



## WCA Educational Focus Groups - South Elementary

Date: September 27, 2024

### Executive Summary

This report summarizes insights gathered from focus groups involving various stakeholders at South Elementary, highlighting critical needs and desired improvements in the school environment.

### Key Issues Identified:

#### 1. Health & Safety Concerns:

- **Temperature Control:** The school faces extreme temperature fluctuations, with the library reaching 104°F and bathrooms at 97°F during the first week of school.
- **Air Quality & Moisture:** Poor indoor air quality and water-related issues are prevalent throughout the building.
- **Electrical & Plumbing Hazards:** An electrical fire occurred in the lactation room, and there are significant plumbing problems, including sewer backup and unpleasant odors.
- **Disrepair of Building:** Numerous reports of leaks, cracks, and general wear-and-tear affect both the interior and exterior of the school.

#### 2. ADA Non-Compliance & Accessibility Issues:

- The building lacks proper ADA accessibility, including non-compliant ramps, stair lifts, and restrooms. Special Education (SPED) spaces are especially deficient, lacking both appropriate size and necessary equipment (e.g., adult changing tables).

#### 3. Space Deficiencies & Overcrowding:

- **SPED & Preschool:** There is inadequate space for Special Education, including insufficient private restrooms and sensory rooms. Preschool also lacks in-class restrooms, forcing students to use hallway facilities.
- **Gym & Lunch Areas:** The gym is too small to accommodate indoor recess and physical education simultaneously. Poor acoustics and circulation issues in the lunch area disrupt class schedules. Kitchen undersized.
- **Storage & Electrical Outlets:** General storage is limited throughout the building, and there is a shortage of electrical outlets.

#### 4. **Security Risks:**

- **Building Access:** Classroom doors do not latch securely, and windows are unable to lock properly.
- **Playground Safety:** There are concerns about students escaping the playground, insufficient fencing, and the proximity to parking lots, which poses additional risks.

#### 5. **General Infrastructure Concerns:**

- **HVAC System:** Consistent complaints about inadequate heating and cooling across various classrooms.
- **Restrooms:** Many restrooms lack hot water, functional fixtures, and/or accessible stalls. Staff restroom access is also limited and shared with SPED.
- **Outdated Technology & Lighting:** Inadequate technology, poor acoustics, and old lighting fixtures were cited as issues. The building lacks modernized electrical infrastructure and reliable internet connectivity.

#### **Conclusion**

The focus group meeting at South Elementary revealed several critical infrastructure, safety, and educational environment concerns. These issues, if addressed, could significantly improve the learning experience and overall well-being of both students and staff.