

April 2022
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Number 7

Eden Prairie Schools Personalizes Learning with Pathways

April 8, 2022
Board of Directors Meeting
7 a.m. - 9 a.m.
Quora Education Center
NE Metro 916
Little Canada

April 29, 2022
Executive/Legislative Committee Meeting
7:30 a.m. - 9 a.m.
Anderson Center
Bethel University
Arden Hills

May 6, 2022
Board of Directors Meeting
7 a.m. - 9 a.m.
Quora Education Center
NE Metro 916
Little Canada

May 13, 2022
Executive/Legislative Committee Meeting
7:30 a.m. - 9 a.m.
Anderson Center
Bethel University
Arden Hills

Graduates of Eden Prairie Schools are ready for every opportunity. Consistently, around 90 percent of district graduates who go to college persist into their second year, and 85 percent continue to their fourth year – one of the highest rates in the state.

Yet, the Eden Prairie community believed in more opportunities for their students. Extensive public input helped shape an academic vision in 2016. This plan, called Designing Pathways, guided the district’s academic work and led to a successful bond referendum to renovate and expand Central Middle School. Core to this vision is the exploration of careers and personal interests. For several years, Eden Prairie Schools operated elementary schools that included sixth grade. Community feedback cited the importance of strong post-secondary preparation using a true middle school model and aligning the curriculum across grades 6-12. Sixth-grade students moved into the updated building in the fall of 2021, and Central Middle School and Eden Prairie High School launched their first Pathways courses.



Middle School courses designed to make real-world connections

 Business & Management	 Communication & Entertainment	 Engineering & Technology
6 Introduction to Business	6 Visual Arts Experience Digital Media Arts Theater Arts	6 Intro to Engineering & Technology
7 Personal Career Literacy Entrepreneurship	7 Art, Media, & Culture Drawing & Painting Theater Arts	7 Designers & Makers Green Engineering
8 Personal Financial Literacy Business Leadership & Management	8 Visual Arts & Identity 3D Visual Arts Theater Arts	8 Design, Model, & Make Coding & Robotics

 Pathways 2021-22



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A perennial plank on AMSD’s legislative platform is a plea to legislators to address the severe cross-subsidy (shortfall) in the special education program. The failure of the state to provide the necessary funding for special education programs has created budget challenges for school districts for years. In recent years a smaller, but growing, cross-subsidy had developed in the English learner program. The most recent data from the MN Department of Education shows that these cross-subsidies have grown to \$780 million and \$146 million respectively. The recently released House E-12 Omnibus Bill offers the best hope in recent memory to make significant progress in addressing the funding shortfalls in these important programs. I encourage AMSD members to contact your local legislators, legislative leaders, and Governor Walz to urge them to eliminate or greatly reduce the cross-subsidies in the special education and English learner programs. Thank you in advance for your advocacy!

From the AMSD Chair, Kelsey Dawson Walton, Osseo Area Schools Board Member



Pathways Provide Students with Authentic Experiences

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Students take introductory Pathways courses in middle school and then have opportunities to specialize and complete a culminating Capstone course as a junior or senior. The district's mission to personalize learning advances significantly when students have opportunities to find their passions.

"We intentionally set up Pathways so that students could be more purposeful about the classes that they are choosing as they matriculate through Eden Prairie Schools," said Nathan Swenson, principal of Central Middle School. "We're sending kids who are prepared differently to the high school, having experienced classes in business and management, arts courses and other Pathways," he said.

The five Pathways areas are based on Minnesota's career fields and pathways. Students drawn to a particular interest area can find connections as they consider options after high school. Eden Prairie Schools' Pathways inspire students in five broad areas:

- Communication and Arts,
- Business and Management,
- Civics and Social Services,
- Natural and Applied Sciences, and
- Engineering and Technology.

There are specific interest areas to which Central Middle School and EPHS align their courses within each Pathway.



Central Middle School students in the Intro to Engineering course work with industry-standard technology to design, prototype and create products. This course teaches fundamental skills to help students decide if the Engineering and Technology Pathway is right for them.

"Our community's vision is to provide students with authentic experiences," said Superintendent Dr. Josh Swanson. "This goes to the heart of the work by our curriculum teams and teachers to give students experiences that mirror what they will do outside of school."

In Margot Cowing's Entrepreneurship class at Eden Prairie High School, students conceive of a business venture, identify a target market, set revenue targets, develop marketing and then bring their business to life. All of this happens within two nine-week terms. Entrepreneurship is a Capstone course, so students would have taken a couple of prerequisites before getting to her class, Cowing explained. After several weeks of research, planning and development, students launch their businesses over five weeks. They analyze their performance weekly and adjust according to their goals.

The first phase of Pathways courses at Central Middle School and Eden Prairie High School launched in the fall of 2021. In the subsequent school years, the schools will build out additional Pathways.

High school senior Rohit Wilson best encapsulates Pathways: "I've taken what I've learned from [the Entrepreneurship] class through networking and used it for college, job shadowing, and even real-life jobs."

This month's member feature was submitted by Brett Johnson, Senior Director of Communications and Community Relations, Eden Prairie Schools.

House, Senate Release E-12 Omnibus Bills

Traditionally, even-year sessions are focused on policy issues and passage of a capital bonding bill. However, a projected \$9.2 billion surplus has provided a once in a generation opportunity for state policymakers to stabilize Minnesota's education funding system and provide meaningful resources to address the mental health needs of our students as they recover from the pandemic. The pandemic, continued shortfalls in the special education and English learner programs, and historic inflationary pressures have created significant budget challenges for school districts across the state. A recent survey of AMSD districts showed a combined projected shortfall of more than \$230 million for the 2022-23 school year.

The Governor released his E-12 budget recommendations shortly after the February economic forecast, which included a 2 percent increase in the general education formula allowance; funding to address the special education and English learner programs; funding for voluntary prekindergarten, and significant investments in mental health support.

Earlier this week the House released its E-12 Omnibus Bill which invests \$1.155 billion in FY 2023 and \$2.12 billion in the 2024-25 biennium to address the cross-subsidies in the special education and English learner programs, mental health supports for students, expanded voluntary prekindergarten, and programs to expand and diversify the teacher workforce among other investments.

The Senate E-12 Finance and Policy Committee released its Omnibus Bill on April 1 and it includes two appropriations, both of which target literacy initiatives. The Senate bill does not address the general education funding formula or either of the cross-subsidies.

Several of AMSD's legislative priorities are included in the House bill including:

- Increases English learner revenue and links English learner funding to the growth in the general education basic formula allowance for fiscal year 2024 and later. Creates a new component called English learner cross-subsidy aid. Sets the aid equal to 40 percent of the district's cross-subsidy in fiscal year 2023, 50 percent in 2024, 75 percent in 2025, and funds 100 percent of the district's cross-subsidy for fiscal year 2026 and later.
- Increases the amount of each school district's special education cross-subsidy that is paid by the state from 6.43 percent of the cross-subsidy to 55 percent of the adjusted cross-subsidy for fiscal year 2023 and later. This is a \$422.47 million increase in FY 23 and a \$997.092 million increase in the 2024-25 biennium.
- Appropriates \$95.862 million in FY 23 and \$212.295 million in the 24-25 biennium to create a new ongoing state aid program to fund additional school support personnel. Defines school support personnel as school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, school nurses, and chemical dependency counselors. Sets the initial aid amount at \$100 times the number of students enrolled in the school district or charter school during the current year. For small school districts, guarantees a minimum aid amount of \$50,000 for the school district. Creates a separate category of aid for intermediate school districts and other cooperative units serving students equal to \$6 per enrollee in the member school districts. Allows a school district to contract for services with the money if the district is unable to hire a new full-time employee with the student support personnel aid.
- Allows districts to offer digital learning to enrolled students without the review and reporting requirements that apply to other online learning providers. Requires online learning courses to be reported and identified in the Minnesota Common Course catalog. Distinguishes supplemental online learning from other online learning.

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House Proposes \$1.1 Billion for E-12 Education

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- An increase of \$61.5 million for the Grow Your Own Program for FY 23.
- An increase of \$11.25 million in FY 23 for Aspiring Teacher Retention bonuses.
- Increases funding for the Concurrent Enrollment Teacher Partnership by \$625,000 per year.
- Increases funding for the Collaborative Urban and Greater Minnesota Educators of Color grants by \$2 million per year.
- The House bill also includes a comprehensive set of policy proposals addressing student discipline, standards and curriculum, and teacher preparation time.

The Senate Omnibus bill, meanwhile, includes just two appropriations:

- \$30 million in one-time funding for the LETRS program.
- \$700,000 in ongoing funding for the Regional Centers of Excellence to support literacy directors.

Specifically, the Senate bill requires that districts adopt a comprehensive plan to support and improve teaching and learning that is aligned with the goal of having 90 percent of third grade students achieve grade-level reading proficiency. The plan must include district and school site goals and benchmarks for instruction and a process to assess and evaluate each student’s progress toward meeting state reading standards. The bill suspends provisions under the World’s Best Work Force law beginning in the 2023-24 school year through the end of the 2028-29 school year. The bill targets \$30 million to provide the Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling program to licensed K-5 teachers, plus \$700,000 to the state’s Regional Centers of Excellence to hire staff and provide support to districts.

Below are links to the bill language, the summary and fiscal tracking spreadsheets:

- [House E-12 Education Omnibus Bill](#)
- [House Research Summary](#)
- [Ed Finance K-12 G&H SS Change Only 2022.04.03 11.07PM](#)
- [Ed Finance Change Items](#)
- [House Appropriations Spreadsheet](#)
- [House Bill District Run](#)
- [Senate E-12 Omnibus Bill](#)
- [22, Change Items, SF4113-A1 Omnibus \(PDF\)](#)

Omnibus E-12 Budget Bills						
	Governor’s Education Proposal		House of Representatives Education Proposal		Senate Education Proposal	
	FY23	FY24-25	FY23	FY24-25	FY23	FY24-25
Totals	\$707.9 million	\$1.55 billion	\$1.15 billion	\$2.12 billion	\$30.7 million	\$1.4 million
Formula Increase	2%	0	0	0	0	0
Special Education Cross-Subsidy Aid	\$47.5 million	\$112.2 million	\$422.47 million	\$997 million	0	0
EL Cross-Subsidy Aid	\$13.895 million	\$31.89 million	\$76.12 million	\$202.45 million	0	0
Mental Health Supports	\$42.18 million	\$85 million	\$114 million	\$233.9 million	0	0
Grow Your Own Grants	\$14 million	\$24.2 million	\$61.5 million	0	0	0
Literacy	\$5 million	\$10 million	\$4.75 million	\$9.5 million	\$30.7 million	\$1.4 million
Voluntary PreK	\$155 million	\$370 million	\$155 million	\$370 million	0	0