



**Meeting Date:** 1/9/2023

**TITLE:** EVP Elementary Update

**TYPE:** Action

**PRESENTER(S):** Dr. Randy Smasal, Assistant Superintendent; and Steven Cullison, EVP Coordinator

**BACKGROUND:** When students were able to return to in-person learning during the pandemic, some families wished to continue with online learning. The district, at the elementary level, provided this as an option, initially under the name Edina Virtual Academy, and then once approved as a comprehensive program through the Minnesota Department of Education under the Edina Virtual Pathway branding. The program has provided a quality education to its students, and continues to serve its students needs at a high level this year. Enrollment, however, has decreased substantially, year-over-year, likely due to decreased concerns around COVID in the in-person setting.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The district's administrative recommendation is to phase out Elementary Edina Virtual Pathway over the next two years, offering only grades 4-5 for the 2023-24 school year. Only grade 5 will be offered for the 2024-25 school year. The Elementary EVP class will need to have at least 10 students enrolled for it to be viable in either year.

**Desired Outcomes from the Board:** Based on previous board discussion, accept the administrative recommendation.

## Rationale

### 1. Enrollment

- Enrollment in 2021-2022 for Edina Virtual Academy averaged approximately 90 students.
- The current 2022-2023 Edina EVP enrollment is 29 students.
- It is anticipated that the current level of enrollment reflects the level of interest in online learning at the elementary level in absence of unpredictable outside factors (such as increased health concerns raised by new COVID variants.) Put differently, the district anticipates that the current level of enrollment is the base-line which should be used for planning purposes in the next few years.

### 2. Budget Summary

- EVP K-5 revenue, based upon enrollment, was projected to be approximately \$276,622 for 2022-2023.
- EVP K-5 expenditures are projected to be approximately \$337,314. These costs are almost entirely dedicated to staffing those who provide direct services (instruction or as a paraprofessional) to students.
- \*\*EVP K-5 is projected to run at a deficit of approximately \$60,692 this year, relative to its generated revenue.
  - The primary driver of this deficit is small class sizes. In order to provide quality instruction, the students must be split into two classes, despite the low enrollment.
- \*\*Edina K-12 Virtual Pathway was budgeted \$826,243 for 2022-2023. Though costs exceed revenue for the K-5 program, ***EVP will come in under its allocated budget this school year due to enrollment in 9-12.***

### 3. Middle and High School Online Learning

- Interest in online learning for grades 6-8 was insufficient to run a program in a fiscally responsible manner for 2022-2023. It is not anticipated that this would change in the foreseeable future.
- Interest in Edina Virtual Pathway at the high school level has been substantial. The program serves enough full-time online students to operate in a fiscally responsible manner, while also offering online courses for in-person students to take as an additional option.
- Because administration does not foresee offering a middle grades option at this time, there is a gap between the elementary and secondary programs at this time.

#### 4. Tuition Agreements with Other Programs

- In 2022-2023, Edina families seeking online learning for kindergarten or grades 6-8 have been able to receive service through a neighboring district under a tuition agreement. This agreement has allowed Edina families to gain access to online learning while retaining enrollment in their home district. It has also allowed Edina to retain some of the revenue generated by their enrollment.
- This agreement structure could be extended to grades 2-3 in the upcoming year and to grades 4, and then 5, in the following years for those families that wish to continue in an online learning environment.

#### 5. Grades 2-3

- Barring new enrollment or student withdrawal, anticipated enrollment for the 2023-2024 school year would be as follows:
  - Grade 2 - 2 students
  - Grade 3 - 3 students
  - Grade 4 - 13 students
  - Grade 5 - 12 students
- Most of the decrease in interest in K-5 online learning occurred in the primary grades. It is an administrative recommendation to provide an online learning option for existing families, phasing out the program gradually, offering one fewer grade each year.
- Redirecting the five families whose students will be in grades 2 or 3 next year to in-person learning or online through a partner district would allow EVP to run a single, full-sized, class with a narrow band of grade levels. *Edina Virtual Pathway recognizes the potential disruption this could represent for the impacted families.*

#### Proposed Timeline

- Communication Plans
  - Dec. 30 - Notify parents/guardians of proposal going to board for discussion
  - Jan. 10 - Notify parents/guardians of board decision on proposal
  - February - Survey families on plans for 2023-2024 and finalize enrollment for 2023-2024
  - March - Finalize staffing for 2023-2024