Partnerships during a Pandemic

Steve Buettner, Director of District Media and Technology Services
Sean Beaverson, Elementary Personal and Digital Learning Specialist
Sara Swenson, Edina High School Media Specialist
Mike Walker, Secondary Personal and Digital Learning Specialist
We were well set to avoid silos in planning, but there were some happy accidents that led to an effective planning and role-out process.

Future consideration - as we get a little distance from the initial emergency, there will be a natural tendency to return to what is known. Are silos a norm in your organization? Beware the return.
Future-Ready District

Edina Learning Framework

Digital Age Learning

eLearning - Put us in a position to prepare staff for the digital shift.

eLearning day (inclement weather implemented)
Essential Partnerships

- Relationships are critical during a pandemic
  - Technology and instruction
  - District and building leadership
  - Media and teachers
  - Teachers and students/parents
Stages of Distance Learning

Stage One - System Tights
In a short amount of time, Edina Schools developed a program outline with a variety of key decisions provided for staff.

Stage Two - Going Live
The initial week of distance learning was designed to support the development of routines and maintenance of relationships.

Stage Three - Supporting Operations
We continually strive to apply lessons learned to have a responsive system that weighs the needs of our students, staff and families.
Distance Learning: Training

All teaching staff attended district distance learning foundations training in 2 days.

Learning Targets
- Understand expectations (TIGHTS) around distance learning
- Learn distance learning tips/tricks
- Feel prepared to plan with my team
- Get questions answered

Provided additional training to support conversion to distance learning

Distance Learning Vocabulary

THINK
- Asynchronous—Deep Learning
- Synchronous—Maintaining Relationships
Articulating Our Plan

EPS Distance Learning Plan

On Monday, March 30, Edina Public Schools will begin implementing a Distance Learning model to deliver instruction during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Our goal is to provide continuity of learning using the tools we have available. Our staff has been working hard to plan for this new reality, and we will learn and continue to evolve to provide the best instruction possible for our students. Students will be completing assignments and activities in order to be marked present in class by 5 p.m.

Edina Public Schools’ concern is always for the well-being of all our students and employees. As a school district serving more than 8,200 students and employing 1,200+, we have a serious obligation to ensure we are preparing and planning for any emergency that could create large-scale impact to the breadth of community members and campus operations. Sometimes, this means exploring alternative instructional delivery methods. This document addresses how we can best prepare ourselves for prolonged absences and/or school closures.

Please see the page links at the top for information specific to Early Childhood, Grades K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12, as well as a Parents Support page with links to digital learning resources and important information about the curriculum tools we use in EPS.

When our district is closed for face-to-face learning, we will engage students with learning experiences that continue the planned learning program and help them to stay connected with teachers and classmates.

These experiences offer authentic opportunities to focus on key concepts, knowledge, and skills. They emphasize interaction and creativity, and involve a balance of on-screen and off-screen tasks that help connect to previous learning and the current curriculum, collaboratively developing a continuous learning program.

As always, online communications are managed in a respectful and safe way. For clarity and safety, we only use Edina Apps Approved services to connect and communicate with students.
Many Hats of Media Specialists

- Supported Teachers
- Supported Student Learning
- Supported Families

Edina Media eLearning

Elementary Summer Learning Resources

Summer Camp Online!

Not the camp you might have hoped for, but still a chance to learn some cool new things and have fun!
Themes for Our First Weeks

- Relationships
- Rituals
- Routines
- Continuity of learning

### Elementary Daily Schedule Sample - Teaching Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time of Day</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>What it looks like</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>By 8:00 AM</strong></td>
<td>Post the “Morning Message”</td>
<td>On Schoology or Seesaw post a video message for the day that includes the goals for the day...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Time</strong></td>
<td>Academic tasks assigned through Schoology or Seesaw</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AM Office Hour</strong></td>
<td>Communicate with families and students and answer questions via email or Google Meet Number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Team Meeting</strong></td>
<td>Check in with your PLC daily - Email, Meet in order to stay connected around student learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PM Office Hour</strong></td>
<td>Communicate with families and students and answer questions via email or Google Meet Number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Creating Connections and Feedback</strong></td>
<td>Check on student work and provide feedback and generally connect with individual students.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Submit Daily Attendance (Infinite Campus)</strong></td>
<td>5:00pm · posted at 11:59pm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Staying Connected

People *spending time* “together”.

- **41 min** Duration average
- **19,895** Meetings total
- **5%** Network congestion of meeting time

*Engagement* in those connections.
Distance Learning District Community

Schoology Courses

“Live” PD Google Meets
By the Numbers: Device Checkout

- 4,031 Library books
- 1,387 Chromebooks
- 120 Internet hotspots
Successes: E-5

- Routines and Relationships
  - Technology/Access
  - Technology Skills
- Connections and Social Emotional Growth
- Academic Successes
  - Content/Standards related instruction
  - Moved grade level- and course-alike teachers into a combined course within our LMS
- Personalization and Individual Support
  - Learners were engaged in new and different ways
  - A new level of interaction and excitement
  - Maximizing staff involvement
- Shoutout to our AMAZING Staff
- Parent Support and Encouragement
Challenges: E-5

- Routines and Relationships
  - Technology/Access
  - Technology Skills
  - Home/Life/Work Balance

- Connections and Social Emotional Learning
  - Finding balance and giving grace

- Academic Content/Instruction
  - How much is “enough” but not “too much”? 
  - Synchronous learning and dependence on adults
  - How do we make learning meaningful for those not acclimating to distance learning?

- Personalization and Individual Support
  - Finding meaningful assignments for all staff
  - Connecting in authentic and helpful ways to students in the online format
Successes: Secondary

- Teachers were amazing, supportive and approachable
- Students liked the flexibility of the day and planning their own schedules
- Class structure helpful in pacing
- Google Meets, lectures felt like regular classes
- Screencasts about each day’s work
- Added Special Ed teachers and paras to Schoology courses
- Used Schoology to group students in each class

- Kept consistency whenever possible
- Same format for our Study Guide, Student Pacing Guide, and Schoology Formative quizzes
- Very high work completion rate through first three weeks
- Advisory check-ins
Challenges: Secondary

- Tracking students struggling to complete work in multiple classes
- Striking the balance of academic learning and the daily needs of students, staff and families
- Losing connections with classmates & teachers; maintaining relationships
- Managing the list of tasks
- Communication: It was tougher to work on messaging with special ed because email takes longer than face to face conversation

- Learners not submitting evidence were mainly ML, IEP or from groups who have been historically marginalized. Although our Cultural Liaisons were supportive and worked hard to connect and support kids, and resources are available to teachers for reach outs (language line, student services), it’s still not enough.
Next Steps

■ Transfer the successes into our classrooms upon our return!

■ Continue to connect with students/families to confirm they are engaging with instruction and they have the tools they need to do so.

■ Continue to find the balance between “not enough” and “too much” in content/tasks for all students and families.
Impact: Learning that will carry forward

- Increased appreciation for our face to face learning
- Increased community connections
- Discovered ways to overcome the obstacles of time and location in professional development
- All instructional staff have increased their experience and ability to use Digital Age Tools and Digital Age Learning pedagogy
Areas that Need Additional Focus

- Create feedback loops in order to:
  - Gain a better understanding of what works best for teaching in a distance learning model
  - Personalize learning so we can provide the right amount of learning for each student
  - Determine tools are working and which are not
  - Understand who needs support
  - Maintain work life balance for everyone
  - Plan for when we can get back into our classrooms
Essential Partnerships – Next Steps for Improvement

- Relationships are critical during a pandemic
  - Parent/Caregiver Relationships
Final Thoughts

The COVID 19 pandemic has impacted all of our lives; education was not spared.

In a matter of two weeks Edina Public Schools pivoted the entire system to emergency distance learning. Though this was an incredible effort by all members of our community, we were helped by:

- Having a highly trained and dedicated staff of professionals across the organization
- Having online platforms that we could leverage
- Having an elearning plan for inclement weather that could serve as a template of our work
- A large percentage of our students had access to technology and the Internet
- A collaborative spirit by everyone through partnerships we could rely on
Questions?