



**School Board Special Meeting
Thursday, February 11, 2021; 5:00 PM
Virtual Meeting**

- I. Determination of Quorum and Call to Order**
- II. Discussion**
 - A. COVID Testing ad hoc Committee Update (5:00-6:00 PM)**
- III. Action**
 - A. Approve Superintendent Search Firm (6:00-6:30 PM)**
- IV. Board Chair Updates**
- V. Superintendent Updates**

Ad-Hoc Committee Report: COVID-19 Testing Pilot Update & Recommendation

Committee Background Recap

This ad-hoc committee was charged in early November 2020 with researching and discussing the opportunities, practicality, challenges and feasibility associated with COVID-19 testing of employees and students in the Edina Public Schools.

Committee members include:

- Matt Fox, School Board
- Julie Greene, School Board
- Owen Michaelson, School Board
- Nicole Tuescher, EPS, Director of Human Resources and Administrative Services
- Mary Heiman, EPS, Director/Health Services,
- Trevor Helmers, EPS External Legal Counsel
- Nick Kelley, PhD, Acting Public Administrator, Bloomington Public Health
- Kelly DeWeese, MPH, Public Health Planner, Bloomington Public Health
- Al Tsai, PhD, MPH, Community member
- Sarah Prebil, MD, Community member

Even with a quickly evolving landscape of this pandemic, this committee has continued to meet, research and problem-solve potential paths for a COVID-19 testing program. It's important to note changes from the start of the committee work (early November 2020) to the committee framework/parameters presented to the Board (Mid-December, 2020) to our current timeframe (February 2021). Shifting variables continue to have an impact on the committee's thought process, discussion and ultimately, a recommended framework and proposal with options for moving this effort forward.

In December, the School Board supported a shift in scope for the work of the ad-hoc committee. Those directions included: (1) **Narrow** the scope of the committee work to the planning and implementation of a COVID-19 testing regimen for EPS and (2) **Broaden** the committee's flexibility and empowerment to seek alignment and support from city, state, and federal government resources. The following is based on this strategy.

Overall Update

<u>Where We Started (Early NOV 2020)</u>	<u>Progress Update to Board (Mid-DEC 2020)</u>	<u>Proposal to Board with Options & Updates (FEB 2021)</u>
COVID-19 positive case rates (<i>less than 20/10,000</i>) in Hennepin County	→ Increase in COVID-19 positive case rates (<i>more than 100/10,000</i>) in Hennepin County	→ <i>Decrease in COVID-19 positive case rates/ (less than 30/10,000) in Hennepin County</i>
Limited public testing sites/availability	→ Additional state-wide public testing sites open	→ <i>State-wide public testing sites open and mail-in testing option available</i> → <i>MDH updated recommendation (1/27/21) includes proactive testing for students every 2-4 weeks</i>

Vaccine approval and distribution unknown	→ Vaccine approval/distribution on horizon	→ <i>Vaccine distribution begins for EPS Tier 1/direct services school district personnel by BPH & MDH</i> <i>EPS Tier 1/direct services employees continue to receive vaccination via distribution</i>
EPS students in Hybrid or EVA learning models	→ All EPS students pre-K-12 in Distance Learning	→ <i>EPS students return to in-person classroom learning</i> <i>Tiered roll-out:</i> <i>Special Services: by Jan 11</i> <i>K-5 (4/5-days week): by Feb 8</i> <i>6-12 (hybrid): by Feb 16*</i> <i>*assumes MDH, MDE Safe Learning Model guidelines align</i>
All EPS facilities and activities open	→ All EPS facilities open and most activities paused	→ <i>All EPS facilities open and activities at less capacity</i> <i>EHS Winter Athletic/Activities</i> <i>Season: Jan 4 start</i> <i>CES Programming: Jan 4 start</i>
State-mandate Tier 1 Essential Care offered	→ State-mandate Tier 1 Essential Care offered (model change)	→ <i>State-mandate Tier 1 Essential Care offered in new model as of Jan 4</i>

Timing & Evaluation

As previously discussed, the committee considered questions and sought information to determine the potential feasibility of an EPS COVID-19 Testing Pilot program based on a set of considerations including funding, logistics/operations and COVID-19 testing resources.

Based on learnings from a few districts/schools with current COVID testing programs in place, the committee agreed the following five main elements are critical considerations needed for EPS to have an effective COVID testing program. They include:

- Purpose
- Cost
- Frequency of test
- Turn-around time for results
- Performance of tests

Using this guideline, our committee discussed at length what a successful EPS Strategy and Launch of a COVID testing pilot would include:

- Pilot Goal
- Secured funding
- Scalability of program
- Stand-Alone EPS testing Hub
- Detailed Execution Plan for employees and students
- Communication Plan for employees and students

For timeline and better analysis, we recommend the following parameters for evaluation of options and have explored plans based on this thinking:

Immediate (Phase 1): February - June, 2021

- In collaboration with in-person mitigation efforts for a safe return of students to the classroom, layer proactive COVID-19 testing efforts into the school system in coordination with timing of Learning Model shifts. Focus of testing efforts is to identify and isolate asymptomatic spread of virus. This effort is expected to be an effective and sustainable tool in lessening operational challenges COVID presents which includes ongoing district evaluation of operations and mitigation efforts and behaviors.

Long-Term (Phase 2): 2021-22 School Year, August - June, 2022

- Evaluate COVID-19 impact on EPS for the 2021-2022 school year and any considerations of ongoing mitigation strategies that may be needed to support the delivery of education to students.

In addition to the committee recommendation below, here is an update on pathways and research work surrounding COVID-19 testing options we are also continuing to pursue, as indicated.

Provide Additional COVID-19 Testing for Edina Public Schools

COVID-19 TEST RESOURCES	LOGISTICS & OPERATIONS	FUNDING	COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION
MDH - Safe Learning Model Plan Testing Kits for Teachers/Employees	<p>EPS roll out started on Jan 4, ongoing</p> <p>EPS testing all direct services teachers/employees on a bi-weekly basis with test kits provided by MDH</p> <p>Since 1/2/21, 712 EPS staff have completed spit / surveillance testing. 590 at elementary and district office, 97 at secondary and 25 at transportation garage. One total staff positive for COVID. Next test on 1/16/21.</p> <p>Approx. time from test to results: 48-72 hours</p>	<p>No cost.</p> <p>Supported by EPS employees.</p>	<p>No change. Continue to support state funding initiatives.</p>
MDH - Safe Learning Model Plan Testing Kits for Teachers/Employees	<p>Letter from Dr. Schultz/EPS sent to MDH 1/11/2021 asking to shift operational mechanics and use savings for EPS to receive additional testing kits.</p>	<p>Potential.</p>	<p>Admin continues communication to State regarding testing support.</p>
Current MDH State-Wide Testing Options & Recommendations	<p>Testing 100% independent of district; driven by family/student</p> <p>Individual, diagnostic test</p> <p>24-48 hours results</p>	<p>No cost.</p> <p>Independently supported.</p>	<p>District continues communication on testing available resources for students, families and teachers.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Mail-In from MN State → In-Person MN State Testing Sites 	MDH new 2021 recommendations for COVID mitigation efforts includes proactive testing for students returning to in-person learning		
City of Edina - Potential Resource for COVID Testing Efforts for EPS	Conversations continue with City of Edina officials exploring COVID mitigation funding streams to partnership opportunities	Potential.	Ongoing
Make On-Site 30-Minute Rapid Tests available for students	<p>Researched option to purchase rapid testing kits from Vendor for weekly student screening</p> <p>30-minute diagnostic results</p>	<p>\$200/per test</p> <p>1,700 Hybrid/EPS students = \$170K per week</p>	No current recommendation.
Make Saliva Tests available for students	<p>Researched option to purchase tests from Vendor for ongoing weekly student screening</p> <p>24-48 hours results</p>	<p>\$20/per test</p> <p>1,700 Hybrid/EPS students= \$34K per week</p>	No current recommendation.

Recommendation:

PROJECT TEST THE NEST: Edina Public Schools COVID-19 Testing Pilot

EPS partners with United Health Group (“UHG”) to launch a research-based COVID-19 testing pilot program for the Edina Public School system. This effort follows the UHG pooled-testing surveillance approach to COVID-19 testing to help prove that a pro-active asymptomatic testing effort for school systems is an important part of an effective mitigation plan in keeping schools open.

Program Goals:

- EPS keeps classrooms open for students in hybrid/in-person learning models.
- EPS, in collaboration with UHG, leads a critical state/national effort to keep classrooms open for all students by creating, piloting and sharing an effective blueprint COVID-19 testing plan for other school systems to learn, copy and implement.
- EPS students become Citizen Scientists as important participants in UHG research efforts to combat COVID-19 and its impact.

Strategy:

- Asymptomatic spread requires screening to prevent additional cases. Provide purposeful and effective COVID-19 surveillance testing pilot (frequent, convenient and fast results) as one of the multiple layers of interventions that can support the delivery of education.

- Focus testing resources on secondary students with flexibility to extend if capacity allows: (1) Students (grades 6-12) enrolled in hybrid/in-person learning model and 2) Employees in hybrid/in-person learning models.
 - ◆ Ages 12+
 - ◆ Students/adults capable of self-administering sample collection
 - ◆ Manageable logistics for testing events at concentrated school locations (VV, SV, EHS)
- Ongoing evaluation of pilot program (Feb-June 2021) for adaptations, effectiveness, partnership impact and communication support.

Why UnitedHealth Group?

In our research, our committee successfully connected with nearby UHG and learned about its ongoing research efforts in COVID-19 testing programs at school sites where it is seeing success in helping keep students in the classroom for in-person learning.

UHG is a highly-respected company helping to combat the global pandemic and its impact on communities. The UHG mission - to help people live healthier lives and to help make the health system work better for everyone - is demonstrated by its willingness to invest in public partners, like Edina Public Schools.

Several weeks of invested conversations between the lead team at UHG and the ad-hoc testing committee members resulted in this UHG partnership opportunity for Edina Public Schools.

Why EPS?

After many conversations with UHG, it is important to note that a successful partnership for a large-scale researched-based pilot program such as this calls for an organization with an innovative mindset dynamic in thinking. Expectations of the unique challenges for this effort calls for a school district that can be flexible, move to quickly problem-solve and adapt as needed. In addition, EPS would meet the qualification for this program with a hybrid/in-person Safe Learning Model and within the capacity UHG is able to offer (3500 students per week).

Consistent with our EPS 2020-25 Strategic Plan, our district and community's willingness to invest resources and a forward-thinking thought-process has and will continue to play a vital role in this COVID-19 testing pilot. EPS is committed to all efforts that safely allow for Edina students to be in the classroom and will continue to work diligently to keep them there. The COVID-19 testing pilot is one mitigation effort that can work towards this goal. EPS is a leader in public education and our district understands how this pandemic has impacted education and students.

How it works:

EPS secondary students and employees may participate in weekly COVID-19 testing as Citizen Scientists. Each week, up to 3,500 participants will get tested at their school site (collection consists of a self-administered simple nasal swab).

Three school sites will be set up for test collection at EHS, Valley View and South View Middle Schools for one swab per student/employee per week who are currently enrolled or working on-site in the hybrid/in-person learning model.

Participants will be trained in how to self-collect and a qualified, trained coordinator will oversee the collection process. UHG has seen success with the self-collection approach with students in the same age/grade bracket.

On test day, completed test swabs are collected and pooled* with the goal for all tests to be delivered by 10:00 am to the nearby UHG lab in Minnetonka for same-day processing. Results returned by the end of the day.

**Pooling is a process of combining test swabs in groups of approx. 10 participants into one test tube for analysis. The pool is then tested for COVID-19 with a PCR-based technology (highly sensitive test platform). Each test pool result can detect if there is or is not a positive COVID case in the pooled sample group.*

If results are negative, the district will know the pool has no active COVID among those participants. If positive, the district will know which specific pool has an active, asymptomatic COVID case among the participants. All participants in that positive pool would retest the same-day with a diagnostic test through UHG, plus provide an additional swab collection for UHG research. Results returned either later the same day/early the next morning.

The quantitative retest of the pool participants pinpoints which individual out of the pool is a confirmed negative and which individuals are confirmed positive. A student/employee with a confirmed positive result would be asked to follow with quarantine, contact tracing and return to school protocols.

Year – School / Learning Model (as of 2.2.2021)	Number of Students
2020-21 Edina High School	1782
<i>4 Day: In Person Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday - Remote Wednesday</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Hybrid: In Person Monday/Tuesday - Remote Wednesday, Thursday and Friday</i>	<i>893</i>
<i>Hybrid: In Person Thursday/Friday - Remote Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday</i>	<i>872</i>
2020-21 South View	756
<i>Hybrid: In Person Monday/Tuesday - Remote Wednesday, Thursday and Friday</i>	<i>380</i>
<i>Hybrid: In Person Thursday/Friday - Remote Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday</i>	<i>376</i>
2020-21 Valley View	731
<i>Hybrid: In Person Monday/Tuesday - Remote Wednesday, Thursday and Friday</i>	<i>384</i>
<i>Hybrid: In Person Thursday/Friday - Remote Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday</i>	<i>347</i>
Grand Total	3269

Current total EPS student enrollment (secondary) in Hybrid learning model is 3,269.

UHG Research Request

In partnership, UHG* requests for the following from EPS:

- UHG will fund test processing and provide logistical and communications consultation through the end of the 2020-2021 school year.
- In a positive test pool, each participant will retest and collect two samples: (1) one sample for diagnostic testing; and (2) one sample for UHG in-house testing and research for additional COVID-19 testing methods. No student/staff data transferred to UHG.
- Survey completion of EPS student participants and employees throughout the pilot.
- EPS commits a predetermined level of funding toward disposables required to perform the tests.
- EPS commits effort with UHG to being a state/national lead resource (shared learning, best practices and results for playbook content) with other districts or educational entities wanting to implement COVID-19 testing measures as effective ways to return and keep students in in-person learning.
- UHG and EPS commit to a partnership approach for all external communication efforts regarding this pilot program.

Why We Should Do This

Research has shown that around 40-50% of people infected with COVID-19 do not develop symptoms.* These asymptomatic individuals, through “silent transmission,” are significant contributors to the spread of this virus.

By offering an ongoing robust COVID-19 testing process for individuals in the EPS school community, we can (1) quickly identify positive cases, (2) be able to isolate and contact trace those cases and (3) retain open classrooms to provide more in-person learning.

Data shows that this proactive approach, in concert with other MDH preventive protocols, could effectively work to reduce the risk of asymptomatic spread by those screened. This testing process has strong indicators of positive impact on school operations by finding cases faster and minimizing the amount of people needing to quarantine.

*<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/basics.html>

**<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/open-america/expanded-screening-testing.html>



Board Meeting Date: 2/11/2021 Special Meeting

TITLE: Superintendent Search Firm Selection

TYPE: Action

PRESENTER(S): Erica Allenburg, Chair

BACKGROUND: The board will discuss and vote to approve a search firm to assist in the selection of a new Superintendent.

RECOMMENDATION: To approve one of the two final search firms that were interviewed by the full board.

PRIMARY ISSUE(S) TO CONSIDER: Superintendent Search Firm

ATTACHMENTS: None