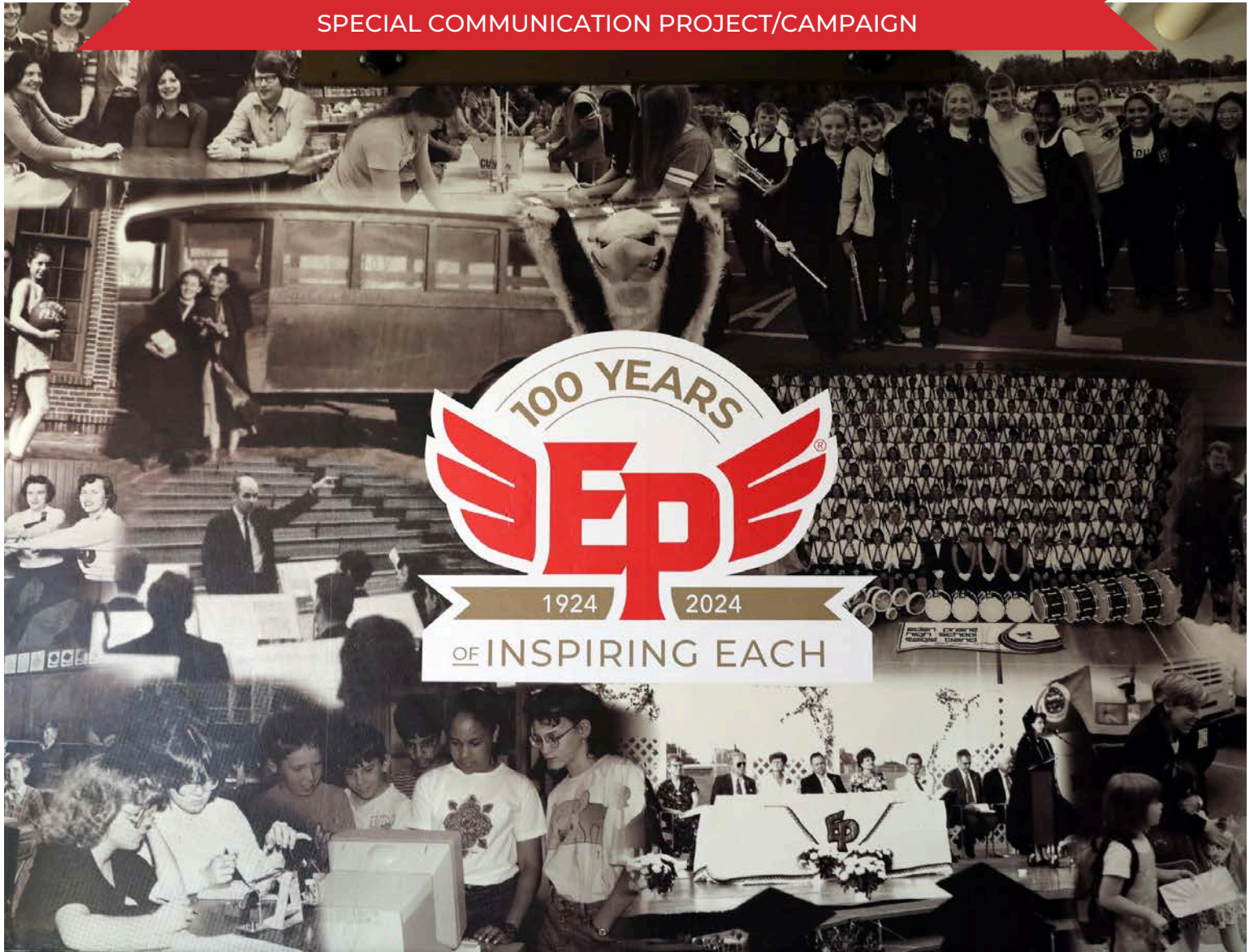


# 100 YEARS OF INSPIRING EACH

**NSPRA GOLD MEDALLION SUBMISSION:**  
SPECIAL COMMUNICATION PROJECT/CAMPAIGN



## **EDEN PRAIRIE SCHOOLS**

8100 School Road, Eden Prairie, Minnesota 55344

Public School District | 9,910 students PreK-22

Communications Professionals at time of project: 5-6

**Jen Clark** | Creative Coordinator

**Grace Becker, APR** | Director of  
Marketing and Communications

**Dirk Tedmon, APR** | Executive Director  
of Marketing and Communications

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## Since Eden Prairie's earliest days,

its residents have believed deeply in the power of community and the importance of education. In fact, the town board of this southwestern Minneapolis suburb held its first meeting in a log schoolhouse on May 11, 1858 — the same day Minnesota became a state. As Eden Prairie's rolling agricultural fields bloomed into thriving centers of business and community, its schools grew as well: Soon there were four one-room schoolhouses educating students across town. In March 1924, it was time for them all to become Eagles, and the Eden Prairie Consolidated School welcomed students to the state-of-the-art, electrified brick building at the top of School Road.

Years later, that building still stands as the district's Administrative Services Center. At its heart is the Historic Gym, once used by residents for voting, ironing, plays and weddings. When the Eden Prairie Historical Society approached the district's Marketing & Communications team in early 2023 asking to hold a prom for the gym's 100th anniversary, an idea was born: **Celebrating a century of educational excellence in a highly strategic, integrated, year-long marketing and communications campaign designed to sustain public approval ahead of a future bond referendum.**

Following the Research, Planning, Implementation and Evaluation (RPIE) process, the team conducted primary and secondary research, set measurable objectives, and crafted strategies to engage key stakeholders. The campaign included unique branding, a Citywide Prom, a five-part video series, a stadium parade, customized lesson plans, a 40-page community magazine, and more. Even before its conclusion, community members reported double-digit increases in attendance at school events, their perception of the district's reputation, their pride in its schools, and their feeling of connection. In addition to the positive increase in community sentiment, this purposeful, comprehensive campaign resulted in a profit of more than \$285,000 for Eden Prairie Schools — and when the district asks the community to increase its financial support in the future, the trust and engagement it built will only amplify that return.

In mid-2022, the district's Executive Director of Marketing & Communications conducted an informal interview with Superintendent Dr. Josh Swanson that established a **six-year community engagement plan**. Following the passage of [operating and technology levies in November 2022](#), the district would enter a strategic planning process in fall 2023 that involved dozens of meetings with staff, students, families and community members. A similar process in 2025 would set the academic vision for the next 10 years and provide an end goal for facilities planning conversations in 2026. Those conversations would then inform the questions added to the ballot for a potential bond referendum in future years.

That left a gap: 2024. It was an already contentious election year likely to be fraught with [challenging union negotiations](#) and elevated scrutiny of public education. Eden Prairie Schools **would need an intentional effort to sustain its high public opinion ratings and position itself for success** in a future referendum.

The district benefits from strong relationships with both the City of Eden Prairie and its Historical Society. In early 2023, Eden Prairie Historical Society President Kathie Case approached the Marketing & Communications team asking to host a Citywide Prom in the Historic Gym to celebrate its 100th anniversary. Team leaders recognized a broader opportunity: **A year-long centennial celebration to fill the 2024 community engagement gap**. Further interviews with Case illuminated a historically tenuous relationship between the district and the Historical Society, which had necessitated the creation of a Historic Gym Task Force to campaign for ongoing preservation of the gymnasium. Over the past decades, there had also been several unsuccessful attempts to coordinate a city parade.



*"I can't tell you how excited we've been as a Historical Society that the school district is really taking this on and celebrating the 100th anniversary."*

- EDEN PRAIRIE HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESIDENT  
KATHIE CASE, IN EDEN PRAIRIE LOCAL NEWS, MAY 2024

In a second interview, Superintendent Swanson affirmed his enthusiasm for the campaign and desire for an ongoing positive relationship with the Historical Society. Funding was available for some potential tactics, but fundraising with partners and the community would be required to supplement funds and lessen concerns about resource use.



100 YEARS

EP

1924 2024

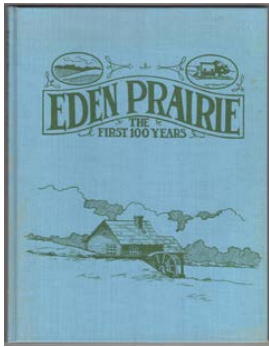
OF INSPIRING EACH

CAMPAIGN GOAL

Elevate the reputation of Eden Prairie Schools among students, families, staff and community by fostering an ongoing sense of pride and celebrating our progress, which will increase stakeholder engagement and improve their connections with the district and its schools.



With approval secured, the campaign team began secondary research. The Historical Society provided a book, “Eden Prairie: The First 100 Years,” with detailed information about Eden Prairie’s four one-room schoolhouses and the Consolidated School. Pictures and quotes from this book were utilized throughout the campaign.



The team studied other organizations’ milestone celebrations and selected Disney World’s 50th Anniversary as a central model due to its **unique branding and integrated approach**, which involved new experiences only available that year as well as a unique 50th anniversary flair to existing activities.

2023 THIRD-PARTY SURVEY

Eden Prairie Schools conducts an annual survey of community members and families. This statistically valid, random-sample survey has historically shown high levels of trust and satisfaction in the school district among stakeholders.



KEY THEORIES AND CONCEPTS:

- Public opinion
- Association
- Framing
- Mere exposure
- Media Richness Theory
- Social Identity Theory

**Research was ongoing** throughout this campaign. Over 20 in-person interviews were conducted between Sept. 2023 and May 2024.



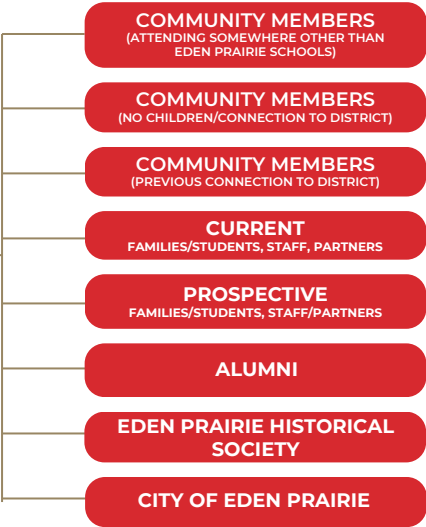
*Alumni, parents, community members, current and former staff members, city staff members and students were all interviewed for the five-part 100 Years of Inspiring Each video series. Each interview surfaced more information about the district’s history that the Marketing & Communications team used to shape the campaign.*



- 1 Maintain or improve current satisfaction levels as measured by the annual Morris Leatherman survey.
- 2 Increase attendance at school and district events by 10%.
- 3 Increase student retention.
- 4 Increase staff retention.
- 5 Raise at least \$100,000 for 100 years.
- 6 Establish a database of at least 1,000 alumni.



CAMPAIGN  
AUDIENCES



CAMPAIGN AUDIENCES

Eden Prairie is a very diverse community, with 50% of Eden Prairie Schools students identifying as people of color and 33% speaking a language other than English at home. The two most commonly spoken non-English languages are Somali and Spanish.

A key target audience was community members without children in the district, who had less of a connection to Eden Prairie Schools and would therefore be less likely to support a future referendum request. That audience is primarily white, affluent and middle-aged. However, the campaign goal aimed to elevate the district's reputation among all members of the community; for that reason, culturally and linguistically inclusive opportunities to connect with this campaign were crucial and are described throughout this document.

BUDGET, RESOURCES & TRAINING

The Superintendent assigned a seed budget of \$40,000 for the campaign, \$25k for services and \$15k for supplies, with the goal of raising additional revenue or receiving in-kind donations to cover expenses beyond that. (In a sign of the buy-in garnered for the campaign, the Finance Department created a new budget code that ended in "100.")

District staff resources were assigned to support all of the strategies and tactics, including the following key staff:

- **Executive Director of MarComm:** Manage overall campaign strategy and budget, identify strategic partnerships internally and externally, support tactical execution, train Cabinet members on their roles for campaign
- **Director of MarComm:** Manage tactical execution of campaign strategies, lead strategic plan development for *Inspire* magazine, train all new staff districtwide in campaign goal and objectives
- **Director of Corporate Engagement & Alumni Relations:** Identify external resources to fund and support campaign, lead event planning for Citywide Celebration, coordinate resources for student experiences
- **Creative Coordinator:** Manage overall campaign brand, design logos and all campaign visual assets, train all staff on appropriate use of brand and marketing materials, design *Inspire* magazine, liaise with students in developing strategic plans for Capstone course
- **Marketing & Outreach Coordinator:** Support tactical execution of campaign, oversee volunteer management and training for Citywide Celebration, serve as member of planning committee for Citywide Prom
- **Communications Coordinator:** Lead writing for *Inspire* magazine, train and support student writers for magazine
- **Director of Adult & Community Engagement Programs:** Liaise with EP Historical Society, lead event planning for Citywide Prom and Family Fun Day, support tactical execution of large events, train event volunteers
- **Director of Learning, Teaching & Curriculum:** Develop and distribute 100 Years lessons plans to all teachers, train Instructional Excellence Coordinators on lessons so they can train all classroom educators districtwide
- **Director of Facilities, Safety & Grounds:** Secure appropriate resources and staffing for events, manage implementation of Historic Gym updates and branding
- **Emergency Management Coordinator:** Create [safety plans](#) for all large community events, coordinate with Eden Prairie Police Department for support, train staff and volunteers in emergency management for events

The Eden Prairie Historical Society also provided volunteers to plan for and staff major campaign events.



CAMPAIGN  
STRATEGIES

- 1 Involve stakeholders in sharing the story and history of Eden Prairie Schools
- 2 Create opportunities for stakeholder connection with our schools and district
- 3 Celebrate those making a positive impact for our schools and district
- 4 Develop and utilize a unique branding experience for the 100 years celebration
- 5 Deepen a sense of district identity for stakeholders

KEY LEADERS/STAKEHOLDERS

The campaign team sought feedback from the Superintendent's Cabinet on the concept, goals, objectives and high-level strategies of the 100 Years campaign. Since this would be a cross-departmental effort, each Cabinet member committed to sharing information with and getting support from their teams. The team also presented the campaign strategic plan to the School Board, who enthusiastically supported the effort.

FULL CAMPAIGN TIMELINE

WHAT	WHEN	WHO'S RESPONSIBLE
RESEARCH	MAY '23–AUG. '23; ONGOING THROUGHOUT CAMPAIGN	Executive Director of MarComm (Dirk), Director of MarComm (Grace), Marketing & Outreach Coordinator (Kim)
PLANNING	JUNE–JULY '23	Executive Director of MarComm, Director of MarComm, Director of Corporate Engagement & Alumni Relations (then Carter)
IMPLEMENTATION*	AUG. '23–NOV. '24 (ONE TACTIC FEB. - APRIL '25)	Executive Director of MarComm, Director of MarComm, Director of Corporate Engagement & Alumni Relations (now Molly)
EVALUATION	JUNE '24–OCT. '24	Executive Director of MarComm, Director of MarComm

In addition to the overall campaign strategic plan, the team created plans using the RPIE process for each of the campaign's three largest tactics. **Timeline flexibility was key to the success of each of these tactics and to the full campaign.** Originally, the Citywide Parade was to be held in April, the Citywide Prom followed closely in May, and *Inspire* magazine's deadline was July. However, two key team members departed in the pivotal month of March: The district's director of corporate engagement & alumni relations, who led all tactics relating to partner engagement, and its marketing & communications specialist, who served as lead writer on *Inspire* magazine. Additionally, the Citywide Parade faced logistical challenges that made its original date unachievable. In order to meet each tactic's goals, the team adjusted timelines for the magazine and the parade.

\*LARGEST TACTICS:  
PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

WHAT	WHEN	WHO
<u>CITYWIDE PROM</u>	DEC. '23–MAY '24	Dirk, Grace, Molly
<u>CITYWIDE CELEBRATION: STADIUM PARADE &amp; GIVE GATHERING</u>	DEC. '23–SEPT. '24	Molly, Grace, Dirk, Kim
<u>INSPIRE MAGAZINE</u>	SEPT. '23–NOV. '24	Grace, Dirk

STRATEGY 1:

INVOLVE STAKEHOLDERS IN  
SHARING THE STORY/HISTORY OF  
EDEN PRAIRIE SCHOOLS

PRIMARY TACTICS

- Develop 100 Years webpage, including a “share your memories and pictures” submission box, and social media plan
- Serve as client for Integrated Marketing & Communications Capstone to generate ideas for how to reach student audience, encourage students to spread in their social circles and with their families
- Partner with local media and others to highlight 100 Years stories
  - Eden Prairie Local News features
  - Eden Prairie Lifestyle Magazine features (one on campaign and one on Citywide Prom)
  - Proclamation from the City of Eden Prairie
  - Congratulations letter from President Joe Biden
- Produce five-part video series to associate Eden Prairie Schools with feelings of pride, legacy and love
- Create “Digging Through the Decades” sections in family and staff newsletters, on social media, and in district publications to feature pictures, quotes and items submitted through the webpage
- Secure oral history grant from the Minnesota Historical Society

KEY MESSAGES

- It's an exciting year to be in EP — our 100th year of Inspiring Each.
- Since Eden Prairie's earliest days, its residents have believed deeply in the power of community and the importance of education.
- We've grown so much over the last 100 years — from four one-room schoolhouses, to the first electrified building in Eden Prairie, to the center of innovation and excellence we are today.
- This is a celebration not just of our schools, but of our entire community.
- For our 100th anniversary, we recognize and honor the legacy of our growth, achievement, and excellence together.
- As we embark on an exciting centennial year, we will remain a vital pillar of the community and continue inspiring each student every day.



**STRATEGY 2:****CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAKEHOLDER CONNECTION  
WITH OUR SCHOOLS AND DISTRICT****PRIMARY TACTICS: EVENTS**

Events would be a key way to strengthen connections with target audiences, especially to invite them into our buildings.

- **All-Staff Kickoff:** Engage staff members, ground them in the campaign goal, and invite yearlong involvement
- **Citywide Prom:** Rebuild connections with community members, especially those without current direct ties to EP Schools
- **Citywide Parade:** Strengthen ties between the City of Eden Prairie and the district, involving students and families; provide connection for community members who did not attend the Prom for cultural reasons (alcohol present)
- **Graduation:** Reinforce key messages at largest yearly event, draw ties between campaign and student outcomes
- **School Events:** Provide resources for schools to host events and share key messages
- **Athletic Events:** Utilize campaign assets to reinforce campaign messages at activities

**PRIMARY TACTICS: PUBLICATIONS**

Print publications would reach audiences broadly and allow for expanded storytelling.

- **Community magazine:** Foster lifelong connection and engagement among stakeholders, thereby developing a shared story and stake in the district's success
- **Inspiring News:** Share stories to increase feelings of pride through quarterly mailer

**PRIMARY TACTICS: PARTNER ENGAGEMENT**

Partners who could champion our efforts with key audiences were important to the campaign.

- **Smith Coffee:** Engage with community, staff and students using discounts and special products
- **Others:** Offer special menu items to increase brand awareness; generate revenue through sponsorships
- **Give to the Max:** Raise additional funds from matches

**STRATEGY 3:****CELEBRATE THOSE MAKING  
A POSITIVE IMPACT FOR OUR SCHOOLS  
AND DISTRICT****PRIMARY TACTICS**

- Recognize staff who "inspire each" throughout the celebration in multiple mediums
- Feature influencers from primary audiences who make a positive impact for schools
- Honor key contributors to the district's success over the last 100 years at major campaign events
- Invite influencers, contributors, and other leaders to the Citywide Parade

**STRATEGY 4:****DEVELOP AND UTILIZE A UNIQUE  
BRANDING EXPERIENCE  
FOR THE 100 YEARS CELEBRATION****PRIMARY TACTICS**

- Design a suite of logos for use throughout the year
  - Use as social media profile pictures, on pens and other giveaways; integrate in advertising, videos, and print pieces created throughout the year
- Create logos and branding for Citywide Celebration: Stadium Parade & GIVE Gathering and Citywide Prom
- Grow awareness of brand through 100 Years-specific staff lanyards, staff/student ID cards, email signatures
- Provide 100 years banners at every school/district site

**STRATEGY 5:****DEEPEN A SENSE OF DISTRICT IDENTITY  
FOR STAKEHOLDERS****PRIMARY TACTICS**

- Partner with Learning, Teaching and Curriculum to create 100th Day of School lesson plans and activities
- Provide t-shirts and tumblers for all staff, giving them unified spirit wear for use throughout the campaign
- Create Inspired Journey Summit, a districtwide event showcasing student learning experiences

**CAMPAIGN IMPROVEMENTS**

Based on feedback from staff and partners involved with the 100 Years campaign, the following adjustments were made as the campaign was ongoing:

- Citywide Prom combined with Family Fun Day for broader community engagement
- Citywide Parade changed to Citywide Celebration with two components: A walking parade in the high school stadium and a volunteer fair
  - Citywide Celebration moved from the spring to fall
- Added key message of "We're all Eagles!" throughout the campaign to reinforce our shared identity

IMPROVED PERCEPTIONS

This campaign began with the end in mind: Create a bridge in gap year that didn't have planned community engagement in order to achieve the campaign goal.

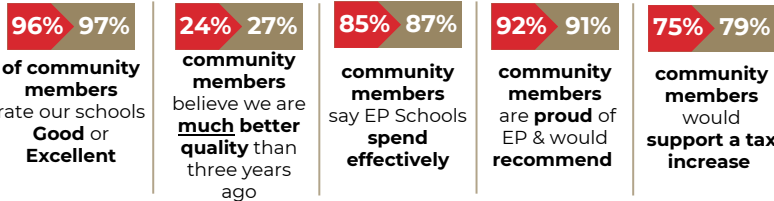
By all measures, the campaign was a tremendous success. The June 2024 third-party survey showed sustained satisfaction, increased attendance at events, and clear increases in reputation, pride and connection among key audiences. Due to timing of the survey to maintain year-over-year reliability, data collection occurred after several primary tactics but preceded others (*Inspire* Magazine and the Citywide Celebration). As such, the already-high evaluation metrics would likely have increased even further had this piece of the evaluation process occurred following the conclusion of the entire campaign.

In the report to district leaders and the School Board, the statistician said, ***"The 100th Year celebrations achieved their goals. Prior to this year, ratings of the Eden Prairie Schools were already high. The celebrations improved perceptions even further and certainly cemented more parents into keeping their children enrolled in the School District."***

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Maintain or improve current satisfaction levels as measured by the annual Morris Leatherman survey.

2024 THIRD-PARTY SURVEY

The 2024 random-sample survey showed marked increases among all stakeholders in their overall satisfaction in the district — including a **15% increase in Excellence from 2023!** Other important measures remained steady or showed increases, thus achieving campaign objective of maintaining or improving satisfaction levels.



**OBJECTIVE 2:** Increase attendance at school and district events by 10%.

2024 THIRD-PARTY SURVEY CONT.

"Compared to previous years, do you think you **attended more school and/or district activities and events, about the same number, or fewer?**"  
**Overall: 11% more | Families: 24% more**

"Did you or members of your household **participate in any activities or events for the 100 Years celebration?**"  
**Overall: 31% yes | Families: 55% yes**  
*Of those who attended – Overall: 98% favorable | Families: 95% favorable*

**OBJECTIVE 3:** Increase student retention.

**25 students retained.** The overall net loss of students from Eden Prairie Schools dropped by 36.4% from the 2023-24 to 2024-25 school years.

**OBJECTIVE 5:** Raise at least \$100,000 for 100 years.

25 students retained at \$10,000  
of state & federal funding per student = **\$250,000**  
**\$64,000** in campaign expenses  
**\$49,000** in revenue (Give to the Max Day, partners)  
**\$100,000** donation from the Foundation for Eden Prairie Schools  
**= \$335,000 profit + untracked in-kind donations**  
*(food for events, staff coffee discounts, etc.)*

**OBJECTIVE 6:** Establish a database of at least 1,000 alumni.  
Currently contains **2,668 alumni.**

**CAMPAIGN GOAL:** Elevate the reputation of Eden Prairie Schools among students, families, staff and community by fostering an ongoing sense of pride and celebrating our progress, which will increase stakeholder engagement and improve their connections with the district and its schools.

**2024 THIRD-PARTY SURVEY RESULTS**  
**"Compared to last year, do you feel..."**

the reputation of Eden Prairie Schools has increased, decreased, or stayed about the same?"  
**Overall: 37% increase | Families: 41% increase**

your sense of pride in Eden Prairie Schools has increased, decreased, or stayed about the same?"  
**Overall: 32% increase | Families: 38% increase**

more connected to Eden Prairie Schools, less connected, or has your feeling of connection stayed about the same?"  
**Overall: 20% increase | Families: 31% increase**

MAINTAINING FOCUS

During this campaign, like any district, we experienced major disruptions, including significant staff transitions, threats to schools, contentious negotiations, a website redesign, and a public relations crisis surrounding our graduation ceremony. Throughout these challenges, the campaign provided a strategic focus. We integrated many of the campaign's key messages in communication about these issues, relying on the sense of common identity it built to sustain us through crisis.

FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS

- Throughout the campaign, we conducted after-action reviews of major events that have informed our approach to managing similar events. Thinking about this campaign specifically, several changes we would make if doing this over would be:
- Set specific metrics for student and staff retention
  - Focus more on outcome objectives than output objectives
  - Ensure all objectives can be evaluated or remove them
    - The Human Resources department maintains staff data but doesn't currently track retention. With transitions on that team, they were unable to gather that data.
  - Better balance this campaign with other work (such as website redesign and launch of *Inspire* magazine)

NEXT STEPS

With the goodwill garnered through our 100 Years campaign, we started the 2025-26 school year in a great place to launch our 10-year academic vision process: Flight Plan 2035. Lessons learned from the 100 Years campaign enhanced the Flight Plan 2035 campaign to envision the experiences, opportunities and learning provided students in 2035. Flight Plan involved more than 1,650 participants — a clear sign of the relationships built and strengthened with audiences through the 100 Years campaign.



*“I’m sure past mayors and superintendents  
have thought, ‘Hey, this is the best the  
city’s ever been – we’ve arrived,  
it’s phenomenal.’*

*But I will say that today, May 18, 2024,  
I think this is the best we’ve ever been,  
and I believe the best is yet to come.”*

– Dr. Ron Case, Mayor of Eden Prairie



STRATEGY 1:

INVOLVE STAKEHOLDERS IN SHARING THE STORY  
AND HISTORY OF EDEN PRAIRIE SCHOOLS

**100 YEARS  
WEBPAGE:**  
Community members could stay up-to-date on all elements of the campaign, engage with videos, and submit their memories and pictures.

Celebrating Learning

Today's students learn and grow in a districtwide preschool-to-high-school elementary schools, including a Spanish immersion option, a newly renovated and expanded middle school, and a 750,000-square-foot high school equipped with classrooms and 30 computer labs that the current Eagles could have hardly imagined back in the day when how learning has changed over the past years.

Read a congratulatory letter from President Biden to Eden Prairie Schools

Learn more about our celebrations!

Share the news!

Past Event

CITYWIDE  
CELEBRATION

19242024

EDEN PRAIRIE SCHOOLS

Stadium Parade & GIVE Gathering

Citywide Celebration: Stadium Parade and GIVE Gathering

The 100 Years of Inspiring Each Citywide Celebration, initially planned for last spring, has been rescheduled for **Saturday, Sept. 28**. This date was intentionally chosen to take place during homecoming weekend — so if you've got Eagles alumni in your family, bring them along to this celebratory event!

Here's what you need to know:

- A parade celebrating the history of Eden Prairie Schools will take place from 11 a.m. to noon around the entire Stadium track. You'll see representatives from each of our schools and the Eden Prairie Historical Society, plus performances from student groups including Eagle Band, Cheer and more! There is no charge to enjoy this event.
- Community Education's yearly GIVE Gathering will take place from noon to 1 p.m., offering resources and volunteer opportunities.
- Food trucks will be on site from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., and concessions will be open.
- Parking will be available at EPHS.

Share your memories and photos!

\* Required

As we commemorate our century of inspiring each, we invite you to be a part of this special celebration. You can use this form to share your memories or photos of Eden Prairie Schools history. Have a physical item you'd like to share with us? Bring it into the welcome center at 100 School Road, and we'll take a photo!

What is your first and last name?\*

First NameLast Name

What is your email address?\*

What is your phone number?\*

Please contain only numbers

What is your connection to Eden Prairie Schools?\*

☐ Current student

☐ Alumn

☐ Current family

☐ Past family

☐ Current employee

☐ Past employee

☐ Community member

☐ Other

Do you have any Eden Prairie Schools memories that you would like to share?

Do you have any photos of Eden Prairie Schools history? Please upload them here.  
(Attach up to 5 files with a maximum size of 10MB)

Select PhotosNo file chosen

Permission to use\*

☐ By submitting this form, you grant us permission to potentially use your shared memories or photos in our print or digital celebration materials.

☐ Do not publish

Submit

**FIVE-PART VIDEO SERIES:** The campaign team sought to associate Eden Prairie Schools with feelings of pride, legacy and love, and it knew video was an appropriately rich storytelling medium to achieve that goal. The district's Multimedia Storyteller, in partnership with the Director and Executive Director of Marketing & Communications, created a five-part video series lifting the voices of over 20 stakeholders from across the district. Even as they explored practices, places and people from the last 100 years, they also looked to the future.

**These videos included:**

- 100 Years of Inspiring Each (a 3-minute campaign feature video, played at All-Staff Kickoff, football game halftimes and more)
- 100 Years of Educating
- 100 Years of History
- 100 Years of Community
- 100 Years of Learning

100 YEARS OF INSPIRING EACH

100 YEARS OF LEARNING

100 YEARS OF COMMUNITY

100 YEARS OF HISTORY

100 YEARS OF EDUCATION

100 YEARS OF INSPIRING EACH:  
CITYWIDE CELEBRATION



STRATEGY 1:

INVOLVE STAKEHOLDERS IN SHARING THE STORY  
AND HISTORY OF EDEN PRAIRIE SCHOOLS

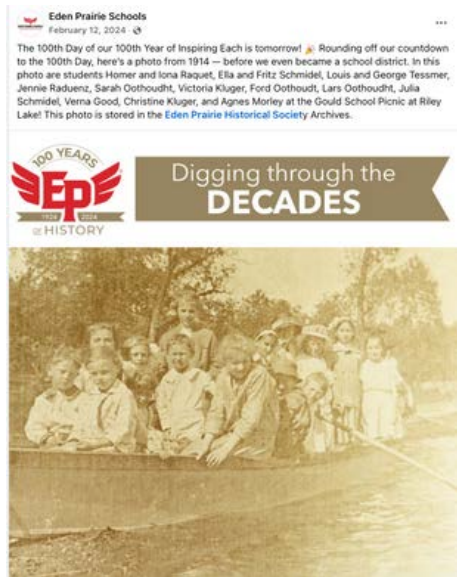


**LOCAL MEDIA FEATURES** The team deepened connections with community members without current ties to our schools by securing two full spreads in Eden Prairie Lifestyle magazine and 12 features in Eden Prairie Local News.

- Eden Prairie Lifestyle:**
- [Campaign Feature \(p. 24\) & Ad \(p. 4\)](#), Aug. 2023
  - [Historic Prom Cover & Feature \(p. 18\)](#), April 2024

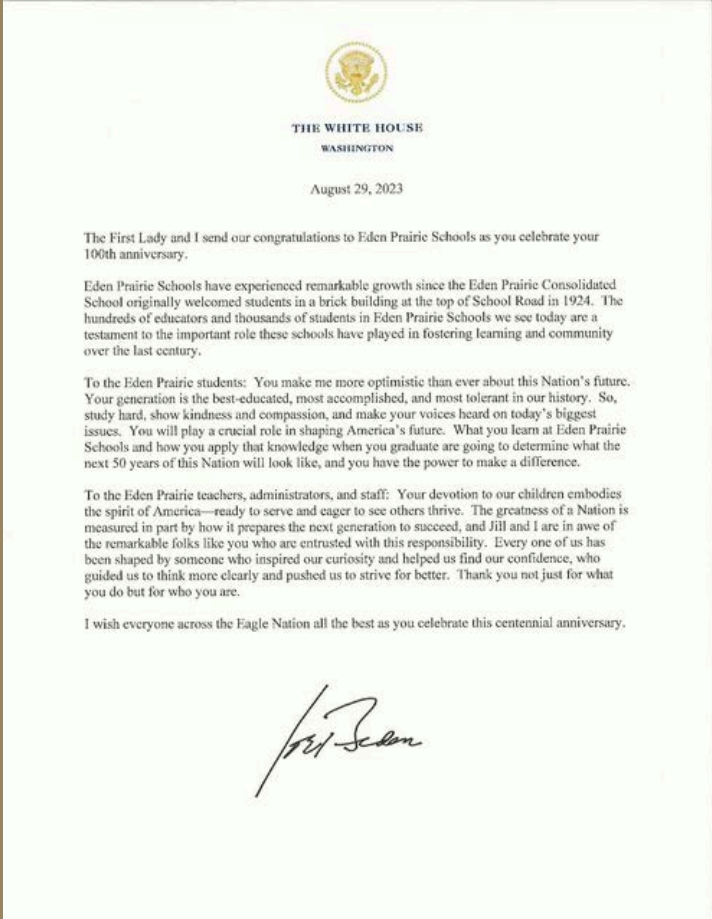
- Eden Prairie Local News:**
- [EP Schools to celebrate 100 years](#), Aug. 4, 2023
  - [EP Schools' 100th anniversary Citywide Prom tickets now on sale](#), Feb. 12, 2024
  - [EP students celebrate 100th day of the 100th year of school](#), Feb. 23, 2024
  - [FEPS announces \\$100K grant to Eden Prairie Schools](#), April 11, 2024
  - [Family Fun Day celebrated 100 years of EP Schools](#), May 21, 2024
  - [A century of class: Prom celebrates 100 years of Eden Prairie School District](#), May 23, 2024
  - ['Century Club' will graduate in EP Schools' 100th year](#), June 3, 2024
  - [Caps off to the Eden Prairie Schools Class of 2024](#), June 18, 2024
  - [100 Years of Inspiring Each Citywide Celebration](#), Sept. 9, 2024
  - ['100 Years of Inspiring Each' Citywide Celebration to be held Sept. 28](#), Sept. 23, 2024
  - [Survey says: Residents, parents give EP Schools high marks](#), Sept. 26, 2024
  - [Parade celebrates Eden Prairie Schools' 100th year](#), Oct. 1, 2024
  - [Ten-year high for preliminary student enrollment](#), Oct. 9, 2024

**DIGGING THROUGH THE DECADES:** This weekly feature in the district's staff and family newsletters featured pictures, quotes and items submitted through the 100 Years webpage as well as those found in the campaign team's ongoing research. These features also appeared on the district's social media accounts.



STRATEGY 1:

INVOLVE STAKEHOLDERS IN SHARING THE STORY  
AND HISTORY OF EDEN PRAIRIE SCHOOLS



CONGRATULATIONS LETTER FROM  
PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN



PROCLAMATION FROM THE  
CITY OF EDEN PRAIRIE




STRATEGY 2:

CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAKEHOLDER CONNECTION  
WITH OUR SCHOOLS AND DISTRICT

**PARTNER ENGAGEMENT:**






















To secure key funds to support the campaign, the district's Director of Corporate Engagement & Alumni Relations presented a tiered benefits chart to local businesses encouraging them to engage. Several did: Smith Coffee & Café, run by an alum and his parents, created a Celebration Blend and an Eagle Spirit Latte. 10% of the proceeds came back to Eden Prairie Schools. Pizza Karma created a Centennial Pizza featuring "EP" in pepperoni, and Nautical Bowls created the "Eagle Bowl."



### JOIN THE CELEBRATION!

2023-2024 School Year

This school year, Eden Prairie Schools celebrates 100 years as a district — and we invite your partnership! Whether you choose to sponsor a specific event or element of the campaign or donate services in kind, your contribution will help us honor this historic milestone. As we look back on a century of growth and academic excellence, we recognize neither would be possible without the support of our partners and community. Thank you for your continued generosity!

BENEFITS	TIER 1 \$25,000	TIER 2 \$10,000	TIER 3 \$5,000	TIER 4 \$1,000- \$4,999
In-person recognition at end-of-year celebration event				
Dedicated float in 100 Year Parade				
Company recognized and logo included as "in partnership with" in district publications and at events				
Logo and company ad included in first edition of Alumni Magazine (spring/summer 2024)				
Meeting with Eden Prairie Schools marketing and communications team to brainstorm marketing opportunities				
Exclusive "thank you" recognition social post				
Company logo in our physical mailers to entire city				
Logo on 100 year webpage				
One social media post with rest of sponsors				





### This November, we're thankful for 100 Years of Inspiring Each!



1964 Seniors

1950s Homecoming

### Give to the Max (or just \$19.24) for Eden Prairie Schools!

100 Years of Inspiring Each would not have been possible without a community that consistently invested their time, resources, and energy into our students and families. This Give to the Max Day, you can help to continue that legacy of excellence!

From November 1 to 16, visit [givemn.org/EdenPrairieSchools](https://givemn.org/EdenPrairieSchools) to donate \$19.24 to support activities and events for students. Our goal is to raise at least \$19,240 in honor of our 100th anniversary!





# \$19,240



## We hit our goal!



**COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING:**

On the district's first-ever Give to the Max Day, it surpassed its \$19,240 goal. The Marketing & Communications team created over 10 graphics to share on all channels throughout the day. Funds from this effort were used to support the 100 Years-themed Dance of the Century at Central Middle School.



### Show your support and celebrate 100 Years of Eden Prairie Schools with a donation of \$19.24!



### Our Goal: \$19,240 to support our students!

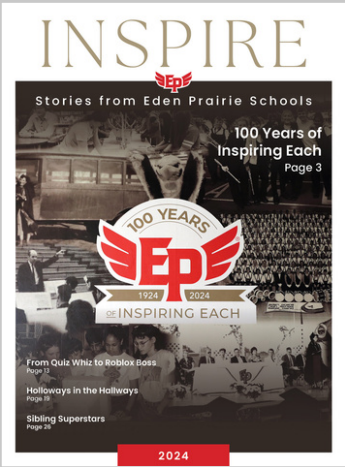




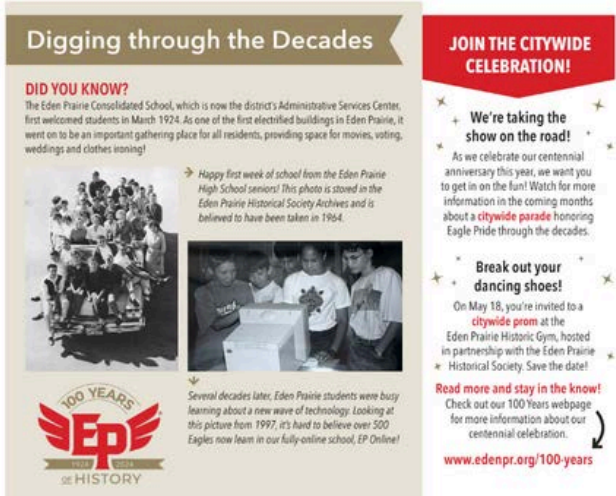
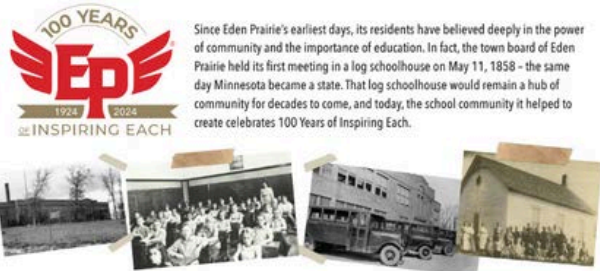
STRATEGY 2:

CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAKEHOLDER CONNECTION WITH OUR SCHOOLS AND DISTRICT

**INSPIRE MAGAZINE:** The inaugural edition of the district's community magazine, Inspire, had a specific 100 Years of Inspiring Each theme. In addition to a 4-page spread about the celebration, the edition featured stories about couples finding love in Eden Prairie Schools, families creating legacies as students and staff members, and siblings who had made the district proud over the decades. This 40-page storytelling piece was mailed to all households in Eden Prairie, as well as all staff members and all open enrolled students. Click on the magazine to read it in full!



**INSPIRING NEWS:** Each edition of the quarterly print newsletter sent to all residents in Eden Prairie had a distinct 100 Years flair. This print piece was used to invite people who would not receive digital district communications, especially those without connections to our schools, to get involved in the campaign.





STRATEGY 2:

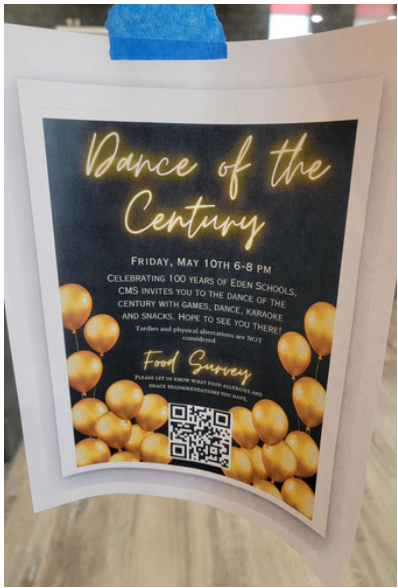
CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAKEHOLDER CONNECTION  
WITH OUR SCHOOLS AND DISTRICT

**ALL-STAFF KICKOFF (Aug. 2023):** The district’s All-Staff Kickoff, held in late August, served as an opportunity to introduce the campaign to the target audience of nearly 1,500 staff. Each staff member received a 100 Years of Inspiring Each lanyard, and in exchange for a 100 Years tumbler, recognized a fellow staff member for embodying the district’s mission. Those nominations were shared in the staff newsletter throughout the year.

During the presentation, Superintendent Swanson introduced the campaign and read a congratulations letter from President Joe Biden. Kathie Case, President of the Eden Prairie Historical Society, spoke to the crowd, and an intergenerational choir performed. This event played a key role in engaging staff members, grounding them in the campaign goal, and inviting them to be involved throughout the school year.



**DANCE OF THE CENTURY (May 2024):** Using funds raised by the community during Give to the Max Day, Central Middle School leaders hosted the school’s first dance in several years to celebrate the Centennial.



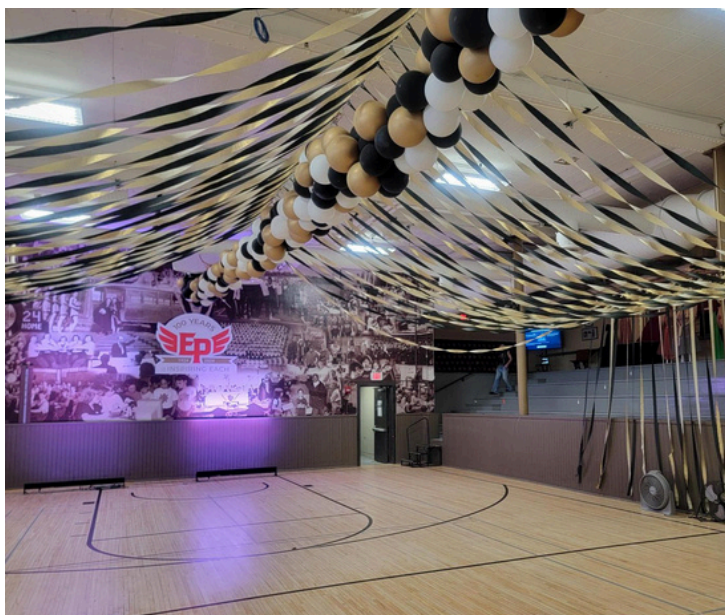


## STRATEGY 2:

CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAKEHOLDER CONNECTION  
WITH OUR SCHOOLS AND DISTRICT

**CITYWIDE PROM (May 2024):** The tactic idea that set the entire campaign in motion, the Citywide Prom, [took place on May 18, 2024](#). Over 200 community members — alumni, parents, current and retired staff, and more — purchased tickets to attend a once-in-a-century event. Guests submitted nominations for Prom Royalty to recognize inspiring Eagles. A brief program included remarks from Mayor of Eden Prairie Dr. Ron Case; Superintendent Dr. Josh Swanson; Eden Prairie Historical Society President Kathie Case; and several early graduates. Alumni band Wondercure provided music, the Eden Prairie Lions Club served wine and beer, and several restaurants donated food to the slightly higher-priced “Very Important Eagle” (VIE) tent. VIE attendees took home a pair of coasters commemorating the occasion.

After the announcement of Prom King and Queen, the evening concluded with the Foundation for Eden Prairie Schools presenting Superintendent Swanson with a \$100,000 donation in honor of the 100 Years celebration.





STRATEGY 2:

CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAKEHOLDER CONNECTION  
WITH OUR SCHOOLS AND DISTRICT

**GRADUATION (June 2024):** The campaign team found ways to purposefully integrate 100 Years branding into its Class of 2024 graduation ceremony, including by showing 100 Years videos before the ceremony, branding physical items and recognizing the celebration in teacher, principal and superintendent speeches.



GRADUATION PROGRAM



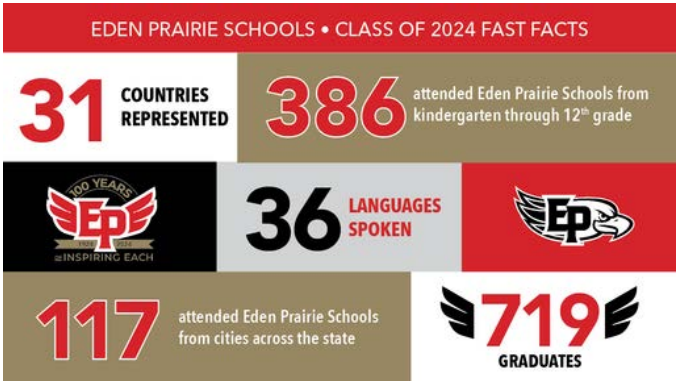
DIPLOMA COVER



TASSEL



JUMBOTRON GRAPHICS



BRANDING IN MARIUCCI ARENA



100 YEARS OF SLANG VIDEO



STRATEGY 2:

CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAKEHOLDER CONNECTION  
WITH OUR SCHOOLS AND DISTRICT

**CITYWIDE CELEBRATION: Stadium Parade & GIVE Gathering (September 2024):** Planning for the Citywide Parade required ongoing collaboration with local police and fire departments, as well as the district’s emergency management coordinator and Community Education department. Though the campaign team originally imagined this event as a traditional street parade, road closure, transportation and safety logistics made that version of the event unattainable in its original timeline (April 2024). To best position the event for success and balance competing priorities, the team postponed the event to September and reimagined it as a stadium parade. This provided an opportunity to combine it with an annual community resource fair that had begun to experience dwindling attendance, the GIVE Gathering.

On Sept. 28, over 500 students representing each of the district’s schools [walked proudly in the 100 Years of Inspiring Each Citywide Celebration](#) at Eden Prairie High School’s Aerie Stadium. Mayor Case and Superintendent Swanson served as grand marshals, leading a group of officials including School Board members, local legislators and the Eden Prairie Historical Society. A [robust script](#) shared a brief history of each school building, and performances from the Eden Prairie Dance Team and Eagle Marching Band got the crowd on its feet. The district’s activities director conducted “man on the street” interviews with parade walkers that were streamed to the stadium screen. At the event’s conclusion, attendees enjoyed local food trucks, connected with each other and learned about important community resources.






STRATEGY 3:

CELEBRATE THOSE MAKING A POSITIVE IMPACT FOR OUR  
SCHOOLS AND DISTRICT

**HONORING 100:** Nominations submitted during the district’s 2023-24 All-Staff Kickoff recognizing fellow staff members for embodying the district’s mission were shared in the staff newsletter throughout the year. One hundred staff were honored, and the success of this effort led to a similar strategy at our 2024-25 Kickoff where staff submitted “One Good Thing” recognitions now being shared throughout the year in the staff newsletter.






**Kerry Hallee, Multilingual Learning Teacher, Prairie View Elementary**

“She is dedicated and passionate about her students’ experience at Prairie View! An inspiring educator!”


- nominated by Jill Baller



**Heather Mac Murray, Director of Learning Analytics, Data, and Reporting**

“Heather leads a team of data professionals whose hard work behind the scenes keeps us focused on, and accountable to, our mission. We are lucky to have her skill, dedication and heart in our district.”

- nominated by Grace Becker



**Amal Younis, Administrative Dean, Central Middle School**

“Amal is dynamite at keeping a positive attitude which is contagious to staff and students.”

- nominated by Yvette Toko



**KEY CONTRIBUTORS:** Throughout the campaign, we recognized those who had played an important part in 100 Years of Inspiring Each at key events, in videos, and in publications. This included current and former students, local elected officials, engaged community members, and staff.



**VIDEO FEATURES:** Influential alumni, parents, community members, current and former staff members, city staff members and students were all featured in the five-part 100 Years of Inspiring Each video series. Each of these people made a positive impact on our schools and district.

## DEVELOP AND UTILIZE A UNIQUE BRANDING EXPERIENCE FOR THE 100 YEARS CELEBRATION

**LOGO CREATION:** Inspired by Disney and other brands, the team created a unique visual identity for the 100 Years celebration. The distinctive “EP” has represented the district for almost its full 100 years; for that reason, it could stand on its own without being explicitly identified as Eden Prairie Schools. The inclusion of “inspiring each” further tied the 100 Years logo to the existing brand. The team selected a gold with a metallic quality that suggested prestige and pride, which was incorporated as a highlight color in all print and digital pieces during the year.

The 100 Years logo was used as the district's social media profile pictures, on every page of its website, and in all advertising, videos, and print pieces created throughout the year. It appeared on staff lanyards, staff and student ID cards, email signatures, and on banners at every school and district site. It also provided the basis for derivative Citywide Celebration and Citywide Prom logos.



**HISTORIC GYM BRANDING (May 2024):** The Eden Prairie Historical Society was deeply tied to the Historic Gym and saw the district's treatment of that space as emblematic of its respect for district history. Before this campaign, the Historic Gym lacked clear branding, leaving visitors unaware of its historical significance. The campaign team met with the Historic Gym Taskforce to gather its input into desired updates, then collaborated with a facilities designer. Vinyl window graphics; a detailed plaque; a floor decal of the original district logo; lettering and pictures outside the bleachers; and a beautiful, full-wall mural now demonstrate the Gym's important history to all who enter.





STRATEGY 4:

DEVELOP AND UTILIZE A UNIQUE BRANDING EXPERIENCE  
FOR THE 100 YEARS CELEBRATION



JOIN THE CELEBRATION!  
2023-2024 School Year

This school year, Eden Prairie Schools celebrates 100 years as a district — and we invite your partnership! Whether you choose to sponsor a specific event or element of the campaign or donate services in kind, your contribution will help us honor this historic milestone. As we look back on a century of growth and academic excellence, we recognize neither would be possible without the support of our partners and community. Thank you for your continued generosity!

BENEFITS	TIER 1 \$25,000	TIER 2 \$10,000	TIER 3 \$5,000	TIER 4 \$1,000- \$4,999
In-person recognition at end-of-year celebration event				
Dedicated float in 100 Year Parade				
Company recognized and logo included as "in partnership with" in district publications and at events				
Logo and company ad included in first edition of Alumni Magazine (spring/summer 2024)				
Meeting with Eden Prairie Schools marketing and communications team to brainstorm marketing opportunities				
Exclusive "thank you" recognition social post				
Company logo in our physical mailers to entire city				
Logo on 100 year webpage				
One social media post with rest of sponsors				



EDEN PRAIRIE SCHOOLS



EP Eagle (they/them/theirs)

School Mascot  
Eden Prairie High School

952-975-7151

[EPeagle@edenpr.org](mailto:EPeagle@edenpr.org)

[www.edenpr.org](http://www.edenpr.org)

8100 School Road  
Eden Prairie, MN 55344

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## STRATEGY 5:

## DEEPEN A SENSE OF DISTRICT IDENTITY FOR STAKEHOLDERS

**100TH DAY LESSON PLANS:** Elementary schools often celebrate the 100th day of a school year. To leverage this day for the campaign, the Marketing & Communications team partnered with the district's Learning & Innovation team to create a [suite of history-themed activities](#) teachers in all grades could use in their classrooms. Lessons were banded by content area and age range, and included drawing one-room schoolhouses, studying historic sites in Eden Prairie, and making up a tune to the 1931 school song. Eden Prairie Local News reported on celebrations across the district. This effort led to high levels of student engagement, and in return students engaged their families.



TV SLIDE CREATED FOR USE IN CLASSROOMS



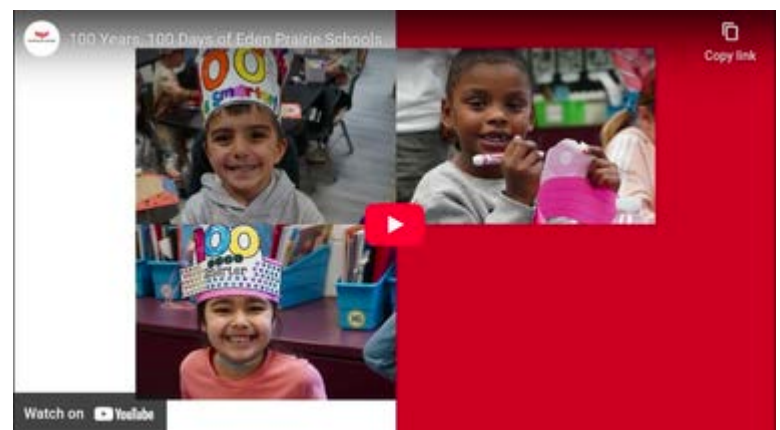
#### Festivities from the 100th Day of our 100th Year of Inspiring Each

Can you believe we've already made it past the 100th Day of our 100th Year of Inspiring Each? So many students had a blast yesterday while learning about Eden Prairie Schools' 100 years of history and the number 100! Here are just a few highlights from the day:

- Lots of 100-year-old students graced our halls and classrooms!
- Forest Hills Little Eagles participated in a variety of activity stations where they made 100-year-old self-portraits, colored 100 spots on dogs, and more! First graders did stations, too, where they made creative 100 Day crowns, practiced counting and adding to 100, and reviewed place values during a game of bingo.
- Prairie View first graders found and wrote down a whopping 100 words around the room that they could read.
- At Cedar Ridge, students constructed one-room schoolhouses in a STEM project, and fifth graders presented on Eden Prairie and world history through the decades.
- CMS World Geography students learned about local historic sites and made connections between the geography of the past and the geography of the present.

Thank you to everyone across the district who made yesterday extra special for our students. Stay tuned for more peeks into the day later this week and early next!

RECAP STORY IN PARENT AND STAFF POST



[100TH DAY RECAP VIDEO](#)



STRATEGY 5:

DEEPEN A SENSE OF DISTRICT IDENTITY FOR STAKEHOLDERS



ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES STAFF AND PRINCIPALS

**Make your week after spring break a little sweeter: Enjoy a staff discount from Smith Coffee from March 30 – April 6!**

Smith Coffee is joining in our celebration of 100 Years of Inspiring Each by making the week after spring break a little brighter for Eden Prairie Schools staff! From March 30 – April 6, enjoy a 10% discount on anything at Smith when you show your Eden Prairie Schools badge.

While you're there, pick up a bag of Smith's Centennial Blend. Featuring Sumatran and Ethiopian coffee beans with notes of cherry and chocolate, this delicious blend celebrates our district's history!

\$1 from each bag sold will be donated to Eden Prairie Schools.



Order for in-store pickup

Order for delivery

STAFF POST ARTICLE ABOUT SMITH DISCOUNT

**STAFF IDENTITY BUILDING:**

To enhance each staff member's sense of connection with Eden Prairie Schools, the district gave each employee a t-shirt and a tumbler that bore the 100 Years logo. This created unified spirit wear for use throughout the campaign, and particularly on the 100th Day of School, when all staff were encouraged to wear their shirts.

The partnership with Smith Coffee reminded staff members of their district identity, as well: The Centennial Blend and Eagle Latte focused on common cross-district pride rather than individual schools, and *all* staff received a discount by showing their district ID.



EAGLE HEIGHTS SPANISH IMMERSION STAFF





STRATEGY 5:

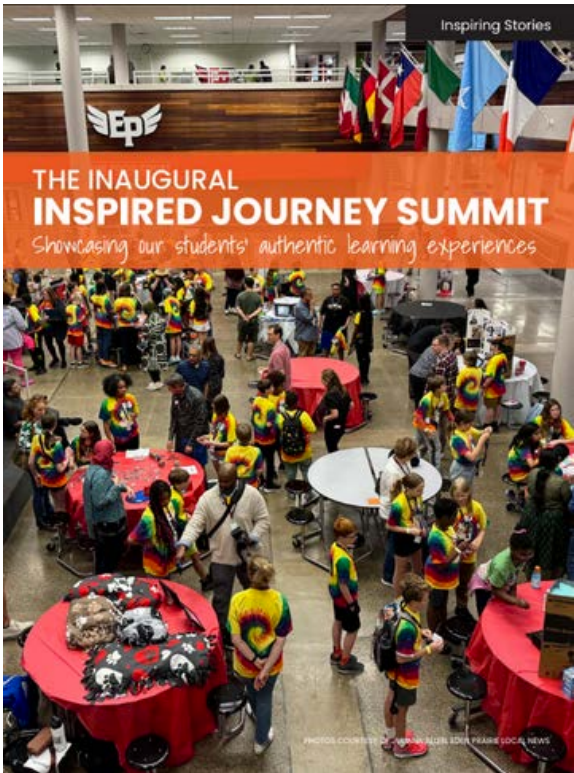
DEEPEN A SENSE OF DISTRICT IDENTITY FOR STAKEHOLDERS

**INSPIRED JOURNEY SUMMIT (May 2024):** The Inspired Journey is the vision we have for each student in Eden Prairie Schools. It's the implementation of our mission: To inspire each student to learn continuously so they are empowered to reach personal fulfillment and contribute purposefully to our ever-changing world. Each student's Inspired Journey is uniquely tailored to their interests as they discover, explore, and pursue their passions during their time in our schools.

The Inspired Journey Summit was established in 2024 as a year-end event to showcase the many ways students have individually experienced the Inspired Journey throughout the school year. The first-ever Summit, which took place at Eden Prairie High School, was an incredible success. Hundreds of Eden Prairie Schools students grades 5-12 displayed and presented projects that showed staff, community partner judges, families and friends their authentic academic journey during our 100th year.



LANYARD FOR STUDENT PARTICIPANTS



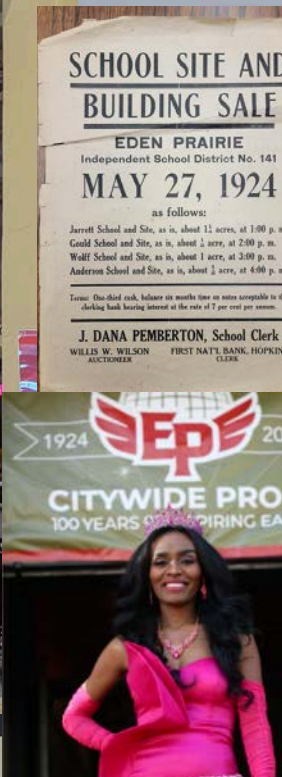
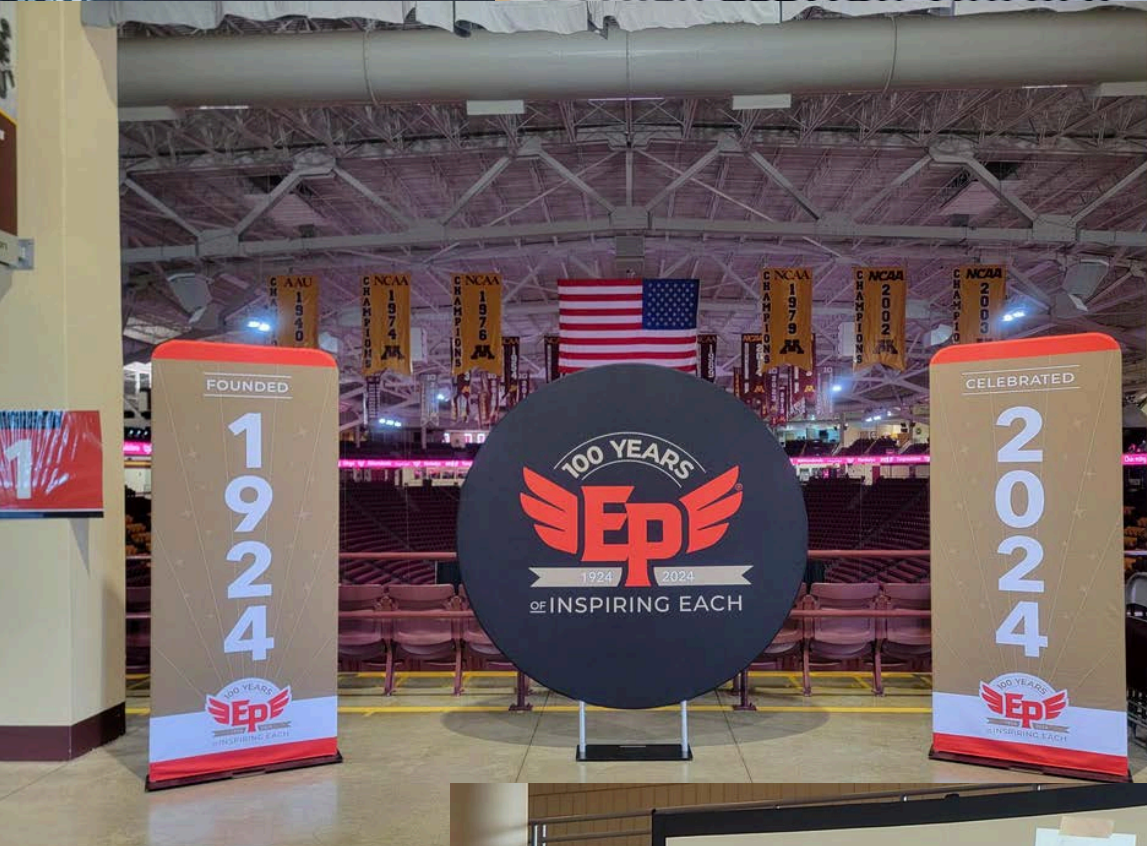
SPREAD IN INAUGURAL INSPIRE MAGAZINE



Signs welcomed families and community members to the inaugural Inspired Journey Summit on May 22

EXCERPT FROM EDEN PRAIRIE LOCAL NEWS









**100 YEARS**  
**OF INSPIRING EACH**  
**CAMPAIGN**