



**School Board Special Meeting**  
**Monday, February 8, 2021; 4:00 PM**  
**Hybrid – Virtual & District Office Conference Room**

- I. **Determination of Quorum and Call to Order**
  
- II. **Closed Session**
  - A. Early Childhood Negotiations **(4:00-4:15 PM)**  
**Presenter(s)**: Nicole Tuescher, Director of Human Resources and Admin Services
  
- III. **Closed Session**
  - A. Superintendent Review **(4:15-5:00 PM)**  
**Presenter(s)**: Erica Allenburg, Board Chair
  
- IV. **Discussion**
  - A. Superintendent Search Firm Criteria **(5:00-6:00 PM)** - *walked in*  
**Presenter(s)**: Erica Allenburg, Board Chair
  
  - B. Board Community Letters **(6:00-6:15 PM)**  
**Presenter(s)**: Erica Allenburg, Board Chair
  
  - C. Board Communications **(6:15-6:45 PM)**  
**Presenter(s)**: Erica Allenburg, Board Chair
  
- V. **Leadership Updates**



**Board Meeting Date:** February 8, 2021 Closed Session

**TITLE:** 2020-2021 Superintendent Goals – Midyear Review

**TYPE:** Discussion

**PRESENTER(S):** John W. Schultz, Superintendent

**BACKGROUND:** Attached are the proposed 2020-2021 Superintendent Goals along with current status of each goal.

**RECOMMENDATION:** None - Discussion Only

**PRIMARY ISSUE(S) TO CONSIDER:** Status of 2020-2021 Superintendent Goals

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Goals/ Status Report (next page)

## **2020-2021 Superintendent Goals and Current Status**

Below are the goals and current status of the work being done by the Superintendent and District administration.

### **1. Roll out Science and Music/Art Curriculum.**

**Superintendent will work with Teaching and Learning to develop a process to develop and present recommendations for science and music and art curricula.**

#### ***Science Curriculum***

*The Science Curriculum Review process has been moving forward at all levels. The Elementary Team recently met to reestablish where they left off in the process since their last meeting on February 25. The team determined to move forward with the following priorities:*

- *Revisiting the analysis of curriculum materials*
- *Organizing around next steps with this materials analysis*
- *Reviewing the new standards and their alignment to other curricular areas*
- *Determining professional development needs and action steps to build collective understanding around pedagogical shifts, and incorporating STEM into the process*

*The Middle School has recently begun implementing Amplify curriculum in grades 6 - 8. In addition, the science leadership team members along with building science leads are collaborating on professional development plans to support the pedagogical shifts with the new standards, the implementation of the new curriculum and, most importantly, how the two align.*

*The Middle School and High School Science Design teams are also collaborating on determining the curriculum resources that will be used to teach 9th grade Physical Earth Science, which will be taught to 8th grade compacted science students in the 2021-22 school year. At the same time, the Middle School and High School teams are collaborating on creating science pathways that support the implementation of Policy 601: Talent Development. Finally, the High School is continuing conversations about course sequence, licensing and professional development.*

#### ***Arts/ Music Update***

*At the December 14, 2020 meeting, the Board received a Music and Visual Arts update. It stated the need to put the implementation of the new MDE Fine Arts standards on hold. During conversations with administration at both the elementary and secondary levels, it was recognized that the following would need to be addressed in order to proceed with full implementation of the Art standards:*

- *Licensing requirements*
- *Course changes at the secondary level*
- *Schedule changes at the elementary level*
- *Shifts in programming at all levels*

*In conversations, administrators collectively agreed that given our current circumstances, addressing these needs in a positive and productive way would be extremely challenging at this time. In addition, Ms. Campana at the Department of Education communicated that she would like to collaborate with Edina Public Schools in the continuation of our implementation process, suggesting we put full implementation on hold and continue to devote time to developing an implementation plan. Our next steps will begin with secondary conversations after registration takes place for the 2021-22 school year. This will start the engagement process in the beginning stages of developing the implementation timeline.*

## **2. Teacher Contract**

**Superintendent and Board will begin negotiating a contract with the teacher bargaining unit.**

*Teacher contract is slated for discussion at the March 16, 2021 Work Session.*

## **3. 2021-2022 School District Budget**

**Superintendent will develop a 2021-2022 school district budget with a focus on any special financing provided due to the pandemic from the Federal and State government.**

*CARES funding was presented to the School Board on September 14, 2020. Budget parameters were presented on November 16, 2020, and January 11, 2021. The 2021-2022 budget will be presented for preliminary approval on March 8, 2021. The final budget will be presented before June 30, 2021, if possible, and approval will take into account the Minnesota biennial budget.*

## **4. 2020-2021 School Year Learning Models**

**Superintendent will prepare Edina schools for the 2020-2021 school year in three education scenarios, face to face, hybrid, and distance learning (September 2020).**

*District administration presented learning models to the School Board on a monthly basis. On July 13 and July 27, 2020, administration discussed models being planned by staff. On August 6, 2020, after the Governor's Safe Learning Plan was released, administration discussed the development of K-12 hybrid models. On August 20, 2020, the Board approved the Learning Models for Fall 2020. On August 24, 2020, the Board approved funding for additional staffing for the hybrid and distance learning models. On*

*September 22, 2020, the Board approved how they would govern the pandemic. On October 12, 2020, the Board decided to collect data from students, teachers, and parents, the results of which were shared on October 22, 2020.*

*On November 10, 2020, with an increase in COVID numbers and after consultation with health experts and the MDE, the administration proposed to the Board to move K-12 to distance learning. The Board conducted a further discussion about the shift to distance learning on November 10, 2020 and November 12, 2020. On December 14, 2020, the administration discussed plans to return to hybrid. On December 21, 2020, the administration presented the Governor's plan to have elementary schools return to in-person learning, which began January 25, 2021 for K-2 and will begin February 8, 2021 for Grades 3-5. On January 11 and 25, 2021, COVID numbers were presented again, and plans for secondary to return to hybrid were discussed.*

## **5. Capital Projects Levy (Technology) Planning**

**Since the Capital Projects Levy (CPL) expires in FY2021, the Superintendent will prepare a plan for Board approval to initiate a referendum in 2021 to approve the capital projects levy.**

*A Board discussion about the renewal of the Capital Projects (Tech) Levy was conducted on November 21, 2020. On December 14, 2020 the Board approved a May 11, 2021 referendum date. On January 11, 2021 the Board further discussed the capital projects levy, and on February 8, 2021, the Board will hear the results of a citizen survey related to the referendum. The Board will give a final call for the referendum on February 16, 2021.*

## **6. Strategic Plan**

**The Superintendent will begin implementing those areas of priority for the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan.**

### **Strategy A: Advance Academic Excellence, Growth and Readiness**

**Edina Public Schools provides our students with access to a comprehensive curriculum that develops critical thinking skills and dispositions, and assures students are ready for their next level and the challenges and opportunities in the next phase of life.**

*Under A.3, Provide expanded, timely and effective interventions for students based on data and individual needs, through all school phases, Pre-K-12 and throughout the school year, continue to monitor, improve and build upon the current intervention systems (June 2021).*

*Under A.4, Review, develop, and implement an improved literacy program at EPS PK-12; begin a literacy study that will provide recommendations to Superintendent (January 2021).*

- **Monitor, improve and build upon the current intervention system (December 2020).**

*Current interventions (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support) are being reviewed, as this informs the literacy study. This year's monitoring and improvement of the intervention system will be presented to the School Board on April 12, 2021.*

- **Launch a Literacy Study for the purpose of developing a literacy plan, which includes building upon current work and practices in literacy (February 2021).**

*The literacy study process was presented to the School Board on October 22, 2020, when the School Board provided ideas and direction for this study. On December 1, a timeline and a guiding change document were presented to the Board. Currently, a steering group is being formed to inform the public and school communities of the study. A literacy study update will be provided to the Board in the Spring.*

### **Strategy B: Ensure an Equitable and Inclusive School Culture**

EPS welcomes, respects, supports and values everyone so students can learn effectively, develop a deeper understanding of complex issues and become empowered to contribute to the school community.

*Under B.2, Create a school culture that enhances learning and fosters a sense of belonging for all students through our values of Integrity, Compassion, Courage, Commitment, Appreciation and Responsibility.*

*Under B.3, Support equity by identifying and eliminating structural barriers to success.*

- **Build upon the foundation of equity work in Edina Schools and learn from the voices of the students and families served.**

*At Edina High School, students are working with teachers and administrators to listen to the voices of those who Edina Public Schools serve: students. Students and staff will be asking the following 3 questions in a "student summit."*

- 1) *How do we create safe spaces for every individual to show up as their authentic selves and be valued for the gifts they have to offer?*
- 2) *How do we cultivate awareness of the inequities around us and create possible solutions to address them?*
- 3) *How do we ensure that every student receives a world class education and is able to access all of the resources Edina has to offer?*

*The Board had a presentation by high school administration and students on January 25, 2021.*

- **Promote and support professional development in equity at all levels of the organization.**

*Edina Public School staff continued its teacher planned and delivered equity professional development for the kick off. Professional development opportunities have also been available for staff on Wednesdays. Principals and other instructional leaders have also discussed how to support teachers in examining standards and assessments in the delivery of instruction to all student groups in schools.*

*The Board is committed to broadening their understanding of equity work and working with the administration to implement strategic equity initiatives. The Board committed to multiple discussions about equity throughout the school year.*

*A first conversation was held on September 20, 2021, with Paula Forbes, regarding the impact equity training could have on the school system.*

*The second was an equity training event on January 19, 2021, similar to what new teachers receive as they begin their career in Edina. The training was delivered by four experienced teachers, who discussed how equity work has influenced their instruction.*

**Strategy C: Foster Positive Learning Environments and Whole Student Support**

**EPS fosters a caring school environment where students feel safe physically and emotionally, in order to be fully engaged in their academic, personal and social growth. Under C.6 Review and develop a technology plan for students and staff.**

- **In preparation for the Technology referendum planning, District Media and Technology Services will begin its research on healthy habits around technology use.**

*District Media and Technology Services (DMTS) kicked off a study motivated by the Strategic Plan that examined student technology use and district inventory and analysis of the digital learning environment. The outcomes for examining student use are:*

- 1) *To help understand the relationships between online browsing behavior and student academics; and*
- 2) *To help Edina Public Schools find and promote the most effective browsing settings for student success and healthy Internet use.*

*In addition, DMTS conducted a peer review using COSN (the Consortium for School Networking), which has identified the current set of practices needed to be a successful digital school system. The process reviewed the schools' systems to determine how a district aligns with these best practices as identified by peers who have successfully converted to a digital environment. Specifically, the outcomes of this review are:*

- 1) *Inventory of technology currently in use by students, staff, parents and the organization; and*
- 2) *Provide feedback on where Edina Public Schools is aligned to these best practices and make recommendations around practices that can be improved.*

## SUPERINTENDENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION FORM

Name: John W. Schultz, Ph.D.  
Date: February 8, 2021  
Evaluator: School Board  
Appraisal Period: July 1 to February 8, 2021

### Directions:

This form includes ten main performance topics common to the position of Superintendent and one open-ended evaluation question. A rating scale is provided to allow School Board members to rate the Superintendent's performance relative to each topic. School Board members should circle the appropriate response and use the space for comments which follows each main topic to further evaluate the Superintendent.

Please note: The evaluation codes are for Board discussion guidance only. We will use the discussion feedback from this form on the formal summarized Superintendent evaluation.

### Evaluation Codes:

- 1 Indicates unacceptable performance
- 2 Indicates improvement needed
- 3 Indicates expectations have been met
- 4 Indicates very good performance
- 5 Indicates outstanding performance
- UA Unable to answer

### Performance Indicators

- 1.** Provides leadership for the School District's educational programs, and curriculum development to provide the best possible learning environment for the students.

1 2 3 4 5 UA

Comments:

- 2.** Informs and advises the School Board about programs, practices, and problems of the School District and keeps the School Board informed of the activities operating under the School Board's authority.

1 2 3 4 5 UA

Comments:

- 3.** Explains the educational needs of the School District to the School Board, recommending necessary new or revised policies and staffing changes for School Board action.

1 2 3 4 5 UA

Comments:



- 4.** Acts as a liaison between the community and the School District and responds to concerns of parents, students, citizens, and staff to increase understanding of policies and practices and to keep them informed and involved with School District activities.

1 2 3 4 5 UA

Comments:

- 5.** Oversees all financial operations of the School District and prepares, presents, and recommends the various budgets to the School Board.

1 2 3 4 5 UA

Comments:

- 6.** Works effectively with employee groups and assists with contract negotiations. Recommends changes pertaining to working with employee groups.

1 2 3 4 5 UA

Comments:

- 7.** Institutes and updates a comprehensive strategic planning process, including short-term and long-term planning, school improvement plans, School District goals, and instructional goals.

1 2 3 4 5 UA

Comments:

- 8.** Establishes and maintains good relationships with personnel outside the School District to promote the best interests of the School District. (examples include City of Edina, Rotary, Associations, etc.)

1 2 3 4 5 UA

Comments:

- 9.** Maintains and improves effective School Board-Superintendent relations and communications.

1 2 3 4 5 UA

Comments:

- 10.** Provides leadership during COVID-19 (e.g. distance learning, graduation).

1 2 3 4 5 UA

Comments:

- 11.** Any other comments

Comments:



**Board Meeting Date:** 2/8/2021 Special Meeting

**TITLE:** Superintendent Search Firm Criteria

**TYPE:** Discussion

**PRESENTER(S):** School Board

**BACKGROUND:**

The Governance Committee has completed initial research to create a short list of potential search firms to hire. Listed below are four firms the Governance Committee recommends it investigate further. Also listed below are firms that were considered the Committee does not recommend the Board hire for the search.

The objective for Monday's meeting is to determine the specific criteria we should use to evaluate search firms and to create a final short list of firms that would be investigated further by the Committee. The Committee recommends that, following Monday's meeting, the Committee conduct further research on the short list and then propose two firms to be interviewed by the full board.

Once a firm is hired the Committee recommends that it work with the selected firm to set up a timeline and facilitate the search process in conjunction with Human Resources.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Per Board Direction

**PRIMARY ISSUE(S) TO CONSIDER:** Criteria and Process for Superintendent Search

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Report (next page)

## Background

The Governance Committee has completed initial research to create a short list of potential search firms to hire. Listed below are four firms the Governance Committee recommends it investigate further. Also listed below are firms that were considered the Committee does not recommend the Board hire for the search.

The objective for Monday's meeting is to determine the specific criteria we should use to evaluate search firms and to create a final short list of firms that would be investigated further by the Committee. The Committee recommends that, following Monday's meeting, the Committee conduct further research on the short list and then propose two firms to be interviewed by the full board.

Once a firm is hired the Committee recommends that it work with the selected firm to set up a timeline and facilitate the search process in conjunction with Nikie Tuescher.

## Superintendent Search Process Update

At Monday's meeting the board will:

1. Review the proposed selection criteria and add any items the Board feels are missing. Come to the meeting prepared with any additional criteria.
2. Review the dates of the next steps listed. The final timeline will be determined in conjunction with the search firm.
3. Review the search firms evaluated so far. Come prepared with the names and pertinent information of any additional firms you believe the Board should consider.
4. Authorize the governance committee to interview and bring to the full board two search firms for the full board to interview.

## Steps taken so far to refine the firms:

1. Contacted the National School Board Association
2. Received recommendations from Nikie Tuescher on successful search firms
3. Created the following criteria to evaluate potential firms:
  - a. Success in past
  - b. Representative client lists
  - c. Experience with high performing districts
  - d. Experience with similar district
  - e. Knowledge of district
  - f. No preconceived notions as to what is best
  - g. Ability to work with and direct board
  - h. Cost
4. Researched the following firms:
  - a) Baker Tilly
  - b) Hazard Young
  - c) School Exec Connect
  - d) BWP and Associates

- e) Ray and Associates
- f) McPherson Jacobson
- g) Minnesota School Board Association
- h) National School Board Association

**The governance committee recommends interviewing the below firms based on above listed criteria:**

- a) Baker Tilly
  - a. Local person is Patricia Heminover
  - b. Knowledgeable about Edina and Minnesota districts
- b) Hazard Young
  - a. Ted Blaesing is lead
  - b. Large firm with experience working with Minnesota districts
- c) School Exec Connect
  - a. Primary contact is Ken Dragseth
  - b. Knowledgeable regarding Edina and Minnesota
  - c. Has experience working with Minnesota districts
- d) McPherson Jacobson
  - a. Primary contact is Tom Jacobson
  - b. Large firm with prior experience in Minnesota
  - c. Local person is Linda Madson

**Additional Considerations:**

1. Since a search firm is deemed a “professional service,” an RFP is not required.
2. Ref. district policy 303.

**Next Steps/Initial Timeline:**

- 2/9-2/10: Governance committee to refine to two firms
- 2/10: Whole Board interview final two firms
- 2/11: Approve firm on Thursday, 2/11
  - Board announces to the public search firm chosen for superintendent search.
- 2/15-2/17: Subcommittee meets with the search firm to discuss next steps, process, timeline, community engagement plan and other details.

February 9, 2021

Dear Edina Public Schools Community,

This Monday, February 8th, our Superintendent, Dr. John Schultz, officially informed the School Board of his intent to retire at the end of the 2020-2021 school year.

Dr. Schultz has spent the last four years in the Edina Public School district managing many complex issues, working with the board to create a new strategic plan and vision, keeping our budget balanced for long term fiscal solvency, and initiating new educational programs, such as a study of and focus on academic interventions in our district. We would be remiss not to acknowledge the unique challenges this year has presented Dr. Schultz as an administrator, and we appreciate the long hours he has worked, his leadership, management, and dedication to his fellow staff members and our students during this pandemic.

As your leadership team, we understand one of our most important responsibilities is hiring our superintendent, and we are committed to a fully transparent process to find a candidate who has the qualities and experience both the board and community expect in a leader. Additionally, both Dr. Schultz and the board are as committed as ever to managing our district through this pandemic, with our continued focus on the academic progress of our students and overall safety and wellness of our students and staff.

We also want to acknowledge that navigating school in this pandemic is not just hard, but changes in our school model can be devastating to some families and students, some of whom are already dealing with hardships. As your elected school board representatives, we want to ensure there is crystal clear communication of the following:

- First and most importantly, for all the students that go to Edina Public Schools, **we see you**. We want to acknowledge that nothing about this situation is fair. All of you deserve to be having a “normal” year, going to school, and engaging in activities that bring you joy, no matter what your age, grade or interests. We are constantly in awe of your resilience and creativity and will continue to work with your best interest as our priority.
- To our community, parents and caregivers, we want to assure you that as board members, as well as parents of EPS students, we want to see our own kids back in their classrooms safely and this sentiment extends to all our students. We also recognize the definition of safety is a very personal, sacred one to families when talking about your children and we understand your own definition of safety ranges from complete online school to complete in-person school, to something in between.
- To all our educators, we see how hard you are working providing multiple learning models and at times shifting from one model to another. As a board, we are committed to providing a safe teaching and manageable working environment for you. For our

educators in our EVA, we know it can be hard to be isolated and teaching alone. We want to recognize that and support you in your work.

- To our administrators and site leaders, we have the utmost confidence in each of you to manage your respective roles in our district. We have seen you work with collaboration, flexibility, and grace and provide creative learning models for our students in some of the most challenging circumstances. We are confident you are providing safe in-person learning environments for our students, educators and other staff. The importance of this cannot be overstated.
- To the rest of the EPS staff: our bus drivers, nurses, custodians, clerical staff, paraprofessionals, food service, technical staff and more: you are the glue that keeps our district functioning. You, many times, face the biggest risks and operational challenges. You are the unsung heroes of our school district.

We are encouraged by the recent rollout of vaccines and the development of emerging nationwide data to help in our decision-making process. We believe that following guidance from the United States' Centers for Disease Control and the Minnesota Department of Health is integral for safe and sustained in-person learning for our students. Our district's measured and intentional approach along with understanding system-wide decisions and their implications, are critical to learning model safety and sustainability. The longer we can sustain an in-person learning model and the fewer shifts our students have to make, the better off they are academically and mentally.

The latest CDC studies and recommendations say schools should keep students socially distanced and in cohorts. Currently, based on analyzing the spread of Covid-19 within the state of Minnesota, the Minnesota Department of Health further refines this guidance to allow for less than 6 feet social distancing at elementary school, but maintains a 6 foot requirement at our secondary schools. At full capacity, manageable cohorts and 6 foot social distancing between students is not possible in our secondary schools. All leading health organizations stress proper masking, social distancing, and the importance of having the ability to quickly and effectively contact trace and quarantine students, teachers and staff who have been exposed to Covid-19. We believe all of these steps are vital to the success of maintaining our hybrid learning model. As a board, we must also weigh the operational and safety issues beyond the classroom (bussing, lunch, etc.), as well as the financial impact to our district, as we have to ensure we are setting our district up for long term success.

Our ultimate goal is to welcome all students back safely into our classrooms. How quickly we are able to do this is not just an Edina Public School's decision, an administration decision or a school board decision. It is a community decision. It involves having patience and trust in the process and each other, as well as keeping Covid-19 rates low around us. We truly believe there is hope right now and that good things are happening on many levels. Let's work together as an Edina community to fulfil our district vision:

*For each and every student to discover their possibilities and thrive.*

Sincerely,

The Edina School Board

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>
2. <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/k12planguide.pdf>

Dear Edina Public Schools Community,

This Monday, February 8th, our Superintendent, Dr. John Schultz, officially informed the Board of Education of his intent to retire at the end of the 2020-2021 school year.

Dr. Schultz spent the last four years in Edina Public Schools managing complex issues, partnering with the board to create a new strategic plan and vision, and initiating new educational programs. We would be remiss not to acknowledge the challenges this year has presented Dr. Schultz as an administrator and we appreciate his dedication, leadership, and management during this pandemic.

As your leadership team, we want to assure you that first and foremost, we are committed to a fully transparent process to find a candidate that has the qualities and experience both the board and community expect in a leader. Additionally, both Dr. Schultz and our board are as committed as ever to managing our district through this pandemic.

We are encouraged by the recent rollout of vaccines and development of emerging nationwide data to help in our decision-making. All leading health organizations stress masking, social distancing, and the importance of having the ability to effectively contact trace and quarantine. We believe all of these steps are vital to the success of maintaining our learning models. The longer we can sustain an in-person learning model and the fewer shifts our students must make, the better off they are academically and mentally.

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*For each and every student to discover their possibilities and thrive.*

Sincerely,

The Edina School Board

*This is a summarized version of a full letter written to the Edina Community. To see the full letter please go to [edinaschools.org/SchoolBoard](https://edinaschools.org/SchoolBoard).*



## Ellen Jones Suggested Edits to Community Letter:::

February 9, 2021

Dear Edina Public Schools Community,

This Monday, February 8th, our Superintendent, Dr. John Schultz, officially informed the School Board of his desire to retire [from Edina Public Schools](#) at the end of the 2020-2021 school year.

Dr. Schultz has spent the last four years in the Edina Public School district managing many complex issues, working with the board to create a new strategic plan and vision, keeping our budget balanced for long term fiscal solvency, and [pursuing new initiatives](#), such as a study of and focus on academic interventions in our district. We would be remiss not to acknowledge the unique challenges this year has presented Dr. Schultz as an administrator, and we appreciate the long hours he has worked, his leadership, management, and dedication to his fellow staff members and our students during this pandemic.

[As a School Board](#), we understand one of our most important responsibilities is hiring our superintendent, and we are committed to a fully transparent process to find a candidate who has the qualities and experience both the board and community expect in a leader.

[In the very near future, the Board will be initiating the search process to find our next Superintendent. We are dedicated to finding the right leader who can move our District forward. You will hear in the coming weeks how you can provide input to this process. In the meantime, know that your Board remains committed to our schools, our students, and our community.](#)

[The Edina School Board](#)

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February 9, 2021

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This Monday, February 8th, our Superintendent, Dr. John Schultz, officially informed the School Board of his intent to retire at the end of the 2020-2021 school year.

Dr. Schultz has spent the last four years in the Edina Public School district managing many complex issues, working with the board to create a new strategic plan and vision, keeping our budget balanced for long term fiscal solvency, and initiating new educational programs such as a study of and focus on academic interventions in our district. We would be remiss not to acknowledge the unique challenges this year has presented Dr. Schultz as an administrator, and we appreciate the long hours he has worked, his leadership, management, and dedication to his fellow staff members and our students during this pandemic.

As your ~~governance board leadership team~~, we understand one of our most important responsibilities is hiring our superintendent, and we are committed to a fully transparent process to find a candidate who has the qualities and experience both the board and community expect in a leader. Additionally, both Dr. Schultz and the board are as committed as ever to managing our district through this pandemic, with our continued focus on the academic progress of our students and overall safety and wellness of our students and staff.

We also want to acknowledge that navigating school in this pandemic is not just hard, but changes in our school model can be devastating to some families and students, some of whom are already dealing with hardships. As your elected school board representatives, we want to ensure there is crystal clear communication of the following:

- First and most importantly, for all the students that go to Edina Public Schools, **we see you**. We want to acknowledge that nothing about this situation is fair. All of you deserve to be having a “normal” year, going to school, and engaging in activities that bring you joy, no matter what your age, grade or interests. We are constantly in awe of your resilience and creativity and will continue to work with your best interest as our priority.
- To our community, parents and caregivers, we want to assure you that as board members, as well as parents of EPS students, we want to see our own kids back in their classrooms safely and this sentiment extends to all our students. We also recognize the definition of safety is a very personal, sacred one to families when talking about your children and we understand your own definition of safety ranges from complete online school to complete in-person school, to something in between.
- To all our educators, we see how hard you are working providing multiple learning models and at times shifting from one model to another. As a board, we are committed to providing a safe teaching and manageable working environment for you. For our

educators in our EVA, we know it can be hard to be isolated and teaching alone. We want to recognize that and support you in your work.

- To our administrators and site leaders, we have the utmost confidence in each of you to manage your respective roles in our district. We have seen you work with collaboration, flexibility, and grace and provide creative learning models for our students in some of the most challenging circumstances. We are confident you are providing safe in-person learning environments for our students, educators and other staff. The importance of this cannot be overstated.
- To the rest of the EPS staff: [our community education services](#), our bus drivers, nurses, custodians, clerical staff, paraprofessionals, food service, technical staff and more: you are the glue that keeps our district functioning. You, many times, face the biggest risks and operational challenges [from ensuring outstanding childcare was provided for essential workers to packing and delivering food to our families in need.](#) You are the unsung heroes of our school district.

We are encouraged by the recent rollout of vaccines and the development of emerging nationwide data to help in our decision-making process. We believe that following [current](#) guidance from the United States' Centers for Disease Control and the Minnesota Department of Health is integral for safe and sustained in-person learning for our students. Our district's measured and intentional approach along with understanding system-wide decisions and their implications, are critical to learning model safety and sustainability. [We continue to be strong advocates to leaders in our state on Covid-19 related issues and are committed to our ad-hoc committee working to problem-solve additional safety interventions that could support sustainability of in-person learning.](#) The longer we can sustain an in-person learning model and the fewer shifts our students have to make, the better off they are academically and mentally.

The latest CDC studies and recommendations say schools should keep students socially distanced and in cohorts. Currently, based on analyzing the spread of Covid-19 within the state of Minnesota, the Minnesota Department of Health further refines this guidance to allow for less than 6 feet social distancing at elementary school, but maintains a 6 foot requirement at our secondary schools. At full capacity, manageable cohorts and 6 foot social distancing between students is not possible in our secondary schools. All leading health organizations stress proper masking, social distancing, and the importance of having the ability to quickly and effectively contact trace and quarantine students, teachers and staff who have been exposed to Covid-19. We believe all of these steps are vital to the success of maintaining our hybrid learning model. As a board, we must also weigh the operational and safety issues beyond the classroom (bussing, lunch, etc.), as well as the financial impact to our district, as we have to ensure we are setting our district up for long term success.

Our ultimate goal is to welcome all students back safely into our classrooms. How quickly we are able to do this is not just an Edina Public School's decision, an administration decision or a school board decision. It is a community decision. It involves having patience and trust in the

process and each other, as well as keeping Covid-19 rates low around us [by minimizing the spread of the virus](#). We truly believe there is hope right now and that good things are happening on many levels. Let's work together as an Edina community to fulfil our district vision:

*For each and every student to discover their possibilities and thrive.*

Sincerely,

The Edina School Board

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>
2. <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/k12planguide.pdf>

## Board Email Communications Best Practices

District	Process	Add'l Info
<b>Wayzata</b>	<p>1. The Board Chair answers all emails to the school board and copies the rest of the board on the response.</p> <p>2. Generally the board chair tries to acknowledge the email and pass along to the administrator that can answer. If Dr. Anderson is copied on the email, he will answer the email.</p> <p>3. If each board member receives the same email from an individual, board members forward the email to each other and the Board Chair responds.</p> <p>4. The only exception to this is if a singular board member receives an email from a singular community member, then they board member may respond and they copy the Board Chair and Superintendent.</p>	
<b>Minnetonka</b>	<p>1. The Board Chair answers all emails to the school board. The Board Chair also refers emails directly to the Superintendent and/or principals or communications area.</p> <p>2. If the superintendent is copied as well then sometimes the superintendent responds.</p> <p>3. If someone does decide to answer a school board email individually, then they copy the school board chair or let board or district leadership know.</p>	<p>Feel it is important to have a consistent single voice. They feel it is very important to have all responses aligned and feel it builds community trust in the district.</p>
<b>Mahtomehdi</b>	<p>1. If an email is to the whole board including the superintendent, the superintendent is responsible for answering on behalf of the district (and includes thank you from the board).</p> <p>2. If the email is to the board and not the superintendent, the chair responds with a generic response. Thank you and who to follow up with. Acknowledge every email. Whole board is copied.</p> <p>3. If people email board members separately, board members forward the email to the board chair and superintendent and the board chair responds.</p>	<p>They do not want multiple emails coming out from the board with different messages.</p>
<b>Hopkins</b>	<p>1. Board chair acknowledges receipt of the email within two business days, and assures the constituent that a district representative will be following up.</p> <p>2. If the board member receives an individual email, Board member assures the constituent that a district representative will be following up.</p> <p>3. If it is a management issue, board member shares the concern or request directly with the superintendent. If it is a board governance issue, board member shares the concern or request with the board chair. If board member is unsure, share the concern with both.</p> <p>See attached document for more information.</p>	
<b>Osseo</b>	<p>In most cases, within three business days residents will receive a specific reply from the school board chair, responding on behalf of the full board.</p>	<p>Also have this option: Operational or management issues:</p>

		Please contact the staff person closest to that area of interest, or email <a href="mailto:WeListen@district279.org">WeListen@district279.org</a> and your message will be forwarded to the appropriate staff member.
<b>Centennial</b>	1.If an email is to the whole board including the superintendent, the superintendent is responsible for answering on behalf of the district (and includes thank you from the board). 2. If the email is to the board and not the superintendent, the chair responds with a generic response. Thank you and who to follow up with. Acknowledge every email. Whole board is copied. 3. If people email board members separately, board members forward the email to the board chair and superintendent and the board chair responds.	

## **Recommended Change in Process**

The below change in email communications process is being recommended to increase responsiveness and transparency to the community and provide clear, consistent standards of communication from the board.

1. If the entire board is emailed and the superintendent is NOT copied on the email, the board chair will send a copy of the incoming email to the superintendent, respond to the email as appropriate and copy the entire board and the superintendent.
  - a. If it is an operational email, the board chair will also copy the responsible administrator.
2. If the entire board is on the email AND the superintendent is on the email, the superintendent will respond as appropriate to the email and copy the full board.
3. If people email board members separately, board members shall forward the email to the board chair and the superintendent and the board chair responds as appropriate.
4. If the board member receives an individual email, the board member assures the constituent that a district representative will be following up. If it is a management issue, the board member shares the concern or request directly with the superintendent. If it is a board governance issue, the board member shares the concern or request with the board chair. If a board member is unsure, share the concern with both.

## **Hopkins School District Processes for Constituent/Board/Staff Communication**

Constituent brings concern to board during open agenda:

1. After the constituent finishes their remarks, board chair assures constituent that a district representative will be following up.
2. Board chair and superintendent discuss the best way to move forward. If the concern or request involves management, the superintendent works with staff to address the issue. If the concern or request involves governance, the board chair determines the process for working with the board or relevant committee.
3. The superintendent emails an update to the board re: the process for how the concern or request will be handled.
4. If board action is required, the board chair will send the discussion item to committee or add it to an agenda.
5. District representative follows up with the constituent.
6. When the situation has been addressed or resolved, the superintendent will email a summary to the board.

Individual board member receives an email from a constituent:

1. Board member acknowledges receipt of the email within two business days, and assures constituent that a district representative will be following up.
2. If it is a management issue, board member forwards the email directly to the superintendent. If it is a board governance issue, board member forwards the email to the board chair. If board member is unsure, forward to both.
3. Board chair and superintendent discuss the best way to move forward. If the concern or request involves management, the superintendent works with staff to address the issue. If the request involves governance, the board chair determines the process for working with the board or relevant committee.
4. The superintendent emails an update to the board re: the process for how the request will be handled.
5. If board action is required, the board chair will send the discussion item to committee or add it to an agenda.



6. District representative follows up with the constituent.

7. When the situation has been addressed or resolved, the superintendent will email a summary to the board.

Entire board receives an email from a constituent:

1. Board chair acknowledges receipt of the email within two business days, and assures the constituent that a district representative will be following up.

2. Board chair and superintendent discuss the best way to move forward. If the concern or request involves management, the superintendent works with staff to address the issue.

If the request involves governance, the board chair determines the process for working with the board or relevant committee.

3. The superintendent emails an update to the board re: the process for how the request will be handled.

4. If board action is required, the board chair will send the discussion item to committee or add it to an agenda.

5. District representative follows up with the constituent.

6. When the situation has been addressed or resolved, the superintendent will email a summary to the board.

Individual board member has a conversation with a constituent:

1. Board member assures the constituent that a district representative will be following up.

2. If it is a management issue, board member shares the concern or request directly with the superintendent. If it is a board governance issue, board member shares the concern or request with the board chair. If board member is unsure, share the concern with both.

3. Board chair and superintendent discuss the best way to move forward. If the concern or request involves management, the superintendent works with staff to address the issue. If the concern or request involves governance, the board chair determines the process for working with the board or relevant committee.

4. The superintendent emails an update to the board re: the process for how the concern will be handled.

5. If board action is required, the board chair will send the discussion item to committee or add it to an agenda.

6. District representative follows up with the constituent.

7. When the situation has been addressed or resolved, the superintendent will email a summary to the board