



Board Meeting Date: 10/13/2025

Title: Edina Virtual Pathway (EVP) Update

Type: Discussion

Presenter(s): Nate Swenson, Assistant Superintendent; and Steven Cullison, EVP Supervisor

Guests: Jessica Cramer (EVP Parent); Eloise Bethea (EVP 10th Grade Student)

Description: This board report is intended to provide a status update on the development and management of the Edina Virtual Pathway Program. The report provides background information, a success metrics update, a description of some recent changes, and next steps.

Recommendation: No recommendation is being made at this time. This item has been prepared for board discussion.

Desired Outcome(s) from the Board: Please bring forth questions you have for the presenters.

Attachment(s):

- See following report

The EVP update includes the following sections:

- Five Highlights
- History and Evolution of Edina Virtual Pathway
- Success Metrics Discussion
- Recent Changes to Programming
- A Vision for the Future
- Summary

Five Items to Note

1. Enrollment has increased from 35 to 110 students since the 22-23 school year.
2. EVP implemented synchronous classes over Google Meet this year, a change from past practice.
3. Several student achievement measures, including graduation rate, reading proficiency, and MCA participation increased last year.
4. For the fourth straight year, EVP projects to generate revenue that exceeds its costs, off-setting insufficient funding for other EPS programs.
5. Participation rates in non-coursework (MCAs, surveys, conferences) by students and families remain low.

History and Evolution of Edina Virtual Pathway

EVP, like all schools in the district, exists to support the district's Mission and Vision and to further its Strategic Plan. The program uniquely contributes by providing instruction in a different setting and different modality than in-person schools, resulting in:

- Opportunities to advance critical thinking and student engagement in order to appropriately challenge every student (Strategy A).
- A differentiated educational experience (Strategy A).
- A learning environment that supports equity by eliminating structural barriers to success (Strategy B).
- Development of skills for students for healthy lifestyles including living effectively with technology and assured access to wellness programs (Strategy C).
- An environment that is conducive to learning (Strategy C).
- Responsiveness to enrollment trends while retaining current students (Strategy D).
- Strong financial stewardship through careful spending and student retention (Strategy E).

Edina Virtual Pathway serves fully online students in grades 9-12. Previously, an elementary-level program served students until enrollment declined, closing after the 2022-2023 school year. In its first two years as an online high school, EVP also served

partially online EHS students. Beginning with the 2024-2025 school year, EHS took ownership of online instruction of its students, allowing EVP to focus on providing excellent service to fully online students.

In 2024, EVP began offering summer enrichment courses in math and science, predominantly to EHS students and rising 9th graders coming from Valley View and South View. In 2025, 52 students benefited from this tuition-based opportunity. The same year, EVP hosted the first annual Minnesota Online Educators Summit, a professional development event that now serves over 100 educators from throughout the state each year, and awards the Minnesota Online Educator of the Year Award. This summit provides the opportunity for Edina online teachers to compare best practices with their peers from online schools throughout the state.

In a little over three years of operation, EVP has grown from 35 students to 109. For the 2025-2026 school year, it added four dedicated teachers in language arts, math, social studies, and science, allowing for the introduction of synchronous instruction over Google Meet in core area classes. This change also allows teachers to participate in professional development tailored to supporting students in an online environment. In addition, the new staff members participate in the Student Support Team, adding vital teacher voices to the group, which is largely responsible for developing and implementing interventions to support students.

This year, in response to feedback from stakeholders, and in keeping with state guidance, EVP improved its attendance procedures in a way that helps ensure accuracy while reducing work for teachers and increasing flexibility for students. Students are now required to check in and engage every school day, rather than a set number of times per week. This allows for daily attendance updates for families.

Demographics of Participating Students

105 students are included in the most recent enrollment analysis data.

Enrollment by Type (n=105):

- Resident - 24 (22.86%)
- Foreign Exchange - 2 (1.90%)
- Open Enrolled - 79 (75.24%)

Of those open-enrolled, 45 (56.25%) previously attended school in-person in Edina.

Enrollment by Grade (n=105):

- 9th - 14

- 10th - 25
- 11th - 30
- 12th - 36

Enrollment by Race (n=105):

- Black or African American: 65 (61.9%)
- White: 26 (24.8%)
- Two or More Races: 7 (6.7%)
- Hispanic/Latino: 6 (5.7%)
- Asian: < 5 (1.0%)

Eligibility for Services/Supports:

- 11.21% receive special education services (EHS - 10.68%)
- 6.54% qualify for accommodations under a 504 plan (EHS - 12.34%)
- 0.56% receive support for English Language Learners (EHS - 4.4%)
- 37.38% qualify for FRPM/Educational Benefits (EHS - 16.67%)

Reasons for Enrolling:

When asked 'What brings you to online learning?', over the past two years, students and families have most frequently responded:

- Want an Edina education, including potentially at EHS one day (25%)
- Flexibility in schedule or pacing (23%)
- Health (13%)
- Activities/Athletics (12%)
- Outside Responsibilities (10%)
- Poor In-Person Experience (9%)
- Accommodate Travel/Move (6%)

Success Metrics

Several metrics have been identified to evaluate the extent to which the Edina Virtual Pathway provides a rigorous and engaging learning experience.

1. Retention of learners as monitored through enrollment patterns
2. Student achievement trends and outcomes
3. Satisfaction of stakeholders, including students, families, and staff
4. Fiscal responsibility

These indicators may be viewed as minimum requirements for the success and continued viability of EVP; however, the goal is to exceed these expectations and to operate one of the most innovative and rigorous online programs in Minnesota.

Enrollment

Enrollment in EVP has grown meaningfully each year. By the end of the 2025-2026 school year, enrollment is expected to reach up to 130 students. This growth is an indicator of satisfaction in the school on the part of students and families, and is in part the result of the strong reputation that good word-of-mouth provides.

2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
35 ^{*^}	66 [^]	85 [^]	110

**Secondary only*

[^] Numbers are estimates, drawn by averaging first and second semester enrollment at the conclusion of each semester.

EVP plans to grow by 20-25 students per year, aiming for 175 full-time enrollments by the 2028-2029 school year.

Student Achievement Trends and Outcomes

Grades

- 2022-2023
 - Passing rate: 77.97%, B- or better rate: 48.47%
 - 2023-2024
 - Passing rate: 87.52%, B- or better rate: 59.15%
 - 2024-2025*
 - Passing rate: 79.85%, B- or better rate: 48.65%
- *For comparison's sake: EHS had a passing rate of 98.80% and a B- or better rate of 80.51% last year.*

Over the 25-26 school year, EVP aims for an 86% passing rate in its classes, with a goal of 90% by 27-28. By 27-28, it also aims for a 75% B- or better rate across all classes.

Attendance

	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
Portion of students with consistent attendance (90% or better)	79.7%	57.58%*	61.11% [^]

**For comparison's sake: EHS had a rate of 76.99% last year. Online high schools, overall, had an average rate of 65.35% in 2023-2024.
^In progress as of 9/23*

Over the 25-26 school year, EVP aims for at least 65% of students to reach the 90%-or-better threshold for attendance, with a goal of 75% by 27-28.

Graduation Rates

Improvements in service to students, and a reduction in the number of students requiring one or more summer courses to complete their requirements contributed to a much improved graduation rate in 2025.

2023	2024	2025
56% (5/9)	64% (21/33)	84% (25/29)

EVP's graduating class of 2026 is less credit-ready than its immediate predecessor. EVP aims to reach a graduation rate of at least 80% this year, with an aim to return to a rate of 85% the following year and to increase that by 1-2% in the following years.

Assessment

MCAs

A goal for EVP is to continue to increase participation rates in standardized testing (a challenge faced by many online programs throughout the state). Progress in this area was made in 2025, but the number of completed tests remains too low, in part due to the small size of EVP, for them to be useful when evaluating instructional efficacy.

	2023	2024	2025
Reading	100% (n=1) <i>Participation rate: 12.5%</i>	28.57% (n=7) <i>Participation rate: 50%</i>	42.86% (n=14) <i>Participation rate: 56%</i>
Math	0% (n=1) <i>Participation rate: 10%</i>	25% (n=4) <i>Participation rate: 36.36%</i>	16.67% (n=6) <i>Participation rate: 21.43%</i>
Science	0% (n=1)	0% (n=3)	22.2% (n=9)

	<i>Participation rate: 25%</i>	<i>Participation rate: 50%</i>	<i>Participation rate: 45%</i>
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EVP seeks to establish a baseline of 50% participation across all MCA tests beginning in 2026 and to increase that to 55% by 2027.

FastBridge

Beginning with the 25-26 school year, EVP has begun assessing reading in all grades, including 11 and 12, using FastBridge. By leveraging live classes over Meet, the participation rate will grow.

Students who demonstrate a high risk of not meeting adequate growth in their reading level will be recommended to an intervention class. Increases across years, and from fall to spring within years, will serve as indicators of EVP's success in serving students in the area of literacy.

	23-24	24-25	25-26
Fall (Low-Risk or Exceeds)	50% (n=20)	53.3% (n=15)	56.41% (n=39)
Spring (Low-Risk or Exceeds)	83% (n=6)	50% (n=5)	

By spring 2027, EVP aims to increase the percentage of students who demonstrate proficiency on the spring literacy universal screening assessment from 50% to 80%

IXL

For the first time in 2025-2026, EVP is conducting skills screenings for all math students to gauge growth over the course of the school year. This data serves as the baseline, with an update on student growth to be provided next year.

	25-26
At or above grade level (fall screening)	46.15% (n=52)

By spring 2027, EVP aims to increase the percentage of students who demonstrate that they are at or above grade level in their math skills to 80%

Satisfaction of Stakeholders

Programs must incorporate stakeholder voices, and no measurement of Edina Virtual Pathway's progress or success could be complete without asking the students, families, and teachers for their perspectives.

In the spring of 2025, the EVP Supervisor conducted interviews with students. When asked what they liked about EVP, flexibility in schedule was the most popular response. Tellingly, when asked what they would change or improve, the most popular answer was "nothing." In a survey conducted during September of 2025, 100% (n=8) of students conveyed that they are satisfied or highly satisfied with their experience so far this year in EVP.

In September of 2025, parents and guardians were asked for feedback about their satisfaction with EVP to date. 100% (n=9) of families conveyed that they are satisfied or highly satisfied.

Also in the spring of 2025, 92% (n=29) of EVP teachers reported feeling a sense of belongingness in our school (the remaining 8% gave a neutral response to the question.) The previous year, 96.5% of respondents stated that they felt trusted "to work the way they think is best," a measure of the degree to which staff feel their expertise is appreciated.

These results conform to a pattern of consistently high levels of satisfaction in all measures, by students, families, and staff.

Financial Responsibility

In each of its first three years, EVP served students while operating at or below its budget allocation. Additionally, the revenue generated by students enrolled in EVP has been higher than the budget outlay, resulting in substantial contributions to the district's general fund.

	22-23^	23-24	24-25	25-26 (projected)
School Revenue*	\$424,998	\$903,707	\$1,124,627	\$1,329,982
Budget	\$0	\$510,112	\$578,967	\$705,164
Expenditures	\$233,379	\$488,955	\$570,371	\$661,989
Impact on District Finances	+\$191,619	+\$414,752	+554,256	+\$667,993

*Calculated using average enrollment multiplied by the general state aid funding formula, with adjustments for students paying tuition.

^Numbers reflect the impact of Secondary EVP, which did not have its own budget but was funded out of the Elementary EVP budget.

Edina Virtual Pathway contributes to the financial wellness of the district by helping to retain the enrollment of students who might otherwise leave the district in order to learn online. Some of the 45 students who have moved from in-person to online may have done so permanently, while others may take advantage of the opportunity temporarily during a time of need, whether to participate in athletics or to manage their health.

Key Successes and Current Barriers

Foremost among the examples of EVP's productive evolution is the successful implementation of synchronous classes over Google Meet this year in core-area courses (those required in language arts, math, science, and social studies). Participation has been strong, both as measured by attendance but also in the form of active engagement during classes. The opportunity for students to build rapport with teachers and to receive expert instruction in a synchronous setting will be the most important driver of programmatic improvement this year for EVP.

The increased graduation rate in 2025 brought EVP closer to its goals in this area and exceeded not only what is typical in online settings but also the last reported overall graduation rate for the state.

The steady growth of EVP, as measured through enrollment, is another cause for celebration for the school. Interest in online learning remains strong and is growing in Minnesota, but only those schools that successfully serve students will thrive in the current competitive environment. That Edina's online school would be among those to rise to the top may not be surprising, but it warrants celebration.

EVP faces some of the same challenges that traditionally come with online instruction. Daily attendance rates are below those at EHS. Rates of participation in MCA tests, while higher than other districts, are lower than those expected in an in-person setting. Similarly, participation rates in clubs and activities for online students are lower than for their in-person peers. A pattern of disengagement from anything that is perceived as optional extends to engagement with families. Participation rates in surveys of parents and guardians, and attendance for teacher conferences or other family events are low. While these instances of reduced engagement/participation in non-instructional activities may be predictable for an online school, overcoming this is an ongoing goal for the school.

A Vision for the Future

EVP currently excels in comparison to other online high schools, but aims to raise its performance to more closely align with that of its in-person partner, Edina High School, and to catch up with older, more established, online schools in enrollment. To these ends, EVP plans the following in the coming years:

Course Offerings

- In the summer of 2026, EVP plans to operate, through collaboration with Options, an internal credit recovery opportunity for its students, which will aid in increasing the school's graduation rate going forward.
- For the 2026-2027 school year, EVP anticipates adding the following course offerings: AP Biology, Marketing, and additional grade levels for AVID.
- By the 2027-2028 school year, if not sooner, EVP plans to offer at least one World Language class.

Staffing

In order to serve larger numbers of students each year, and based upon four years of enrollment trends, EVP anticipates the following increases in staffing in the coming years:

- For the 2026-2027 school year, the EVP counselor position increases from 0.5 to 0.6.
- For the 2027-2028 school year, the EVP language arts, social studies, and math positions increase from 0.8 to 1.0. The science position increases from 0.6 to 0.8.

Engagement

- By spring of 2027, EVP intends to establish an independent Parent Teacher Organization to help support EVP in its work to support students and families.

Summary

By some measures, Edina Virtual Pathway already meets or exceeds the standards of excellence expected of any Edina school. Student, family, and staff surveys, every year, have revealed tremendous levels of satisfaction with the school's services. Enrollment grows each year, and EVP contributes to the financial stability of the district.

By other measures, including graduation rates, grades, and participation rates in state assessments, EVP excels among online schools, but does not yet meet the high levels of achievement found in-person in Edina. Substantial improvements in programming, most notably the implementation of synchronous lessons in core area classes, will help

EVP continue to make gains in these areas. EVP will not be content to simply be excellent by the standards of online schools; it will be excellent by the standards of Edina schools.