

Governor McKee, RIDE Highlight #RIReady Budget Investments for Davies Career and Technical High School

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#RIReady FY24 Budget recommends \$35 million to construct new classrooms, media center, CTE lab and more

LINCOLN, RI – Governor Dan McKee, Rhode Island Department of Education Deputy Commissioner of Instructional Programs Lisa Odom-Villella, RIDE Chief Operating Officer Mario Carreño, Davies Career and Technical Director Mary Watkins, and Rhode Island state legislators joined officials from the William M. Davies, Jr. Career and Technical High School to discuss significant facility investments laid out in [Governor McKee’s FY24 #RIReady Budget proposal](#). The Governor recommends \$35 million in financing from the Rhode Island Capital Plan Fund in FY 2024-2026 for Davies school construction.

“Through the RI Ready budget, we will transform Davies Career and Technical High School into an efficient and inspiring 21st century learning environment,” said Governor McKee. “My administration is committed to improving student outcomes and providing both educators and students with the school facilities they deserve. We look forward to watching the Davies’ school community thrive as a result of the RI Ready vision and investment.”

The Fiscal Year 2024 budget proposes to support new construction that will replace a wing of the school built in the 1970s. The current wing of the building is in poor condition and inefficiently designed. A [RIDE School Building Authority \(SBA\) assessment](#) found it would be more cost effective and educationally beneficial to replace the old wing and renovate the new wing, with an approximate cost of \$30 to \$35 million, rather than to build an entire facility, which would cost about \$120 million. The overall cost has risen since the 2017 assessment due to inflation. The new addition would house academic classrooms, a media center/library, CTE lab, and theory spaces.

“To prepare our students to compete in a global economy, all aspects of our education system must be aligned and focused on 21st century learning. This includes the environments in which students learn,” said Chair of the Council Elementary and Secondary Education Patti DiCenso. “On behalf of the Council, I share my gratitude with the McKee Administration for sharing a bold vision for Davies’ and school communities throughout Rhode Island.

“For far too long, students and educators statewide have found themselves limited by outdated

facilities that are not conducive to learning. The Rhode Island Department of Education is proud to support the proposed investments at Davies Career and Technical High School,” said Education Commissioner Angélica Infante-Green. “Together, we are addressing the critical need for modern and engaging learning environments that will equip students with the tools they need to succeed in college and career.”

Funding in the project’s first year would be for procurement of design services and demolition of the existing structure, which would be built and furnished in the following two years.

“Thanks to Governor McKee's proposed investments, we will be able to finance a 21st century, cost-effective design solution for Davies that provides facility equity for students and improved working conditions for teachers,” said Davies Career and Technical Center Director Mary Watkins. “The new wing will reclaim underutilized square footage in the current design and repurpose it to create new, state-of-the-art facilities reflective of equivalent workplaces of tomorrow's economy. These spaces will support innovative teaching and learning, as well as the safety, security and environmental well-being of students and staff.”

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