



Board Meeting Date: 7/17/2023

Title: Board Liaison Roles

Type: Action

Presenter(s): Governance Committee

Description: The board has had discussions at multiple board meetings about reconfiguring our liaison roles. At the April 25th work session we identified four priorities to guide the improvements around the board liaison work and meeting the board's goals. They are the following:

1. Capacity - scale back
2. Equity & Access - increase access with more diverse groups
3. Standardize communication to collect and disseminate information
4. Explore pushing board meetings (work sessions) out to school sites

Background Information: The Edina School Board set goals for the 2022-2023 school year that align with our strategic plan and are consistent with the priorities of Edina School District stakeholders. Two of these goals are the following:

Goal Area Three | Strategy C Alignment: Foster Positive Learning Environment and Whole Student Support

Board Goal: Ensure students, staff, families and other members of the community experience a positive school climate with a deliberate focus on student, teacher and staff mental health and wellness.

Key actions:

- Board determines our role in the district educator feedback process for oversight and decision making at governance level.
- Board explores student leadership opportunities at the board level to elevate student voice to the board.

Goal Area Five | Strategy D Alignment: Develop Leadership Throughout the District

Board Goal (3): Continued development of the Board in order to effectively govern for maximum student achievement.

Key actions:

- Clarity around board priorities and how it relates to general board capacity and individual board member capacity.
- Board work bandwidth is manageable and efficient for all Board members.

Recommendation: The board discusses and agrees on recommendations to implement and test reconfiguration in the 2023-2024 school year.

Desired Outcomes from the Board: See recommendation.

Attachment(s): Reconfiguration 2023 Board Liaison Roles

Proposed Updates - Board Liaison Roles

Background Information

At the Board's March 28th work session, the board agreed upon the following goals and intended outcomes for gathering stakeholder voice at the board level (see Appendix A).

Proposed Goal

Stakeholder voice is an important tenet of the Edina School Board's governance work. In order to ensure all stakeholders have the opportunity to participate and influence educational decisions in the district, the Board seeks out and promotes multiple pathways for active listening, learning and understanding stakeholder input for better governance decision-making.

Intended Outcomes

- Stakeholders know how to engage with the board and where their feedback will be utilized (clarity around engagement and purpose with stakeholder feedback).
- Stakeholder feedback helps the board make decisions that support our mission, vision and strategic plan.
- A diversification of opportunities/pathways the board utilizes to gather stakeholder voices.
- Ensure gathering of voice opportunities reflect the diversity of our student, teacher and community body.
- Student, educator and community voice is gathered at a governance level and for governance purposes.
- Stakeholders feel better engaged in decision-making processes (at a governance level).

At the April 25th work session, the board identified four priorities to guide the improvements around the board liaison work and meeting the board's goals. They are the following:

1. Capacity - scale back
2. Equity & Access - increase access with more diverse groups
3. Standardize communication to collect and disseminate information
4. Explore pushing board meetings (work sessions) out to school sites

In order to meet the above stakeholder goals, intended outcomes and priorities, the following recommendations are being proposed by the governance committee to realign the board liaison positions.

Process Recommendation

To best meet goals, manage implementation and expectations and allow for thoughtful restructuring, we are recommending a two-year phase-in approach that 1) develops strong and impactful infrastructure of this work that honors the priorities identified by the board and 2) meets intended outcomes (see Appendix A: *intended outcomes*).

Year 1 (2023-2024): Implement Change to Current Work with focus on Stakeholder Voice

- Board feedback drives adjustments to liaison roles, responsibilities and expectations
- Build a strong communication base (logistics) for information sharing from the Board
- Board works with district communication to implement communication plan (changes to liaison roles + ongoing Board communication as identified)
- Review Policy 213 – School Board Committees and Policy 216 – School Board Representation for any suggested changes

Year 2: (2024-2025) Evaluate + Adjust

- Board evaluates success of changes and determines which to implement and where to make additional changes

Year One Recommendations

This set of recommendations is being proposed to meet improvements around capacity, while still meeting our intended outcomes and goals.

Recommendation One: *Restructure school/site liaisons to create board member capacity and better leverage the PLC. A written report will be created for all sites not having a board member visit in person to continue continuity of board update.*

- All board members assigned to school sites serve as representative throughout year cultivating relationships with PTO leads to manage ongoing issues, feedback and concerns
- Two board members are assigned to elementary schools and would have a board representative at their PTO meeting every third month.
 - *Elementary Liaison One:* Cornelia, Highland, Normandale
 - *Elementary Liaison Two:* Concord, Countryside, Creek Valley
- One board member will be assigned to the middle schools and will attend PTO meetings every other month.
- One board member will be assigned to the high school and attend PTO meetings every other month

- One board member will be assigned to the early learning center and attend PTO meetings every other month

Benefits:

- This proposed structure reduces board member site level commitment from 189-243 hours annually to 81-107 annually.
- Each school would still have a dedicated board liaison; would still get monthly updates and board members would still be available for urgent situations and questions.
- PTO presidents would get monthly updates via PLC and can funnel information to PTOs.

Recommendation Two: Move from having one dedicated PLC liaison to having a different board member attend PLC each month. (See spreadsheet for calendar).

Benefits:

- Redistributes time commitment of PLC across all board members.
- Gives more exposure for PLC members to each board member and vice versa.
- Allows each board member to engage and hear feedback directly from this leadership team.

Recommendation Three: Transition from having a board member attend each Edina Education Fund meeting to attending twice annually presenting structured board information about the work of the school board (board goals, strategic planning, opportunities for receiving stakeholder feedback, etc). Both the Edina Education Fund and Edina Give and Go will be invited to present their strategy and goals for each school year at a fall board meeting.

Benefits:

- This proposed structure reduces board member site level commitment from 18-27 hours annually to 2-3 annually.
- Elevates the role to a strategic governance level.
- Provides strategic updates for Ed Fund to help drive fundraising efforts.
- Board member remains available as a point person for ongoing questions or issues.

Recommendation Four: Insurance Liaison is dissolved and integrated into the finance committee; school-city liaison is dissolved and integrated into the governance committee; MSHSL is dissolved.

Benefits:

- Alignment of liaison functionality with the committee the role is aligned with.
- Does not require extra meetings and streamlines processes.
- Spreads work amongst all committee members.

This set of recommendations are being presented to meet the goal of equity and access while still honoring our goals and intended outcomes.

Recommendation One: *Add a liaison for cultural affinity groups and other identified groups. This liaison will work with our cultural liaisons and potential other identified groups. Liaison develops plan as to how to most effectively bring a broader stakeholder voice to the board and presents plan to board when prepared.*

Expectations:

- This role is exploratory for a year
- Work with cultural liaisons to identify at least one meeting per year with each affinity group
- Update the board on a quarterly basis as to feedback and progress being made.
- With administration, assess current work already done by the district.
- Bring proposal to board after the end of the 2023-2024 school year with recommendations.

Recommendation Two: *Add a liaison for student voice.*

Expectations:

- This role is exploratory for a year
- Be the SAAC representatives
- Be a board representative on the LAC
- Seek out additional opportunities to garner student voice, e.g. student council, student senate, Somali student group, Black student union, etc.
- With administration, assess current work already done by the district.
- Bring proposal to the board after the end of the 2023-2024 school year with any recommendations to elevate student voice to the board level.

Recommendation Three: *Create clarifications and additional pathways for educator voice.*

Suggested Clarifications and Additions:

- See other document

This recommendation is being presented to meet the goal of exploring work sessions and school sites while still honoring our goals and intended outcomes.

Recommendation One: *Explore having some board work sessions at school sites and explore the potential of having a 30-minute open listening session prior to the work session.*

This set of recommendations is being presented to meet the goal of standardizing communication to collect and disseminate information while still honoring our goals and intended outcomes.

Recommendation One: *Board works with district communication to implement communication plan (changes to liaison roles + ongoing Board communication as identified).*

Recommendation Two: *Set minimum expectation that all liaisons report to the rest of the board, community and governance level issues on a quarterly basis AND for any relevant topics.*

Recommendation Three: *Have a follow-up work session to more clearly define liaison role and communications expectations.*

Please see appended spreadsheet for updated proposed roles document.

Next Steps

- May 23 work session: Solicit board feedback
- June 12 work session: Bring proposed new liaison roles to board for discussion
- July regular board meeting: Bring new liaison position document to board for approval
- July work session: Discuss board members in roles; discuss communications in more specifics
- August regular meeting: Approve board members in new roles
- August: Communicate to new structure stakeholders.

Appendix A: Key Definitions

Governance: As the elected governing body of Edina Public Schools, the School Board is responsible to:

- Employ and evaluate the Superintendent, the chief executive officer who oversees and manages all operations of the School District.
- Establish policy. The superintendent directs administration in the implementation of policy and supervision of school operations.
- Review and approve the annual budget, and ensure that proper facilities and equipment are available to support teaching and learning in Edina Public Schools.
- Partner with the superintendent to establish and promote the strategic plan.
- Ratify employee contracts.
- Monitor progress toward school district goals and compliance with school board policies and state and federal laws.
- Advocate for students with lawmakers.

Advocacy: Public support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy.

Administration: Under the leadership of the Superintendent, the administration of the district is responsible for the management of the schools and the implementation and management of the school district's educational programs, as well as the administration of all district policies. The superintendent is directly accountable to the school board.

Stakeholders: Stakeholders are those individuals who have a stake in the school, its day-to-day operations and strategic direction.

For the purposes of this board exercise, our key stakeholders will be defined as:

- EPS students
- Families (parents/guardians)
- EPS staff (Instructional and Non-instructional)
- Principals and other administrators
- Edina community residents
- Board members
- City, county, state and federal partners (government and non-government, e.g. Edina Give and Go, State Representatives, Edina City Hall)

Student Voice: Student voice is defined as the ways in which each and every student has opportunities to participate in and/or influence the education decisions that will shape their lives and the lives of peers. (1)

Educator Voice: Educator voice is defined as the ways in which all educators have opportunities to participate in and/or influence the education decisions that will shape their lives and the lives of peers.

Community Voice: Community voice is defined as the ways in which all stakeholders -other than students and educators including parents, guardians and other key community partners - have opportunity to participate in and/or influence the education decisions that will shape the lives of the students, educators, administrators and other employees in the school district.

Proposed Goal

Stakeholder voice is an important tenet of the Edina School Board's governance work. In order to ensure all stakeholders have the opportunity to participate and influence educational decisions in the district, the Board seeks out and promotes multiple pathways for active listening, learning and understanding stakeholder input for better governance decision-making.

Intended Outcomes

- Stakeholders know how to engage with the board and where their feedback will be utilized (clarity around engagement and purpose with stakeholder feedback).
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