



EdVisions

Newsletter

September 2017

Our mission is to help create and transform schools. **Our vision** is to work with public and private partners to help create schools that prepare students for college, careers and global citizenship using the most student-centered teaching and learning.

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EdVisions Redesigned to Support Transformative Learning!

Dr. Lisa Snyder | Executive Director
(Adapted from EdVisions Schools Development Plan)

EdVisions Schools has been successfully serving the public high schools market in the U.S. since 2000. Our redesign launches us into an ambitious and comprehensive effort to scale this success and further strengthen the network of innovative schools created and supported by the EdVisions team of professional educators.

The hallmark of EdVisions Schools is innovation: the development of schools that fundamentally challenge

and change nearly everything about teaching and learning. Beginning in 1994 with our flagship school, the Minnesota New Country School in Henderson, Minnesota, we are the only organization that has successfully implemented a self-directed project-based learning model and a teacher-leader governance system—core elements of our model and competitive advantage. The need has never been more evident, and we feel strongly our strategy is in step with the demand created by a changing, global economy, increased diversity and the advent of new technology. Our model, which integrates innovative practices to address standards, motivation, personalization, learning styles and technology, continues to show great promise with students of all levels of ability and varying economic status.

Our goal in this redesign is to work toward two major outcomes: to create a more productive and supportive network of innovative schools and to better prepare educators to implement a personalized model of teaching and learning.

First and foremost, we are committed to strengthening our network. As a result, we will further formalize and build our network to better serve our partners in the areas of network activities, professional development, communication and assessment tools. Second, we aim to re-double our efforts around preparing teachers to implement the EdVisions teaching and learning model. This will involve the creation of new strategies to improve professional development such as highly customized services and by offering immersive learning experiences with our partner schools. Third, we will dramatically improve the tools to assist our schools in project tracking and assessment. Fourth, our plan includes a strategy aimed at helping some of the most needy of our school communities.

EdVisions is committed to working with charter, traditional district schools and private school partners to transform learning!

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Helping Create Transformative Strategic Plans

Dr. Steven J. Rippe | Professional Development Associate

Strategic planning done well is a powerful tool for any group. As I work with schools around the country, people often ask what they can do to create strategic plans that have more meaning and positive impact. Strategic planning is an art form and like many art forms, you can rush through it or you can be very thoughtful and take your time. Each organization is different and so each group needs a strategic planning process based on where they are at as an organization and the issues that are challenging the school. Avoid the strategic planning trap of always doing the same model and going through the process too quickly. Ideally I want to see strategic plans that are informed by everyone in the school. Looking back at organizations that I have worked with that have become world-class schools, their strategic planning process had these five common elements:

The process is authentic and inclusive. It is important that we invite everyone to the table and we create an environment that is safe and welcoming for all ideas and opinions. The good, the bad and the ugly.

The process is transformative. Transformation is about getting to root issues and opportunities that make a significant difference and will result in positive change both for individuals and the organization. Establish a transformation mindset to set the stage for positive change.

The process is engaging. Make the content continuously connect with the voices of the stakeholders, their input drives the process not an agenda created in isolation, this creates deeper meaning and ownership. When you meet, the process is well facilitated, efficient and productive.

The process builds community. Make it a priority that each step of the strategic planning process builds the sense of team and community. Sharing ideas and our differences is as important as sharing food and having fun.

The process produces results. We have a plan and a team that owns the work. We have a process in place to review and tune the plan, milestones and a commitment to recognize our successes and limitations. We invite someone from outside our organization to help us see our blind spots and remind us when we are being successful.

If you would like help with your strategic planning, please contact EdVisions-
Dr. Steven J. Rippe
stevenrippe@edvisions.org | 612-735-2522

Testimonials

"We are still buzzing with positive vibes from Steve's visit. ...Steve was thoroughly engaging throughout the whole day, he kept the staff at the edge of their seats and left us with a number of ideas/take-a-ways with our staff. He got us thinking and wanting more. It is has not been easy to find someone to push innovation the way Steve does."

Brandon N. Wait, LSC
Executive Director
Paladin Career & Technical High School

"Wow! Today's Strengthsfinder workshop was perfect - Thank you Steven for all the coordinating, planning and fun activities. The thoughtful personal connections you made in conversation with me and the staff were very kind. ...Because of your afternoon session, everyone left work today feeling affirmed, positive and energized"

Dr. Joan Arbisi Little
CAREER PATHWAYS

There's still time to administer the Hope Survey in Fall 2017!

New students should take the survey within the first 2 weeks of school to establish a baseline.

All students take the survey in the Spring and growth can be measured in Hope, Engagement, Academic Press, Goal Orientation, Autonomy, and Belongingness.

We developed new reports to show cohort growth - a key metric for your school.

For more information visit hopesurvey.org to get started!



Summer Training Prepares Teachers for Personalized Learning

Krissy Wright | Professional Development Director

The Ed°Essentials are a guideline of the principles and practices of the EdVisions Model. The main components are: Authentic Learning Community, Personalized Learning, Authentic Assessment and Teacher-ownership/Democratic Governance.

This summer, EdVisions had the opportunity to work with dynamic teams at Career Pathways and CHOICE Technical Academy to take deeper dives into the Ed°Essentials to develop personalized programs either from the ground up or building on existing systems. We explored advisories, modeled activities and practices to engage students and conducted guided project brainstorming sessions.

We also had the opportunity to do follow-up, customized trainings to more clearly define committee systems to further promote teacher ownership and democratic governance.

EdVisions staff is equipped to provide customized coaching to meet any needs including school start up, strategic planning and board work.

If you have any questions or would like to set up a training or personal coaching, contact Krissy Wright, Professional Development Specialist, at krissywright@edvisions.org or **text/call 612.601.1093**.



Meet our Board Members



Dr. Trish Harvey is an Assistant Professor in the School of Education with an emphasis in Advanced Learning Technologies at Hamline University. Trish's background includes over 18 years of K-16 experience including teaching social studies, facilitating graduate students

in their pursuit of advanced degrees and serving as a district digital learning administrator. Her technology related experiences include an 1-1 iPad implementation roll-out, the development of online and hybrid courses, district-wide professional development around technology goals, and a Bring-Your-Own-

Device district initiative. Focus areas of scholarship and research include: the use of digital tools for learning and assessment, fostering quality online learning experiences and relationships between students and instructors and educational transformation via policy and technology.



Keely Brenno is Communications Director at UnitedHealthcare. Keely's background includes 15 years of experience leading internal and external communications,

public relations and crisis communication strategies for health care, financial, operations and technology organizations. Her professional experiences including strategic planning

and senior executive coaching, program management and staff development. Previously, Keely held leadership positions at Optum, Ameriprise Financial and Wells Fargo.



Jay Haugen currently serves as Superintendent of Schools for Farmington Area Public Schools. Previously, he served as superintendent in West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan School District. Jay has served as Minnesota Association of School Administrators president and was instrumental in creating and supporting legislation to support more innovation in Minnesota's public schools. Under his leadership, Farmington

school district became the first educational "Innovation Zone" in Minnesota. He has encouraged Farmington teachers and staff to innovate and create progressive educational models to meet the demands of the global economy. As a result, Farmington has implemented one-to one devices to leverage technology to personalize learning. Teachers have created flexible learning spaces and schedules and have implemented more active, relevant learning

pedagogy that has heightened student engagement for learning. Recently, teachers in the district have created new options for learning that incorporate best practices of interdisciplinary learning, competency-based instruction and self-directed learning. High school teachers were awarded a Minnesota Department of Education Teacher Governed Schools Grant to plan and create a school with more teacher and student autonomy and agency.



Dr. Janice Porter is an experienced instructional leader with numerous years serving as a principal, teacher and director in both traditional and non-traditional school systems. She has worked for Burnsville Eagan Savage Schools for the past twenty years as a teacher and currently serves as the principal

at the Burnsville Alternative School. She has co-authored five books, and co-founded a charter school in Minneapolis called, Friendship Academy of the Arts which was honored as a National Blue Ribbon School in 2016-17. She earned her doctorate in education from Bethel University.

Janice is passionate about helping students learn. She believes in high academic expectations for all students regardless of their circumstances, and she believes every child can reach their full potential and excel academically, emotionally and socially in a caring and nurturing environment.



Dr. Walter Enloe is Professor Emeritus at Hamline University after forty five years of teaching and leadership. He began his career at the Paideia School in Atlanta teaching K-12 and earning his doctorate in human studies at Emory University. For several years he taught the normative child development rotation for pediatric and child psychiatry residents at Emory's medical school, and consulted a county health department on children mental health in daycare centers. In 1980 he became lead teacher and headmaster of Hiroshima International School, Japan

and over the next eight years helped to establish HIS as the "international school of peace and culture." He came to the University of Minnesota in 1988 to direct the rural component of the National Models School Project in Global Education under the leadership of John Goodlad. Over the next six years he worked closely with schools developing multicultural and international programs, was the university liaison for one of the pilot schools in Ernest Boyer's Basic School network, and partnered with Harry Boyte's Center for Democracy and Citizenship in the H.H Humphrey Institute.

He joined the Hamline faculty in 1994 and for the past twenty three years co-created and co-developed the university's MAED and EDD Learning Community programs. He began working with public chartering in the 1990s and consulted on developing Twin Cities Academy and Avalon School; he has worked as a consultant and board member for EdVisions since 2001. His professional work-life may be found at walterenloe.com



Jon Schroeder's career in public affairs and journalism has spanned more than 45 years. He is a senior fellow with Education Evolving, having been associated with EIE and previous joint ventures of the Center for Policy Design and Hamline University since 1996. From 1996 to 2003, Jon was founding director of Charter Friends National Network (CFNN), which linked more than 75 state-level charter school leaders. He then led the transition from CFNN to

the National Alliance for Charter Public Schools and served on the Alliance's board of directors and executive committee and chaired its policy committee. Once the CFNN/Alliance transition was complete, he became EIE's coordinator, then administrative partner, until his retirement from Hamline University in 2014. Jon has also held volunteer leadership positions in a number of organizations during this period, including service as a director and board chair of two Minnesota-based national

non-profits, the National Youth Leadership Council and EdVisions, Inc. Previously, he was appointed to state commissions on education policy and service learning by Governors Al Quie, Rudy Perpich and Arne Carlson. In 2012, his national leadership on education policy and reform was recognized through his induction into the National Charter School Hall of Fame.



Doug Thomas is an entrepreneur and former teacher, and was the founding Executive Director of EdVisions Schools from 2000-2012. Doug was also a founder of the Minnesota New Country School and the founding president of EdVisions Cooperative, the affiliated teacher professional practice cooperative. He spent ten years as Southern

Minnesota representative for the Center for School Change at the Humphrey Institute at the University of Minnesota and served as a board member of Le Sueur-Henderson Public Schools for four terms.

Doug is a strong advocate for small public schools, teacher leadership and innovative learning strategies and has a

special interest in sustainable community development. He earned a B.S. in Secondary Education from Bemidji State University and a Masters Degree in Educational Leadership from Minnesota State University-Mankato, where he taught a graduate course in educational reform and leadership for ten years.

Meet our Staff



After working in public education as a teacher, principal, technology director, curriculum director and superintendent, **Dr. Lisa Snyder** brings a balanced perspective and passion for new ideas as the **Executive Director** of EdVisions.



Dr. Ron Newell is the great mind behind EdVisions' research and assessment work and is developing the next generation of research tools to serve our schools and students as the **Assessment Director**.



Krissy Wright is a former school director and special education teacher who can help schools work through any challenge - big or small - as our **Professional Development Director**.



Her experience as an administrative professional in the public school system makes **Mary Moening** the ideal person to bring calm to chaos as our **Office Manager and Finance Assistant**.



With a depth of knowledge of EdVisions as well as the state and national conversations on education since the start of the charter movement, **Doug Thomas** helps create and strengthen relationships with key foundations and partners as the **Director of Development**.



Signe Swenson is a creative problem solver who works to keep all of our gears moving along as the **Director of Finance and Operations**.



With a variety of experience teaching and working in education research, **Dr. Steven Rippe** can help your school utilize data and student perspectives to implement whole school improvement plans as the **Director of the Hope Survey**.

EdVisions Launches Research and Evaluation Plan

By Dr. Ron Newell | Research & Assessment

Re-creating the EdVisions network is an exciting endeavor. Those of us who were there at the beginning know how important this work can be. In order to fulfill our vision and mission, we as an organization have created an evaluation plan I believe will generate data that will provide irrefutable proof that innovative, student-centered schools prepare young people for life and success.

The EdVisions Comprehensive Evaluation Plan has asked that network partners track data from a variety of sources: basic skills tests, student self-perception surveys, life skill development, and graduate success. Student progression through the schools then may be tracked in order to provide a clear picture of growth and development.

Basic skills tests will utilize growth models, such as NWEA's Measure of Academic Progress. The self-perceptions surveys are a group of surveys that measure student engagement and hope through EdVisions' Hope survey. Life skills to be assessed are Self-Directed Learning and Collaboration/Interaction. Graduates will be tracked for college and work activity. As these different data sets are gathered, they will be part of a progression map of student growth, and will allow for correlative research.

We at EdVisions know, from earlier case studies, that there is a clear correlation between student's perceptions of their environments and their achievement. We believe the data generated will prove the point. But there are other reasons.

State data about schools, especially about small, project-based, individualized schools, does not in any way showcase their strengths. We also believe that we can augment annual reports, allowing schools to report their strengths and focus on their weaknesses. Correlating the data from all of the assessments will prove the validity of the concept that creating schools conducive to human development will also raise achievement. And having a network of schools exhibiting such growth will provide a stronger national voice.

Through a well-planned and well-carried out evaluation plan we will meet our vision and carry out our mission. Thus there will be a strong network of schools providing examples, and the pathway, for new and innovating schools.

ECMC Foundation Makes Generous Grant to Support Innovation

Doug Thomas | Development Director

An announcement in May was made by the ECMC Foundation that EdVisions would be their latest network grantee. Kyle Miller and Jenny Power, representing the ECMC Foundation traveled to Minnesota earlier in the year to tour EdVisions network schools, meet with EdVisions staff and board members and communicate the Foundation's vision for supporting innovation and network activities.

Based in Los Angeles, ECMC Foundation's mission is to inspire and

facilitate improvements that affect educational outcomes—especially among underserved populations—through evidence-based innovation. The Foundation makes investments in three focus areas: Teacher and Leader Development, College Success, and Career Readiness. It is one of several affiliates under the ECMC Group enterprise based in Minneapolis.

In making the announcement, Kyle Miller, Senior Program Director, expressed her confidence in EdVisions continuing to bring their strong

deeper learning model to more new and existing schools, students and educators. The grant will be used to launch an effort to create twenty five more network partners; some to be newly created and some to be transformed using the EdVisions model. Contact us through www.edvisions.org for more information or if you are interested in becoming an EdVisions partner.

[Click here for an overview of ECMC Foundation](#)

[Click here for press release](#)

We have moved to the Twin Cities!

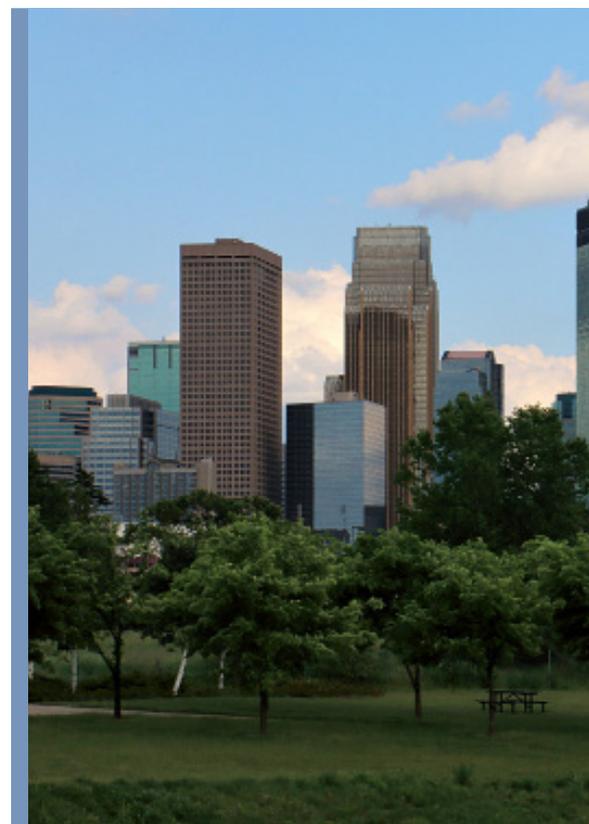
Signe Swenson | Director of Finance & Operations

After 20 years of being based in Henderson, Minnesota, EdVisions has officially moved to St. Paul. Henderson incubated our great ideas for so many years and was the origin of our awesome story. We started changing education with Minnesota New Country School (MNCS) and it has only grown exponentially from there. We want to thank everyone in that community who supported us when we were just a group of people with weird ideas about how students could learn. We couldn't have done it without you! And we won't be gone - MNCS remains an outstanding example of the model, and we will continue to highlight and support the great work of their advisors and students.

Our new home comes with a few exciting perks. Many of the EdVisions schools in Minnesota are located in the metro area, and with access to the Minneapolis International Airport, we're well situated to connect more easily with schools here and across the nation. And, thanks to our new partners at Technology and Information Educational Services (TIES), we can access their amazing events spaces that will allow us to develop new workshops and conferences to reach teachers throughout the school year.

A big thank you to everyone who supported us over the last 17 years! We look forward to inviting you to our new headquarters very soon.

Please update your address books: 1667 Snelling Ave N
St. Paul, MN 55108
(612) 601-1032





Our Approach

EdVisions' approach focuses on highly personalized learning. Through the training, teachers learn to create dynamic, student-centered learning experiences where they can achieve curriculum standards through rigorous, engaging projects that are driven by student interest and community/global connections. In schools that have embraced the EdVisions approach, educators experience a new level of professionalism by empowering them to develop systems of teacher governance and shared leadership.

Check Out

The **Ed**Essentials
Powered by EdVisions

The **Ed**Surveys
Powered by EdVisions

Social Media

f facebook.com/edvisionsinc

t twitter.com/edvisions

i instagram.com/edvisionsinc

Let's Keep In Touch

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