

About ISD 709

The Duluth Schools serve the city of Duluth and certain outlying areas beyond the city limits. This area constitutes 328 square miles. The majority of the schools serving the district lie within the city limits. These schools are located within or near a ribbon of land two miles wide and seventeen miles long which follows the shoreline of Lake Superior and the St. Louis River.

The Duluth School system currently provides service to 8,600 students in the city of Duluth and outlying townships, including PreK and ECFE programs and education at the Area Learning Center and Secondary Vocational Programs.

Independent School District 709 is committed to ensure that all requirements in hiring, training, promotion, personnel management practices and collective bargaining agreements are structured and administered in a manner which furthers equal employment principles.

Legislative Platform 2017

Thank you for supporting these important issues during the 2016 legislative session. In the Duluth Public Schools we strive to reach every student every day. We all play a role in helping the young people of our community to be successful. Your efforts help to improve our schools, our community, and our future!

**ISD
709 Duluth
Public Schools**

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Legislative Platform 2017



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General Education Funding

Increase the general education formula and provide an ongoing adjustment to protect against the negative impacts of inflation. Additional funding is needed in order to properly address many needs including reducing class size, retaining investments in PLCs, PBIS, and other efforts designed to reduce the achievement gap.

Mental Health Professionals

Essential mental health professionals have been reduced in an effort to maintain reasonable class sizes and programs as financial support of schools has fallen behind. Minnesota now has one of the highest counselor to student ratios in the country--at a time when mental and chemical health needs of students are an increasing priority. Ongoing fully funded positions are needed to sustain the availability of mental health professionals in all K-12 schools.

Special Education

Full funding of special education services as identified in state statute. Eliminate the special education expenditure disparity with charter schools.

Increase Support for Full-service Community Schools Model

Continue and expand the support of full-service community schools. This important work removes barriers to learning allowing all students to be more successful. Increasing the funding of this initiative will allow for additional sites to be included.

School Based Early Education Programs

Fully fund the expansion of school-based early education programs allowing for school district flexibility in implementation and design to best meet the needs of the local community.

Mandate Reform & Reduction

Mandates that have negative, unintended consequences should be considered for repeal or revision. Included would be system-wide technology infrastructure investments that would result in enhanced efficiency, eliminating mandated newspaper publishing that could be more effectively done via websites and provide funding to implement staff evaluation systems.

Election Enhancements

Increase the filing fee for school board candidates to a level equal with other local election candidates in order to more adequately offset the costs of providing required documents. In addition, allow the Duluth School District an opportunity to realize the cost reduction made possible by moving to even-year elections.

Removal of Rubber Mulch Playground Cover

The use of shredded rubber mulch for playground cover has become a topic of increasing concern among educators, parents, and community members. After months of reviewing research, a parent-led study of local materials, and community discussions, the Duluth School Board has supported the removal of shredded rubber mulch from playgrounds. It is required that rubber mulch is handled as a hazardous waste material requiring specially trained professionals to remove and track the disposal process. This further supports the concerns of stakeholders that shredded rubber may not be an appropriate material to be used on school playgrounds. We are requesting funding, or authorization to spend Long-Term Facilities Maintenance revenue, to replace shredded rubber mulch with another material.

Facilities Renewal

While there have been legislative actions to help some districts across the state to renew or rebuild aging school facilities, other communities who had already made investments did not receive that same support. Providing funding to subsidize these communities' projects, or removing debt service levy limit restrictions for debt relating to such projects, would bring equity to those districts who made investments prior to these changes.