

Duluth Public Schools 2026 Legislative Priorities

1. SCHOOL FUNDING (TOP PRIORITY)

Ensuring stable, equitable, and predictable resources for every student, every day.

State Education Aid

- Increase the general education formula for FY25–26 to address staffing shortages, student supports, salaries, inflation and learning recovery.

Fully Fund State-Mandated Programs

- Establish permanent funding for:
 - Unemployment Insurance for non-licensed staff
 - Paid family leave
 - Universal school meals
 - Grow Your Own educator pathways
- No unfunded mandates. New requirements must include full state funding.

Special Education

- Support Duluth-specific legislation reimbursing \$1 million for a state formula error (FY16–FY19) that forced DPS to absorb a \$5.8M gap.

Technology, Safety & Infrastructure

- Increase funding for instructional technology, cybersecurity, and tech support.
- Expand school safety resources.
- Increase LTFM revenue and provide greater flexibility in its use.
- Expand Solar for Schools and raise the grant cap to cover up to 100% of project costs.

Career & Technical Education

- Create permanent, dedicated funding for CTE equipment, supplies, and industry-aligned technology.

Transportation Aid

- Increase state transportation aid to reflect inflation and Duluth's geographic service area.

READ Act Implementation

- Fully fund literacy training, curriculum, coaching, and implementation supports.

2. SCHOOL POLICY

Creating a sustainable, modern policy environment for student learning and district operations.

No Unfunded Mandates

- Require full state funding for any newly imposed district responsibilities.

Expand Educator Workforce

- Broaden licensure pathways (science, music, media literacy, ABS, and other shortage areas).
- Support district flexibility in building diverse and effective educator pipelines.

Reserve Teacher Flexibility

- Reduce barriers to serving as a reserve teacher by easing requirements (e.g., removing the 4-year degree requirement).

3. STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

Prioritizing well-being so students can learn, grow, and thrive.

- Increase funding for school counselors, social workers, psychologists, and chemical-health staff.
- Strengthen school-based mental-health partnerships.
- Sustain resources for trauma-informed practices, prevention, and crisis supports.

4. THE DULUTH PROMISE

A coordinated regional workforce strategy supported by DPS, UMD, CSS, Lake Superior College, the Duluth Chamber, APEX, the City of Duluth, and the Duluth Workforce Development Board.

- Align K-12, higher education, employers, and training partners.
- Address projected workforce shortages and expand local career pathways for students.