



A MESSAGE from the Superintendent

HOW YOUR VOICE MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN EDEN PRAIRIE SCHOOLS

Over the last 10 years, Eden Prairie Schools has continued to provide unmatched opportunities as one of Minnesota's top school districts.

The inspiring opportunities we provide our students are due to the strong connections throughout Eden Prairie. We are a school district that listens closely to the public in many different ways, and we value the input of our diverse residents, civic organizations and business leaders.

This school year, Central Middle School (CMS) and Eden Prairie High School have new classes that inspire students to explore their interests and potential careers. These "Pathways" courses directly result from an extensive community input process in 2015 called Designing Pathways. This fall, we opened CMS newly renovated and expanded with funding from a bond referendum approved by voters in 2019. These renovations are central to realizing the academic vision defined by our community in Designing Pathways.

At the start of this school year, we again conducted an engagement process across our school community to identify priorities for federal coronavirus relief funds. These are one-

time funds available only during a specific window of time. Our community's voices were clear: Provide mental health support for students, expand opportunities for academic support, and make operational improvements for air quality and outdoor learning environments.

Over the rest of this school year, our staff will have opportunities to learn from mental health experts. Students will have more access to mental health counseling. Our elementary schools have enhanced daily routines to build strong social connections and classroom community. This has been especially important after the isolation so many experienced in 2020. A number of academic supports are being added, including Power Reading which provides elementary students with daily, individualized reading practice with an adult. These are just a few of the ways community input has a direct effect on our schools.

Listening carefully to our public is part of how we conduct our work in Eden Prairie Schools. There will be more opportunities to share your ideas and inspirations about Eden Prairie Schools. Thank you for your continued support of our students, staff and schools.



SHOW YOUR WINGS

Name: Shirin Nashath Shaik Abdullah **Grade:** 8
School: Central Middle School

My Wings: I am on the Principal Advisory Leadership Council at CMS, which makes me feel like I have the chance to shine and show what I am talented in. Before I came to this school, I didn't feel very included with my other classmates. Everyone at CMS treats me the same though, even if we don't look like each other. The school spirit and caring and supportive environment inspires me to come to school and be myself.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

December 23 - 31, 2021 - No School: Winter Break

January 17, 2022 - No School: Martin Luther King Jr. Day

January 27, 2022 - End of 2nd quarter/end of 1st semester

January 28, 2022 - No School: Grading Day

February 15, 2022 - Elementary Conferences (4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.)

February 17, 2022 - Elementary Conferences (4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.)

February 18, 2022 - No School

February 21, 2022 - No School: Presidents Day

February 23, 2022 - High School Conferences (4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.)

February 24, 2022 - Middle School Conferences

February 28, 2022 - High School Conferences (4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.)

March 1, 2022 - Middle School Conferences

March 8, 2022 - School Board Listen & Learn at CMS PAC (7:00 p.m.)

March 21, 2022 - No School: Spring Break (March 21 - 25)

EXCERPT **EP** EXPRESS

EDEN PRAIRIE NEWS IN 30 SECONDS



01 Kindergarten Enrollment

Get ready for kindergarten! Please submit your child's 2022-23 registration to the Welcome Center by January 28. Visit edenpr.org/enroll.



EP Wins Niche Best Schools Award

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Niche, a web-based tool that helps students and families find schools, named Eden Prairie Schools among its 2022 Best Schools.



The district was also ranked in the top three places to teach in Minnesota.



Open this edition to learn about
what this student is doing!



EDEN PRAIRIE SCHOOLS
Inspiring each student every day

INSPIRING NEWS

DECEMBER 2021 / VOL. 2 • ISSUE 6



EDEN PRAIRIE SCHOOLS

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SCHOOL BOARD MESSAGE:

Supporting Student & Staff Well-Being

Since the beginning of 2020, many in our community have faced challenges and experienced loss. We have all been reminded that how we respond to adversity matters a great deal. The Eden Prairie School Board is incredibly grateful for and proud of how our community has and continues to respond to adversity.

- School district staff has shown incredible creativity, flexibility, and, above all, unwavering dedication to students and families.

- Students have focused on their education and shown care and concern for their peers.

- Community members have supported each other in countless ways.

The achievement of our students demonstrates the impact of our collective response to adversity. The 2020-2021 goal for our third-grade students to be reading at grade level, which was set before the pandemic and assumed an in-person learning model, was missed by a mere 2.8 percentage points. The goal set for graduation rates was exceeded by 1.3 percentage points. In addition, the progress made over the last four years to reduce the gap in graduation rates between subgroups of students is truly commendable. Recently, we've developed and shared a new initiative, Measuring What Matters, which monitors these results

achieved by students as well as other operations of the district. We'll be sharing examples of how we monitor the results in the coming months. Yet and still, the challenges presented by the pandemic remain.

Food service and other district departments aren't always getting what they ordered. Staff members are pitching in daily to support and cover for each other. Teachers are working to identify gaps in students' learning that exist as a function of non-traditional learning models during the past year. Eden Prairie School District staff has gone above and beyond for almost two years and the end is still not clearly in sight. Delivering a quality education is no small task but it's never been more difficult than it is right now. Please say thanks to Eden Prairie Schools' staff when you can.

Because Eden Prairie is a place where people care about their neighbors and extend grace in difficult times, we have not experienced the conflict and division that is happening in other communities. That is something of which we can all be very proud. As we all navigate the challenges of a "new normal," let's continue to respond to adversity with creativity and flexibility and continue to support and care for each other. Thank you Eden Prairie!

NEW SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS



Francesca Pagan-Umar



Steven Bartz

The Eden Prairie School Board welcomed two new board members in November - **Francesca Pagan-Umar** and **Steven Bartz**. Eden Prairie voters elected Steven Bartz in the November 2 special election and the School Board appointed Francesca Pagan-Umar at the November 8 meeting to fill Beth Fletcher's seat until a special election in November, 2022. We are happy to have you both with Eden Prairie Schools!

EDEN PRAIRIE PROMOTES STUDENT WELL-BEING AND MENTAL HEALTH:



This summer, Eden Prairie Schools received notice from the federal government that coronavirus relief funds would be available on a one-time basis for a limited period of time.

We used an online tool called Thought Exchange to ask our community for ideas on how to use these funds. The following key themes were formed from answering this question:

Improve air circulation & ventilation

Increase access to outdoor spaces

Provide more family supports

Offer accelerated learning

Prioritize student mental health

Eden Prairie Schools is addressing each of these areas with special emphasis on family engagement and student mental health. These two areas align directly with our Strategic Plan. Read more in Superintendent Dr. Josh Swanson's message about specific ways these funds are being used.

WE ARE HERE TO HELP

Mental Health Matters

Eden Prairie is a community that provides many resources and supports for families. Always staying up-to-date on what's available can be time-consuming and difficult to navigate. Help is here – no one needs to feel alone going through hard times. The following list will help you streamline the process of exploring and accessing resources. A full list of local programs and services can be found on our website by searching the Family Resources Program through Community Education.

- MoveFwd provides counseling for ages 12-24 & their families. Call 952-988-8336 or visit movefwdmn.org
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline provides 24/7 support for prevention and crisis resources. Call 800-273-8255.
- PROP (People Reaching Out to People) provides free counseling to families.

Call 952-937-9120 or visit propfood.org

- Hennepin County Children's Mobile Crisis Response provides 24/7 help with a child's mental health crisis). Call 612-348-2233 or visit hennepin.us/mentalhealthcrisis
- Hennepin County Adult Mobile Crisis Response provides 24/7 help for those 18+ experiencing a mental health crisis. Call 612-596-1233 or visit hennepin.us/mentalhealthcrisis
- Crisis Text Line is a text-based conversation with a real person. Text MN to 741741 at any time for any kind of crisis, or visit crisistextline.org/text-us/

Find more resources at edenpr.org/community-education

IN CLASSROOMS

- Elementary teachers provide morning circles and routines that promote shared community.
- Secondary teachers support student connection and belonging throughout their day.
- Elementary students participate in daily physical activity.

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- Educators use learning data to identify and respond to instructional gaps.
- Students have authentic, real world learning experiences to build understanding and self-confidence.

OUTSIDE OF CLASSROOMS

- Access to counselors, social workers and school psychologists for responding to social-emotional needs.
- All schools intentionally plan with Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) teams.

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- Support students to be safe, kind and responsible across school environments.
- Access to therapeutic services provided by Washburn Center located at school sites through a state grant.
- Small group and individual academic tutoring with social-emotional mentoring.

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WIDEST OFFERINGS

- Wide offering of athletics, activities and clubs.
- Student leadership opportunities and advisory group roles available.
- Strong parent/guardian involvement and support.

*** ON THE COVER: This student is participating in PBIS, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, where she acts out her emotions in a responsible, safe and kind way. Every elementary school participates in PBIS.**