

Work Session

Monday, May 5, 2025 5:00 PM

ECC 350, 5701 Normandale Road, Edina, MN 55424

I. Determination of Quorum and Call to Order

II. Approval of Agenda



**School Board Work Session
Monday, May 5, 2025; 5:00 PM
ECC Room 350 and Virtual***

- I. Determination of Quorum and Call to Order**
- II. Approval of Agenda**
- III. Discussion**
 - A. Spanish Dual Language (SDL) Update

Description: This board report is intended to provide a status update on the development and management of the Spanish Dual Language Program.
Presenter(s): Dr. Frannie Becquer, Director of Achievement Equity and Multilingual Learner Programs; and Nate Swenson, Assistant Superintendent
 - B. Proposed Staff Year End Letter from Board

Description: Annually, the board sends district employees a year end letter (email) to show our gratitude for their hard work and contributions to our success. The board must approve all communication that is sent out on behalf of the board. The attached letter will be discussed at tonight's work session and included, with discussed edits, in tonight's board meeting consent agenda for board approval.
Presenter(s): Elliot Mann, School Board Director
- IV. Leadership and Committee Updates**
- V. Superintendent Updates**
- VI. Adjournment**

* One board member will be participating from 4752 E Sunrise Dr, Tucson, AZ 85718.

III. Discussion

III.A. Spanish Dual Language (SDL) Update



Board Meeting Date: 5/5/2025

Title: Spanish Dual Language (SDL) Update

Type: Discussion

Presenter(s): Dr. Frannie Becquer, Director of Achievement Equity and Multilingual Learner Programs; and Nate Swenson, Assistant Superintendent

Description: This Executive Summary is intended to provide clarity and an update on the District's Spanish Dual Language Program at Countryside Elementary.

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

Desired Outcome(s) from the Board: Please review the information and bring forth questions & comments that you have for the presenters.

Attachment(s):

- [Presentation](#)
- [Detailed Report](#)

Executive Summary: Spanish Dual Language Program Update

Over the past year, our Spanish Dual Language program has faced challenges that have elicited strong emotions from students, families, staff, and the broader community. We acknowledge these concerns and are committed to responding effectively, appropriately, and promptly. Our commitment to excellence remains steadfast, and we are dedicated to continuous improvement. We are committed to aligning the program more closely with the needs of our students, families, and staff, along with priorities identified in our district's strategic plan. (Pages 6, 7, and 8)

Leadership and Organizational Structure

We have provided additional resources and appointed a new coordinator, Dr. Alex Giraldo, who brings extensive experience within Edina Public Schools and our Spanish Dual Language program, and is highly respected by our stakeholders. Additionally, the hiring process for our new principal, Ms. Lisa Barnholdt, involved active participation from students, families, and staff, ensuring a collaborative approach and excellence. This leadership team is dedicated to fostering a unified Countryside school environment while building a successful dual language program. (Pages 13 and 14)

Program Oversight and Role Clarity

Clear organizational structures and defined roles are in place to enhance accountability and communication within the program. We are committed to providing transparency about who is responsible for various aspects of the program, ensuring that all stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities. (Pages 13 and 14)

Communication and Community Engagement

We recognize the importance of ongoing dialogue with families and the community. Plans are in place to expand our communication efforts, including updates on middle school programming decisions. (Pages 6 and 7)

Program Metrics and Student Achievement

We are reviewing the metrics currently used to assess the program's effectiveness, ensuring they remain relevant and aligned with our goals for student and operational success. Student achievement trends will be shared through the comprehensive data metrics plan, highlighting areas of success and identifying opportunities for improvement. (Pages 11 and 12)

Curriculum and Resource Planning

The procurement of specialized curriculum materials in the target language is underway, with careful consideration of the resources and support needed as the program expands. We are committed to ensuring that these resources are aligned with best practices and meet the needs of our students. (Pages 6 and 16)

Unified School Vision

Efforts are being made to integrate the dual language program more fully into the school community, fostering a sense of unity and shared purpose. This includes enhancing our website to provide current and relevant information, as well as showcasing the successes and positive developments within the program.

Collaboration with Other Districts

We are actively learning from other school districts with successful dual language programs, incorporating best practices to enhance our own program's effectiveness.

Commitment to Success

With renewed support from the Board, the Superintendent, and our families, we are confident that our Spanish Dual Language program will continue to grow and succeed, providing valuable opportunities for our students.



Spanish Dual Language

Spring Update 5.5.25



Edina Public
Schools
DEFINING EXCELLENCE



Alignment with District Strategic Priorities

Strategy A.1:

Design and deliver curriculum, instruction and assessment focused on content rigor, critical thinking, student engagement

- Rigorous dual-language immersion
- Critical thinking across linguistic contexts
- Enhanced engagement through culturally responsive teaching

Strategy A.2:

Provide a coherent and differentiated educational experience that effectively engages every student

- Unique pathway option within district
- Differentiated instruction through bilingual strategies
- Challenge of developing multilingual proficiency

Strategy B.1:

Create learning environments that enable exploration of multiple perspectives and diverse identities

- Celebration of cultural and linguistic diversity
- Cross-cultural appreciation and understanding
- Development of intercultural competence

Strategy B.3:

Support equity by identifying and eliminating structural barriers to success

- Enhanced opportunities for heritage Spanish speakers
- Valuing diverse linguistic backgrounds
- Supporting academic success for all learners

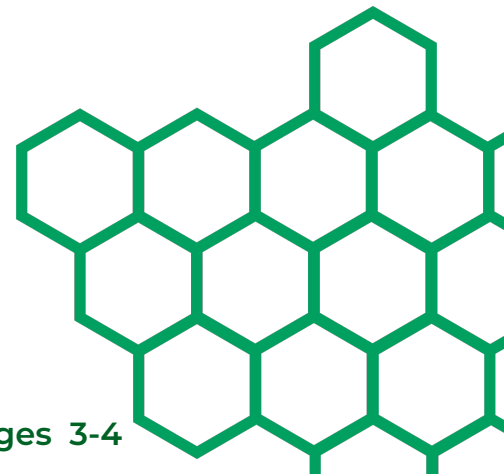


Program History and Development

2015-2022

Key Milestones:

- 2015: Initial concept emerged through Birth to Grade-5 Thought Exchange
- 2018: Morris Leatherman Survey identified community interest
- 2021 (February): Administration recommendation to pursue language program
- 2021 (May): Language Immersion Design Team established
- 2021 (November): Board approval for Spanish Dual Language at Countryside
- 2022-2023: Program launch with two kindergarten sections





Why Spanish Dual Language

Program Model Selection

Why Spanish?

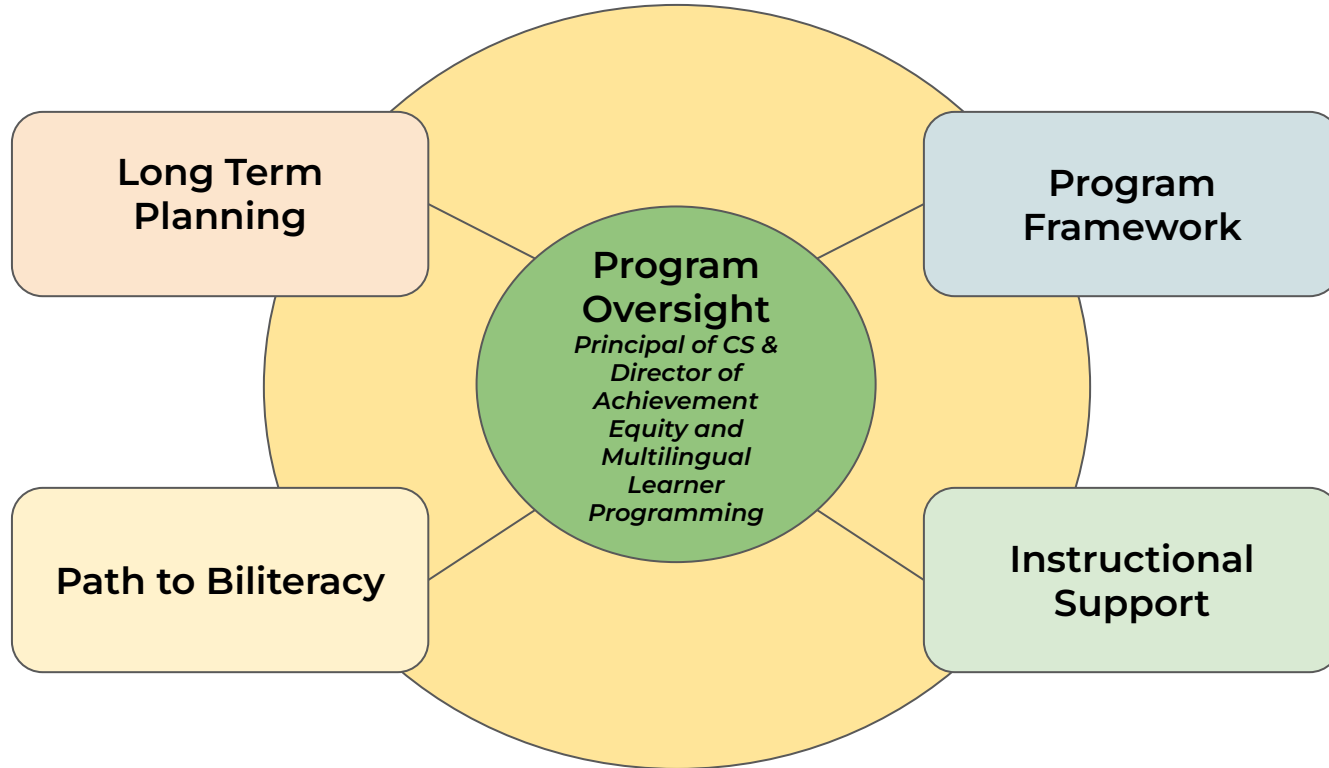
- 4th most spoken language worldwide
- 2nd most spoken in the United States
- Availability of curriculum resources
- Licensed staff availability
- High community interest

Why Dual Language Model?

- Accelerated language acquisition
- Higher academic achievement
- Deeper learning through multiple languages
- Mutual language support between speakers



Program Oversight and Role Clarity





Leadership and Organizational Structure

Long-Term Planning:

- Analyze successful implementation models from surrounding districts
- Study Edina Public Schools' French immersion pathway to middle school to leverage existing transition expertise
- Identify best practices and lessons learned from established programs in MN
- Board proposal for middle school implementation: Spring of 2026

Program Framework:

- Entrance Criteria
- Language allocation
- Content allocation
- Assessment Plan (Biliteracy)

Path to Biliteracy:

- Identify a schedule to support biliteracy
- Evaluating and supervising dual language teachers
- Maintaining fidelity to the model
- Assessments to support biliteracy
- PD Specific to Biliteracy

Instructional Support:

- Material Selection and Use (T & L)
- PD on curriculum resources (T & L)
 - English Language and Literacy
- Common Assessments
- Differentiated Instruction
- Collaboration among teachers
- Interventions



Leadership and Organizational Structure

Long-Term Planning:

Led by: Director of Achievement Equity & Multilingual Learner Programming

Support team: Countryside Principal, Assistant Superintendent, Middle School Leadership, Teaching & Learning

Path to Biliteracy:

Led by: Countryside Principal and Administrative Dean

Support team: Director of Achievement Equity, MDE Immersion Specialists, SDL Teacher Coordinator/Interventionist

Program Framework:

Led by: Director of Achievement Equity & Multilingual Learner Programming

Support team: Countryside Principal, SDL Teacher Coordinator/Interventionist, MDE Immersion Specialists, Enrollment leadership

Instructional Support:

Led by: Director of Teaching & Learning

Support team: Curriculum leaders, literacy coaches, MTSS specialists, special education leadership, SDL Teacher Coordinator/Interventionist



Communication & Community Engagement

Key Parent Concerns:

- Program leadership and direction
- Staffing and resource support
- Principal transition
- Program growth and enrollment (Heritage Speakers)
- Summer and extended learning - ongoing discussion

District Responses:

- SDL parent meetings
- SDL community meeting
- New SDL Coordinator/Interventionist position created and hired
- Weekly District on-site support from March 2025 - present
- Updated website information - in progress



Communication & Community Engagement

Future Plans:

- Joint monthly SDL meetings w/ District administration
- Provide additional teacher/family connections specifically related to SDL programming
- Develop and implement a process to identify a middle school site for program expansion
- Seek approval from the board for middle school site selection (Spring 2026)



Program Metrics and Student Achievement

Academic Performance:

Original Metric:

Meeting Academic Benchmarks in Literacy and Math (K)

Recommendation:

Meeting academic benchmarks in Literacy and Math for all grade levels as reported in the data metrics plan.

Language Development:

Original Metric:

Meeting Language Proficiency Targets

Recommendation:

Meeting academic benchmarks in Literacy and Math for all grade levels as reported in the data metrics plan.

- New SDL language assessment plan for 2025-26
- Collect longitudinal data at multiple levels

Program Retention:

Original Metric:

Retention of Students and Families in Program

Recommendation:

A balanced student population with approximately 30% Heritage speakers.

- Student departures limited to families relocating outside district

Family Engagement:

Original Metrics:

- Satisfaction and Engagement Ratings
- Family and Student Connections to School

Recommendation:

Satisfaction ratings on bi-annual family survey for 2025-26 and 2027-28

- Survey areas: communication, home-school connection, student experiences, cultural perspectives, and program value



Curriculum and Resource Planning

Curriculum Materials:

- Math in Focus (aligned with English curriculum)
- American Reading Company (ARC) Core Literacy (K-1) - **exiting 24-25**
- Estrellita Phonemic Awareness - **exiting 24-25**
- Benchmark Adelante K-5 (K-1 is transitioning for 25-26)
- Mystery Science (aligned with English)
- Character Strong SEL (aligned with English)

Balanced Instruction:

- Daily literacy in both languages
- Strategic timing of sound/concept teaching
- Deliberate connections between languages
- Structured 50-minute language blocks in 2nd grade

Professional Development Focus:

CORE training
Teaching for biliteracy

Science of Reading
Bridge techniques

Strategic language use
Intercultural competence



Commitment to Success

Thoughtful Planning

Research-based implementation with clear vision, clear alignment to the strategic plan through continued collaboration with Normandale elementary, other Immersion programs and MDE guidance.

Strategic Support

Comprehensive structures ensuring success

Future-Ready Focus

Preparing students for global society

Unified School

Honoring the programs at Countryside while staying committed to,
“We’re Countryside strong where we **ALL** belong.”



QUESTIONS?

Edina Public Schools

III.B. Proposed Staff Year End Letter from Board



Board Meeting Date: 5/5/2025

Title: Proposed Staff Year End Letter from Board

Type: Discussion

Presenter(s): Elliot Mann, School Board Director

Description: Annually, the board sends district employees a year end letter (email) to show our gratitude for their hard work and contributions to our success. The board must approve all communication that is sent out on behalf of the board. The attached letter will be discussed at tonight's work session and included, with discussed edits, in tonight's board meeting consent agenda for board approval.

Recommendation: Review the Staff Year End Letter and come ready with any suggestions or questions.

Attachment(s): Proposed Staff Letter from Board

Dear Edina Public Schools Administrators, Educators and Staff,

As we near the end of the 2024-2025 school year, we want to pause and recognize the extraordinary work that happens across Edina Public Schools every single day: preparing thousands of school lunches, providing study sessions for precalculus tests, helping students navigate their first days, patching up scratches from a heated game in physical education, and driving our students safely to school—just to mention a few of the myriad daily tasks that go into offering a world-class Edina Public Schools education.

As a relatively new member of the school board, I have the privilege of writing our letter of appreciation this year. It seems like a standard, ordinary form letter that most will scroll right past — I get it. But none of the work you all have accomplished this year has been standard or ordinary. I feel fortunate to share our appreciation.

Edina's reputation for excellence exists because of you. Your dedication—your patience, your creativity, your compassion—is what shapes our schools into places where students not only learn, but thrive.

I still remember how I felt as a child when I didn't know something — the fear of thinking, "Where do I carry the one?," the cluelessness of wondering, "So where is the mitochondria located?," the anxiety of wandering the halls, trying to find the right classroom in a new high school.

Recalling that now as a parent, a well-known adage comes to mind: "Be the adult you needed when you were younger."

Whether it is watching the Polar Plunge, enjoying an elementary school band concert, or just talking with any of our educators — full-time teachers, part-time paraprofessionals, food service employees, business services administrators, our buildings and grounds staff, everyone with a green lanyard that is involved in this daily enterprise of education across our district — I'm warmed to know that our buildings are filled with adults pursuing that mission.

It means something special to be part of Edina Public Schools.

You have helped our youngest learners take their first steps onto the bus as kindergarteners, and you have guided our seniors as they take their final steps toward graduation. You have taught our students how to read and reason, how to count, and how to become critical thinkers ready to take on the world. You have also taught them compassion and empathy and how to go out into the world to serve their communities.

That is Edina Public Schools.

That is you.

We look forward to continuing this journey together.

- Elliot Mann, on behalf of your Edina School Board

Edina School Board

Karen Gabler, Chair

Erica Allenburg, Vice Chair

Dan Arom

Cheryl Barry

Michael Birdman

Jennifer Huwe

Elliot Mann

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IV. **Leadership and Committee Updates**

V. **Superintendent Updates**

VI. **Adjournment**