across campuses, uneven enforcement, policies that change without explanation, and consequences applied to everyone because of the behavior of a few. They said fairness, consistency, respectful interactions, and clear explanations matter more than simply making rules stricter.

"About trust - just because certain students can't behave doesn't mean new rules have to apply to all of us."

Communication, Student Voice, and Follow-Through

Students said they do not always understand why decisions are made or have meaningful opportunities to help shape changes affecting their school experience. Communication gaps among administrators, teachers, security staff, departments, and campuses can create confusion and weaken trust. Students want clearer information, meaningful ways to provide input, and follow-through on what they raise.

"We need more transparency. We don't know what's going on, which makes us think that they don't know what's going on."