



# **EDINA PUBLIC SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH**

## **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY REPORT**

**DECEMBER 2025**



MINNESOTA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

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## **EXECUTIVE SEARCH SERVICES**



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# **Edina Public Schools Superintendent Search**

## **Public Engagement Superintendent Search Survey**

**Overview:** On October 16, 2025, the "Edina Public Schools Superintendent Search Survey" was made available to the public both online and in hard copy. The survey remained open for respondents until November 19, 2025, and a total of 1,865 people completed the survey (1,865 English, 0 Spanish, 0 Somali).

Although this survey was opt-in (meaning individuals must actively choose to participate), MSBA's analysis of the results do indicate a cross-section of people who are invested in the district were reached through the survey process. Knowing it took time and effort to do so, the school board and MSBA deeply appreciate each and every respondent who participated in this survey. The information these individuals shared through their responses will provide valuable input for the school board to consider as they move forward in selecting the next superintendent to lead Edina Public Schools.

The results of all quantitative survey responses are summarized in the first five pages of this report, beginning below with those from across the district who participated in the survey.

**Self-identifiers:** Survey takers were first asked to identify the role that best reflected the basis for their responses. The categories selected by the survey takers are as follows:

- 52.55% of respondents selected "Student"
- 32.60% of respondents selected "Parent/Guardian"
- 12.65% of respondents selected "Staff Member"
- 1.56% of respondents selected "Community Member"
- 0.43% of respondents skipped this question
- 0.21% of respondents selected "Other"

**Areas of Expertise:** Those who responded to the survey were also asked to identify the top six desirable areas of expertise they believe the new superintendent must possess. The most frequently noted areas of expertise are listed below in order of preference.

- Budget and Finance
- Curriculum Development/Evaluation
- Collaborative Leadership
- Strategic Planning
- Student Testing Results and Achievement
- Educational Equity

**Previous Experience:** Respondents were asked if previous superintendent experience is important. Based on the results, 52.08% of the respondents selected "Yes," while 47.92% of the respondents selected "No."

**Specialized Skills:** The top six specialized skills the new superintendent must possess were identified in the survey results as shown below.

- Leads with honesty and in an ethical manner with the school board, staff, students, parents, and community
- Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups and communities
- Develops and directs an effective leadership team
- Demonstrates clear, confident, and adaptable communication skills
- Experience in school finance, including resource allocation and fiscal oversight
- Experience in implementing practices that support student safety and mental health

**Personal Characteristics:** Survey takers were also asked to identify the top six personal characteristics they believe the new superintendent must possess. The most frequently noted personal characteristics are listed below in order of preference.

- Effective Communicator
- Ethical
- Problem Solver
- Transparent
- Empathetic
- Consistent

The following tables provide another perspective of the quantitative data, categorizing each question's responses by self-identifiers. The number of individual responses per category were:

- Student (980)
- Parent/Guardian (608)
- Staff Member (236)
- Community Member (29)
- Other (4)
- Skipped this question (8)

## PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

Student (980)	Parent/Guardian (608)	Staff Member (236)	Community Member (29)	Other (4)
Yes: 53.44%	Yes: 49.23%	Yes: 57.52%	Yes: 31.03%	Yes: 75.00%
No: 46.56%	No: 50.77%	No: 42.48%	No: 68.97%	No: 25.00%

## TOP SIX AREAS OF EXPERTISE

<b>Student (980)</b>	<b>Parent/Guardian (608)</b>	<b>Staff Member (236)</b>	<b>Community Member (29)</b>	<b>Other (4)</b>
Budget & Finance	Curriculum Development/ Evaluation	Collaborative Leadership	Collaborative Leadership	Budget & Finance
Curriculum Development/ Evaluation	Budget & Finance	Budget & Finance	Strategic Planning	Collaborative Leadership
Educational Equity	Collaborative Leadership	Strategic Planning	Budget & Finance	Curriculum Development/ Evaluation
Student Testing Results and Achievement	Strategic Planning	Educational Equity	Curriculum Development/ Evaluation	Educational Equity
Social/Emotional Support Services	Student Testing Results and Achievement	Personnel Management	Public Relations	Cultural Competency
Collaborative Leadership	Personnel Management	Cultural Competency	Student Testing Results and Achievement	Student Testing Results and Achievement

## TOP SIX PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

<b>Student (980)</b>	<b>Parent/Guardian (608)</b>	<b>Staff Member (236)</b>	<b>Community Member (29)</b>	<b>Other (4)</b>
Effective Communicator	Effective Communicator	Effective Communicator	Effective Communicator	Effective Communicator
Confident	Problem Solver	Transparent	Ethical	Personable
Ethical	Transparent	Ethical	Personable	Ethical
Consistent	Ethical	Empathetic	Strategic	Transparent
Empathetic	Strategic	Problem Solver	Problem Solver	Problem Solver
Problem Solver	Inclusive	Personable	Transparent	Inclusive

The following page directly compares the school board's responses to the specialized skills question. These results do indicate significant alignment between the board and public, as board members prioritized many of the same categories as a majority of the district's constituencies.

# Edina – Superintendent Search

## Hiring Criteria Board Results

1. Leads with honesty and in an ethical manner with the school board, staff, students, parents, and community
2. Develops and directs an effective leadership team
3. Demonstrates clear, confident, and adaptable communication skills
4. Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups and communities
5. Works cooperatively with the school board; provides options and recommendations
6. Visible and accessible to the school board, staff, students, parents, and community

## Hiring Criteria Public Results

### **Specialized Skills: Public**

1. Leads with honesty and in an ethical manner with the school board, staff, students, parents, and community
2. Develops and directs an effective leadership team
3. Experience in school finance, including resource allocation and fiscal oversight
4. Demonstrates clear, confident, and adaptable communication skills
5. Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups and communities
6. Visible and accessible to the school board, staff, students, parents, and community

### **Specialized Skills: Public + Students**

1. Leads with honesty and in an ethical manner with the school board, staff, students, parents, and community
2. Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups and communities
3. Develops and directs an effective leadership team
4. Demonstrates clear, confident, and adaptable communication skills
5. Experience in school finance, including resource allocation and fiscal oversight
6. Experience in implementing practices that support student safety and mental health

All highlights show where there is alignment between the school board and district stakeholders.

### **The following areas of expertise rose to the top in the public input survey:**

- Budget and Finance
- Curriculum Development/Evaluation
- Collaborative Leadership

### **Is previous superintendent experience important?**

**Board:** Yes = 71.4%; No = 28.6%

**Public Input:** Yes = 52.1%; No = 47.9%



## TOP SIX SPECIALIZED SKILLS

<b>Student (980)</b>	<b>Parent/Guardian (608)</b>	<b>Staff Member (236)</b>	<b>Community Member (29)</b>	<b>Other (4)</b>
Leads with honesty and in an ethical manner with the school board, staff, students, parents, and community	Leads with honesty and in an ethical manner with the school board, staff, students, parents, and community	Leads with honesty and in an ethical manner with the school board, staff, students, parents, and community	Leads with honesty and in an ethical manner with the school board, staff, students, parents, and community	Experience in school finance, including resource allocation and fiscal oversight
Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups and communities	Develops and directs an effective leadership team	Visible and accessible to the school board, staff, students, parents, and community	Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups and communities	Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups and communities
Delegates authority while maintaining accountability	Experience in school finance, including resource allocation and fiscal oversight	Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups and communities	Demonstrates clear, confident, and adaptable communication skills	Knowledge of and experience with equity leadership challenges and opportunities
Experience in implementing practices that support student safety and mental health	Demonstrates clear, confident, and adaptable communication skills	Develops and directs an effective leadership team	Experience in developing and/or implementing a strategic plan	Experience in developing and/or implementing a strategic plan
Knowledge of and experience with equity leadership challenges and opportunities	Experience in developing and/or implementing a strategic plan	Demonstrates clear, confident, and adaptable communication skills	Develops and directs an effective leadership team	Develops and directs an effective leadership team
Demonstrates clear, confident, and adaptable communication skills	Possesses a strong academic background with experience in curriculum	Possesses a visionary and creative approach to problem-solving	Possesses a visionary and creative approach to problem-solving	Leads with honesty and in an ethical manner with the school board, staff, students, parents, and community

**Additional comments:** Finally, respondents were given the opportunity to answer open-ended questions in the survey, and on average, 575 of the 877 respondents (Parent/Guardian, Staff, Community Member, and Other) provided additional commentary. These qualitative results were then reviewed by MSBA representatives, with reappearing ideas identified and grouped into themes. These themes are highlighted below for each of the questions.

\*\* Please note student responses to the open-ended questions are summarized on page 47 later in this report, where on average, 720 of the 980 student respondents provided additional commentary as well.

### **The superintendent search survey asked the following four questions:**

1. What are some of the good things taking place in Edina Public Schools today?
2. What challenges do you see for our district over the next five years?
3. What does the new superintendent need to know about the history of the school district and community to be successful?
4. Additional comments.

### **INPUT HIGHLIGHTS from PARENT/GUARDIAN, STAFF MEMBER, COMMUNITY MEMBER, OTHER:**

The results of the survey were reviewed by MSBA representatives, with recurring ideas identified and grouped into themes. In addition to the survey, MSBA conducted six listening sessions (4 attendees) and six focus groups (74 attendees), with the highlights of both the survey and all group feedback identified below. Together, this information reflects how the Edina school community views the district's current reality, future direction, and leadership needs.

### **Good Things Taking Place in the District**

- **Exceptional staff** – Edina benefits from highly dedicated, student-centered teachers and staff whose professionalism, care, and collaboration are central to the district's success.
- **Strong academic reputation** – The district is widely recognized for high standards, rigorous instruction, and preparing students for postsecondary success.
- **Diverse opportunities for students** – Students benefit from broad academic pathways, robust extracurriculars, strong athletics and arts, and valued programs such as language immersion.
- **Deeply engaged community** – Families, alumni, and community partners are highly invested in the schools and want to actively support and collaborate with the district in meaningful ways.



- **Positive school culture and belonging** – The district is fostering inclusive, supportive school environments focused on relationships, safety, and student well-being.
- **Strength in special education programming** – Edina is recognized for inclusive and well-developed special education services, particularly its Unified programs.

## **Challenges Over the Next Five Years**

- **Budget and funding pressures** – Rising costs, funding uncertainty, and fiscal constraints threaten the district's ability to sustain staffing, programs, and services at current levels.
- **Concerns about academic direction** – Some stakeholders worry about academic consistency, declining performance indicators, and balancing innovation with rigor and stability.
- **Technology and AI challenges** – The district faces growing pressure to thoughtfully integrate technology and AI while minimizing negative impacts on learning, critical thinking skills, and student well-being.
- **School safety and mental health needs** – There is strong concern about physical security, student behavior, and increasing mental health and trauma-related needs across the student body.
- **Enrollment challenges** – Declining resident enrollment, competition from other schooling options, and shifting demographics are affecting district culture, class sizes, and long-term planning.
- **Staff recruitment and retention pressures** – Workload, burnout, compensation, and staff shortages are straining the stability and sustainability of the current workforce.
- **Changing demographics and DEI complexity** – The community recognizes demographic shifts and holds varied perspectives on diversity, equity, and inclusion, with a shared concern about maintaining high expectations for all students.
- **Growing special education demands** – Increasing student needs, staffing challenges, and funding uncertainties are putting pressure on the district's special education systems and supports.

## **What the Next Superintendent Needs to Know**

- **Strong historical identity and reputation** – Edina’s long-standing reputation and legacy of high achievement remain a major source of pride and a key reason families choose the district.
- **Close-knit, high-expectation community** – Edina functions much like a small town with deep traditions, strong pride, and high expectations, while also navigating the challenges of persistent and ongoing change.
- **Culture of excellence and pressure** – Although the district’s identity built around excellence is primarily viewed as a strength, it also creates additional pressure on students, staff, and leadership.
- **Leadership expectations for the next superintendent** – The community wants a visible, approachable, transparent, and collaborative leader with a clear vision who honors tradition while guiding thoughtful innovation.
- **Community as a strategic asset** – Stakeholders want engagement to be leveraged intentionally through communication, collaboration, and shared problem-solving to support district progress across all grade levels.

## **Additional Comments**

- **Thoughts regarding the interim superintendent** – Many praise the interim superintendent’s visibility, experience, and early impact and would like him to stay, while others emphasize the importance of the school board engaging in a nationwide search.
- **Additional leadership expectations** – Stakeholders reiterate the need for a collaborative leader with strong judgment, communication skills, and the ability to guide the district through complexity without disrupting ongoing progress.
- **High expectations for process integrity** – The community stresses the importance of the school board conducting a thorough, inclusive superintendent search that clearly communicates each step, elevates diverse perspectives, and builds trust in selecting the district’s next long-term leader.

## **DETAILED SURVEY SUMMARY:**

This section of the report offers deeper context behind the themes summarized above, organized by question and supported by representative participant comments.

### **1. What are some of the good things taking place in Edina Public Schools today?**

<p><b>The district benefits from exceptionally talented, dedicated, and caring teachers and staff who consistently put students first and go above and beyond to support the whole child. Their strong commitment to professional growth, collaboration, and high-quality instruction is a clear foundation for the district's continued success.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Amazing teachers.</i></li><li>• <i>High quality of teachers and administration.</i></li><li>• <i>We have quality staff that needs to be valued because it IS valued by the community.</i></li><li>• <i>Amazing people in the system doing great things.</i></li><li>• <i>Talented staff who do the work extremely well; strong culture.</i></li><li>• <i>The educators are second to none.</i></li><li>• <i>Teachers do an amazing job with children no matter who is steering the ship.</i></li><li>• <i>The teachers are knowledgeable about the curriculum they are teaching.</i></li><li>• <i>Long-serving teaching staff and lots of stability, which does make a difference.</i></li><li>• <i>Deeply committed, passionate teachers/educators.</i></li><li>• <i>My colleagues are deeply committed to kids and the district. Teaching here is not easy but so worth it! We want to be inspired!</i></li><li>• <i>Teachers are dedicated to keeping up with best practices, professional development and supporting social/emotional student needs.</i></li><li>• <i>Teachers. Strongly believe we do a great job of hiring and developing teachers.</i></li><li>• <i>Educators are committed and many have been here a long time.</i></li><li>• <i>Some of the teachers are truly exceptional - have high expectations and help kids grow and meet them.</i></li><li>• <i>We have great teachers and coaches that make our community proud.</i></li></ul>	256 related responses
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The current teaching staff are dedicated, caring, and resourceful. Each and everyone of them gives 100% to each student in their class and every student they come across.</i></li> <li>• <i>We have an incredibly talented and dedicated staff who put students first.</i></li> <li>• <i>Engaging teachers that work with parents.</i></li> <li>• <i>Amazing staff who show up for students each and every day!</i></li> <li>• <i>Great teachers - let them lead.</i></li> <li>• <i>Excellent teachers, leaders, and staff - highly capable and committed.</i></li> <li>• <i>Teachers are generous and supportive with students. They seem appreciated and cared for.</i></li> <li>• <i>There are some exceptional teachers, support staff, administrators.</i></li> <li>• <i>I believe that there are great teachers who work hard.</i></li> <li>• <i>High level of teaching. We want to bring in excellent teachers that bring innovative new ways of teaching for the future.</i></li> <li>• <i>Amazing staff. Building administrators with experience and credibility.</i></li> <li>• <i>Teachers continue to work hard in the ever changing world of education and find ways to engage students and produce positive results.</i></li> <li>• <i>We have leaders who really care and are doing exceptional work.</i></li> <li>• <i>All staff are committed to helping students excel to the best of their abilities.</i></li> <li>• <i>We have great teachers who truly get to know the whole child.</i></li> <li>• <i>We are so lucky to have great staff.</i></li> <li>• <i>We have an amazing staff that consistently goes above and beyond to meet the needs of their learners.</i></li> <li>• <i>Educators here are constantly trying to innovate and evolve, and the vast majority are experts in the field, with education far beyond a master's degree.</i></li> <li>• <i>Teachers, teachers, teachers. We have some of the best teachers around (and at all grade levels).</i></li> <li>• <i>Good staff in our schools—teachers, support staff, principals.</i></li> <li>• <i>We have talented, experienced, and committed staff who are good at what they do.</i></li> <li>• <i>Outstanding educators at every level.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Edina Public Schools is widely known for its strong academic performance, high standards, and rigorous, well-rounded education that prepares students for success in college and beyond. Families value the district's commitment to high expectations and providing meaningful support for all learners.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Many of our students are prepared for success in college.</i></li> <li>• <i>All the many ways we strive to meet the needs of each and every student.</i></li> </ul>	<p>234 related responses</p>

- Continued focus on high academic achievement
- The schools are the best they can be in light of the post Covid challenges.
- Academic achievement/ranking fairs has faired well over the years.
- Excellent academic opportunities while balancing a whole-person emphasis on social-emotional development.
- Students have lots of support to become successful.
- Tradition. More than any other district I've been a part of, tradition is prioritized in Edina.
- Very strong strategic plan.
- Data analytics show we're on a good path to pursue aggressive growth.
- Good academics, range of options in school style available in elementary.
- Education and life skills for future for students.
- High academic standards and avenues for advanced learners.
- The kids get a good education. My primary focus for schools is on outcomes. It is part of the reason we moved to Edina.
- The teaching model for core academics.
- Increased focus on literacy.
- Availability of tailored support and opportunities for students who need additional help with a skillset or a student who is ready for additional challenges beyond the core curriculum.
- Maintaining our historically-high standards in academics, arts, and activities while engaging as many students, families, and stakeholders as possible.
- Student test scores and GPAs.
- Strong, evidence-based curriculum used at the elementary level.
- I think EPS is doing a great job staying strong and dedicated to education even though leadership changes are in the works.
- I like seeing the emphasis on increasing effective reading strategies and curriculum.
- Kids are excelling in all fields; we need continue to showcase the achievements of ALL students.
- Great ratings for the High School and focus on every kid.
- Ambitious approach to student excellence.
- I purposefully live in and send my children to EPS for their academic prowess and rigor.
- The work we are doing in Literacy, the science of reading, is paying off with improvements in proficiency on standardized assessments.
- Getting back into some hands-on learning that introduces trades skills and a general understanding of how things are made.
- Excellent rankings on academics and testing.
- Setting high expectations for student achievement that is backed by high quality education.
- The national awareness of Edina as a high-performing school district. There is a uniqueness to top-performing public schools across the country and Edina is one of those districts.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Academics, Upholding a standard of excellence.</i></li> <li>• <i>Test scores are up. Parents expect a lot of their kids including learning how to study, how to perform, and how to get along in the world.</i></li> <li>• <i>High academic standards, systems that support the whole child.</i></li> <li>• <i>High percentage of students with high academic achievement.</i></li> <li>• <i>Strong academic instruction, strong test scores.</i></li> <li>• <i>Focus on math and reading in student achievement.</i></li> <li>• <i>Our child has received an excellent, well-rounded education at Edina.</i></li> <li>• <i>Edina has the reputation as one of our state's best school districts.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Survey respondents feel the district offers a broad and well-developed range of academic pathways, co-curricular opportunities, and extracurricular programs that allow students to explore their interests, develop their talents, and prepare for future success. Strong athletics, arts, advanced coursework, and language immersion programs provide meaningful opportunities for students at all levels.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>School programs that allow kids to develop their academic careers.</i></li> <li>• <i>Strong Athletic, Academics, Arts.</i></li> <li>• <i>College ready / lots of academic programs.</i></li> <li>• <i>There are lots of opportunities at EPS for students to do anything.</i></li> <li>• <i>Quality of the high school programming and its focus on liberal arts.</i></li> <li>• <i>The Talent Development program is a strength and should continue to be supported to allow advanced learners to achieve their best potential.</i></li> <li>• <i>Growth in language immersion options. (<u>Language immersion was mentioned around 35 times.</u>)</i></li> <li>• <i>Continuing the programs and projects that were started under Dr. Stanley (Spanish Dual Language, Discover Pathways, and refresh ELC in future).</i></li> <li>• <i>We need to continue working on varying way of education. Sometimes it's the traditional college route and sometimes a more tech college route.</i></li> <li>• <i>Financial literacy is needed for the students.</i></li> <li>• <i>Quality of the high school programming and its focus on liberal arts.</i></li> <li>• <i>Excitement and planning around the SDL program and investment into making that a priority. Variety of opportunities for activities and involvement for students.</i></li> <li>• <i>A wide offering of courses, AP courses and access to great athletics and music programs</i></li> <li>• <i>Music program. Range of classes offered.</i></li> <li>• <i>Student Ambassadors, Webb Program, overall strong curriculum and sports programs</i></li> </ul>	<p>201 related responses</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>EHS student activities, elementary choice, middle school flexible options</i></li> <li>• <i>We have been participating in the Spanish dual language program, and I found it to be wonderful.</i></li> <li>• <i>Options for children with higher academic goals.</i></li> <li>• <i>Broad set of experiences and opportunities for students.</i></li> <li>• <i>Commitment to strong performing arts programs - especially instrumental music - from elementary through high school.</i></li> <li>• <i>Excellence in our athletics, academics and arts - especially our band program which is one of the finest in the nation!</i></li> <li>• <i>Edina offers exceptional extracurricular opportunities to students.</i></li> <li>• <i>Opportunities for students to develop leadership skills.</i></li> <li>• <i>Edina is taking on new programs that have great appeal to families like Spanish dual language.</i></li> <li>• <i>There is an excellent range of curriculum for students with varying levels of academic goals and interests.</i></li> <li>• <i>Plethora of opportunities.</i></li> <li>• <i>Our band department is one of the finest in the country! We have excellent academics and athletics.</i></li> <li>• <i>A lot of extracurricular clubs, groups, etc., so most kids can find their place.</i></li> <li>• <i>Combination of academic and co-curricular excellence.</i></li> <li>• <i>Lots of AP course offerings. Lots of student led clubs etc. Continued emphasis on arts and music.</i></li> <li>• <i>Variety of programs and resources available to students and families.</i></li> <li>• <i>Lots of opportunity for above-average kids.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Edina Public Schools benefits from a highly engaged and supportive community where families, alumni, and local partners are deeply invested in student success. Strong parent involvement, community pride, and meaningful partnerships create a connected environment that supports students, staff, and schools and strengthens the overall culture of the district.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Parents want to support and be involved, even more than what's allowed. You have ready and willing community members.</i></li> <li>• <i>We are very fortunate to have such a high level of parent participation in their kids' lives. I see it all the time at every event, multiple parents almost always there supporting. We all care much more than most in other districts do about our kids' education.</i></li> <li>• <i>It's well-resourced and parents play a very, very big role here.</i></li> </ul>	<p>129 related responses</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>We have a really strong and connected community who wants to support our students, staff, and schools. That leads to a lot of good things all over EPS.</i></li> <li>• <i>Numerous communities are coming together with a blend of old and new traditions.</i></li> <li>• <i>The Chamber of Commerce has a partnership with EPS and holds a seat on their board of directors for the superintendent.</i></li> <li>• <i>The school district, city, and business community are a three-legged stool. Those three entities working together have created a great partnership in making the community really prosper.</i></li> <li>• <i>Community support. Two-thirds of residents do not have kids in the schools but still support it.</i></li> <li>• <i>Exceptionally strong business partnerships.</i></li> <li>• <i>Communal component – a vast majority of people care deeply about EPS and are willing to do things to support the work.</i></li> <li>• <i>I think the district values the comments of people in the district that do not still have students from their household in school.</i></li> <li>• <i>Community engagement (middle school nights, kindergarten nights, athletic events partnered with community sponsors).</i></li> <li>• <i>Strong parent involvement and rising reading and math scores at the elementary level.</i></li> <li>• <i>Our students and families are amazing! Their positive energy is what drives our schools and makes my teaching experience a fabulous one.</i></li> <li>• <i>Community support but we can't take that for granted.</i></li> <li>• <i>There is community pride in our district, and a bond of partnership.</i></li> <li>• <i>Community pride and involvement is also great. It was really cool to see so many people gearing up for homecoming, etc.</i></li> <li>• <i>We have outstanding community support.</i></li> <li>• <i>I think Edina is also unique in how active families are within the schools and PTOs.</i></li> <li>• <i>We have a highly engaged community who are generally supportive of our work.</i></li> <li>• <i>We're built on the foundation of families that create a safe and loving community.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Survey respondents feel that the district is fostering a strong, positive school culture where students, staff, and families feel connected, supported, and proud of their community. An intentional focus on inclusion, belonging, cultural competence, and social-emotional learning is creating safe, welcoming environments where students feel valued and relationships are prioritized.</b></p>	<p>119 related responses</p>



- *The community feel to the school.*
- *The sense of community and supporting one another. The constant sense of achievement and reaching for the stars.*
- *Students, staff and families are coming together to create an environment that is inclusive, safe, warm, fun and just awesome.*
- *Kids are still excited about school. I see elementary kids running to the bus stop. The high school has recovered with great energy. The sense of tradition and pride in Edina is coming back.*
- *There's an emphasis on inclusive education and opportunities. I wouldn't want to see that eroded.*
- *In general, the sense of spirit at the schools seems to be quite good.*
- *Inclusive in nature. No bullying.*
- *Consistent - not overly reactive to the winds of change.*
- *A sense of purpose and dedication in every student and staff, or ownership.*
- *Inclusive culture: EPS is considerate and inclusive diverse students such as special needs, learning disabilities, races, and cultural backgrounds.*
- *Inclusivity and commitment to diversity, meeting students where they are to help them succeed.*
- *Allowing each individual school to maintain its own identity while offering equitable learning opportunities.*
- *Inclusive culture.*
- *A shared school/city spirit.*
- *An awareness of cultural competency, a desire to implement SEL framework across the district.*
- *Our elementary truly feels like a community.*
- *Promoting school pride.*
- *Relationships precede learning.*
- *Edina pride.*
- *Focus on inclusion, social emotional learning, creating safe and supportive environments for all students to thrive*
- *Student teacher relationships seem very positive.*
- *Close-knit feeling.*
- *We have intentionally focused so much time and energy in continuing our commitment to cultural proficiency, and that work is paying off with a district culture and climate that gives each and every student a sense of welcome and belonging.*
- *A learning atmosphere where students feel supported.*
- *They are inclusive and are trying to (and largely succeeding) in meeting the needs of our diverse population.*
- *The focus and development of values and inclusivity.*

**The district is also recognized for its strong and inclusive special education programming, particularly its Unified programs, which provide meaningful opportunities for students with diverse learning needs to be supported and integrated alongside their peers.**

85 related responses

- *Unified programs for special education.*
- *Special education programs are great. We have families who move here for those services.*
- *We have a unique approach to specialized services and helping students with special needs.*
- *I love the direction we've been going with inclusiveness and SPED.*
- *Ability to meet both accelerated and delayed students with appropriate resources and dedication.*
- *Innovative and inclusive special education.*
- *Good special ed at the pre-K and elementary levels.*
- *Unified and inclusion with special ed.*
- *Great special education programs.*
- *Edina continues to be known for its outstanding special education.*
- *Love the Unified program in the middle schools.*
- *Resources available for specific academic needs.*
- *Unified Programming, emphasis on closing the achievement gap for ML, SpEd, and Black and Brown students.*
- *Special ed partnerships with students (Unified, etc.)*
- *Unified programming for our special education students.*
- *Excellent special services for any type of learning or physical disabilities.*
- *The Edina Unified Program is the heart and soul of Edina Public Schools. Without it, I feel Edina no longer would be a place I would want to work.*
- *Edina Unified at middle school level is especially amazing. Wish it were developed more at elementary and high school level.*
- *Supportive student environment for special Ed.*
- *Adapting to changing student needs.*
- *The special education program is top notch. We couldn't be happier for the dedicated resources our child receives from special ed but also mainstreaming into the classroom.*
- *Amazing Unified program at the middle schools.*
- *Structure, stability, and support of children who need extra help, e.g., IEP resources and teams.*
- *Amazing early intervention and special Ed program at ELFC.*

## 2. What challenges do you see for our district over the next five years?

<p><b>Budget and funding pressures were identified as a defining challenge for the district. There is an ongoing concern about maintaining high-quality staff, programs, student services, and security investments amid rising costs, potential state and federal cuts, and uncertainty in the broader economic and political landscape.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Budget. (This single word descriptor was used 31 times.)</i></li> <li>• <i>Funding. (This single word descriptor was used 25 times.)</i></li> <li>• <i>How to maintain (and extend) quality of staff, student experiences and course options given the budget reality of the economy.</i></li> <li>• <i>Potential changes in federal funding.</i></li> <li>• <i>We need to face the fiscal reality of a district our size. Just because it's a wealthy community, doesn't mean it's a wealthy district.</i></li> <li>• <i>The ever-shrinking budget and pressures to do more with less.</i></li> <li>• <i>The biggest challenge will be maintaining quality with variable and probably less funding from the state and federal levels.</i></li> <li>• <i>Increasing costs.</i></li> <li>• <i>Finance and inequitable distribution of resources per department.</i></li> <li>• <i>Edina has the ability to creatively resource things, especially considering the fiscal uncertainty of public education funding.</i></li> <li>• <i>We need to get creative about how we spend our money.</i></li> <li>• <i>Budgetary challenges: from economic and political circumstances.</i></li> <li>• <i>The predicted budget shortfall will be the defining challenge of the superintendent's tenure. We need a superintendent who can think creatively and tenaciously to help us fundraise as much as possible and limit cuts to all student-facing positions as much as possible.</i></li> <li>• <i>Budget challenges will always be top of mind. Doing more with less seems to be the norm these days.</i></li> <li>• <i>Budget. How do we balance budget cuts while still maintaining competitive salaries?</i></li> <li>• <i>I see continued fiscal challenges for all public education.</i></li> <li>• <i>Financial concerns after state &amp; federal changes.</i></li> <li>• <i>Heavy spend on security measures to turn schools into faux secure sites.</i></li> <li>• <i>Possible funding challenges due to political climate.</i></li> <li>• <i>Federal cuts and thus district budget cuts.</i></li> <li>• <i>We need more sources of revenue. I will not be okay with funding cuts to teachers, programming, the arts, libraries, etc.</i></li> </ul>	<p>268 related responses</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>We need a large amount of funding to improve our safety and security infrastructure and at the same time we need to provide staff to support our students' growing needs.</i></li> <li>• <i>Funding because of government cuts.</i></li> <li>• <i>Struggling with current landscape of funding cuts, uncertainty in workforce and budget.</i></li> <li>• <i>Financial strains, lack of federal funding.</i></li> <li>• <i>Reduced budget, which can leads to limited resources for students, special education, and teachers.</i></li> <li>• <i>Financial headwinds.</i></li> <li>• <i>Finances will be ongoing challenge - costs continuing to push up.</i></li> <li>• <i>Constraints across various programs (Sp Ed, Gifted, Art, Phy Ed) that could lead to a less well-rounded student.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>The Edina school community expressed concern about the school district's academic direction. Worries include maintaining high standards and meaningful innovation amid declining test scores, frequent curriculum changes and mandates, staff capacity challenges, and comparisons to neighboring districts perceived as more advanced. Many also emphasized the importance of supporting multiple pathways so all students are prepared for an evolving and uncertain future.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>We could use more of a competitive edge where we are set on being the best school system in the country. That's going to require a renewed commitment to innovation. We can do that collaboratively but we need that to be the vision.</i></li> <li>• <i>We recruit students by on our reputation for strong academics, but we don't have the budget to get some programs that other schools have.</i></li> <li>• <i>Some test scores dropping.</i></li> <li>• <i>We need more stem education.</i></li> <li>• <i>Competency at national level. Introducing new concepts to teach.</i></li> <li>• <i>We're known for elite academics, but don't want to wall into the pit of elitism.</i></li> <li>• <i>What about the influence of AI? It's a clear trend that white collar jobs are harder to get now and there is going to be a much larger need for blue collar jobs. That should be noted by the district and reflected in the programing.</i></li> </ul>	<p>241 related responses</p>

- Continued pressure to be traditional without thinking outside the box. For example, there is very little career and tech education. We need to be able to shift and take risks.
- There are increasing number of programs for affluent and privileged students, while other get left behind.
- Ensuring that Edina maintains high academic standards.
- Staying academically competitive with other districts
- Too many new curriculum revisions happening at once.
- Getting the high school caught up with authentic learning.
- Lack of focus on high academic achievement resulting in accepting mediocrity and teaching to the lowest common denominator
- Declining school district rankings; Declining students academic performance.
- Losing focus on what is most important - kids learning core life skills
- Not reacting to the latest buzz words or fads. Focusing on helping all students learn, be creative, and thrive.
- Continuing to improve gifted education in elementary and middle school
- New mandates, especially from the federal govt, making it more difficult to teach effectively.
- Low test schools, poor reading and math skills. The course work is very easy for my children and they are not challenged as they could be.
- Getting test scores up for minority students is important but challenging. Having a curriculum that is consistent and effective will be important.
- The continued pressure to lower standards.
- The need to provide an educational track for students who are not college bound, but who want to pursue a trade or an area of vocational study. Not all students want/plan to attend a four year college.
- Why do some of our neighbors have better academic programs than us? Let's work with our business community and build some programs for the future!
- Getting back to leading the way through innovation and excellence.
- Declining test scores.
- The ability to maintain a high standard of academics and autonomy.
- Maintaining a balanced creative global curriculum with an emphasis on students emotional well-being which can still be funded amidst national cuts.
- We need Talent education for gifted kids thar includes thinking skills, not just acceleration in reading and math. We need STEM learning in elementary. We need to continue to have acceleration and intervention.
- Get back to basics with teaching students academia.
- Our challenge, and opportunity, is to connect tradition with innovation so Edina becomes again a national model for excellence.
- Students and families who do not promote/engage in a strong, rigorous education environment.
- It seems like not everyone is interested in academic success.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum needs to evolve and reinvent itself. There needs to be more outward look at the world in many subjects.</li> <li>• Continued focus on educational excellence in a budget challenged environment.</li> <li>• Maintaining the education level we currently provide, as resource levels change or disappear.</li> <li>• Maintaining high expectations, teaching critical thinking skills.</li> <li>• Would like more equality between the elementary schools. Seems like there is a vast difference in education between them.</li> <li>• The implementation of MTSS frameworks across the district, this is going to be a major change that some may not want/be ready for.</li> <li>• I do not feel we are being innovative enough with our course offerings. Our elective choices are dwindling and students are choosing to go outside of the school to meet their needs for new skills and experiences.</li> <li>• At the elementary level, we have so many new curriculum resources and changing state standards to implement in the next three years. I worry about our staff's capacity.</li> <li>• Continuing to keep that strong reputation and staying ahead of the curve, especially with developments in technology.</li> <li>• Students in the "middle" are not given encouragement and support. Advanced or gifted programs are not transparent and too much emphasis is placed on test scores.</li> <li>• Preparing graduates for an uncertain future is my biggest concern.</li> <li>• Meeting the needs of an evolving population.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Survey respondents also identified rapid advances in technology as a growing area of challenge and uncertainty for the district. They expressed concern about how to ethically and effectively integrate AI into teaching and learning while limiting the negative effects of excessive technology and protecting student creativity and critical thinking skills. Many also emphasize the need to prepare students for an AI-driven workforce.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guiding teachers and students through transition to AI generation.</li> <li>• With the introduction of AI and a high level of information and digital learning environments, our digital native students will be expected to navigate a vast sea of information, misinformation, and digital systems effectively. We need to be proactive about preparing students for these challenges.</li> <li>• Keeping current on technology is going to be a challenge because changes are happening so fast.</li> </ul>	<p>171 related responses</p>

- *How to deal with AI. How to get away from/beyond screens.*
- *The challenges faced by students to adapt to new jobs/ opportunities in the new AI driven world.*
- *AI, career preparation for our kiddos should be number one.*
- *We are not meeting the challenges of a 21st century economy. Take AI: Currently, we are in a situation where students can access AI and are not using it in ethical ways. We need a robust plan to support the ethical implementation of AI tools.*
- *Need to continue to have media/library staff and teach children how to think critically and use technology wisely.*
- *AI interfering with students' creativity, problem solving skills and knowledge acquisition; excess technology use in the classroom; cell phone use during the school day unless banned completely.*
- *The management of technology and AI, ensuring that students continue to understand the importance of doing things on their own while also knowing when it's appropriate to implement technology.*
- *Understanding the workforce and world we are preparing kids for through education and ensuring what we teach is relevant and viable as technology advances certain aspects of learning.*
- *Use of AI and technology in education and impact on college and jobs.*
- *Need to learn to include AI in teaching, not ignore or just treat as a way students could cheat.*
- *Utilizing and teaching students how to safely utilize AI in their everyday life. Understanding that the world is changing at a rapid rate and students are going to need to possess a different set of skills than was needed even 5 years ago to be successful in a job.*
- *If we aren't leading for AI, we'd be the only top org that isn't.*
- *Technology/AI: Impacting students' ability to learn, hindering growth, and creating social-emotional-mental health problems.*
- *We all have mixed opinions on AI. The school district isn't moving fast enough on this issue and by the time a policy comes out, it will be too late.*
- *How to set up our children for the best careers in a new age of AI.*
- *As with most districts, the use of AI in the classroom needs to be considered especially in the context of how it impacts the learning environment.*
- *Preparing students for a world where AI changes what jobs and careers look like.*
- *The greatest challenge I foresee is properly balancing technology in the classroom. Already, I feel there is an over-reliance on technology (e.g., screens in the classroom as a regular and consistent teaching tool); I fear that incorporating AI into the curriculum will exacerbate this trend.*
- *I also would like to understand how the district plans to balance the need to understand technology with returning to almost a more classical model of education where kids don't rely on technology to think or learn.*
- *Technology undermining learning the basics.*



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Getting phones out of the schools, AI in education as a tool not a cheat code/obstacle.</i></li> <li>• <i>I don't think EPS has a handle on its technology and could do a better job with how we organize our online meetings.</i></li> <li>• <i>Striking a healthy and optimal balance of utilizing technology and recognizing the benefits of non-screen academic instruction and practice.</i></li> <li>• <i>Social media. I love that kids can't have phones in school. Keep doing that! Social media is such a disaster.</i></li> <li>• <i>Technology. Limiting the use for teaching, learning and removing personal technology from all schools.</i></li> <li>• <i>Balance of technology supporting learning vs being an obstacle. My kids have their faces on a screen for hours on end, and that is before they look at their phones.</i></li> <li>• <i>We HAVE to educate kids on the perils of their phones. They need the data to know what's being done to them.</i></li> <li>• <i>Embracing technology with an eye towards the classic education our kids need.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>In addition, the school community identified school safety and student well-being as a growing challenge for the school district. There is a desire to strengthen physical security and emergency preparedness, address rising student behavior concerns, and meet the increasingly complex mental health and trauma-related needs among both students and staff.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Continuing to have the most effective protocols/technology in place to create a safe school environment (i.e. in light of increasing school shootings).</i></li> <li>• <i>Safety in the schools.</i></li> <li>• <i>Kids are under unbelievable pressure here, so mental health supports for students are needed.</i></li> <li>• <i>Safety improvements.</i></li> <li>• <i>Raising money for mental health is super important.</i></li> <li>• <i>Will likely face increasing security demands.</i></li> <li>• <i>Something needs to be done about students fighting at school.</i></li> <li>• <i>Student safety, student support of mental health and learning challenges (I think we will see more kids needing these services).</i></li> <li>• <i>Keeping students safe amid periods of social unrest.</i></li> <li>• <i>Kids are under a lot of pressure (sports, music, grades) – has been this way for a LONG time.</i></li> <li>• <i>School shootings. We need to work to avoid emotional isolated kids.</i></li> <li>• <i>Security and student mental health needs.</i></li> </ul>	<p>163 related responses</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Safety - it can always get better.</i></li> <li>• <i>The students haven't seen what their skills are yet and what they're good at. They compare themselves to superstars and it's really tough on them.</i></li> <li>• <i>Safety is a concern in the wake of this year's devastating shooting, and it is my biggest concern as we look forward.</i></li> <li>• <i>Safety from outside threats and peer to peer.</i></li> <li>• <i>School safety continuing.</i></li> <li>• <i>Increased safety concerns.</i></li> <li>• <i>College easier than EPS – they don't have as much competition or as much pressure.</i></li> <li>• <i>Keeping schools safe and dealing with student behavioral concerns.</i></li> <li>• <i>Updating critical safety and security tools, and the development of a safety-centric culture within the school district. Safety and security is not simply something we can purchase, it must be implemented with thoughtful consideration and intention. It must balance the implementation of physical safety systems with the development of a safety-centric culture.</i></li> <li>• <i>I think school safety is the biggest challenge.</i></li> <li>• <i>Increasing need for trauma informed understanding and dealing with behavior of students.</i></li> <li>• <i>Reducing bullying, increasing safety.</i></li> <li>• <i>Bigger asks of schools to address mental health.</i></li> <li>• <i>Keeping up with mental health support.</i></li> <li>• <i>The competition between EPS and the private school can be very hard on the students. There is often self-inflicted pressure on our athletes.</i></li> <li>• <i>Our schools are very safe and we have overly emotional, reactive responses to school shootings</i></li> <li>• <i>I'm concerned about behavior management at the high school.</i></li> <li>• <i>We need to continue to focus on mental and social needs/health of students.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Enrollment stability is deemed to be a growing obstacle for the school district. Concerns center on declining resident enrollment, increasing open enrollment from outside the district, and rising competition from private and charter schools, all of which are seen as contributing to fluctuating school populations and changing school culture. Many also link enrollment patterns to larger class sizes, overcrowding, and long-term budget pressures.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Enrollment. (This single word descriptor was used 32 times.)</i></li> <li>• <i>Losing students to private schools that live in the district.</i></li> <li>• <i>Influx of Minneapolis students as their system continues to fail.</i></li> <li>• <i>Increasing enrollment from other districts</i></li> </ul>	<p>159 related responses</p>

- *We're losing about 20% of residents to private schools.*
- *Enrollment – first ring suburb and there's no more land to build upon. There are also less kids being born.*
- *Private schools are our biggest competitors. How do we keep enrollment up and leverage open enrollment in a positive way.*
- *Class size is too large. Record number of Edina families opting for private schools.*
- *How to balance the requests for kids that live outside the district to come to PPS has always been a challenge. It's different than other communities that just want to cast the net out and get as many kids as possible. We've never taken that approach. There are some people that would like us to. There are some people that would like to turn that spigot off altogether.*
- *Drop in enrollment, especially residents who choose not to attend Edina Public Schools.*
- *Balance open enrollment verses the capture rate of our own students. Which should take priority.*
- *Enrollment is down – mostly due to residents enrolling with competitors and birth rates dropping.*
- *A change of direction is needed to maintain enrollment. Families with high-achieving students are sending their children to other districts or to private schools when they have the means to do so.*
- *EPS are getting very large! I'm concerned about all the open enrollment and strongly believe it needs to be more monitor*
- *Open enrollment keeps growing pushing out more kids who actually live in the district as they leave for private schools.*
- *Competitive environment amongst other schools that compete for student enrollment, larger class sizes, increasing number of open enrollments outside our district continue to change the school culture.*
- *Charter school competition.*
- *Competitive nature of enrollment – we need to showcase Edina as much of an option as the private schools (but they have more money to market it).*
- *Enrollment declines because there are less kids in the west metro.*
- *Enrollment fluctuations. This is contagious, and messaging around school successes, issues, programs, etc. is incredibly important.*
- *Declining enrollment causing budgetary shortfalls.*
- *Substantial decreases in public school enrollment numbers.*
- *Keeping class sizes from sky rocketing.*
- *Overcrowding, too many open enrollment kids, would rather do more fundraising and keep schools small.*
- *Maintaining reasonable class sizes in the midst of budget cuts.*
- *Out of district open enrollment is negatively impacting EDINA SCHOOLS. We need to STOP taking problems from out districts and focus on supporting children living in EDINA.*
- *Open enrollment and therefore too many kids in each class.*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>School choice / competition is high and probably increasing.</i></li> <li>• <i>If the district continues to receive the amount of open enrollment we have been bringing in, it is nearly impossible to close the achievement gaps.</i></li> <li>• <i>Large open enrollment numbers are fine but at times feels like Edina residents are being left behind.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>In addition, there is increasing pressure on staff across the district. Concerns focus on recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers, support staff, and administrators amid rising workloads, burnout, staffing shortages, and compensation that is not keeping pace with cost of living. There is concern that continued strain and staffing instability could undermine both program quality and student outcomes.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Increasing pressures on support staff resources.</i></li> <li>• <i>Expectations are so high that we risk burnout of teachers dealing with large classes.</i></li> <li>• <i>Not enough para support, especially at the younger ages.</i></li> <li>• <i>Workload - shrinking resources, unfilled support positions when people retire. Growing workloads for those left behind.</i></li> <li>• <i>I worry about retaining staff and funding in the current economy. Hikes in insurance prices, and rising costs of living might not keep up with what the district can provide support staff.</i></li> <li>• <i>Retaining and recruiting good staff as the cost of living continues to rise, budget management in an increasingly unpredictable economy and sociopolitical environment.</i></li> <li>• <i>An ever increasing and top heavy district office personnel that are not directly impacting students.</i></li> <li>• <i>Reduction in workforce - hoping that doesn't impact Edina Public Schools.</i></li> <li>• <i>High demands on teachers and district resources with reduced funding.</i></li> <li>• <i>Staff need to feel protected in today's political climate, so we need a superintendent who's able to connect with teachers and still hold them accountable.</i></li> <li>• <i>I want to make sure cabinet members have the opportunity to grow and progress.</i></li> <li>• <i>One of our biggest challenges is retaining qualified teachers, especially given the salary discrepancies compared to similar districts. In addition, the increased workload tied to the rollout of new curriculum has added significant pressure on educators.</i></li> <li>• <i>Keeping staff due to an increase in workload. Having too many leadership positions for teachers. Losing special education staff due to cutting positions</i></li> </ul>	<p>136 related responses</p>

<p><i>and increasing workload, caseloads, and not providing the leadership needed to support staff and our most vulnerable students.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>• We're asking educators to do more with fewer resources. This is a big challenge.</i></li> <li><i>• There is a constant pressure on staff and the superintendent to keep meeting and increasing expectations.</i></li> <li><i>• Teacher/staff burnout is real and needs to be addressed. Too much is dropped on their plate.</i></li> <li><i>• I worry about our staff's capacity. It takes time and resources to train the staff. This is an area that often gets overlooked.</i></li> <li><i>• Cuts to teachers/in building staff. Too many consultants.</i></li> <li><i>• How do we keep these teachers and staff members with so many budget cuts?</i></li> <li><i>• Teachers leaving the profession due to workload.</i></li> <li><i>• Retaining administrators for longer than a year or two to actually see a strategic visions through to implementation and improvement.</i></li> <li><i>• We struggle to choose good administrators at certain sites, we continue to push too many programs-like SDL without guidance, leadership or clear vision from the District Office.</i></li> <li><i>• We seem to be struggling to keep up with inflation with staff pay- making other districts more desirable- I worry we will continue to lose good staff.</i></li> <li><i>• Loss of quality teachers due to overwork, underappreciation, and retirement.</i></li> <li><i>• The current staff is what makes EPS great, cuts will only damage the reputation and further the downward spiral.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Survey respondents described shifting demographics as an increasingly complex challenge for the school district as well. Comments reflect a wide range of perspectives on diversity, equity, and inclusion — from calls to strengthen belonging, representation, and culturally responsive practices, to concern that DEI efforts may distract from academics or lower expectations if not carefully balanced. Many also point to growing racial and socioeconomic divides, changing student needs (including ESL and basic support needs), and the importance of supporting staff capacity so all students feel welcome, supported, and held to high expectations as a member of Edina’s student body.</b></p>	<p>134 related responses</p>

- *The district's culture will become more diverse, which may pose challenges to the teachers used to teaching in a more mono-culture environment.*
- *I am worried that Edina will fall to an unnecessary focus on equity, when they are already delivering a top notch education to all. I am worried that will lead to expectations being lowered and student behavior becoming a problem.*
- *We have a significant issue with racial tension in our schools and community. There is so much talk about this in the high school, including talk of families leaving the district.*
- *The diversity of need here is widening, and with a focus on high-performing kids and high-needs kids, I have a concern that the majority of kids in the middle may be left behind.*
- *Our government will stand in the way of the progress made on inclusion.*
- *Changing student demographics and needs. Teachers needing to provide more supports (social emotional, meeting basic needs like food, grooming and clothing) that take away from instructional time and energy.*
- *It can be hard to be poor in this district. There is definitely room to grow in the area of offering equitable experiences to all kids.*
- *Our student demographics are changing along with open enrollment and that's a big challenge.*
- *We need to do a better job of elevating the stories and experiences of all our students, especially those from different cultures or experiences. We need to listen to them.*
- *We need to elevate students from different minority groups – making sure students are feeling loved, valued, and heard.*
- *The demographics of the student body are changing and we need to help students feel that they belong.*
- *Edina is becoming more diverse. That needs to be factored into. We need to be able to get good performances out of all the different kids that come from all different backgrounds and cultures and make them feel like they're blending in and they fit – everybody belongs.*
- *A further divide between our schools with large populations of students of color and our majority white schools- academically and socially/emotionally.*
- *Increase in diversity of students - that is not the challenge, but some staff do not seem competent in this area.*
- *Issues created with wide influx of non-assimilated students and families, such as non-compliance with some students.*
- *Avoiding the pitfalls of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion thinking.*
- *Wealth gap and opportunity gap with those who are low-income, ESL.*
- *Dealing with increasing diversity - racial and economic - in the district.*
- *Promoting cultural diversity, inclusion.*
- *An increasingly diverse student population which can lead to further distinctions between race and class.*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Need to continue to defend DEIB initiatives, making sure all students feel welcome, supported, and celebrated.</i></li> <li>• <i>There continues to be a big socioeconomic gap within Edina. This also comes with cultural differences that are often misunderstood. We need to get everyone on the "same page."</i></li> <li>• <i>Our district has not fully addressed the changing demographics of our schools by insisting on staff development in racial equity and belief that all students can achieve.</i></li> <li>• <i>Embracing demographic changes and increased diversity; ensuring resources are divided up equitably and decisions are made with the more marginalized at the center.</i></li> <li>• <i>Continued cultural inclusion and equity with transplants moving in and tough political climate.</i></li> <li>• <i>A focus on integrating students from different cultural backgrounds needs to be continued, students will gain life skills by learning to work with students from different cultural and economic backgrounds.</i></li> <li>• <i>Edina's demographic is changing but inclusion, diversity, initiatives lacking. Students of color struggling to maintain a sense of belonging.</i></li> <li>• <i>Building an inclusive community given increasing diversity along many dimensions.</i></li> <li>• <i>How to maintain our empathy and commitment to inclusion for our female, transgender, minority, special needs, and other marginalized groups of students and families?</i></li> <li>• <i>Managing a more diverse student body than Edina has had in the past. Not only culturally diverse but socioeconomically as well.</i></li> <li>• <i>Please focus more on education and not so much on DEI.</i></li> <li>• <i>National government efforts to restrict equity and inclusion and promote curriculum that exclude or distort important historical events that have had negative impacts on certain populations in the US.</i></li> <li>• <i>Also a growing divide in the student body with regards to economic backgrounds and learning opportunities and home support systems.</i></li> <li>• <i>Demographics of the school district does not match the demographics of the city. Forced DEI initiative were using open enrollment for the wrong reasons. This needs to be reversed.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Finally, special education is viewed as a growing and increasingly complex challenge for the school district. Concerns focus on rising student needs, staffing shortages and turnover, increased service demands, and uncertainty around funding — particularly at the federal level — while still meeting legal requirements and IEP commitments to students and families.</b></p>	<p>83 related responses</p>



- *Determining how to address special education and general education in regard to resource utilization, efficiency, and cost.*
- *How special education services are formed and delivered. Need to have supports in place to assist families and students experiencing challenges.*
- *Addressing needs of students who are not neurotypical (adhd, autism spectrum).*
- *Likely increase in special needs/SpEd even as ED support decreases. Neurodevelopmental issues continue to rise in our community and parents want services.*
- *Meeting legal requirements for special ed and ELL students. Please don't forget about these students. Students with IEPs and 504s often still struggle with executive function skills, there is a huge opportunity to improve that for all students, not just students with learning differences.*
- *How do we balance that support and level of engagement to close the gap from the bottom one-third of students to the middle one-third of students.*
- *I think it's a growing concern that Edina is know for it's special education program but yet than we don't have a transition program to support those children throughout the entirety of their education.*
- *The amount of need at the bottom is brutal. There are exceptional services available for both the top and the bottom of student needs, but kids in the middle may be left behind if we don't pay attention to all kids and not just those with the highest (or most obvious) needs.*
- *Special education has not enough staff because the budget, statistics show the numbers in special ed in MN is increasing with recent data showing significant growth and higher costs.*
- *Special education cuts. The middle schools are sharing a sped facilitator, staff has left and not been replaced and we don't have enough paras to meet student needs/required coverage.*
- *The Special Education is falling apart right before our eyes. The Special Education staff will likely leave for other districts, which is going to completely change the face of Edina.*
- *Supporting our most vulnerable learners without taking away opportunities for everyone else.*
- *Supporting special education and mental health of students with the current climate and cuts to programs.*
- *Maintaining strong special education departments at schools so that all students receive a fair education-funding administrators, teachers and staff who support students with disabilities.*
- *Need more help making special education more vibrant and active in Valley view and High school and create a clear and consistent idea of what unified looks like in elementary school.*
- *Challenges with providing resources for SPED students.*

### 3. What does the next superintendent need to know about the history of the school district and community to be successful?

**Edina is a close-knit community with a strong sense of pride, tradition, and high expectations for its schools. To be successful, the next superintendent must understand the community is evolving demographically and balance high expectations with genuine inclusion and equity. They must recognize that while change can be challenging, there is strong momentum toward growth and adaptation across Edina's neighborhoods as well as the school district.**

171 related responses

- *Edina is a tight knit and supportive community with a long history of educating successful students.*
- *This is a moderate - conservative community.*
- *People from Edina leave and will come back. It's tough for people who move to Edina from somewhere else in the state or from a different state.*
- *Edina is more diverse than meets the eye, and many parents choose to live here because of the commitment to their children's education. This alone unifies many diverse families, so leverage this commitment to build great schools and education programs.*
- *There is Edina history that goes back deep. People in Edina are proud of Edina. However, there is a change in the community that continues to create a big divide.*
- *High resident per capita income. High property values. Extreme voter support.*
- *It's a unique geographic location coupled with a population that values education very highly. It is a key reason most people live in Edina. The schools are the jewels of the community.*
- *Change is always hard – not everyone is receptive to more diversity.*
- *Unique in that people instantly have an opinion about Edina, but it's really changed in the last 20 years. There is now more diversity, AND there are resources to help people in need (i.e. 20% of students are on free and reduced lunch), AND people want to actually help.*
- *It's unusual how many people grew up in Edina and then come back to live and raise their families here.*
- *We are a progressive, inclusive, empathetic district that believes church and state should be separate.*



- *There are pockets within the community that want to stay more isolated and not change.*
- *There is an interconnection between residential real estate and the quality of public schools in Edina. Therefore, a lot of attention is paid to what's happening in schools because it is an important driver for economic development. As long as the reputation is high, we're all doing better.*
- *People choose to be here and be part of the community – kids can meet others easily. It's a big small school (or a small big school).*
- *Changes in demographics of students and families over the years - cannot live in the past.*
- *People are surprised that 30% of Edina's students are from a minoritized population. Also 1 in 5 students in Minnesota have a foreign-born parent, and that's becoming more common here too.*
- *While some may see the demographic changes in the last 20 years in district as a liability, the future of EPS will continue to be bright if leadership can combine the districts' history of excellence with a strategic mission to meet each student where they are and lift them up as part of a community where they belong.*
- *The community here IS aligned with the direction of EPS which is great – they'll just be slow and probably resistant to change.*
- *There is a strong multicultural and mixed economic relationship among the community here. Not everyone is white, old and rich.*
- *As a suburban city of wealth, our reputation has not historically aligned with inclusion or equity.*
- *Edina is a very proud community, sometimes to a fault, and sometimes holds its leaders to unrealistic expectations. The community has evolved from not very inclusive (by reputation) to very inclusive, albeit sometimes "inclusivity" for the sake of inclusivity and sometimes in name only.*
- *That it's changing — and that's a good thing. Our community is becoming more diverse, open, and forward-thinking. Families value inclusion, equity, and compassion.*
- *Change is hard – things like innovation and AI meet some resistance here.*
- *People's deep roots in the community can make change hard. They Really Care.*
- *There are a wide range of families in Edina schools, from socioeconomic status to race, religion, and special needs families. It's important to take them all into account.*
- *Edina needs to stop being considered "cake eaters". Edina is becoming more international, global and multiracial.*
- *Community pride is second to none, and the momentum needs to continue.*
- *It has changed with influx of different cultures.*
- *There is resistance to change because stakeholders have always gotten their way and they expect that to continue.*

- *That Edina was a sundown town and has been slow to accept new communities (but I do think they are trying).*
- *A significant portion of the community believes that Edina is the same as it was in the 1950s and wants education to reflect that. Meanwhile, we have moved forward and need to adapt to the changes in our population the educational needs of an increasingly diverse enrollment.*
- *Edina and its residents are persecuted and hated by every other district in the state. They made a movie about it in the 1990's. This is how everyone views every parent and child in the district. That perception is a reality, and it's demoralizing for those of us who didn't grow up here.*
- *Sensitivity to the changing demographics.*
- *Edina is a bit of a closed circle, and it doesn't always make room for others at the table.*
- *I think it's vital for the new superintendent to know the history of how diversity in the community has changed over the last 25 years.*
- *Community comes together when asked. Relationships matter.*
- *Edina carries a rich history of development. It's important to acknowledge the accomplishments of the community as well as the harm that has been caused in the past.*
- *Redlining is part of our history. The community and our school district have not always been welcoming.*
- *A new superintendent needs to be able to see the difference between where Edina was 10 years ago to now. We have a diverse population of students and staff that is always growing.*
- *There has been tension from long time residents and new immigrants. Students who are not white do not always feel welcome or included.*
- *Edina is a tight-knit community where everyone speaks with one another so consistency is important.*
- *The community in Edina consists of generational pride and I think its important that the superintendent knows they are not only representing Edina Public School students but even alumni.*
- *Yes, Edina loves tradition, but the community is ready to learn, love, and support all that live here.*
- *Edina is filled with passionate and insightful parents and guardians. We are very thankful and we hold our leaders accountable.*
- *Edina Public School District has strong inclusive family oriented community.*
- *Change comes slowly and all the stakeholders need to be involved in the conversation.*
- *Edina has a racist history (e.g. redlining) and has lacked cultural and financial diversity. We're making progress, but it's important to keep championing so that we can be the best community.*

**Survey respondents are looking for a superintendent who is visible, approachable, and deeply engaged with the community. Someone who communicates openly and leads collaboratively with a clear vision of where the district is headed. Success in this role will come from authentically honoring Edina’s traditions while moving the district forward through thoughtful innovation and steady leadership in the face of high expectations.**

167 related responses

- *Students need a leader who can set the bar high for academic achievement AND human qualities. We need someone how can continue to lead and show excellence in a wholistic way. Someone who students and their families feel is approachable and trustworthy.*
- *We want the superintendent to really understand EPS and not just the surface level stuff.*
- *We don't want the superintendent to come into Edina with negative stereotypes in mind about the students, staff, and community.*
- *The superintendent of Edina needs to be careful and understand the kind of scrutiny they will face. Someone who will not get intimidated by power plays. Expectations are very high here and some people don't understand it until they've been here a while.*
- *Someone who is welcoming to students and parents, and who can handle emotions with grace and diplomacy.*
- *High integrity, service-oriented, and able to establish diplomatic relationships with our neighbor districts.*
- *Strong vision – understanding where education is headed, and how they can ensure our students are ready to meet future challenges.*
- *Someone able to hold students accountable and expect good conduct.*
- *They need to immerse themselves in the community (i.e. don't be a helicopter CEO who flies in to do the job and then leaves on the weekend).*
- *It is important for the coming candidate to possess innovation, visions for what is to come – not the status quo, commitment to excellence, familiarity with the community, and someone who can be here for the long run.*
- *There are some who definitely would not be a good fit for Edina. People perceived as too conservative or too progressive. Someone from a school district in financial trouble.*
- *We want and expect excellence and see the superintendent as a PARTNER in making that happen, not a dictator or know-it-all.*
- *Need to be able to look at global issues from the perspective of other than what's put in front of him/her by the media.*
- *This is a great place with deep history. It would be nice to have someone who can bridge our past and build excitement for the future.*

- *We have a history of racism and privilege in the community and a changing student body. We need leadership who can navigate this and build schools that work for everyone.*
- *Needs to be able to navigate PR and crisis situations as they arise.*
- *They need a vision for the future. Edina can get stuck in the idea of itself and past too often.*
- *More important is the new superintendent's desire & capability to learn what they don't yet know and deepen the context of what they already understand*
- *Vision. We are currently a high-performing district (although not the highest), but we need someone who can see where the district could still go beyond where we are.*
- *Calm demeanor, but someone who can do the hardest thing because it's the right thing. The superintendent here will have to manage an unmanageable amount of stress.*
- *The community here puts a higher level of pressure on EPS than other places I've worked – need transparency, agency, clear communication.*
- *Someone who's approachable and visible, and who sets the tone as the leader of the district. Has a sense of discernment – knows what's here and what could be tweaked – and a very clear communicator.*
- *Not try to reinvent the wheel, but rather take into account what has worked and changes that will further improve and enrich the current district.*
- *Doing innovative work thinks forward, not just what is "trendy".*
- *He/she must understand the Edina is different - and that can be a positive different or a negative different. Its a unique job and it requires collaboration with the community, the teaching staff, and all stakeholders.*
- *The Superintendent must be present and engaged. Vision is crucial - we need someone with a clear vision of where we are going and cannot afford to have someone in a caretaker role that will just ride out the status quo.*
- *We need stability, not someone who will leave at the next shiny opportunity.*
- *They need to listen to all residents that have their students in the school district, regardless of political affiliation.*
- *Know and connect to the community effectively not theoretically, track record of success and excellence.*
- *The new Superintendent MUST be a community builder with a warm, welcoming personality. The people in this school district will go above and beyond for the schools to be successful, so having a very collaborative Superintendent is a must to continue that tradition.*
- *I think the next superintendent needs to be a strong leader that won't get flustered when pushed by parents.*
- *The community greatly appreciates transparency and communication.*
- *Experience as a superintendent does not mean they'll fit Edina.*

**Edina's history of excellence has long been a source of community pride and is a major reason families choose to live here, drawing generations who value strong academics and broad opportunities for students. The next superintendent must recognize how central this reputation is to the district, and help protect and strengthen its longstanding legacy of excellence.**

142 related responses

- *The successful history of the past. Edina was a school ranked very high with school testing, etc. that one would be very proud of.*
- *Edina has always been a flagship public school system for education (and athletics). This cannot change.*
- *EHS has been a top school in MN, this must be preserved and extended.*
- *We have a proud history that we want to maintain. Excellent academics and opportunities should be core focus.*
- *There is tremendous loyalty to Edina. People move to this schools district because of its reputation for high-quality education.*
- *Community is super proud of its history of having an excellent public school system.*
- *People move here for the schools. Our family did. Keep Edina's reputation for high academics at the forefront of everything. Keep it a district that people want to come to and a place where the best people want to teach.*
- *Edina is one of the best school districts in the state — it's why we live here. The new superintendent needs to ensure it stays that way.*
- *Edina School district has generational pride it's curriculum and ability to send students to prestigious colleges and universities.*
- *This community is passionate about its schools. It's why many of us chose to live here.*
- *Some of us are not from here, but chose to live here because of the reputation of the school district and the desire to have a strong well rounded education for our kids.*
- *It is a high performing district that has high expectations for its schools and kids.*
- *There are many people that are native Edinians that choose to move back because of the community and reputation that this district has is academics, athletics and beyond. We are proud.*
- *Edina Public Schools has a reputation of being one of the finest school districts in the country.*
- *We are a district of excellence. We welcome all. We are leaders in the state.*
- *They must realize that we have always been a leading school district when it comes to achievement, innovation, and community engagement in academics, arts, and activities.*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Edina had a very strong reputation for academic excellence and robust opportunities for special education, athletics, music, clubs.</i></li> <li>• <i>Understand there is a strong history of pride, academics and athletic programs in Edina, this creates an expectation amongst parents and the community that this continues to be attained.</i></li> <li>• <i>To be successful, the new superintendent must understand that our district's history is defined by a tradition of academic excellence, high community expectations, and a deep sense of pride in our schools.</i></li> <li>• <i>Edina has a legacy of excellence across academics, the arts , extra curricular and athletics. We need to get back to the basics and teach the kids to prep them for the future.</i></li> <li>• <i>We have a history of being a 4 year prep school district that values sports and the arts. Looking to future we need to the expand/change what we should truly be preparing our children to be able to know and do.</i></li> <li>• <i>Edina has always been considered an academic powerhouse and places strong value on excellence.</i></li> <li>• <i>Past educational successes were achieved as a result of objective metrics, not subjective, shifting and divisive social programming.</i></li> <li>• <i>Rich tradition around academic excellence.</i></li> <li>• <i>Our history of innovation and inclusion yet focused on academic excellence.</i></li> <li>• <i>It's a high achieving community and if you don't want to lose kids to the private schools you need to keep it high achieving and excellent.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Excellence in education is deeply ingrained in Edina Public Schools, with families choosing to live here specifically for its reputation and holding the district to exceptionally high standards for academic achievement, student outcomes, and overall performance. The next superintendent must understand that this drive for excellence is a both strength and source of pride, but can also place tremendous pressure on students and staff.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>We want the very best education possible. We demand the highest academic experience we can get, and we also will do everything we can as a community to support this mission of excellence.</i></li> <li>• <i>The expectations of the community are extremely high, and the superintendent will need to be very engaged in the community.</i></li> <li>• <i>High achievement and high expectations go hand in hand here.</i></li> <li>• <i>People care so much that they absolutely believe Edina should be the standard-bearer of excellence, but instead the district needs to be grounded in reality.</i></li> </ul>	<p>119 related responses</p>



- *We should continue to aspire to be one of the top school districts when it comes to academic achievement, athletics, inclusion, safety, and supporting our students.*
- *Expectations are very high here, so it's not for everyone. People push and push here, and the superintendent needs to understand and welcome that.*
- *Focus on achievement and the rest will come.*
- *Edina is very focused on providing excellence, but can't just assume "it's the best in the state".*
- *People want to buy a house in Edina because the school are so excellent. It builds upon itself and becomes central to everything that the community does.*
- *Need to focus on improvement of academics, test results and stop trying to be everything to everyone. Focus on core base of students.*
- *Edina always puts academic achievement before anything else which might actually be putting too much pressure on many students before they are developmentally ready.*
- *The community cares deeply about providing a high quality education and good experience to all students.*
- *This is a community that demands excellence and will ask questions and hold people accountable when it is not delivered.*
- *Parents demand academic success and will move to other districts if it is not a priority.*
- *Parents have very high expectations of EPS for their students. This pressure can be very hard on students, staff and admin.*
- *Many people choose to live in Edina for the school district (myself included). The Edina public school system must remain best in class in order to ensure the continued vitality of the community overall.*
- *That this is a district of high expectations that will not settle for mediocrity of the district.*
- *They need to know that Edina families move back to Edina for the schools - they expect high performance for their children and their teachers. They will support any initiative we ask for but expect the schools to maintain integrity of behavior and academic achievement.*
- *This is a community focused on high achievement, almost to a fault. It can leave behind or minimize the average kid or a sped student.*
- *Edina is the best and has always done the best and always knows best.*
- *Edina expects excellence and success over all other things (including equity and diversity).*
- *Edina as a community places a high value on education and its schools and the schools need to continue to live up to a high standard.*
- *Edina is a place where success is the expectation. From elementary reading scores to high school hockey, we are willing to work towards achieving great heights.*

**Survey respondents note that Edina is a highly engaged, invested community which takes deep pride in its schools and wants to actively support their success. The next superintendent should view this involvement as a strength to be harnessed through transparent communication, thoughtful collaboration, and meaningful opportunities for families and community members to contribute to the district's continued growth and development.**

117 related responses

- *The community is invested in and wants the best for our students and schools. treat this as a superpower rather than a stumbling block.*
- *There is strong community engagement and pride and an overall desire for excellence by everyone. The biggest challenge is corralling that passion meaningfully and managing everyone's expectations.*
- *Kids are king in Edina. We do anything and everything for them. We do what we can to give them every opportunity to advance their knowledge. We send more kids to ivy league colleges than any other school in the state, including private schools.*
- *Partnerships between the City of Edina and school districts are tremendously important; also Rotary, Chamber, and business leaders hold a lot of sway.*
- *The community generally is quite supportive of EPS. Utilize this support to help find creative ways to generate more revenue!*
- *It's a very invested parent group and community. The strong academic standards are a source of pride and parents want to have input on how that continues to set the bar for the rest of the country.*
- *Continue to promote collaborative and supportive community for schools.*
- *Parents and the community care about the students education and support it more than in most communities in the country.*
- *The business community's perception of the new superintendent is extremely important, so don't underestimate their role and how much it means to the district.*
- *I have been very impressed with how supportive the community is and how much the school is part of the community identity and pride.*
- *Edina has always been supportive of its staff.*
- *The community can be an enormous asset to EPS. Transparency, consistency in communication, willingness to work with the community on new processes and challenges are all ways to engage parents and residents.*
- *We have very involved, educated and concerned parents that want to be heard and collaborated with.*



- Community that takes pride in being involved within the schools and holds high academic standards for all children.
- Edina parents and community members are opinionated. It is important to use communication effectively but also figure out how to harness the opinions into action.
- Edina schools benefit tremendously from the wealth and achievement among a large segment of the parent population.
- The community is very involved, we will fund it if it's important.
- Highly engaged parent community that demand and deserve a high quality education for their children.
- This is a community that cares, A LOT. They want to be involved. They want to hear directly from leadership. They want their input to be taken seriously.
- Reaching out to parents to help solve problems is encouraged. Our community takes pride in our schools and would be happy to help make improvements.
- The community supports the schools and is proud of their success.
- Continue the tradition of listening to and working with the community and stakeholders like parents. Having strong community engagement and support of the Edina School District is what I think sets Edina apart from many other districts. The community is always here to support the schools and students and allows for great things to happen.
- We will do everything we can as a community to support the mission of excellence.
- The community is more heavily involved in school business and activities than normal.
- It's a supportive community who is inclusive and wants to do the right thing.
- The community is very engaged in all aspects of the school district work, and planning.
- We care immensely about our students as a whole.
- Parents expect to have a seat at the table or even own the table. Sometimes they don't trust the experts and think their opinion matters more.
- It's intense here. You hear a lot from the community.
- They will support any initiative we ask for but expect the schools to maintain integrity of behavior and academic achievement.
- Community is very invested in the schools – including their commitment to excellence and that they have the resources to support it.
- People in Edina genuinely want to serve on city and school committees, and they want to have authentic conversations whether positive or negative. The level of discourse here is not passive aggressive. There is a real global awareness here and commitment to doing what's right.

#### 4. Additional Comments:

<p><b>Survey respondents noted many positive aspects of the interim superintendent’s leadership, noting his personable approach, visibility, experience, and the positive impact he has made in a short time. Others expressed the need for long-term stability, while emphasizing the importance of the school board conducting a transparent and trusted search process as was described to district stakeholders last Spring.</b></p> <p><i>Most comments about the interim superintendent were positive and emphasized his impact as a stabilizing, people-centered leader during a time of transition. Respondents frequently described him as a leader who is approachable, calm, trustworthy, and deeply experienced, noting that he has improved staff morale, reduced tension between leadership and teachers, strengthened cabinet collaboration, and built trust quickly across staff and families. Many stakeholders feel seen, supported, and valued under his leadership and expressed confidence in both his interpersonal approach and his ability to handle complex challenges without overreaction.</i></p> <p><i>At the same time, concerns were raised not about the interim superintendent’s performance but rather the search process and long-term direction of the district. These respondents worry that any lack of a full, open search process could undermine trust in district leadership and limit the opportunity to identify a long-term, innovative leader for the next phase of Edina’s future. Overall, the feedback in this area reflects a clear tension between valuing the stability brought by the interim superintendent and wanting assurance that the school board will follow a transparent, credible process to secure the district’s long-term leadership needs.</i></p>	159 related responses
<p><b>Survey respondents are looking for a visionary, compassionate, and communicative leader who values academic excellence, inclusivity, and the well-being of students and staff. There is a strong desire for a superintendent with broad experience, a long-term commitment to Edina, and the ability to unify the community while guiding the district forward with transparency and integrity.</b></p>	144 related responses

- *It's important to have someone that is passionate about education and the power of education, who understands that strong academic achievement is measured not just in test scores but in how schools, teachers, and the academic curriculum nurture students' curiosity, engagement, and a deep love for lifelong learning.*
- *Create a working environment that makes people want to stay. Be authentic. Recognize the internal value and expertise of staff.*
- *A connector who understands the role of the school board, and wants to communicate with the board and connect with each of them.*
- *Need to look for a culture fit – find the humanity of a person. Someone who will push for staff wellness. A relationship-builder and someone who can build trust.*
- *Approachable and has the humility to be open to others' ideas – doesn't always have to be right. Someone who's genuinely visible and is not performative about it.*
- *We do NOT need a transformational leader – the strategic plan is clear and that's what we need. We need an executor, not a visionary. Someone who can shepherd the strategic plan through to completion.*
- *Excellent conflict resolution skills and conflict doesn't make them uncomfortable.*
- *We need someone who's going to stay here a long time – long enough to make an impact on the future of the district – and I think that means they stay at least 10-12 years in the role.*
- *The new superintendent will have to be a leader of leaders, continuing to create opportunities for growth and elevate others. People have agency here and a high level of talent – tap into and leverage those things to continue moving the district forward.*
- *I think it is imperative that our next superintendent has prior experience serving in communities with comparable demographics (both historically and changing), and demonstrates a strong capacity to engage stakeholders from across the spectrum of those demographics.*
- *Curiosity of leadership about how to align our kids now with the needs of the future. Someone who has an appetite to try new things, ask the right questions, nudge people towards new ideas.*
- *The next superintendent needs to understand the impact of technology and AI on knowledge development and to utilize it as part of their leadership journey. Things are changing quickly and public education needs to keep up with what's happening.*
- *I'd love to see someone nontraditional, maybe an innovative thinker that comes with some experiences in other settings. A fresh perspective, new eyes. Not the same old thing.*
- *Edina taxpayers and families expect a rigorous, transparent process to identify not just a capable leader for today, but the right superintendent to*

<p><i>guide the district for the next decade and beyond. This community has always valued long-term commitment, integrity, and deep local investment.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>• It is important that our next superintendent understand our community stakeholders and staff, have a clear vision for moving EPS forward, and also not see this job as a short-term role or as a stepping stone to their next job.</i></li> <li><i>• We need a decisive leader who understands the multi-disciplinary challenges facing modern school systems. One that is pragmatic and negotiates real world challenges with tenacity.</i></li> <li><i>• Hire a good human, someone who understands diversity of thought and the student population, who is focused on learning and continuing a strong focus on academics - but also gets that there are students of all levels that what want to excel here. Someone with good sense of humor, who sees the big picture and landscape of the broader MN education community, but wants to make Edina a district that kids all want to be a part of.</i></li> <li><i>• The new superintendent must have experience as a superintendent. It will need to be someone who's gone through very stressful things and handled them well.</i></li> <li><i>• Fresh eyes on old problems. But don't want initiative fatigue. We don't want to disrupt the good work that's already happening.</i></li> <li><i>• A superintendent that is well connected not only locally but nationally or globally to stay cutting edge.</i></li> <li><i>• Make sure the district is doing what it can with the funds – need Supt to value that cause can't do all these things without the money.</i></li> <li><i>• Good listener - lean into stakeholders' ideas... ok to make changes to a process even though something's been done a certain way for a long time.</i></li> <li><i>• Innovative! We need to change in 2025 to stay a leader in education!</i></li> <li><i>• Warmth, caring, willingness to listen to all and take perspectives.</i></li> <li><i>• Authenticity – authentic relationship building.</i></li> <li><i>• Bravery - actionable items (bravery to take action).</i></li> <li><i>• Finance – needs to understand inside and out. Take school finance seriously.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Many respondents stressed the importance of a transparent, inclusive, and thorough superintendent search process - one that considers diverse perspectives, communicates clearly at every stage, and avoids assumptions or shortcuts. While many stakeholders appreciate the board's intentional approach thus far, there are lingering questions about trust, representation, and ensuring that the search process results in the best long-term leader for Edina.</b></p>	<p>142 related responses</p>

- *Please do a FULL search process and bring candidates to the board for transparent interviews.*
- *Be accessible, transparent, and communication-focused during the process.*
- *There are concerns that only the loudest voices will get heard throughout this process.*
- *Worried the school board won't take our feedback into consideration.*
- *Community is upset about the cost. This is a waste of time because they've done it so recently. We've already done this, just let us hire someone and done.*
- *Your work is appreciated, but it's going to be hard to make everyone happy.*
- *I think the Board has been thoughtful and intentional regarding the search process.*
- *I'm concerned about the challenges out-of-state candidates can face regarding Minnesota licensure because I would like this to be a nationwide search.*
- *Depth and reach, trying to reach everyone. It's wow. You're doing a lot.*
- *Community engagement and desire to make sure all voices are being heard and reach out to pockets of the people that aren't always heard.*
- *Would like any internal candidate to go through the whole process to get the job.*
- *Experience is important, but that experience does not have to be as a superintendent. I would love to see candidates with experience from districts with different socio-economic student demographics. That sort of background would be very helpful in Edina.*
- *I'm glad the staff is getting a voice in the process. I want to know what are the wishes and desires of the staff.*
- *I've seen other searches (not in Edina) that were not authentic and it felt like school boards have manipulated the process to get their desired candidate. I don't get that sense here.*
- *The board has been very deliberate in what they're doing, and I think getting input from stakeholders first is a very important part of the process.*
- *Before a search firm was hired, I was concerned about the process and whether it would truly be focused on finding someone right for Edina versus placing a candidate.*
- *I was really happy to hear that MSBA does not actively recruit candidates because that would really skew the pool.*
- *Process, transparency, and communication are VERY important. Explain here's what we did, here's why we did it, and here's what's next. If you're consistently very clear about the process, regardless of the decision the community will understand.*
- *I believe that the board needs to have a public process which brings a set of finalist to the community. The community needs to see and hear from the finalist and be able to offer feedback to the board.*

- *This is an opportunity for a fresh slate. Edina is used to having their superintendents stay a long time, so the districts needs to get this right.*
- *Please run a thorough and thoughtful process, and don't 'sneak someone in.*
- *I'm excited for the opportunity to define what we want in a leader, then hiring someone who fits that definition and reaping the benefits of that person's experience.*
- *The new norm post-Covid is being established, and starting today we can decide "this is our new reality" and then be intentional about it. It's a great chance to re-set – to start/stop/continue what the district is doing well.*
- *I look forward to having and expecting a thorough process in a public setting with the best applicants possible and hearing the community's voice come through in the feedback.*
- *Talk to every administrator, all the principals, the City of Edina, PLC, etc. In other words, keep doing what you're already doing.*
- *You're already running a culturally-proficient search, so thank you!*
- *The board is made up of critical thinkers who are being very thoughtful in this process, and they should continue to share messaging that explains that they're being critical thinkers, what they're doing at every step and here's why we're doing it. Keep it simple but clear.*
- *I think offering clarity and transparency of the "WHY" the board makes their decision will be crucial.*
- *This is a long process and causes angst for the staff. Stability is good for a district, so the searching is causing some unfortunate stress.*
- *I'm fascinated to see the responses from our community – change offers a chance to review what's worked and adjust accordingly. There's always an opportunity for improvement and the superintendent search offers us that.*

# **Student Survey Summary Report**

**Student Additional comments:** Student respondents were given the opportunity to answer open-ended questions in the survey, and on average, 720 of the 980 respondents provided additional commentary. These qualitative results were then reviewed by MSBA representatives, with reappearing ideas identified and grouped into themes. These themes are highlighted below for each of the questions.

\*\* Please note the numbers included here are from the student survey taken during high school advisory periods, but also include the 37 student responses from the main survey. All student participation in the survey was also completely optional.

**CONTENT OF SURVEY:** The survey consisted of the following four questions:

1. What are some of the things you like about your school or district?
2. What challenges do you think the school or district will face in the next five years?
3. What should the new superintendent know about the school and community to do a good job?
4. Additional comments:

## **INPUT HIGHLIGHTS from STUDENTS:**

The results of the survey were reviewed by MSBA representatives, with recurring ideas identified and grouped into themes. Below are highlights of those themes across all of the student feedback. Together, they reflect how the Edina students view the district's current reality, future direction, and leadership needs.

### **Good Things Taking Place in the District**

- **Dedicated teachers and staff** – Students consistently highlight how supportive, caring, and effective their teachers are, emphasizing strong relationships and high-quality instruction.
- **Positive school culture and spirit** – Students describe their schools as welcoming, friendly, and fun, with strong school pride and a sense of belonging.
- **Strong academics and high expectations** – Students appreciate receiving a solid education that challenges them, prepares them well, and reflects Edina's reputation for excellence.
- **Inclusive and diverse community** – Students value being part of a community where people from different backgrounds and identities feel seen, respected, and supported.



- **Helpful academic resources** – Many students appreciate having tools, supports, and flexible spaces that help them learn and succeed.
- **Quality facilities and environment** – Clean, modern buildings and accessible spaces contribute to a comfortable, functional learning environment.
- **Friendships and peer connections** – Positive relationships with peers are a defining strength of students’ day-to-day experience.

## **Challenges Over the Next Five Years**

- **Technology and AI** – Students see rapidly expanding AI and technology use as a major challenge, worrying about academic honesty, reduced learning, and the need for a balanced, thoughtful district approach.
- **Budget and funding limitations** – Students anticipate financial pressures that could affect staffing, programs, activities, and opportunities without sustainable funding solutions.
- **Academic performance and learning needs** – Concerns include declining grades, uneven rigor across courses, and ensuring curriculum options meet the needs of diverse learners.
- **Enrollment shifts** – Students expect challenges related to overcrowding, increased open enrollment, and the possibility of students leaving the district.
- **Safety, behavior, and mental health** – Students cite growing concerns around bullying, vaping, violence, substance use, and increasing mental health needs.
- **Changing student population** – Students note growing diversity in culture, background, socio-economics, and learning profiles, with varied perspectives on how well the district supports this complexity.

## **What the Next Superintendent Needs to Know**

- **A strong, spirited school community** – Students want the superintendent to understand Edina’s long-standing pride, traditions, and collaborative culture, and to build on what is already working.
- **Who the students are** – Students describe themselves as diverse, hardworking, kind, and under significant pressure. They want a leader who listens, builds relationships, and supports their needs.

- **A tight-knit and values-driven community** – Understanding Edina’s culture, people, and expectations is seen as essential to leading effectively here.
- **Leadership qualities** – Students want a superintendent who is kind, approachable, fair, and visible; someone who communicates openly, handles challenges thoughtfully, and engages meaningfully with the entire school community.
- **Commitment to inclusion and belonging** – Students emphasize that ensuring everyone feels welcome and valued is central to who Edina is and should remain a high priority.
- **High standards and diverse learning needs** – Students want the superintendent to recognize Edina’s academic expectations while supporting different learners and ensuring opportunities for growth for all.

## **Additional Comments**

- **Leadership expectations and priorities** – Students reiterate the need for a superintendent who is communicative, empathetic, and confident—someone who understands Edina’s culture, values student voice, and pays attention to the details that shape everyday experiences.



## **DETAILED STUDENT SURVEY SUMMARY:**

This section offers deeper context behind the themes summarized above, organized by question and supported by representative participant comments.

### **1. What are some things you like about your school or district?**

<p><b>Students appreciate the district's wide range of classes, activities, and athletic programs, noting that there are many opportunities to get involved, explore interests, and succeed.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>I like the different courses offered.</i></li><li>• <i>It is a very good school with a variety of classes.</i></li><li>• <i>I like how many different types of classes are offered and the range of levels within each category.</i></li><li>• <i>I like how many classes you can take and how there's a lot of options available for electives, which can help people find their true callings.</i></li><li>• <i>I like that we have a lot of options for classes so students can pick what they're interested and how challenged they want to be.</i></li><li>• <i>Lots of electives.</i></li><li>• <i>Opportunities to take advanced classes.</i></li><li>• <i>How we have good school programs and a variety of classes.</i></li><li>• <i>Some of the best extracurriculars.</i></li><li>• <i>There are lots of activities.</i></li><li>• <i>There are clubs and programs to help everyone feel safe and involved in the community.</i></li><li>• <i>The different clubs you can join and make.</i></li><li>• <i>I enjoy the amount of school affiliated and non-affiliated school trips, clubs, groups, and activities that the school supports.</i></li><li>• <i>I love how many opportunities the school district has for engaging in all sorts of activities.</i></li><li>• <i>I like how many different things it has to offer.</i></li><li>• <i>The wide variety of things where you can get involved.</i></li><li>• <i>I love all the opportunities we all get. I love trying new things.</i></li><li>• <i>I like all the opportunities to improve like the tutor center, student services, office hours, and flex.</i></li><li>• <i>I like that I can set myself up to be successful here and I have a lot of choices.</i></li><li>• <i>There are a lot of different and unique opportunities available to us.</i></li><li>• <i>Achievement in athletics.</i></li></ul>	209 related responses
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I like our sports. They're really good. A lot of people win and that make it fun.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like the athletics programs</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Student respondents highlighted the quality and dedication of their teachers and staff, noting that educators are knowledgeable, accessible, and effective in supporting student learning. They also appreciated how kind, caring, and supportive staff members are.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I like the teachers. (Exact statement mentioned 11 times.)</i></li> <li>• <i>Great student support team.</i></li> <li>• <i>Honest of staff.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like how easy it is to get in touch with teachers.</i></li> <li>• <i>The trust teacher have with the adolescents.</i></li> <li>• <i>I think most teacher are great and funny. Definitely a higher percentages than I would expect.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like that I do not think I have has a single objectively bad teacher.</i></li> <li>• <i>The staff is very impressive. Teachers are very good and there is a lot of support.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like the staff.</i></li> <li>• <i>Teachers are of good quality.</i></li> <li>• <i>I think that all my teachers are so intelligent and amazing at what they do. I learn so much every day.</i></li> <li>• <i>Good teachers.</i></li> <li>• <i>Very good teachers.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like how accepting all the teachers are.</i></li> <li>• <i>It's very open and the teacher are actually mostly kind.</i></li> <li>• <i>Some of the teacher are very kind to their student and like answering questions.</i></li> <li>• <i>How nice the staff members are.</i></li> <li>• <i>How nice and friendly the staff are.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like that the teacher care about the students learning and success.</i></li> <li>• <i>I think my teacher are nice.</i></li> <li>• <i>Most of the staff are supportive.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like the staff the school has hired. Individually, are very supportive.</i></li> <li>• <i>The staff genuinely care.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like how nice and flexible my teachers are.</i></li> <li>• <i>The friendly staff.</i></li> </ul>	<p>131 related responses</p>

<p><b>Students describe their school as a welcoming and supportive place where people treat each other well, school spirit is strong, and the overall atmosphere generally feels positive and relaxed.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>They are forward with people and treat everyone fairly</i></li> <li>• <i>They really know how to support their students.</i></li> <li>• <i>They attempt to show support to students who need support.</i></li> <li>• <i>Everybody is super nice and supportive.</i></li> <li>• <i>Everyone is kind.</i></li> <li>• <i>People are very nice.</i></li> <li>• <i>People at this school are really nice and easy to talk to.</i></li> <li>• <i>They are kind, respectful, and nice to talk to.</i></li> <li>• <i>They provide a supportive environment.</i></li> <li>• <i>The kind and respectful people/students.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like how our school district has a lot of school spirit and shows it.</i></li> <li>• <i>It's a high energy place.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like how much pride we hold in our academics, extracurriculars, etc. It makes me feel like I'm a part of something important.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like that there is a sense of community.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like the community we've building as a district because it's easy to stay connected.</i></li> <li>• <i>That is acts like a family (one community).</i></li> <li>• <i>That we are a tight-knit community.</i></li> <li>• <i>Some things I like are how it is like a family.</i></li> <li>• <i>The environment is not too strict and students feel comforted by it.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like how independent I feel.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like how my district listens to its students.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like that EPS is open to changes based on all forms of feedback.</i></li> <li>• <i>Having administrators who take time to pause what they're doing to listen to students.</i></li> <li>• <i>It allows students to make their own clubs.</i></li> <li>• <i>It's fun.</i></li> <li>• <i>It's cool.</i></li> <li>• <i>It's chill.</i></li> </ul>	<p>106 related responses</p>
<p><b>Student survey respondents valued the solid education they receive, noting that it challenges them, supports their growth, and prepares them well for what comes next. They also take pride in the district's strong academic reputation and high standards.</b></p>	<p>104 related responses</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Good learning program and quality in school.</i></li> <li>• <i>How Edina innovates.</i></li> <li>• <i>I know that our school has a good education program.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like that this school challenges me and makes me a better person.</i></li> <li>• <i>It like that we have good education.</i></li> <li>• <i>We are considered a higher-end district with the quality of education given.</i></li> <li>• <i>The level of education.</i></li> <li>• <i>We learn a lot of good knowledge.</i></li> <li>• <i>We receive a good education.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like how my school district values education and takes pride in its image.</i></li> <li>• <i>How good the education is.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like that I can set myself up for success here.</i></li> <li>• <i>Great education.</i></li> <li>• <i>Our good education system.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like how it prepares you for the future.</i></li> <li>• <i>There are a lot of opportunities to grow and develop our future.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like that we are well-known for our academics.</i></li> <li>• <i>How it is one of the top schools.</i></li> <li>• <i>It is one of the best educations in Minnesota.</i></li> <li>• <i>Prestigious.</i></li> <li>• <i>We are academically competitive.</i></li> <li>• <i>Considered at the top of the state.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>EPS students value being part of a school community that is welcoming, inclusive, and diverse, where people of different backgrounds and identities feel respected, safe, and supported.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Community and inclusion efforts.</i></li> <li>• <i>The school is very inclusive and open.</i></li> <li>• <i>How we have different students at different events and they would be people of color.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like how inclusive and accessible the school is.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like how our school is kind and welcoming and how everyone can come to our schools.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like that it emphasizes peoples' culture and indemnity like indigenous peoples' day and international night.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like the commitment to diversity.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like the diversity and how people get to come together and share different ideas about the world.</i></li> <li>• <i>It is diverse with a lot of different people in the building. Which is very cool.</i></li> <li>• <i>It is tolerant of different people.</i></li> <li>• <i>I feel like everyone is being included.</i></li> </ul>	<p>84 related responses</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Very inclusive and understanding.</i></li> <li>• <i>The school is very welcoming of all ethnicities and cultures.</i></li> <li>• <i>The openness to all ethnicities, learning types, and different types of people.</i></li> <li>• <i>People are treated equally.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like how Edina Schools is open to many people of all abilities and backgrounds.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like the diversity and how many can feel safe.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like how diverse the community is. How supportive we are of student with disabilities.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Students also appreciate having access to a wide range of academic resources and supports, noting that there are many ways to get help and tools that make learning easier and more successful.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Quality resources.</i></li> <li>• <i>I get extra time in school to get my work done.</i></li> <li>• <i>Quantity and quality of available resources for learning.</i></li> <li>• <i>I get the help that I need.</i></li> <li>• <i>There are so many ways to get help if needed.</i></li> <li>• <i>How we have access to good programs and things that we can utilize to improve our learning.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like all the resources available to students.</i></li> <li>• <i>Free paper to do school work.</i></li> <li>• <i>Good support from PTO to cover expenses.</i></li> <li>• <i>I appreciate the numerous resources available through EPS and how I can utilize them to my advantage.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like all of the resources available to us.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like that we have a tutor center for learning help.</i></li> <li>• <i>That we have access to lots of help/aid.</i></li> <li>• <i>The amount of resources at our disposal.</i></li> </ul>	53 related responses
<p><b>The district's students value having clean, modern buildings with flexible spaces and good accessibility, which make the school environment comfortable and easy to navigate.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>How clean the buildings are.</i></li> <li>• <i>Good facilities.</i></li> <li>• <i>Big school with different environments.</i></li> <li>• <i>Good quality facilities.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like how clean it is.</i></li> </ul>	41 related responses



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I like how students have open areas to study.</i></li> <li>• <i>We are able to work in the flex space.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like the accessibility routes (sidewalks, crosswalks, traffic guards).</i></li> <li>• <i>I like the beautiful locations of all the schools. Very expandable and provides more room for students.</i></li> <li>• <i>It is very modern and nice.</i></li> <li>• <i>It is well take care of.</i></li> <li>• <i>The campus, the classrooms, the cafeteria.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like the flexibility and the improvements made to the buildings.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Finally, EPS students highlight the friendships and positive peer relationships that make school enjoyable.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Friends I've made.</i></li> <li>• <i>A lot of people that I'm friends with in the school.</i></li> <li>• <i>Being with friend and meeting new people that I never met in my life.</i></li> <li>• <i>Good kids at schools.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like how many friend I have in the school district.</i></li> <li>• <i>The kids in the school.</i></li> <li>• <i>My friends.</i></li> <li>• <i>Having many friends in classes.</i></li> <li>• <i>I like the students.</i></li> <li>• <i>Get to meet new people.</i></li> <li>• <i>Classmates are friendly.</i></li> <li>• <i>Chill people.</i></li> <li>• <i>Seeing friends.</i></li> </ul>	41 related responses

## 2. What challenges do you think the school or district will face in the next five years?

<p><b>Students anticipate that rapidly expanding use of AI and other technologies will be a major challenge for the district. They worry this will increase academic dishonesty and make it harder for students to focus, do their own thinking, and truly learn if the district doesn't find a thoughtful balance between using AI as a tool and preventing its misuse.</b></p>	235 related responses
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- *AI, AI challenges, AI problems, AI usage, AI use. (42 similar statements)*
- *I think a big challenge will be the growth in AI and the percentage of students who take their phones out during class.*
- *It will probably struggle to find a balance in technology usage and the new problems it brings to the table.*
- *The school will face technology changes and that could make learning difficult.*
- *The use of AI and cellphones by students.*
- *Different rules with technology.*
- *A rise in academic dishonesty and the use of AI on assignments and projects.*
- *AI and the use of technology for cheating.*
- *AI technology advancements and increased methods of cheating.*
- *AI in school, how do you make sure people don't just cheat their way through life.*
- *I think AI will be challenging for the district to figure out how to deal with in terms of academic honesty.*
- *I think that AI will continue to become more prevalent in students work with more and more people choosing to use it to cheat on assignments.*
- *I think there will be challenges with AI and technology doing people's homework.*
- *Most likely problems with people using Ai and ChatGPT.*
- *People using AI on assignments.*
- *The rising popularity of A.I. to complete assignments, quizzes, etc.*
- *AI and over technology usage in schools.*
- *Ai and shortened attention spans.*
- *I think AI will improve and be harder to keep out of the classroom. I think this will be bad for students' learning.*
- *I think there will be an increasing challenge with AI and technology innovations within the school that disrupt student learning.*
- *I think with the rise of AI, doing our own independent research and work will get harder.*
- *Students will use AI or other technologies to cheat or avoid assignments so they won't learn.*
- *The improvement of AI and how it effects students.AI big challenge will probably be increasing the use of AI in schools.*
- *A surge in AI technology.*
- *AI getting better and better, tech/AI getting cheaper and harder to discover, even usable in physical areas.*
- *I think that there might be some decisions with AI in the future.*
- *I think the district will face the challenges of Ai and advancements in technology.*
- *I think the issue of AI in schools will become increasingly prevalent, whether for good or for bad.*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I think they will face further technology and AI difficulties.</i></li> <li>• <i>Problems with social media and AI.</i></li> <li>• <i>When technology gets more advanced people will have to use it more for every day.</i></li> <li>• <i>The use of advancing technology in schools.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Students also believe the district will face funding challenges in the coming years. Many worry that budget constraints could limit programs, staffing, and opportunities if the district doesn't find sustainable ways to support its growing needs.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Budget, budget cuts, budget problems, budgeting issues. (12 similar statements)</i></li> <li>• <i>Money. Money distribution. Money loss. Money problems. (15 similar statements)</i></li> <li>• <i>Challenges with money and budget because of the new school infrastructures and free meals.</i></li> <li>• <i>Differences in student family incomes (rising taxes) and affordability.</i></li> <li>• <i>I think the district will face a lot of challenges with budgets and funding, especially to the arts programs. Edina is super special because of what these programs are able to give to students but these opportunities are not possible without funding.</i></li> <li>• <i>I would guess school funding and the changing landscape of higher education. I would want the superintendent to be able to chart a steady course through it all.</i></li> <li>• <i>I see the district struggling with the funding behind liberal arts or other elective classes.</i></li> <li>• <i>I think we will have to come figure out how to deal with/keep programs open when not getting enough funding from the state.</i></li> <li>• <i>Inadequate funding due to less support from the federal government.</i></li> <li>• <i>Lack of money and budget challenges.</i></li> <li>• <i>Likely the district will be faced with money problems so the right now the city of Edina should be working to get as much money as possible to the schools.</i></li> <li>• <i>Money: A lot of the extracurricular programs are pretty expensive; it's hard for me or my family to pay for some expenses.</i></li> <li>• <i>Most likely budgeting difficulties because we are becoming slightly in debut. So the new superintendent should have some ideas to help fundraise.</i></li> <li>• <i>Our funding for sports is horrible; many sports go without money, while others buy more things that aren't necessarily needed.</i></li> <li>• <i>Pushback from funding at the federal level.</i></li> </ul>	<p>96 related responses</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Sports and other extracurriculars should have more support. There is some room for improvement when it comes to equal funding for each sport.</i></li> <li>• <i>Less money in the education system around the USA.</i></li> <li>• <i>The amount of money that the school has, that funds a ton of extra activities available at EHS.</i></li> <li>• <i>I think with the government stuff we'll need to fund our own programs that help differently-abled people or other unique programs that we offer.</i></li> <li>• <i>We will be underfunded due to education cuts and an increasing student population.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Many students believe the district may struggle with declining grades and test scores while keeping curriculum options strong and trying to meet different learning needs.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Declining academic integrity.</i></li> <li>• <i>Hardship on academics.</i></li> <li>• <i>Helping student with getting grades up.</i></li> <li>• <i>I think we will face challenges with academic tests and grading systems.</i></li> <li>• <i>Issues with declining grades due to lack of motivation to complete schoolwork.</i></li> <li>• <i>Curriculum advancements.</i></li> <li>• <i>Maintaining the same level of consistent test scores and grades seen amongst every student attending the high school.</i></li> <li>• <i>Make sure that curriculums keep improving.</i></li> <li>• <i>Managing students and their grades.</i></li> <li>• <i>Students will have low grades.</i></li> <li>• <i>The challenges I think the school and district will face are academic, specifically grades and learning styles that fit best with the student.</i></li> <li>• <i>I think our school should focus more on learning not other aspects of culture or social things.</i></li> <li>• <i>I think the school might face challenges with scores if they start to go down.</i></li> <li>• <i>Increasingly limited options for accelerated students.</i></li> <li>• <i>Kids' test scores not improving.</i></li> <li>• <i>Students seem to be reading at lower and lower levels lately. So that could get worse.</i></li> <li>• <i>We should develop more AP classes.</i></li> </ul>	<p>67 related responses</p>

<p><b>EPS students recognize there will be challenges tied to enrollment changes, including overcrowding from rising numbers and keeping existing students in the district.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Not enough rooms for teachers or students.</i></li> <li>• <i>A lot of kids to accommodate.</i></li> <li>• <i>Changing class sizes.</i></li> <li>• <i>Facing new challenges such as more students.</i></li> <li>• <i>More people coming than we have right now. Big students increase.</i></li> <li>• <i>More people trying to enroll their students in the district.</i></li> <li>• <i>Overcrowded. Overpopulation.</i></li> <li>• <i>Possibly too many students because we have a lot of open enrollment.</i></li> <li>• <i>Too many people coming in, so class sizes get too big.</i></li> <li>• <i>Too many students will want to attend the district.</i></li> <li>• <i>Challenges with overpopulating schools. Especially the high school with open enrollment</i></li> <li>• <i>Challenges with the size of the school and incoming students.</i></li> <li>• <i>Declining enrollment.</i></li> <li>• <i>Getting Edina students to stay in Edina.</i></li> <li>• <i>Growing numbers in transfers.</i></li> <li>• <i>I think the school district is going to face too many enrolled students.</i></li> <li>• <i>Increases in the number of kids going to the school each year.</i></li> </ul>	<p>62 related responses</p>
<p><b>Students anticipate challenges related to safety, behavior, and well-being, including concerns about bullying, substance use, school violence, and worsening mental health.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Students skipping classes.</i></li> <li>• <i>I think with expanding debate over school safety will be a problem.</i></li> <li>• <i>Vaping and substance abuse.</i></li> <li>• <i>Safety procedures/improvements.</i></li> <li>• <i>School safety.</i></li> <li>• <i>School shooting issues.</i></li> <li>• <i>Being able to handle students' behavior/actions.</i></li> <li>• <i>Bullying.</i></li> <li>• <i>Dealing with violence in school.</i></li> <li>• <i>I think it will face social media bullying and a change in general student personality.</i></li> <li>• <i>Attendance issues and vaping.</i></li> <li>• <i>Regulation of bad students' behavior.</i></li> <li>• <i>I think school safety will be an issue as school shootings increase.</i></li> </ul>	<p>60 related responses</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>More concerned with phone than kids bring weapons and fighting in the halls.</i></li> <li>• <i>School fights.</i></li> <li>• <i>Student being unfair and rough with each other.</i></li> <li>• <i>Not listening to the teacher.</i></li> <li>• <i>Mental health in students.</i></li> <li>• <i>Challenges related to student mental health.</i></li> <li>• <i>I think it will face the problem of students' mental health being poor.</i></li> <li>• <i>I think teens' mental health is lowering and will continue to do so, and the school should address that and try to help in any way they can.</i></li> <li>• <i>Students suffering from mental health issues that can impact their learning or make their motivation to live fruitful lives lacking.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Finally, students believe the district may face challenges related to a changing and increasingly diverse student population, including differences in culture, background, socio-economic realities, and learning needs.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Changing student population: more ethnic differences.</i></li> <li>• <i>There's a lot of casual racism at our school, and I think with our current society, it will only get worse.</i></li> <li>• <i>A growing population with diverse cultures.</i></li> <li>• <i>Higher racial prejudice percentage than already exists.</i></li> <li>• <i>I also believe the district will see greater learning disparities among students.</i></li> <li>• <i>I think EPS will face challenges when dealing with division among students. The district needs to work hard to ensure a culture of inclusion and an emphasis on community is created to unite students.</i></li> <li>• <i>Some cultural differences and issues with that.</i></li> <li>• <i>Bringing attention to and acknowledging things like homophobia, racism, discrimination against neurodiverse people, and other forms of discrimination.</i></li> <li>• <i>Difficulty representing a growing diversity in student population.</i></li> <li>• <i>Ethnic groups will grow, and people need to be inclusive.</i></li> <li>• <i>A diversifying student body that could become divided by the current political atmosphere.</i></li> <li>• <i>People don't understand when others are struggling because it doesn't affect them.</i></li> <li>• <i>Maybe a lack of diversity and opportunities for people who don't come from high-income homes.</i></li> <li>• <i>The language differences.</i></li> <li>• <i>To work together and be kind to other people who are different from us.</i></li> </ul>	<p>47 related responses</p>

### 3. What should the new superintendent know about the school and community to do a great job?

<p><b>EPS students want the new superintendent to understand that Edina is a strong, high-spirited, and collaborative school community with a history of excellence. They hope the superintendent will take time to learn how the district operates day-to-day and build on what is already working well.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>That we are a hard-working school that strives for excellence in everything we do.</i></li><li>• <i>Edina is a great place with smart students and capable teachers.</i></li><li>• <i>Fun school.</i></li><li>• <i>I love it here.</i></li><li>• <i>Our school is kind.</i></li><li>• <i>Our school spirit is pretty strong.</i></li><li>• <i>That EHS is really nice and an important school.</i></li><li>• <i>That it's a great school that has a lot of good things and a lot of improvements.</i></li><li>• <i>That we are hornets and Edina has a lot of pride.</i></li><li>• <i>That we have a strong sense of spirit.</i></li><li>• <i>That we help each other out and are resilient people.</i></li><li>• <i>The schools are cohesive and collaborate well.</i></li><li>• <i>We're flexible and a very well set-up school district compared to others in the nation.</i></li><li>• <i>The new superintendent should know about the different activities and how the school district in Edina works.</i></li><li>• <i>Have a good understanding about what is good in the school.</i></li><li>• <i>Know about our strong legacy and rich history.</i></li><li>• <i>Know about the different schools and how they operate day-to-day.</i></li><li>• <i>The background of the school.</i></li></ul>	143 related responses
<p><b>Student survey respondents also want the new superintendent to understand who they are — a diverse, hardworking, and kind student body with many different needs, pressures, and personalities. They hope the superintendent will build strong relationships, listen to student voices, and support them in meaningful ways.</b></p>	135 related responses



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Everybody is different and is going through something on their own.</i></li> <li>• <i>Everybody is special in their own way.</i></li> <li>• <i>Everyone I know is kind and good and well-behaved.</i></li> <li>• <i>There are a lot of active kids.</i></li> <li>• <i>Most of the students are good people.</i></li> <li>• <i>The community is very important to the students.</i></li> <li>• <i>Not all students enjoy school.</i></li> <li>• <i>Not all people are the same and are going through problems.</i></li> <li>• <i>We all know each other very well and are super close friends. We should never be split up.</i></li> <li>• <i>We are all a little sassy inside.</i></li> <li>• <i>That we are hard workers and that we are determined.</i></li> <li>• <i>That we are kind.</i></li> <li>• <i>That we love Edina.</i></li> <li>• <i>The kids are pretty nice.</i></li> <li>• <i>That students are very involved and busy, as well as put under pressure sometimes.</i></li> <li>• <i>They should know that everyone is trying their best and that everyone is mostly friendly and easy to talk to.</i></li> <li>• <i>They should know the schools is full of kids who want to succeed and exceed expectations.</i></li> <li>• <i>Understand the students who struggle and how to help them.</i></li> <li>• <i>We are cool, good, responsible, tuff, very talented, creative, and smart.</i></li> <li>• <i>Take student opinion into account.</i></li> <li>• <i>Understand the dynamics between students – how best to support them, community building, figuring out learning techniques for them to best learn.</i></li> <li>• <i>Everyone is different and you should get to know them before you assume things.</i></li> <li>• <i>I think the new superintendent should know that everyone is different and everyone's needs are different.</i></li> <li>• <i>I would say to make sure you engage with the student body and create a good reputation.</i></li> <li>• <i>Make sure you list to kids' requests.</i></li> <li>• <i>Talk to the students.</i></li> <li>• <i>That you have to understand the student body.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Students also want the superintendent to know that Edina is a tight-knit, values-driven community and believe understanding its people and culture is key to leading it well.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Edina has a good community and sense of belonging.</i></li> <li>• <i>Edina isn't just cake eaters. We also eat cupcakes.</i></li> </ul>	<p>105 related responses</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I think they should know Edina is a very supportive and hardworking community.</i></li> <li>• <i>It has a great community with lots of opportunities. I hope it stays that way.</i></li> <li>• <i>It is a diverse community full of great people.</i></li> <li>• <i>It is a winning community.</i></li> <li>• <i>Our community is very receptive to changes when they're brought about in a calm and respectful manner.</i></li> <li>• <i>People are usually resistant to change and switching the things we do.</i></li> <li>• <i>People like having a choice on what goes on in the schools.</i></li> <li>• <i>That there are a lot of conflicting opinions in the community.</i></li> <li>• <i>There are a lot of poor people.</i></li> <li>• <i>They should know the community is way better than they think and all its stereotypes.</i></li> <li>• <i>Edina is a tight knit community. It is hard to break through but once you are in, you are supported and welcomed – for the most part.</i></li> <li>• <i>Engage with the community and learn about what the community values most.</i></li> <li>• <i>Have a lot of meetings to talk about what to do for the community and people.</i></li> <li>• <i>The type of people who live in the community and how things affect the community.</i></li> <li>• <i>They should get to know the residents of Edina.</i></li> <li>• <i>They should know how the community and school interact.</i></li> <li>• <i>How to handle people from Edina (need attention, high maintenance).</i></li> <li>• <i>They should know about the parent involvement.</i></li> <li>• <i>The superintendent should know what Edina's values are.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Students want a superintendent who is kind, fair, and approachable. Someone who communicates well, listens, and engages genuinely with the school community. They hope for a calm, open-minded leader who handles problems thoughtfully, supports everyone, and works hard to keep the district running smoothly while making improvements where needed.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Be a good person. Be calm. Be chill. Be nice. Be funny. Be confident. Be open-minded. Be talkative. Be a good superintendent.</i></li> <li>• <i>Build trust and have clear visions for the future.</i></li> <li>• <i>Have a good attitude.</i></li> <li>• <i>How to engage with people.</i></li> <li>• <i>How to handle problems and changes.</i></li> </ul>	<p>98 related responses</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I think that they should be someone who has experience at a similar caliber of school.</i></li> <li>• <i>Include everyone, and work hard!!!</i></li> <li>• <i>It's important to be honest with students.</i></li> <li>• <i>They need to know we want an interactive superintendent.</i></li> <li>• <i>Have good communication.</i></li> <li>• <i>Help the community and school.</i></li> <li>• <i>To know how to respect people.</i></li> <li>• <i>It may be challenging at first, as we are a large school, but trust the process.</i></li> <li>• <i>It's important to be honest with students.</i></li> <li>• <i>Just be a genuine person.</i></li> <li>• <i>Just come in with an open mind and do the things you need to do.</i></li> <li>• <i>Just keep it running smoothly, I think we're pretty okay with anything.</i></li> <li>• <i>Stay calm and understanding.</i></li> <li>• <i>Support everyone, be engaged and involved.</i></li> <li>• <i>Understand that these are people's lives that they are affecting very much.</i></li> <li>• <i>The new superintendent should know that a lot of people like a fun superintendent and is someone who is involved in the school spirit.</i></li> <li>• <i>The superintendent should know that they have to be patient... and not to do drastic things.</i></li> <li>• <i>The superintendent should know to be a good person, and people will like you.</i></li> <li>• <i>They should be able to make new changes to make Edina Public Schools better, and keep things that have already changed the same, and not make changes that might hurt the district's reputation.</i></li> <li>• <i>They should be fair and kind to all students.</i></li> <li>• <i>Treat everyone kind and fairly.</i></li> <li>• <i>Treat everyone with respect and be honest.</i></li> <li>• <i>Work hard and remain open-minded.</i></li> <li>• <i>We will be supportive if you actively engage with us and solve issues.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Student in the district want the new superintendent to understand that Edina is a diverse and welcoming community where making sure everyone feels they belong is a core value.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>It's very inclusive.</i></li> <li>• <i>I think that the superintendent should know that this school district really, really values how inclusive all the staff, students, and general community are. We are all very inclusive and care for people with any sort of difference, whether that is race, ability, or anything.</i></li> <li>• <i>Equality and supporting all students.</i></li> <li>• <i>Make sure everyone is welcome.</i></li> </ul>	<p>68 related responses</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>About the other ethnic groups in the school.</i></li> <li>• <i>That it's diverse.</i></li> <li>• <i>We have a diverse community in many ways and we want to keep it that way.</i></li> <li>• <i>Needs lot of inclusion.</i></li> <li>• <i>The welcoming nature that should continue to be reflected.</i></li> <li>• <i>There a big diversity and many different groups of people.</i></li> <li>• <i>There are many different cultures.</i></li> <li>• <i>There are many different types of people at the school and in the community.</i></li> <li>• <i>There are many kinds of people and it is important to help to meet the needs of everyone to ensure that no one feels left out.</i></li> <li>• <i>They should know about local minority groups as well as problems that all students are facing.</i></li> <li>• <i>They should know how to be accepting and welcoming to all kinds of different groups of people.</i></li> <li>• <i>They should know that the school and community does a great job at being respectful towards others.</i></li> <li>• <i>This school is very open and everybody likes to be treated equally.</i></li> <li>• <i>We are a prominent school that stands out and is equal, but that equality doesn't mean making kids who stand out (either advanced or in need of aid) feel different.</i></li> <li>• <i>We have students from many backgrounds with diverse needs.</i></li> <li>• <i>With many students coming from diverse backgrounds its important to be socially aware and educated.</i></li> <li>• <i>Inclusivity and equality are big things; bullying/discrimination is not tolerated. We love supporting our special needs students.</i></li> <li>• <i>That people who go to Edina come from all different places, cultures, and communities. They need to understand that diversity is a huge indicator and factor of how the school can be run effectively.</i></li> <li>• <i>We are all welcome in every class and stand up to one another.</i></li> <li>• <i>That a lot of people need different needs and have different opinions, but you just need to be respectful and understanding.</i></li> <li>• <i>They should know Edina is a very inclusive and energetic school, and they should try to match our energy.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>In addition, EPS students describe Edina as a competitive, high-standards community that cares deeply about learning.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Understand Edina Unified.</i></li> <li>• <i>Edina used to be the #1 in the state.</i></li> <li>• <i>Education is most important.</i></li> </ul>	<p>64 related responses</p>

- *Every student has their own individual needs.*
- *Everyone can excel here.*
- *I think they should know that we have high standards.*
- *Kids want to learn but it has to be fun at a certain point.*
- *Our school is very competitive, and we have very high standards when it comes to our grades and scores.*
- *Quality student-educator interaction is very important.*
- *Some kids need more help than others.*
- *Students-Staff relations are important.*
- *That Edina has high standards.*
- *That Edina students can be successful IF they want to.*
- *That is very open to kids with special needs.*
- *That the students strive to learn and be the best that they can be.*
- *That we are competitive, and our community is built around high test scores and high GPA's.*
- *That we are here to promote learning and growth.*
- *The school is highly competitive.*
- *The importance of special education.*
- *There are a variety of academic levels that all deserve to be met where they are, not limited in order to make numbers look better.*
- *They should know that kids need different resources to be successful.*
- *They should know that lots of people learn in different ways.*
- *To understand that everyone learns differently and that not everyone learns the traditional way.*
- *We have a good learning system.*
- *That every student learns differently.*
- *Understand that people don't learn the same.*
- *Help all the kids not just some of the kids.*
- *Students feel supported here and we can't lost that.*
- *They should know that we are a high-achieving yet welcoming school that needs someone dedicated, honest, and empathetic to succeed.*
- *The student body is smart and willing to help, if an adult treats the students here like children then we likely won't respect the superintendent.*
- *Theres a lot of kids who want to succeed.*
- *They should know that parents and students alike are very dedicated to learning and achieving success.*

#### 4. Additional comments:

<p><b>Overall, students want a superintendent who is communicative, empathetic, and confident—someone who understands Edina, prioritizes student learning and inclusion, and pays attention to the details that matter in their daily school life.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Be more empathetic to other people.</i></li><li>• <i>Be responsible with money and make good decisions.</i></li><li>• <i>Be upfront about your goals.</i></li><li>• <i>Communication is everything. Be open about decisions and inform the students. It builds trust, communication, and relationships.</i></li><li>• <i>Do good and help the students.</i></li><li>• <i>Don't hire someone passive or unapproachable. They must know what is important and must execute it efficiently.</i></li><li>• <i>I think that we should hire a superintendent who is focused on the academics and extracurricular and developing the students as students and learners.</i></li><li>• <i>I think they should make the school more welcoming to new students and families.</i></li><li>• <i>It would be wonderful if our superintendent was a professional who has had experience in the educational district of Edina, who has interacted with students and parents firsthand.</i></li><li>• <i>The candidate should be someone who not only cares about Edina schools as a whole, but someone who cares even about the little details like parking problems, food options, educational flexibility and more.</i></li><li>• <i>The new superintendent has to be someone who has the confidence to make decisions that best fit EHS standards.</i></li><li>• <i>There should be a balance between a skilled superintendent and a kind person. They must know how to handle situations appropriately and have open minds and good judgment skills.</i></li></ul>	20 related responses
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