



Board Meeting Date: June 10, 2024

Title: Culture and Climate Board Update

Type: Discussion

Presenter(s): Dr. Randy Smasal, Assistant Superintendent; Leigh Ann Feily, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Coordinator; and Sonya Sailer, J.D., Director of Human Resources

Description: Strategy B of the Edina Public Schools Strategic Plan states that *Edina Public Schools will ensure an equitable and inclusive school culture*, and Strategy C states that *Edina Public Schools fosters a caring school environment where students and staff feel safe physically and emotionally, in order to be fully engaged in their academic/professional, personal, and social growth*. In order to monitor the current state of our school culture and climate, we administered two surveys to staff and one to students this spring. The Panorama Climate and Wellness survey provided feedback on the Teaching and Learning Climate in our schools and was administered to students and licensed staff. The Employee Engagement survey provided information regarding the degree to which all staff are engaged and satisfied in their work as an employee of Edina Public Schools. The body of the report includes background information on the surveys, participation rates, data summaries, analysis and some next steps.

Recommendation: This report is intended to be an update to the school board. No recommendation is being made at this time.

Desired Outcome(s) from the Board: After reviewing the report, please consider what needs additional clarity and be prepared to share your questions and comments with administration.

Attachment(s): See attached report

The Culture and Climate Board Update report includes the following sections:

- Background Information
- Panorama Student Survey Questions
- Student Survey Participation
- Key Take-Aways, Celebrations and Areas for Improvement
- Panorama Staff Survey Questions
- Staff Survey Participation
- Themes and Frequency Counts for Open Ended Responses
- Panorama Staff Data Key Takeaways
- Employee Engagement Survey Background Information
- Employee Engagement Questions
- Employee Engagement Survey Participation Information
- Employee Engagement Data rated against 80% Target Benchmark
- Employee Engagement Findings: Celebrations and Opportunities for Improvement
- References

Background Information:

The strategic action under C5 of Edina’s Strategic Plan states that *we will create environments that are conducive to learning and facilitate constructive student interaction*. Strategy B2 states that *Edina Public Schools will 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*. Data is needed in order to monitor the degree to which our culture creates a sense of belonging for students and staff, is a place where people can do their best work, and feel supported. The Panorama Climate and Wellness survey for students and staff was used to assess the current state of the Teaching and Learning climate in our schools. The Employee Engagement survey was used to generate feedback on the degree to which staff feel engaged in their work, connected to others at work, supported in their professional learning and growth, and motivated to do their best work. The data is used each following year, to set goals and establish action plans and KIPs to monitor progress towards meeting goals and shift plans as needed.

Panorama Student Survey:

Edina Public Schools is in its fourth year of partnering with Panorama Education to administer a student survey. National norms are provided in the data analysis to help understand the context of the data and provide insights for what is going well and where opportunities for improvement exist. Site and district leadership teams use the data to understand the needs of students, set goals, and create action steps for improvement. The annual monitoring will provide feedback on the impact of the action steps. The specific questions on the student survey are listed in Table 1.0 below.

Table 1.0: Student Survey Questions

| Topic Area: | Questions: |
|---|---|
| Challenging Feelings: how frequently students feel challenging emotions, with higher scores indicating less frequent challenging emotions. | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. During the past week, how often did you feel mad/angry?2. During the past week, how often did you feel lonely?3. During the past week, how often did |

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| | <p>you feel sad?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. During the past week, how often did you feel worried? 5. <i>During the past week, how often did you feel frustrated? (6-12 only)</i> 6. Thinking about everything in your life right now, what feels the hardest to you. |
| <p>Emotional Regulation: How well students regulate their emotions.</p> | <p>Grades 3-5</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How often are you able to pull yourself out of a bad mood? 2. When everybody around you gets angry, how relaxed can you stay? 3. How often are you able to control your emotions when you need to? 4. Once you get upset, how often can you get yourself to relax? 5. When things go wrong for you, how calm are you able to stay? <p>Grades 6-12</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When you are feeling pressured, how easily can you stay in control? 2. How often are you able to pull yourself out of a bad mood? 3. When everybody around you gets angry, how relaxed can you stay? 4. How often are you able to control your emotions when you need to? 5. Once you get upset, how often can you get yourself to relax? 6. When things go wrong for you, how calm are you able to remain? |
| <p>Positive Feelings: How frequently students feel positive emotions over time</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. During the past week, how often did you feel excited? 2. During the past week, how often did you feel happy? 3. During the past week, how often did you feel loved? 4. During the past week, how often did you feel safe?* 5. <i>During the past week, how often did you feel hopeful? (6-12 only)</i> 6. Thinking about everything in your life right now, what makes you feel the happiest? <p>*Students who indicate they do not feel safe receive a follow up from a student support staff member</p> |
| <p>Supportive Relationships: How supported</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you have a teacher or other adult |

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| <p>students feel through their relationships with friends, family, and adults at school</p> | <p>from school who you can count on to help you, no matter what?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Do you have a family member or other adult outside of school who you can count on to help you, no matter what? 3. Do you have a friend from school who you can count on to help you, no matter what? 4. <i>Do you have a teacher or adult from school who you can be completely yourself around? (6-12 only)</i> 5. <i>Do you have a family member or other adult outside of school who you can be completely yourself around? (6-12 only)</i> 6. <i>Do you have a friend from school who you can be completely yourself around? (6-12 only)</i> 7. What can teachers or other adults at school do to better support you? |
| <p>Engagement: How attentive and invested students are in class.</p> | <p>Grades 3-5</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How excited are you about going to this class? 2. How focused are you on the activities in this class? 3. In this class, how excited are you to participate? 4. When you are not at school, how often do you talk about ideas from this class? 5. How interested are you in this class? <p>Grades 6-12</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How excited are you about going to your classes? 2. How often do you get so focused on activities in your classes that you lose track of time? 3. In your classes, how eager are you to participate? 4. When you are not in school, how often do you talk about ideas from your classes? 5. Overall, how interested are you in your classes? |
| <p>Sense of Belonging: How much students feel that they are valued members of the school community.</p> | <p>Grades 3-5</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How well do people at your school understand you as a person? 2. How much support do the adults at your school give you? 3. How much respect do students at |

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| | <p>your school show you?</p> <p>4. Overall, how much do you feel like you belong at your school?</p> <p>Grades 6-12</p> <p>1. How well do people at your school understand you as a person?</p> <p>2. How connected do you feel to the adults at your school?</p> <p>3. How much respect do students in your school show you?</p> <p>4. How much do you matter to others at this school?</p> <p>5. Overall, how much do you feel like you belong at your school?</p> |
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Student Survey Participation:

The Panorama Student Survey is broken down into two component areas; Student Competency and Well-Being Measures (Challenging Feelings, Emotional Regulation, Positive Feelings, and Supportive Relationships) and Student Supports + Environment (Engagement and Belonging). A breakdown of the student participation in the survey is shared in the table below. Participation rates were consistent with last year with regard to student participation.

| | Total | Grades 3-5 | Grades 6-12 |
|---|------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Student Competency and Well-Being Measures | 4,621 (70%) | 1,694 (90%) | 2,927 (62%) |
| Student Supports + Environment | 4,256 (65%) | 1,614 (86%) | 2,642 (56%) |

*Percentages represent percent of enrolled students

Grades 3-5 Key Takeaways - Celebrations

- Over 80% of EPS 3rd-5th grade students completed both the Student Competency and Well-Being Measures and the Student Supports + Environment Measures. This response rate was comparable to last year’s response rate for 3-5 grade students.
- Students in grades 3-5 **indicated significant increase (+2%)** in their level of favorable ratings in the areas of Supportive Relationships, Positive Feelings, Challenging Feelings, Emotion Regulation, and Sense of Belonging. **Ratings in all of these areas were in the 90th to 99th percentile nationally.**
- Students in grades 3-5 maintained similar levels of favorable responses in the area of Engagement.

Grades 3-5 Key Takeaways - Areas for Improvement

- Though at the 90th percentile nationally and also an improvement from last year, only 55% of EPS 3-5 grade students responded favorably to questions about emotional regulation. Looking at question-level responses, *themes indicate that 3rd-5th grade students are having the most difficulty regulating themselves after experiencing negative emotions such as disappointment or a bad mood.*

- Looking at district level data, across all measures on the Panorama survey, students who identify as Black or African American indicated favorable responses at a rate of 2 to 14 points lower than the district average.
- Looking at district level data, across all measures on the Panorama survey, students who have a 504 plan indicated favorable responses at a rate of 3 to 10 points lower than the district average.

Grades 6-12 Key Takeaways - Celebrations

- Students in grades 6-12 maintained similar levels of favorable responses in the area of Supportive Relationships as last school year.
- Students in grades 6-12 reported increased favorable ratings in the areas of Positive Feelings, Challenging Feelings, Emotion Regulation, Engagement, and Sense of Belonging
- Across all measures on the Panorama survey, *students who participate in Talent Development pathways at the 6-12 level indicated favorable responses at a rate of 1 to 2 points higher than the district average.*

Grades 6-12 Key Takeaways - Areas for Improvement

- Student participation in the survey decreased slightly (4%) for grades 6-12
 - 2023 Participation Rates
 - Student Competency and Well-Being Measures = 66%
 - Student Supports + Environment = 60%
 - 2024 Participation Rates
 - Student Competency and Well-Being Measures = 62%
 - Student Supports + Environment = 56%
- Across all measures of the Panorama survey:
 - Students in 9th grade indicated favorable responses at a rate of 1 to 4 points lower than the district average
 - Students in 11th grade indicated favorable responses at a rate of 3 to 9 points lower than the district average
 - Students who identify as Hispanic/Latino indicated favorable responses at a rate of 2 to 8 points lower than the district average

Panorama Staff Survey:

The staff Panorama survey was administered to all EPS licensed staff from March 25 through April 8, 2024. The staff survey asked questions within the broad categories of School Climate and Belonging. The entire survey required about ten minutes to complete. More information about the topic areas that staff will be answering can be viewed below.

Table 2.0 - Questions:

| Topic: | Questions: |
|---|---|
| <p>School Climate: Perceptions of the overall social and learning climate of the school.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On most days, how enthusiastic are the students about being at school? 2. To what extent are teachers trusted to teach in the way they think is best? |

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| | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. How positive are the attitudes of your colleagues? 4. How supportive are students in their interactions with each other? 5. How respectful are the relationships between teachers and students? 6. How optimistic are you that your school will improve in the future? 7. How often do you see students helping each other without being prompted? 8. When new initiatives to improve teaching are presented at your school, how supportive are your colleagues? 9. Overall, how positive is the working environment at your school? |
| <p>Belonging: How much faculty and staff feel that they are valued members of the school community.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How well do your colleagues at school understand you as a person? 2. How connected do you feel to other adults at your school? 3. How much respect do colleagues in your school show you? 4. How much do you matter to others at your school? 5. Overall, how much do you feel like you belong at your school? |

Staff Survey Participation:

| | 2021 Total | 2022 Total | 2023 Total | 2024 Total |
|------------------------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Staff Climate and Belonging | Survey Not Given | 397 (62%)* | 538 (77%)* | 574 (85%)* |

*Percentages represent percent of licensed staff employed

Staff qualitative responses to open ended questions categorized into five top themes:

1. **Student Behavior and Discipline** - Themes from staff comments indicated concerns about student behavior. These themes invite continued district-wide work around refining/updating district policies and offering professional development around behavior intervention strategies and trauma-informed classrooms.
2. **Administrative Support and Leadership** - mixed comments with some feeling supported and others feeling unsupported. There is a desire for more administrative presence and connection with staff and students. Staff would like to have more partnership in long-term planning with district administration.
3. **School Climate and Culture** - range of comments from appreciation for positive environments to a desire for more joy, fun, and positivity. Themes emphasized included building a culture of respect, empathy, and caring among students and staff.
4. **Teacher workload and Well-Being** - themes of feeling overworked, overwhelmed, and

exhausted due to workload expectations. Comments suggested reducing workload through fewer initiatives and providing more time for collaboration and preparation. Themes also included feeling the impact of budget cuts and how they affected staff morale.

5. **Collaboration and Communication** - themes emphasized the importance of open communication, trust and collaboration between staff and administration. Staff also indicated a desire for more opportunities for staff input, feedback, and shared decision-making. Additionally, more time for collaboration between general and special education staff was highlighted.

Panorama Staff Data Key Takeaways

- Staff reported increased favorable ratings in the area of School Climate compared to last school year. National percentile rankings for Edina staff ratings grew from the 20th percentile last year to the 50th percentile this year. This means that Edina favorable staff responses were at or above 50% of favorable responses from all the schools in the Panorama sample nation-wide.
 - Staff also reported increased favorable ratings in the area of Sense of Belonging. National percentile rankings for Edina staff ratings grew from the 40th percentile last year to the 60th percentile this year. This means that Edina favorable staff responses were at or above 60% of favorable responses from all the schools in the Panorama sample nation-wide.
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Employee Engagement Survey

This new survey was first used in the spring of 2023 and then again in the fall of 2023 to measure employee engagement across all employee groups and obtain valuable insights into the experiences and perceptions of our school district's employees that can guide our district's efforts to create an even better working environment. By prioritizing employee engagement, the school district aims to create a more positive and productive work environment to both aid in the retention and recruitment of its valuable EPS team members.

Employee Engagement Survey Questions

The fifteen survey questions center on three key categories, which are detailed below:

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| Employee Connection to Mission and Their Job: Having the right resources, knowing what is expected of them, perception of others' commitment, and overall sense of engagement. |
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| Feeling Connected: Feeling cared for, recognized for accomplishments, having a voice, and feeling connected to the team. |
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| Opportunities to Learn and Grow: Frequent feedback, opportunity to do your best work, feeling of encouragement and support at work, and value for employee development. |
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Supporting Research

Studies show that engaged employees are happier, healthier, and more comfortable in their workplaces. They produce at a higher level than disengaged employees and experience lower absenteeism rates. Disengaged employees tend to lack any commitment to their workplace and often perform at a low level and rarely contribute in a positive way. According to Gallup's 2023

data collection, only 33% of employees across industries are "actively engaged," which is defined to mean "involved in and enthusiastic about their work and workplace." Approximately 16% of employees across industries are "actively disengaged" according to Gallup's research. Data gathered through the use of employee engagement surveys can be used to initiate conversations between employers and employees with the goal of improving engagement levels. Regularly gathering feedback from employees about areas where their needs are and are not being met provides an employer insight into common ways it might be able to maintain and improve the level of employee engagement.

Outcomes:

Employee Engagement Survey Participation

A total of 483 EPS employees participated in the Fall 2023 survey with representation from every employee group, which is approximately 35% of the district's 1,332 benefits-eligible employees. A breakdown of employee participation by employee group is listed below (14 survey participants did not indicate their employee group):

| Employee Group | 2022-23 Number of Employee Participants | 2023-24 Number of Employee Participants |
|---|--|--|
| Administrative (EAC, Non-Affiliated, SAC) | 34 | 35 |
| Community Education | 39 | 25 |
| Custodial and Grounds | 15 | 42 |
| EPASS | 30 | 28 |
| Paraprofessional, Health Service Associates | 89 | 53 |
| Supervisory, Confidential, and Other Support Staff | 29 | 22 |
| Teacher (Classroom, Non Classroom, Non Community Education) | 485 | 251 |
| Transportation | 10 | 13 |
| Total | 731 | 469 |

Employee Engagement Data

| Employee Engagement Questions | 2022-23 Strongly Agree and Agree Responses (Desired | 2023-24 Strongly Agree and Agree Responses (Desired |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|
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| | Benchmark* = 80% or higher) N=732 | Benchmark* = 80% or higher) N=483 |
|---|--|--|
| The vision and mission of Edina Public Schools makes me feel like my work is important. | 80% | 74% |
| I enjoy working with my team. | 90% | 90% |
| I have the resources I need to do my job well. | 63% | 61% |
| I understand what is expected of me in my position. | 89%* | 89%* |
| I get to use my best skills at work every day. | 78% | 81%* |
| In the last week, I have received recognition for doing good work. | 51% | 51% |
| At least one person seems to care about me at work. | 94%* | 94%* |
| There is someone at work who supports my professional growth. | 77% | 78% |
| At work, my ideas are appreciated. | 74% | 76% |
| My colleagues are committed to doing excellent work. | 87%* | 82%* |
| I have a good friend at work. | 81%* | 74% |
| A colleague and/or supervisor at work has talked to me about my progress during this school year. | 68% | 61% |
| Edina employees have shared their expertise and experiences with me during the past year. | 83%* | 80%* |
| There is someone at work who supports my growth. | 78% | 78% |
| I feel like I belong here. | 78% | 75% |

**Benchmark of 80% based on Gallup's finding that 16% of employees are actively disengaged.*

Employee Engagement Findings - Celebrations to Highlight

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| At least one person seems to care about me at work. | 94% |
| I enjoy working with my team. | 90% |
| I understand what is expected of me in my position. | 89% |

The majority of survey participants expressed a high level of job satisfaction, particularly in relation to working with their teams and being able to use their best skills at work. They also

reported a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. This suggests a strong sense of fulfillment and engagement among employees.

Ninety-four percent of survey participants reported at least one person cares about them in their workplace. Employees need to know that someone cares about them in the workplace to feel safe and willing to put forth their best efforts. They are more likely to innovate, engage in creative thinking, and share their results with colleagues. They trust first and are prepared to give their supervisor and/or organization the benefit of the doubt when managing organizational change.

The majority of survey participants expressed a positive sentiment about the supportive work environment at Edina Public Schools. They reported feeling that their work is important, supported in their professional growth, and that their ideas are appreciated.

Employee Engagement Findings - Opportunities for Improvement

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| I have the resources I need to do my job well. | 61% |
| A colleague and/or supervisor at work has talked to me about my progress during this school year. | 61% |
| In the last week, I have received recognition for doing good work. | 51% |

The main weakness identified was the lack of adequate recognition for good work and the perceived lack of resources needed to perform jobs effectively. A notable number of participants disagreed or were neutral about receiving recognition for good work in the last week. This suggests the current recognition practices may not be meeting employees' expectations or needs.

While a majority of employees agreed or strongly agreed that they have the resources they need to do their job well, a significant portion disagreed or were neutral on this point. This indicates that while some employees feel well-resourced, others may be struggling with resource constraints. Roughly half of the respondents within the teacher employee group responded that they strongly agree or agree to the question "I have the resources I need to do my job well." All other employee groups reported a favorable response at a rate of 70% or higher.

Lessons Learned from Spring 2023 and Fall 2023 Employee Engagement Surveys

The Power of a Supportive Work Environment

The survey results underscore the importance of a supportive work environment. A majority of our school district's employees feel that their work is important, they can use their best skills at work, and they are supported in their professional growth. This positive sentiment is a testament to the strong community we have built together. It's a reminder that fostering a supportive work environment can lead to high levels of job satisfaction and engagement.

The Need for Adequate Resources

While many employees feel they have the resources they need to do their job well, a significant portion expressed concerns about resource availability. This highlights the importance of ensuring that all employees have access to the necessary resources to perform their roles effectively. It's a reminder that resource constraints can hinder job performance and satisfaction.

The Importance of Recognition

Recognition for good work emerged as another key theme from the survey both this fall and last spring. Only slightly more than one-half of the district's employees feel they have received recognition for good work in the last week. This feedback underscores the importance of regular recognition in driving employee engagement and satisfaction. It's a reminder that recognition is not just about acknowledging achievements, but also about making employees feel valued and appreciated.

In conclusion, the survey has provided valuable insights that can guide our school district's efforts to improve the working environment at Edina Public Schools. By fostering a supportive work environment, ensuring adequate resources, and enhancing recognition for good work, our district can further increase job satisfaction and engagement among employees and make Edina Public Schools an even better place to work.

Sources:

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