



**Board Meeting:** 6.10.24

**Title:** Calendar Changes for the 2024-25 School Year

**Type:** Information

**Presenter(S):** Jody De St. Hubert, Director of Teaching and Learning; and Dr. Randy Smasal, Assistant Superintendent

**Description:** District administration has proposed two specific calendar changes for the 2024-25 school year. The first one includes the addition of one professional development day in the Spring of 2025. The specific date of the professional development day will be determined in consultation with the calendar committee and presented back to the board at a future meeting. The second change is the movement of Connect and Assess days in the back to school week. The Connect and Assess days will be one day earlier in the week than they have been in past years.

**Recommendation:** There is no recommendation at this time and this item is being shared with the board for information.

**Desired Outcomes for the Board:** This is for information only.

## **Adding a Professional Development day in the Spring of 2025**

Professional development is crucial for educators as it ensures they stay current with best practices, provides time for learning new standards and resources, and creates collective efficacy across the district. Collective efficacy fosters collaboration, leading to more supportive, positive, and effective learning environments for each and every Edina student and staff member. By investing in professional development, we are investing in the quality of education students receive, ultimately leading to improved academic outcomes and a more engaging, inclusive school experience for all. Currently the Edina 2024-25 calendar has 5 Professional Development Days, 3 of which are not aligned with conferences. These 3 days are designated as “Professional Development Days” and are district lead with strong collaboration with site administrators.

As we look ahead with a variety of stakeholders and across departments over next year and beyond, there are many topics that are critical to provide professional development on at every level of the Early Learning - 12 system. We are specifically implementing READ Act Legislation professional development. Although the READ Act does align closely with our district priorities some of the legislative requirements are limiting our flexibility and tightening our deadlines. Thus we are requesting to add an additional “Professional Development Day” for the 2024-25 school year.

In addition to on-going training such as annual mandated trainings, specific trainings for license renewal, continued CoGAT implementation training, learning on technology advancements/AI, specific training to support the need of students with IEPs, and 504 training, there are three **main areas** that these topics fall into:

1. Strategy Plan A: Advance Academic Growth and Readiness
  - a. PreK-12 Comprehensive Literacy Plan
  - b. Curriculum Reviews specific to ELA (in various stages depending on level) and Social Studies (in exploration) and Math (beginning exploration in 24-25 or 25-26)
  - c. K-5 STEAM
2. Strategy Plan B: Ensure and Equitable and Inclusive Culture
  - a. Culturally Proficient School Systems
3. Strategy Plan C: Foster Positive Learning Environment and Whole Student and Staff Wellness Support
  - a. Social and Emotional Learning
  - b. Adult Wellness

We are also implementing READ Act Legislation professional development. Although the READ Act does align closely with our PreK-12 CLP some of the legislative requirements are limiting our flexibility and tightening our deadlines.

The READ Act professional development that Edina has chosen is LETRs. In 2024-25 approximately 220 staff will be participating in the LETRs training. LETRs consists of 2 volumes of training; each volume consisting of 4 units. The total hours of professional development for

the 8 units is 136. Each unit includes one 6-hour full group session and 10 or 12 asynchronous independent hours of learning.

- For 2024-25 we have 3 District Allocated Professional Development days, with these days and an addition of either a summer or August Workshop choice for teachers we are able to fit in each of the necessary 6 hour full group sessions for volume 2\*\*. *\*\*Note: Most staff are being trained on volume 2, and we have plans in place for staff that are still working on volume 1.*

Unfortunately, this leaves no additional professional development time. Our proposal is that we add an additional district professional development day on the calendar in April, 2025. This timing would allow us to create intentional professional development on other targeted topics that were mentioned above. For example, this could allow all elementary staff to engage in spring STEAM and/or ELA curriculum resource professional development. Both STEAM and ELA curriculum resources will be new to implementation in the fall of 2025-26. The additional day will also allow us to continue to build upon the 6-12 CLP focus areas such as literacy across content areas and intervention systems. Another example would allow for Early Learning - 12 professional development on CPSS. As we learn more about READ Act requirements and continue planning with all stakeholder input and across departments this spring, we would enter 2024-25 with a tight specific and aligned topic for the proposed additional professional development day. Placing the proposed additional day in April is intentional, as it would allow EPS to adjust if we end up closing school for multiple days due to inclement weather earlier in the year. This would allow EPS to recapture a student contact day in that circumstance. We are and will remain committed to ensuring that Edina students are in school accessing learning as a priority.

Currently, the following districts are adding district professional development days to their 2024-25 calendar in order to fully implement the READ Act:

District	Additional Days
Burnsville	5
Lakeville	5
Byron	4
Minnetonka	3
West St. Paul	3
Big Lake	2
Independent District 728	2
Wayzata	0

## **Connect and Assess Update and Back to School Schedule Reminder for the Fall of 2024**

A review of our current practices for Connect and Assess days was conducted in the spring of 2024. An IROD (Information, Reactions, Options, Decision) framework was used to determine what steps, if any, could be taken to improve the Connect and Assess days in terms of the experience of students, parents and staff. Elementary Principals and Administrative Deans worked through the IROD framework and determined that we needed additional input from staff, parents/guardians which was captured through a survey. Survey participants were asked to respond to potential benefits of moving the Connect and Assess days earlier in the back to school week and adding a data analysis day for teachers prior to the start of school year. There was also an opportunity for respondents to add suggestions for improvements and to give general feedback on the Connect and Assess days overall. A summary of the survey results is included below along with a schedule for the Connect and Assess experience in grades K-5 and a reminder of the back to school schedule for grades 6-12. A communication plan has also been developed to inform staff, parents and guardians of the changes.

### **Feedback from Connect and Assess Survey to Staff and Parents/Guardians (N ~ 1400 respondents)**

#### Data Summary:

A total of 75% of respondents indicated that they either supported (25%) an additional data analysis day between Connect and Assess and the start of the school year or were neutral to the idea (50%); 25% of respondents were opposed to the idea. Connect and Assess and the start of the school year.

#### Open Ended Response Summary:

Based on the feedback provided, here are some key themes and suggestions for improving the Connect and Assess days at Edina Public Schools:

#### 1. Redundancy of Open House and Connect & Assess Days:

Many respondents felt that having both Open House and Connect & Assess days was redundant and unnecessary. There were suggestions to eliminate Open House entirely or combine it with the Connect & Assess days to reduce the burden on families and staff. This will be a future consideration.

#### 2. Scheduling Challenges for Working Families:

Several respondents highlighted the difficulties faced by working families in accommodating the Connect & Assess days, especially when they fall during regular work hours or conflict with end-of-summer travel plans. Suggestions included offering evening or weekend options,

scheduling the days closer to the start of school, or providing childcare options. Flexible options for accommodating families have been included in the schedule.

### 3. Teacher Preparation and Data Review:

Many respondents supported having a dedicated day for teachers to review data and prepare for the start of school after the Connect & Assess days. This was seen as valuable for making the Connect & Assess process more meaningful.

### 4. Communication and Transparency:

Some respondents expressed a desire for better communication and transparency regarding the purpose and goals of the Connect & Assess days, as well as receiving feedback on their child's assessment results and how it will inform their learning. Site leadership teams will include this feedback in their communication plans.

### 5. Logistics and Scheduling:

There were suggestions to provide longer time slots or flexibility for families with multiple children or those with special needs. Additionally, some respondents requested virtual or electronic options for completing forms or introductions before the in-person meeting. Flexibility in accommodating family needs has been deemed important.

### 6. Childcare and Scheduling Conflicts:

Many respondents mentioned challenges with childcare arrangements or conflicts with end-of-summer travel plans, especially when the Connect & Assess days fell during the week before school started. Multiple day options have been built into the schedule.

### 7. Value and Appreciation:

Despite the challenges, many respondents acknowledged the value of the Connect & Assess days in helping students and teachers build connections and reduce anxiety before the first day of school. The reduction of anxiety amongst students on the first day of school was a common benefit shared by teachers.

Overall, the feedback highlights the need for a careful balance between providing opportunities for connection and assessment while minimizing disruptions and accommodating the diverse needs of families and staff.

## **Fall School Schedule for all grades**

### **Grades: K-5**

Thursday, August 22nd: Open House scheduled at each Elementary school

Friday, August 23rd: Connect and Assess from 7:30am to 3:30pm, Scheduled time for students and families

Monday, August 26th: Connect and Assess from 10am to 6pm, Scheduled time for students and families

Tuesday, August 27th: Teacher Data Analysis, No school for students

Wednesday, August 28th: First day of school K-5

**Grades: 6-8**

Monday, August 26th:

- Full school day for 6th graders, and 7th and 8th graders new to middle school
- Late start for all other students in grade 7 and 8

Tuesday, August 27th:

- Regular school day for all students

**Grades: 9-12**

Monday, August 26th:

- Full school day for 9th graders
- Late start for students in grades 10-12

Tuesday, August 27th:

- Regular school day for all students

**Communication Plans for Calendar Changes:**

Updates for families will be included in two summer principal newsletters, two District Office “In the Know” communications for families, and “The Buzz” communications to staff. Additionally, information will be posted on the front page of our Edina website in August as a Banner reminder for staff and families.