Work Session

Monday, May 11, 2026 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 11, 2026; 5:00 PM
ECC Room 350

I. **Determination of Quorum and Call to Order**

II. **Approval of Agenda**

III. **Discussion**
- A. Executive Summary - A Strategic Plan for Safety and Security
- B. A Strategic Plan for the Future of Edina High School - Recommendations
- C. Draft student handbooks for 2026-2027

IV. **Leadership and Committee Updates**

V. **Superintendent Updates**

VI. **Adjournment**

NOTE: School Board members may participate by interactive technology as permitted by Minnesota Statute 13D.02

III. **Discussion**

III.A. Executive Summary - A Strategic Plan for Safety and Security	**Speaker(s):** Dr. Daniel Bittman, Superintendent

Board Meeting Date: 5/11/26

Title: Executive Summary - A Strategic Plan for Safety and Security

Type: Discussion

Presenter(s): Dr. Daniel Bittman, Superintendent

Description: The Superintendent will provide an Executive Summary focused on District-wide safety and security efforts, including an overview of the Safety and Security Task Force's work and its key findings and recommendations.

The Executive Summary will focus on key themes that emerged from the Task Force's work, including areas of strength, opportunities for continuous improvement, and considerations for future planning. Emphasis will be placed on maintaining a balanced, comprehensive approach to safety and security that supports the academic, social, and emotional needs of students while meeting the expectations of families and staff.

This agenda item is intended to inform the Board of the Task Force's conclusions, frame potential areas for future consideration, and reaffirm the District's ongoing commitment to keeping safety and security at the forefront of its work.

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

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

Attachment(s):

- Executive Summary

2025–2026 Strategic Safety and Security Assessment Executive Summary
Date: May 11, 2026
Prepared by: Dr. Daniel Bittman, Superintendent

Overview and Foundations

Edina Public Schools (EPS) is committed to maintaining a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment where physical protection, emotional well-being, and community trust are prioritized. This Executive Summary is the culmination of a comprehensive, multi-phase assessment designed to evaluate existing systems and develop a multi-year roadmap for the future. While EPS has a long history of investing in safety, recent events have created a heightened sense of urgency within the community to further strengthen these layers.

The results of this comprehensive assessment confirm that Edina Public Schools continues to be a safe and secure environment for our students and staff, supported by a proven, multi-level "layered approach" to safety that integrates physical infrastructure, professional training, and proactive mental health wellness. Central to our success are the amazing and vital relationships we maintain with the Edina Police and Fire Departments, whose experts serve on our steering committee, are involved in our building safety audits, and partner with us on rigorous emergency drills to fundamentally strengthen and validate our security work. This collaborative foundation ensures that our protective measures are expert-informed and deeply integrated into the fabric of the Edina community.

The assessment is grounded in the "First Principles" methodology, which avoids simply copying neighboring districts and instead evaluates every tool and protocol against three criteria: all-hazards utility, human performance under stress, and root-cause disruption.

Strategic Alignment

The recommendations within this report are intentionally aligned with the Edina Public Schools Strategic Plan 2020–2030:

- **Strategy A:** Ensures secure environments for academic excellence.
- **Strategy B:** Reviews safety data through an equity lens to provide inclusive protection.
- **Strategy C:** Fosters wellness and positive learning environments through prevention and mental health support.
- **Strategy E:** Strengthens community trust through transparent communication.

A Community-Driven Process
This assessment was built on extensive stakeholder engagement, including:

- A 28-person Steering Committee featuring students, parents, staff, Edina Police and Fire, and safety experts.
- Nearly 600 survey responses from the community via ThoughtExchange.
- Direct site walkthroughs and audits of over 1.85 million square feet of district facilities.

Key Stakeholder Themes:

- **People Over Hardware:** While technology is necessary, the community emphasized that training, mental health professionals, and relationships are the true backbone of safety.
- **Psychological Safety:** Stakeholders affirmed that emotional well-being and a sense of belonging are essential components of a safe school.
- **Communication Gaps:** Parents expressed a desire for more familiarity with safety protocols and faster communication during active incidents.

Key Recommendations for Investment
The assessment identified that while EPS has many safety tools, they often operate in "silos" and rely on aging infrastructure. The following strategic investments are recommended:

1. **Modernizing Communication:**
    - Replacing 1960s-era analog PA systems with a **Unified IP-based digital system** featuring text displays and strobe lights for the hearing impaired.
    - Installing a **Distributed Antenna System (DAS)** at Edina High School to eliminate dangerous cellular "dead zones".
2. **Unifying Security Platforms:** Migrating CCTV and door access to a single, integrated platform to eliminate playback failures and false alarms.
3. **Hardening Classroom Protections:** Standardizing classroom locksets with thumb-turn mechanisms and "LOCKED/UNLOCKED" indicators so teachers do not have to step into hallways during a crisis.
4. **Professionalizing Staff Training:** Shifting from passive compliance to active proficiency through a "Safety Academy" digital library and paid, in-person orientation for new hires.
5. **Specialized Staffing:** Adding new positions, including a Cybersecurity Administrator, a Physical Security Operations Specialist, a Safety and Security Coordinator, Wellness Coordinators and Elementary Student Behavior Interventionists to manage complex systems.

Strategic Exclusions
Following the "First Principles" audit, the district is not recommending AI weapons detection, wearable panic buttons, or metal detectors at this time. These technologies were found to have high false-positive rates, operational infeasibility, or a lack of reliability under stress.

Funding and Implementation
To sustain these improvements, the district is proposing a 1.4% increase to the technology levy. This would cost the average Edina homeowner $9.80 *per month and generate approximately* $2.2 million annually to fund both infrastructure and the personnel required to maintain it.

Proposed Implementation Timeline:

- **Immediate (0–1 Years):** PA system replacements, elementary anonymous reporting, and hiring identified personnel.
- **Short-Term (1–3 Years):** Unified Security Platform deployment and building-specific lock upgrades.
- **Mid-to-Long Term (4–10 Years):** Continued infrastructure cycles and technology refreshes.

Closing Statement
Safety is not a project with a completion date; it is an ongoing commitment. By investing in both our physical systems and our people, Edina Public Schools ensures that our response to any future emergency will be swift, coordinated, and rooted in the principle that every life in our care is worth protecting.

III.B. A Strategic Plan for the Future of Edina High School - Recommendations	**Speaker(s):** Nate Swenson, Assistant Superintendent; and Paul Paetzel, Edina High School Principal

Board Meeting Date: 05/11/26

Title: A Strategic Plan for the Future of Edina High School - Recommendations

Type: Discussion

Presenter(s): Nate Swenson, Assistant Superintendent; and Paul Paetzel, Edina High School Principal

Description: This presentation brings forward recommendations for Board consideration that emerged from the Defining Excellence redesign process at Edina High School. Building on the fall 2025 introduction and the December 2025 mid-year update, the recommendations are the result of a full school year of community engagement, research, and co-design. Two Big Ideas are presented for Board discussion: the Applied Learning and Relational Learning Models. The recommendations are aligned to the Edina Public Schools Strategic Plan 2020-2030 and the Portrait of a Well-Rounded Edina Graduate.

Recommendation: This item has been prepared for board discussion.

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

Attachment(s):

- Executive Summary

III.C.	Draft student handbooks for 2026-2027	**Speaker(s):** Nate Swenson, Assistant Superintendent

Board Meeting Date: 05/11/26

Title: Draft student handbooks for 2026-2027

Type: Discussion

Presenter(s): Nate Swenson, Assistant Superintendent

Description: This item brings forward draft student handbooks for the 2026-2027 school year for initial Board discussion. Four level-specific handbooks have been developed for elementary, middle school, Edina High School, and the Edina Virtual Pathway. These draft handbooks would replace the district's current Rights and Responsibilities Handbook with documents tailored to each level of student experience. The drafts are being shared at this stage to invite Board reflection and feedback before further refinement.

Recommendation: This item has been prepared for board discussion.

Desired Outcome(s) from the Board: Please bring forth questions and reflections you have on the draft handbooks as initial input into the development process.

Attachment(s):

- Draft Elementary Student Handbook
- Draft Middle School Student Handbook
- Draft Edina High School Student Handbook
- Draft Edina Virtual Pathway Student Handbook

IV. **Leadership and Committee Updates**

V. **Superintendent Updates**

VI. **Adjournment**