

Monthly Committee of the Whole Board Meeting

Duluth Public Schools, ISD 709

Agenda

Thursday, September 4, 2025

District Services Center

709 Portia Johnson Dr.

Duluth, MN 55811

4:30 PM

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

2. **ROLL CALL**

3. **AGENDA ITEMS**

A. Strategic Plan Alignment

1) Advancing Equity - N/A

2) Improving Systems

a. Summary of 2024-2025 Superintendent Evaluation

3) Supporting Every Student

a. State Accountability Review

2

b. One-Time Supplemental Head Start Nutrition Grant

25

c. SRTS Planning Process

40

d. District Safety and Crisis Response Update

52

B. Budget Update - N/A

C. Other

4. **ADJOURN**

COW Agenda Cover Sheet

Meeting Date: September 4, 2025

Topic: **Every** Student Succeeds: Accountability

Presenter(s): Brenda Spartz / Jen Larva

Attachment:

Brief Summary of Presentation or Topic (no more than a few sentences):
State & Local Assessments and North Star Accountability

This Requires School Board Approval : No

Duluth Public Schools

Committee of the Whole

Supporting Every Student: Accountability

September 4, 2025

OUR MISSION

Every student, every day will be empowered with learning opportunities for growth, creativity and curiosity, in preparation for their future in a global community.

OUR VISION

Duluth Public Schools provides an academically engaging, safe and inclusive environment with high expectations and responsible use of resources.

OUR CORE VALUES

Learning



Developing a love of learning through life-long inquiry.

Excellence



Having high standards for all through accountability, integrity and authenticity.

Equity



Creating conditions of justice, fairness and inclusion so all students have access to the opportunities to learn and develop to their fullest potential.

Collaboration



Working in partnership with staff, families, students and community.

Belonging



Providing a welcoming and accessible environment where everyone feels safe, seen and heard.

**Today, we will be presenting and
discussing information pertaining to:**

State & Local Assessments Results
&
North Star Accountability Identification



STATE ASSESSMENT

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs)



2025 Reading MCA: By Grade & Overall

MCA Reading: By Grade 2024 VS 2025			
Grade	2024	2025	Increase or Decrease
	% Meets + Exceeds	% Meets + Exceeds	
3rd	47.7%	50.8%	3.1%
4th	54.1%	52.6%	-1.5%
5th	68.8%	66.0%	-2.8%
6th	58.9%	61.5%	2.6%
7th	53.6%	53.1%	-0.5%
8th	51.2%	52.2%	1.0%
10th	63.3%	53.8%	-9.5%
ALL	56.8%	55.7%	-1.1%

3rd, 6th, & 8th grades made gains on MCA Reading from 2024 to 2025...

MCA Reading: By Grade & Overall Duluth Compared to MN			
Grade	Duluth	MN	Comparison
	2025	2025	
	% Meets + Exceeds	% Meets + Exceeds	
3rd	50.8%	46.1%	4.7%
4th	52.6%	46.3%	6.3%
5th	66.0%	57.1%	8.9%
6th	61.5%	54.1%	7.4%
7th	53.1%	46.2%	6.9%
8th	52.2%	46.0%	6.2%
10th	53.8%	51.3%	2.5%
ALL	55.7%	49.6%	6.1%

All grades are above the state average in reading... every grade!

2025 Reading MCA: State Race / Ethnicity





MCA Reading: State Race / Ethnicity 2024 VS 2025			
State Race / Ethnicity	Duluth	Duluth	Comparison
	2024	2025	
	% Meets + Exceeds	% Meets + Exceeds	
American Indian	33.7%	35.5%	1.8%
Asian	74.4%	77.5%	3.1%
Hispanic or Latino	56.6%	57.1%	0.5%
Black or African Am	17.6%	20.8%	3.2%
Two or More Races	42.9%	39.4%	-3.5%
White	61.6%	60.5%	-1.1%


★ American Indian; Asian; Hisp/Latino; Black/ African American all realized increases in MCA Reading from 2024 to 2025.







MCA Reading: State Race/Ethnicity Duluth Compared to MN			
State Race / Ethnicity	Duluth	MN	Comparison
	2025	2025	
	% Meets + Exceeds	% Meets + Exceeds	
American Indian	35.5%	33.1%	2.4%
Asian	77.5%	44.4%	33.1%
Hispanic or Latino	57.1%	28.7%	28.4%
Black or African Am	20.8%	31.0%	-10.2%
Two or More Races	39.4%	50.4%	-11.0%
White	60.5%	58.7%	1.8%


★ Duluth students outperformed MN on average on Reading MCA 2025: American Indian; Asian; Hispanic/Latino; White.

2025 Reading MCA: Comparison Groups

MCA Reading: Comparison Groups 2024 VS 2025			
Comparison Groups	Duluth	Duluth	Comparison
	2024	2025	
	% Meets + Exceeds	% Meets + Exceeds	
Special Education	24.8%	24.8%	0.0% 
Not Special Education	51.9%	63.7%	11.8% 
Free or Reduced Meals	38.1%	37.3%	-0.8%
Not Free/Reduced Meals	58.6%	66.6%	8.0% 
English Learner (EL)	31.7%	28.2%	-3.5%
Not English Learner (EL)	46.8%	56.0%	9.2% 

 Some comparison groups had significant gains from 2024 to 2025: Not Spec Ed; Not Free/Reduced Meals; Not EL.

MCA Reading: Comparison Groups Duluth Compared to MN			
Comparison Groups	Duluth	MN	Comparison
	2025	2025	
	% Meets + Exceeds	% Meets + Exceeds	
Special Education	24.8%	25.1%	-0.3% 
Not Special Education	63.7%	54.6%	9.1% 
Free or Reduced Meals	37.3%	32.6%	4.7% 
Not Free/Reduced Meals	66.6%	61.1%	5.5% 
English Learner (EL)	28.2%	9.9%	18.3% 
Not English Learner (EL)	56.0%	54.4%	1.6% 

 When compared with MN, Duluth students outperformed the state on Reading MCA 2025 across most comparison groups.

2025 Reading MCA: By Cohorts

	Stowe			Myers-Wilkins			Laura MacArthur			Piedmont			Congdon Park		
	2024	2025	Cohort	2024	2025	Cohort	2024	2025	Cohort	2024	2025	Cohort	2024	2025	Cohort
'25 3rd		14.7%			40.4%			31.5%			50.0%			64.7%	
'24 3rd to '25 4th	26.3%	32.4%	6.1%	17.0%	20.4%	3.4%	25.6%	34.1%	8.5%	37.3%	63.9%	26.6%	59.8%	64.6%	4.8%
'24 4th to '25 5th	30.6%	45.9%	15.3%	12.5%	20.9%	8.4%	24.4%	36.4%	12.0%	42.6%	58.8%	16.2%	74.7%	89.0%	14.3%
Overall		31.5%			27.8%			33.8%			57.6%			73.9%	

	Lowell ENG/Ojibwe			Lakewood			Homecroft			Lester Park			Lowell Spanish		
	2024	2025	Cohort	2024	2025	Cohort	2024	2025	Cohort	2024	2025	Cohort	2024	2025	Cohort
'25 3rd		40.0%			74.0%			60.3%			57.3%			52.5%	
'24 3rd to '25 4th	37.2%	45.5%	8.3%	72.9%	63.0%	-9.9%	68.1%	57.5%	-10.6%	61.0%	61.5%	0.5%	43.1%	55.1%	12.0%
'24 4th to '25 5th	52.9%	57.4%	4.5%	73.7%	84.6%	10.9%	65.4%	81.8%	16.4%	66.3%	75.0%	8.7%	59.6%	65.2%	5.6%
Overall		47.7%			73.3%			66.8%			65.0%			57.1%	

	All Elementary		
	2024	2025	Cohort
'25 3rd		50.1%	
'24 3rd to '25 4th	47.7%	52.6%	4.9%
'24 4th to '25 5th	54.1%	66.2%	12.1%
Overall		56.3%	

90% of the elem cohorts (4th & 5th grades) had growth in reading!

 = Double Digit Growth

2025 Math MCA: By Grade & Overall

MCA Math: By Grade 2024 VS 2025			
Grade	2024	2025	Increase or Decrease
	% Meets + Exceeds	% Meets + Exceeds	
3rd	57.8%	59.1%	1.3%
4th	58.0%	57.1%	-0.9%
5th	50.2%	45.4%	-4.8%
6th	36.8%	37.2%	0.4%
7th	38.8%	43.1%	4.3%
8th	45.0%	37.5%	-7.5%
11th	37.5%	33.7%	-3.8%
ALL	46.9%	45.1%	-1.8%

3rd, 6th, & 7th grades made gains on MCA Math from 2024 to 2025...

MCA Math: By Grade & Overall Duluth Compared to MN			
Grade	Duluth	MN	Comparison
	2025	2025	
	% Meets + Exceeds	% Meets + Exceeds	
3rd	59.1%	57.9%	1.2%
4th	57.1%	55.6%	1.5%
5th	45.4%	42.9%	2.5%
6th	37.2%	40.1%	-2.9%
7th	43.1%	40.9%	2.2%
8th	37.5%	41.9%	-4.4%
11th	33.7%	35.0%	-1.3%
ALL	45.1%	45.2%	-0.1%

3rd, 4th, 5th, & 7th grades outperformed the state on average in math...

2025 Math MCA: State Race / Ethnicity

MCA Math: State Race / Ethnicity 2024 VS 2025			
State Race / Ethnicity	Duluth	Duluth	Comparison
	2024	2025	
	% Meets + Exceeds	% Meets + Exceeds	
American Indian	19.8%	18.0%	-1.8%
Asian	79.5%	71.8%	-7.7%
Hispanic or Latino	48.6%	43.1%	-5.5%
Black or African Am	9.0%	13.1%	4.1%
Two or More Races	29.8%	27.9%	-1.9%
White	51.9%	50.4%	-1.5%

★ Black / African American students realized a 4.1% increase in MCA Math from 2024 to 2025.

MCA Math: State Race/Ethnicity Duluth Compared to MN			
State Race / Ethnicity	Duluth	MN	Comparison
	2025	2025	
	% Meets + Exceeds	% Meets + Exceeds	
American Indian	18.0%	24.9%	-6.9%
Asian	71.8%	43.1%	28.7%
Hispanic or Latino	43.1%	22.4%	20.7%
Black or African Am	13.1%	22.5%	-9.4%
Two or More Races	27.9%	43.6%	-15.7%
White	50.4%	55.4%	-5.0%

★ Duluth Asian and Hispanic/Latino students outperformed MN on average on Math MCA 2025.

2025 Math MCA: Comparison Groups

MCA Math: Comparison Groups 2024 VS 2025			
Comparison Groups	Duluth	Duluth	Comparison
	2024	2025	
	% Meets + Exceeds	% Meets + Exceeds	
Special Education	23.4%	20.1%	-3.3%
Not Special Education	51.9%	51.6%	-0.3%
Free or Reduced Meals	28.8%	26.4%	-2.4%
Not Free/Reduced Meals	58.6%	56.1%	-2.5%
English Learner (EL)	35.7%	37.1%	1.4%
Not English Learner (EL)	46.8%	45.2%	-1.6%



English Learners made gains in math from 2024 to 2025.

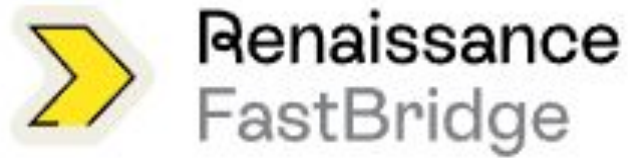
MCA Math: Comparison Groups Duluth Compared to MN			
Comparison Groups	Duluth	MN	Comparison
	2025	2025	
	% Meets + Exceeds	% Meets + Exceeds	
Special Education	20.1%	24.3%	-4.2%
Not Special Education	51.6%	49.5%	2.1%
Free or Reduced Meals	26.4%	26.5%	-0.1%
Not Free/Reduced Meals	56.1%	57.8%	-1.7%
English Learner (EL)	37.1%	12.6%	24.5%
Not English Learner (EL)	45.2%	49.2%	-4.0%



When compared with MN, Duluth students not qualified for special education and ELL students outperformed the state on Math MCA 2025.

LOCAL ASSESSMENT

FastBridge



FastBridge: Kindergarten

Early Reading English Composite			
Percent of K Meeting Expected Benchmark			
Assessment Year	Fall	Spring	Increase/ Decrease
2021-2022	51.3%	35.5%	-15.8%
2022-2023	53.4%	38.9%	-14.5%
2023-2024	57.2%	46.2%	-11.0%
2024-2025	59.8%	44.7%	-15.1%
Avg Over 4 Yrs	55.4%	41.3%	-14.1%

Early Math Composite			
Percent of K Meeting Expected Benchmark			
Assessment Year	Fall	Spring	Increase/ Decrease
2021-2022	65.9%	67.9%	2.0%
2022-2023	65.5%	66.6%	1.1%
2023-2024	73.2%	67.0%	-6.2%
2024-2025	72.1%	68.8%	-3.3%
Avg Over 4 Yrs	69.2%	67.6%	-1.6%

Subskill - Letters Sounds			
Percent of K Meeting Expected Benchmark			
Assessment Year	Fall	Spring	Increase/ Decrease
2021-2022	38.9%	36.0%	-2.9%
2022-2023	34.6%	44.8%	10.2%
2023-2024	47.9%	54.3%	6.4%
2024-2025	46.5%	52.3%	5.8%
Avg Over 4 Yrs	42.0%	46.9%	4.9%

Sub-skill screening assessment letter sound per minute for fluency is a predictor for future successful reading skills.

FastBridge: 1st Grade

Early Reading English Composite			
Percent of 1st G Meeting Expected Benchmark			
Assessment Year	Fall	Spring	Increase/ Decrease
2021-2022	29.6%	45.8%	16.2%
2022-2023	36.6%	53.6%	17.0%
2023-2024	34.2%	52.2%	18.0%
2024-2025	38.4%	47.9%	9.5%
Avg Over 4 Yrs	34.7%	49.9%	15.2%

Early Math Composite			
Percent of 1st G Meeting Expected Benchmark			
Assessment Year	Fall	Spring	Increase/ Decrease
2021-2022	63.1%	65.0%	1.9%
2022-2023	66.5%	71.0%	4.5%
2023-2024	69.0%	67.2%	-1.8%
2024-2025	69.9%	62.2%	-7.7%
Avg Over 4 Yrs	67.1%	66.4%	-0.8%

FastBridge: 2nd Grade

Fast aReading			
Percent of 2nd G Meeting Expected Benchmark			
Assessment Year	Fall	Spring	Increase/ Decrease
2021-2022	43.5%	56.2%	12.7%
2022-2023	47.6%	57.0%	9.4%
2023-2024	51.5%	58.0%	6.5%
2024-2025	54.6%	58.5%	3.9%
Avg Over 4 Yrs	49.3%	57.4%	8.1%

Fast aMath			
Percent of 2nd G Meeting Expected Benchmark			
Assessment Year	Fall	Spring	Increase/ Decrease
2021-2022	59.2%	61.7%	2.5%
2022-2023	62.8%	63.3%	0.5%
2023-2024	62.1%	64.2%	2.1%
2024-2025	63.2%	61.5%	-1.7%
Avg Over 4 Yrs	61.8%	62.7%	0.8%

North Star Accountability



North Star Accountability

Overarchingly...

MN North Star system designed to fulfill requirements of federal **Every Student Succeeds Act** (ESSA)

- Signed into law December 2015

Identification

- Identification occurs every 3 years
 - **2025-2026: Year 1** in current cycle
 - Next identification - August 2028
- Identify individual schools for support based on student groups not meeting expected outcomes or continuing to not meet thresholds




As a side note...

- *North Star Accountability* uses complicated calculations for reporting data. Hence, data accessed through “*North Star*”, as cited on [MDE Report Card](#), will not equal the basic data reported for general year to year proficiency (students meeting or exceeding the standards on MCAs for math, reading, or consistent attendance).

North Star Accountability

3 Stages: Identification Process

- 
- **Stage 1**
 - Math Achievement
 - Reading Achievement
 - Progress Toward English Language (EL) Proficiency
 - **Stage 2**
 - Math Progress (elem/middle schools)
 - Reading Progress (elem/middle schools)
 - 4 & 7 year grad rates (high schools)
 - **Stage 3**
 - Consistent Attendance

2 Types of Support for Schools

Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI)

- Title I schools performing in lowest 5% in MN
- High schools 4-year grad rate below 67% overall or for any student group
- Schools where same student group performs below thresholds for at least one indicator in each stage for two identification cycles in a row

Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI)

- Schools where one or more student groups are performing at or below thresholds for at least one indicator in each stage

Non-Exit

- CSI or TSI schools that have not yet met the exit criteria from a previous identification cycle.
- ❖ District will provide support for all levels for 2025-2026.
- ❖ District level support will come from *COMPASS through the NorthEast Service Cooperative (MDE).

*COMPASS = Collaborative Minnesota Partnerships to Advance Student Success (statewide system of continuous improvement)

Duluth North Star Accountability: 2025 Identification

School	2025		
	Support Level	Student Group	Reason
Myers-Wilkins	Targeted	American Indian	Multi-yr avg below thresholds on at least 1 indicator per stage
		Black/ African American	Multi-yr avg below thresholds on at least 1 indicator per stage
		2 or More Races	Multi-yr avg below thresholds on at least 1 indicator per stage
		Free/Reduced	Multi-yr avg below thresholds on at least 1 indicator per stage
			Below performance thresholds in each of the last 3 yrs on at least 1 indicator per stage
		Spec Ed	Multi-yr avg below thresholds on at least 1 indicator per stage
			Below performance thresholds in each of the last 3 yrs on at least 1 indicator per stage
		White	Multi-yr avg below thresholds on at least 1 indicator per stage
	Comprehensive	Overall	Lowest 5% of Title I Schools
		Black	Continue - did not meet thresholds
		Spec Ed	Continue - did not meet thresholds
Congdon	Comprehensive	Spec Ed	Did not meet exit criteria

Non-exit

Non-exi21

Non-exit

Duluth North Star Accountability: 2025 Identification

School	2025		
	Support Level	Student Group	Reason
Laura MacArthur	Targeted	Spec Ed	Multi-yr avg below thresholds on at least 1 indicator per stage
	Comprehensive	Spec Ed	Multi-yr avg below thresholds; at least 1 indicator per stage; last 2 cycles
		Free/Reduced	Multi-yr avg below thresholds; at least 1 indicator per stage; last 2 cycles
		2 or More	Multi-yr avg below thresholds; at least 1 indicator per stage; last 2 cycles
Stowe	Targeted	Spec Ed	Multi-yr avg below thresholds on at least 1 indicator per stage
	Comprehensive	Spec Ed	Did not meet exit criteria
		Free/Reduced	Did not meet exit criteria
Piedmont	Targeted	American Ind	Multi-yr avg below thresholds on at least 1 indicator per stage
	Comprehensive	Spec Ed	Did not meet exit criteria
Lowell ENG/Ojibwe	Targeted	American Ind	Multi-yr avg below thresholds on at least 1 indicator per stage
	Comprehensive	Spec Ed	Did not meet exit criteria
ALC Independent Study	Comprehensive	Overall	4 Yr Grad Rate

Non-exit

Non-exit

Non-exit

Non-exit

22





Contact Information

Brenda Spartz

Director of Elementary Education

brenda.spartz@isd709.org

Jen Larva

Director of Secondary Education

jen.larva@isd709.org

COW Agenda Cover Sheet

Meeting Date: September 4, 2025

Topic: One-Time Supplemental Head Start Nutrition Grant

Presenter(s): Barbara Eckberg, Head Start Director

Attachment: grant narrative and signature page

Brief Summary of Presentation or Topic (no more than a few sentences):

Duluth Head Start has applied for a \$5000.00 one-time supplemental nutrition grant. Taste and Non-Taste Experiences for Preschool Children offering taste, dramatic play, sensory, and literacy activities to promote fruit and vegetable exposure in the preschool classroom.

This Requires School Board Approval : Signature of the Governing Board is required by September 5, 2025 to meet the OHS priority deadline.

One-Time Head Start Supplemental Nutrition Grant

Requested funds from the Office of Head Start

OUR MISSION

Every student, every day will be empowered with learning opportunities for growth, creativity and curiosity, in preparation for their future in a global community.

OUR VISION

Duluth Public Schools provides an academically engaging, safe and inclusive environment with high expectations and responsible use of resources.

OUR CORE VALUES

Learning



Developing a love of learning through life-long inquiry.

Excellence



Having high standards for all through accountability, integrity and authenticity.

Equity



Creating conditions of justice, fairness and inclusion so all students have access to the opportunities to learn and develop to their fullest potential.

Collaboration



Working in partnership with staff, families, students and community.

Belonging



Providing a welcoming and accessible environment where everyone feels safe, seen and heard.

The requested one-time funds for nutrition and health, through the Office of Head Start, log number ACF-OHS-PI-25-02 will focus on grant area 3: Nutrition and Education Resources for Head Start children in the Duluth Preschool classroom setting.

The requested funds will be used to promote taste and non-taste exposures for the children in each of the 13 Head Start classes. Duluth Preschool Head Start children will have the opportunity to taste new, novel, and familiar fruits and vegetables, paired with literacy and classroom community activities.

Both the taste and non-taste fruits and vegetables experiences will take place 2 times per month, in each of the 13 Duluth Preschool Head Start classes, from December 2025 through May 2026.

The classroom teaching staff will be guided by the Head Start Nutrition Coordinator and Head Start Education Coordinator in the implementation of the taste and non-taste fruits and vegetables experiences and supporting activities.

Parents will be included in the experience through take-home ideas for increasing fruit and vegetable consumption in their preschoolers, shared through the ChildPlus platform.

A final take-home book will allow each Head Start family to try a taste and non-taste fruit and vegetable experience in their own home. Parents will be prompted to explore taste, texture, colors, and descriptive vocabulary in the home setting, providing an effective and appropriate way to improve fruit and vegetable intake in their preschool children.

The budget for this proposal includes the taste component of the experience of \$2000.00 for fresh fruits and vegetables, based on the July 2025 USDA food price outlook. The budget will also include \$3000.00 for children's books depicting or including fruits and vegetables for the classrooms and each of the children's families. Duluth Preschool in-kind includes the service of the teaching staff, Nutrition Coordinator, Education Coordinator and ChildPlus Communication Platform. The total requested funds through the Office of Head Start, log number ACF-OHS-PI-25-02 for Head Start children in the Duluth Preschool is \$5000.00



Questions?

- Any questions?
- Comments?
- Concerns?
- Feedback?

Program Narrative

Duluth Preschool blends and braids funds, through a mixed delivery format, with funds from Head Start and the State of Minnesota. Duluth Preschool offers 13 class options in 8 elementary schools within the school boundaries of Independent School District 70, in Duluth, Minnesota. Duluth Preschool is an inclusive high quality early childhood program for children 3-5 years of age. Meeting each child in his or her developmental milestones allows the activities and experiences offered to strengthen and build a child's social emotional skills, language & literacy, health & nutrition, and physical skills. We are proud to be one of the first preschool programs in the state to earn a Four-Star Rating from Minnesota Parent Aware- the highest rating possible!

The Head Start student enrollment in the Duluth Preschool for the 2024-25 program year was 184 children, or 97% of the funded slots. 77 Head Start students were identified with developmental disabilities during the program year. The identified children were provided special education services in an inclusive preschool setting, the least restrictive environment. The health and wellness of the Duluth Preschool Head Start students includes 84% of students up to date on dental exams, 70% of students up to date on well-child checks, and 98% of children are up to date on immunizations.

The requested one-time funds for nutrition and health, through the Office of Head Start, log number ACF-OHS-PI-25-02 will focus on area 3: Nutrition and Education Resources for Head Start children in the Duluth Preschool classroom setting. The requested funds will be used to promote taste and non-taste exposures for the children in each of the 13 Head Start classes. Duluth Preschool Head Start children will have the opportunity to taste new, novel, and familiar fruits and vegetables, paired with literacy and classroom community activities. Research indicates that taste and non-taste exposures of food can increase preschool children's

willingness to engage with food exploration behaviors (Johnson, A.R., Johnson, N.R., 2025).

Non-taste exposures of food include sensory and visual exploration of the food, with a focus on new, novel, and familiar fruits and vegetables.

Additionally, the impact of visual exposure will also include exploring fruits and vegetables through preschool-appropriate books. Research indicates that stories and pictures of vegetables and (fruits) increase the willingness of preschoolers to taste them (Braga-Pontes, C., Simoes-Dias, S., Lages, M., Guarino, M., Graca, P., 2021). Duluth Preschool Head Start children will have an opportunity to explore fruits and vegetables through a variety of books, shared in the classroom setting, paired with visual vocabulary cards, language, and dramatic play opportunities.

Both the taste and non-taste fruits and vegetables experiences will take place 2 times per month, in each of the 13 Duluth Preschool Head Start classes, from December 2025 through May 2026. The classroom teaching staff will be guided by the Head Start Nutrition Coordinator and Head Start Education Coordinator in the implementation of the taste and non-taste fruits and vegetables experiences and supporting activities. Parents will be included in the experience through take-home ideas for increasing fruit and vegetable consumption in their preschoolers, shared through the ChildPlus platform. A final take-home book will allow each Head Start family to try a taste and non-taste fruit and vegetable experience in their own home. Parents will be prompted to explore taste, texture, colors, and descriptive vocabulary in the home setting, providing an effective and appropriate way to improve fruit and vegetable intake in their preschool children.

Citations:

Braga-Pontes, C., Simoes-Dias, S., Lages, M., Guarino, M., Graca, P., Nutrition education strategies to promote vegetable consumption in preschool children: the Veggies4myHeart project, *Public Health Nutrition*, 25(4), 1061-1070.

Johnson, A.R., Johnson, N.R., To Taste or Not to Taste, A Narrative Review of the Effectiveness of Taste and Non-Taste Exposures on Dietary Intake of Head Start Children, *Nutrients*, 2025,17,1817.

Budget Narrative

The requested one-time funds for nutrition and health, through the Office of Head Start, log number ACF-OHS-PI-25-02 will focus on area 3: Nutrition and Education Resources for Head Start children in the Duluth Preschool classroom setting. The budget for this proposal includes the taste component of the experience of \$2000.00 for fresh fruits and vegetables, based on the July 2025 USDA food price outlook. The budget will also include \$3000.00 for children's books depicting or including fruits and vegetables for the classrooms and each of the children's families. Duluth Preschool in-kind includes the service of the teaching staff, Nutrition Coordinator, Education Coordinator and ChildPlus Communication Platform. The total requested funds through the Office of Head Start, log number ACF-OHS-PI-25-02 for Head Start children in the Duluth Preschool is \$5000.00

Link to slides

[OHS Supplemental Nutrition Grant Request](#)

Duluth Public Schools Federal Head Start One-Time Supplemental Nutrition Grant

Funding Type: OHS Nutrition Education and Resources

Total Request: \$5000.00

Grant Goals:

1. Taste exposure opportunities for preschool children in the classroom setting.
2. Non-taste experiences for preschool children in the classroom setting.
3. Parent engagement opportunities in the home setting, for both taste and non-taste fruit and vegetable exposure for the preschool child and his/her family.

Signatures indicate approval of the OHS grant application/request

_____ Kelly Durick-Eder, School Board Chairperson

_____ Date

_____ Kristi Meyer-Fladwood, Head Start Policy Council Chair

_____ Date

COW Agenda Cover Sheet

Meeting Date: 9/4/2025

Topic: Duluth SRTS Planning Process

Presenter(s): Andie Heil SRTS Coordinator, Gavin Bukovich ARDC Planner

Attachment:  Duluth SRTS COW Presentation.pptx

Brief Summary of Presentation or Topic (no more than a few sentences):

Duluth Safe Routes to School program was awarded a MnDOT Planning Assistance Grant in 2025 in the amount of \$260k+. The Duluth SRTS program is working to create a plan to make it safer and easier for K-8 students to walk, bike, and roll to school. This initiative is a collaboration between Duluth Public Schools and the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) and is funded by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT). The final product will be a strategic document to improve the city's pedestrian and bike network , which will also create opportunities for new grants to fund infrastructure and programming.

This Requires School Board Approval : No

Duluth Safe Routes to School Planning Assistance Process

Presented By:
Andie Heil - Duluth Safe Routes to School Coordinator
Gavin Bukovich - ARDC Planner

OUR MISSION

Every student, every day will be empowered with learning opportunities for growth, creativity and curiosity, in preparation for their future in a global community.

OUR VISION

Duluth Public Schools provides an academically engaging, safe and inclusive environment with high expectations and responsible use of resources.

OUR CORE VALUES

Learning



Developing a love of learning through life-long inquiry.

Excellence



Having high standards for all through accountability, integrity and authenticity.

Equity



Creating conditions of justice, fairness and inclusion so all students have access to the opportunities to learn and develop to their fullest potential.

Collaboration



Working in partnership with staff, families, students and community.

Belonging



Providing a welcoming and accessible environment where everyone feels safe, seen and heard.

Introductions

Andie Heil - Safe Routes to School Coordinator, DULuth Public Schools

Gavin Bukovich - Planner, Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) Email: gbukovich@ardc.org

ARDC has been selected as the planning and development organization to assist in creating a full-district Safe Routes to School Plan for Duluth Public Schools (ISD #709).

This planning process is funded by Minnesota Department of Transportation.

MnDOT SRTS - Program Overview

- The MnDOT Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program encourages K-8 students to walk, bike, and roll to school.
- It provides funding, planning, and educational resources for safety and infrastructure projects.
- The goal is to improve student physical activity, safety, and well-being, and reduce traffic and improving air quality around schools.
- The SRTS initiative includes both state and federal funding to support a variety of initiatives.



The 6 E's

SRTS programs improve safety, reduce traffic and improve air quality near schools through a multidisciplinary approach that is structured around the 6 E's.

- Evaluation: Figuring out what issues to address and how to make projects effective.
- Education: Teaching students and parents traffic safety skills and the benefits of walking and biking.
- Encouragement: Creating fun events and activities to get students and families excited about walking and biking to school.
- Equity: Making sure all students, especially those from underserved communities, benefit from the program.
- Engagement: Listening to the community—students, parents, and staff—to build a successful program together.
- Engineering: Making physical improvements like better crosswalks and signs to create safer routes.



The Benefits of Safe Routes to School

COMMUNITY CONNECTEDNESS

- Stronger student friendships & relationships through walking & biking together
- Positive social connections for families & neighbors



CLIMATE BENEFITS AND CLEANER AIR

- Fewer student asthma attacks due to less driving & reduced air pollution results
- Cleaner air & reduced greenhouse gas emissions



BETTER ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

- Better focus, improved concentration & less distraction for students who are active before school
- Fewer absences and less tardiness when students walk or bike in groups



TRAFFIC SAFETY

- Reduced traffic injuries & dangers for students and community members at arrival & dismissal through street improvements near schools
- More chances to learn & practice road safety for students



SAFETY FROM CRIME

- Increased safety from crime & violence due to more people on the streets, good lighting & better street design
- Less harassment, bullying, or violence when students walk or bike together or with adults



SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION FIXES

- Solutions to reduced or non-existent bus service through Safe Routes to School
- Reduced traffic congestion at pick-up/drop-off times



COST SAVINGS

- Household savings from reduced gas & car use
- Education budget savings through reduced student busing costs



SRTS Timeline - ARDC Scope of Work

- ❑ Task 1: Initial Contact with Project Applicant (July/August 2025)
- ❑ Task 2: Kick-Off Meetings (September/October 2025)
- ❑ Task 3: Data Collection (September-November 2025)
- ❑ Task 4: Data Assessment (December 2025)
- ❑ Task 5: Action Plan Development (January 2026)
- ❑ Task 6: Plan Development (February 2026)
- ❑ Task 7: Draft Plan (March 2026)
- ❑ Task 8: Local Plan Review (April 2026)
- ❑ Task 9: Final Plan Review (May 2026)
- ❑ Task 10: Plan Completion (May-June 2026)

**These tasks are currently outlined on a typical 12-month contract. However, given that this project is unique and under an 18-month contract; there will be some slight variabilities in the outlined timeline.

Data Collection Overview - Fall 2025

Duluth Public Schools:

- Parent/Caregiver Surveys
- Student Travel Tallies
- Pick Up/Drop Off Observations
- Student Population Density Maps
- School Environment and Policy Assessment
- Walk/Bike Audit Events
- School Zone Hazard Assessment

Other Data Collection (ARDC):

- Crash Data for the past 10 years
- Speed Data
- Average Daily Traffic Counts
- Qualitative data obtained through community meetings
- Any other data relevant to the planning process



Final Product - Duluth Public Schools SRTS Plan

The final product of this planning process will be a document that outlines strategic plan to make Duluth neighborhoods safer and more accessible for kids walking and biking to school.

This plan can serve as a strategic tool for improving the entire pedestrian and bike network in the City of Duluth and St. Louis County.

Funding Opportunities as a Result of the Planning Process

- **SRTS Boost Grants:** For communities with existing SRTS Plans, these grants fund non-infrastructure projects such as education, encouragement, and promotional activities to keep walking and biking safe and fun.
- **State-Funded SRTS Infrastructure Grants:** Provides funding for construction projects that improve access and safety on walking, biking, and rolling routes to schools, such as new sidewalks, trails, and improved crossings.
- **Active Transportation (AT) Program:** A grant program for projects that increase walking and bicycling. Future funds are expected to cover planning, infrastructure, and non-infrastructure projects.
- **Greater Minnesota Transportation Alternatives:** This is open to communities in Greater Minnesota for projects including bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
 - SRTS projects are eligible, but a 20% local match is typically required.



Questions?

- Any questions?
- Comments?
- Concerns?
- Feedback?

COW Agenda Cover Sheet

Meeting Date: Thursday, September 4, 2025

Topic: District Safety and Crisis Response Update

Presenter(s): Danette Seboe

Attachment: [Fall Updates 2025](#)

Brief Summary of Presentation or Topic (no more than a few sentences):
Updates to district Crisis Response and Safety Planning for 25-26 School Year

This Requires School Board Approval :
No

Fall 2025 Safety Updates

Duluth Public Schools
Committee of the Whole

Danette Seboe, Principal on Special Assignment



Core Planning Team

Team Lead (Principal), Communications, Mental Health, Safety

District EOC

All sites, all staff groups represented, meets at least monthly

Site EOCs

Led by principals, all staff groups represented, meets at least monthly

Mental Health Recovery

Co-chairs from core team, includes reps from social workers, counselors, school psychologists. Ready to respond always.

District Crisis Communication

Always kept in the loop. One contact for principals to manage. Always includes **Superintendents, Directors, Core Team** (see above), and as needed: SPED Directors, HR, Facilities, Food Service, Transportation, etc.

NEW in 25-26: PREPaRE Crisis Prevention and Intervention Training

- PREPaRE is an evidence based training curriculum from the National Association of School Psychologists
- Aligns well with our current work and with community response protocols (US Dep't of Ed REMS guidance, Homeland Security, FEMA Incident Command structures)
- Adds a focus on PREVENTION
- Training for building and EOC team leaders on full model
- Training for Mental Health team on risk, resilience, coping capacity, immediate supports
- Recognizes unique role of schools in supporting not just students but also staff, families, and often the local community
- Schools provide a safe haven, disseminate information, identifying individuals at risk, provide mental health services, tracking and supporting displaced families, supporting long term recovery, and generally serving as a focus of normalcy in the face of trauma.*

Standard Response Protocol

- This is year 2 of using the I Love You Guys Standard Response Protocol
- We will be ready for any scenario and ready to change our response if necessary.
- Any announcements are clear and won't use any codes.
- We will give as much information as we can to keep in announcements, including DRILL or NOT A DRILL.

- Using announcements and any other information (sounds, smells, sights, etc.) staff and students will follow instructions and make decisions.
- Remember to use what is seen and heard to make decisions about how to respond.
- New training continues for the Standard Reunification Method
- Brief reminder of the SRP follows:

SHELTER



In a shelter:

- Follow any announcements. (“Shelter for (Tornado). Go to (LOCATION). Shelter for (Tornado). Go to (LOCATION).”)
- Follow directions and try to stay together.
- Leave your belongings behind.
- Lead students to you where you need to shelter in the building.

If a shelter is called and you are in the hall or other common space, join another class and shelter with them on your own. Assist any stragglers.

HOLD



A hold happens when there is something happening in the halls and we need to keep them clear for safety and privacy.

In a hold:

- Follow directions from announcements. (“Hold in your room or area. Clear the halls. Hold in your room or area. Clear the halls.”)
- Stay in your room.
- Lock doors.
- Classes operate as normal, EXCEPT:
- If the bell rings, stay where you are until the hold is lifted.

If a hold is called and you are in the hall, go to the nearest⁵⁸ classroom and stay in that space until the hold is lifted.

SECURE



A secure happens when there is something happening in the community outside the school building.

In a secure:

- Follow directions from announcement. (“Secure! Get inside. Lock outside doors. Secure! Get inside. Lock outside doors.”)
- Stay inside the building—no one in, no one out. Classes outside should get in ASAP.
- We will run business as usual in the school, EXCEPT no open lunches for anyone.
- If you need to leave, go to the front office.
- If you are outside the building and need to get in, call the school office and wait away from the school in a safe area.

LOCKDOWN



A lockdown happens if something unsafe is happening in the building.

In a lockdown:

- Follow directions from announcement (“Lockdown! Locks, Lights, Out of sight. Lockdown! Locks, Lights, Out of sight.”)
- Remain behind a closed and locked door
- The class may decide to barricade the door
- Turn off lights and stay quiet
- Be ready to evacuate if that is a safe choice for you

If a lockdown is called and you are in the hall or other public space, go to the nearest classroom or exit the building and go to the evacuation site or your other school/office and stay there until the lockdown is lifted.⁶⁰

EVACUATION



We will evacuate if it is safest to be outside the building.

In an evacuation:

- Follow directions and try to stay together with your students/team.
- Leave your belongings behind.
- Lead students to your evacuation location(s).
- If you get separated, meet at your evacuation site location. Students should be reminded to go with any other class.
- Walk calmly and watch for traffic. Do not block roads for emergency vehicles.
- If an evacuation is called and you are in the hall or other common space, join another class and evacuate with them. Help any stragglers.

EVACUATION

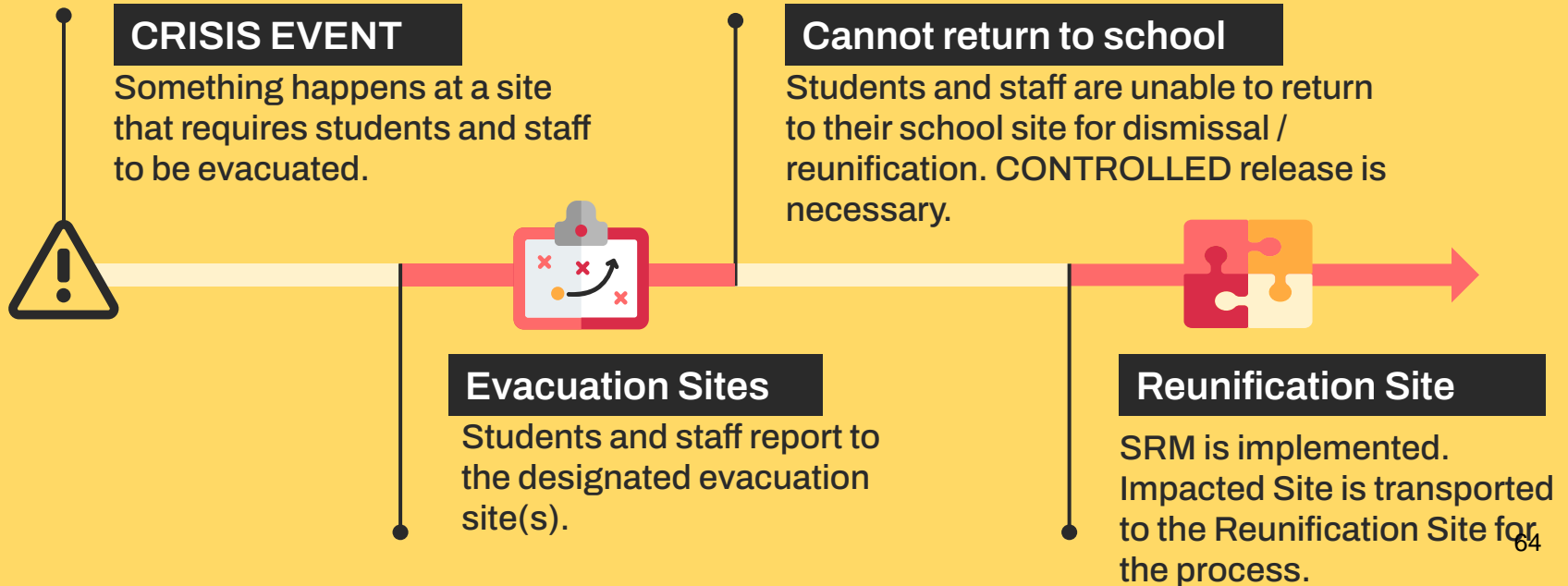



- Do NOT walk home. Remind students to NOT WALK HOME.
- Do NOT try to get to your car- you will not be allowed to leave the parking lot and you would be in the way of emergency response.
 - If you have a car in the parking lot, there is a chance you may not be able to retrieve it for a day or two.
- It is important that we stick together as much as possible to keep everyone safe and account for your location.
- At an evacuation site, keep students calm and seated, if possible. Be ready to help with attendance and care. Stay calm, reassure that safety is important and we will get everyone home as quickly and safely as possible.

When Evacuation Leads to Reunification



When would we use the Standard Reunification Method (SRM)?





We must be as organized and prepared as we can be!

Students First

Goal to connect all students with their families within 4 hours of reunification start

Communication

Pre-teach, set expectations, clear and frequent updates

Family Experience

New video, support to add contacts, support at reunification site

Team Members

This will require A LOT of people power!

Mental Health

Minutes, hours, days, weeks for ALL

Community Support

We continue to work with city, county, medical, mental health, etc.



66

Family Reunification Video

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

- EVERY YEAR, encourage parents to provide info on several adults who are authorized to pick up the student in an emergency.
- This list should be 5 or 6 deep. IC now allows that.
- Plan will be developed to address if someone other than the legal parent/guardian comes. Includes how we will ensure the parent/guardian knows of this pick up and consents.



Reunification Information

(PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

Have photo identification out and ready to show school district personnel.

Student Name

Student Grade Student Cell Phone Number

Name of person picking up student

Signature

Phone number of person picking up student

Relationship to student being picked up

School personnel completes:

Photo identification matches name
of person picking up student?
Yes or No

Parent/Guardian completes:

Print Student Name Again..... Student Grade

Teacher

Student Birthday

School personnel completes upon release of student

TIME

INITIALS

OTHER

Reunification

First, we want to thank you for your patience during this reunification. We share the same goal during this process: Getting you and your student back together as quickly as possible. The reason we're going through this is that an event has occurred at the school that mandates we personally reunite you with your child.

Instructions

1. Please complete the information on the other side of this card.
2. Prepare identification (If you don't have ID with you, please move to the side of the line, it may take a little longer to verify your identity.)
3. Select the check-in line based on either student last name or student grade.
4. After check-in, staff will split this card and a runner will be sent to recover your student. Please step over to the Reunification Location.
5. If there has been injury or other concerns, you may be asked to meet a counselor.
6. Please don't shout at school or district staff. We'll get through this as quickly as possible.

Translated for our
specific ESL
households.

Parent/Guardian Sign Off

I have read and understand these instructions.

Print Your NameDate

Signature

AT IMPACTED SITE

Step 1: ***Establish Onsite School Incident Command***

(District Incident Command and Reunification Team will be activated)

Step 2: ***Classroom Evacuation***

May be police led. Follow additional instructions.

Step 3: ***Secure Assembly Area*** - stay with students.

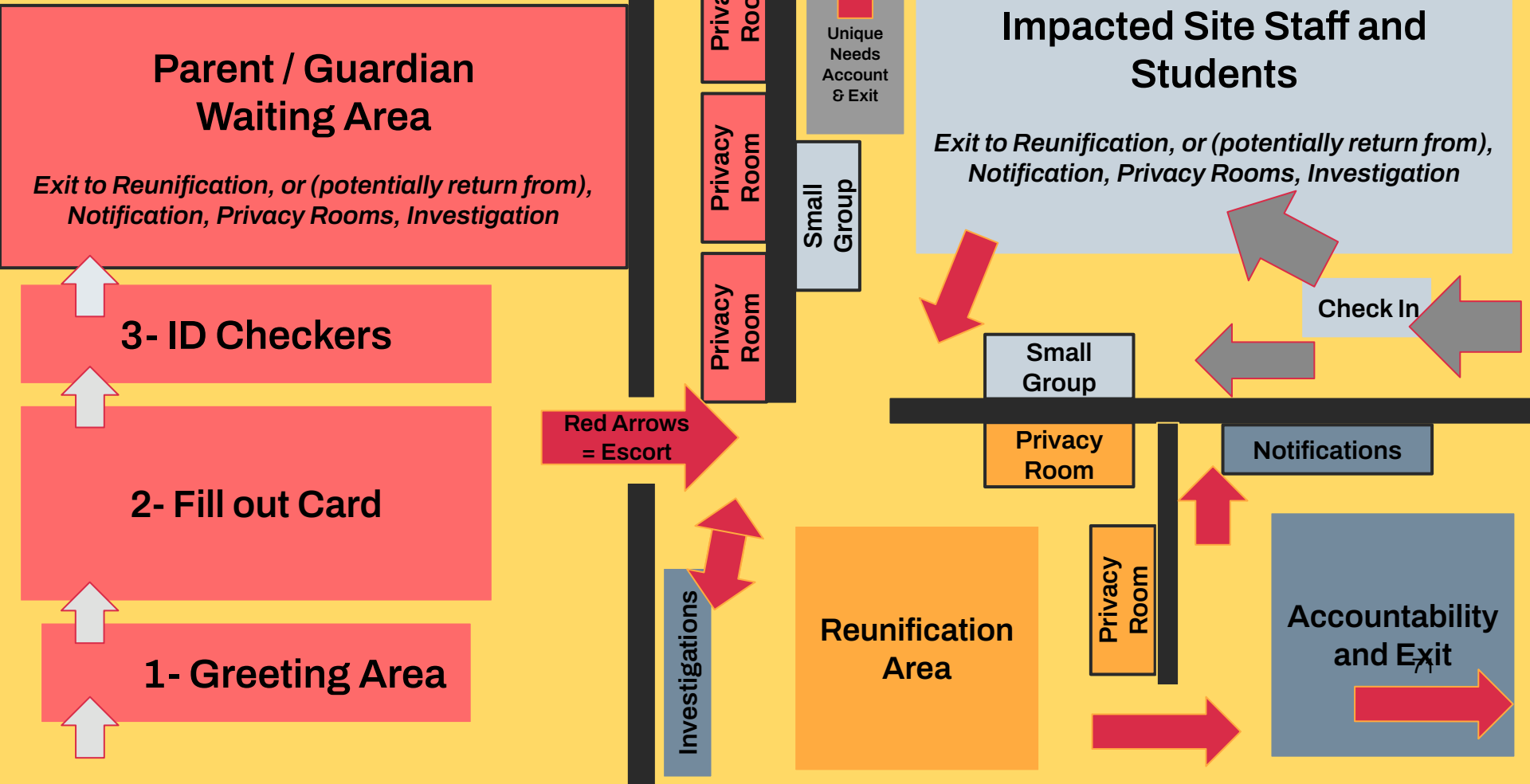
Verify Attendance, begin master roster verification

Law enforcement may be present and may search

Step 4: ***Impacted Site Transport***

ALL students and staff board buses to Reunification Site

Steps and Example of Spaces





Who is involved?



SCHOOL

- Principals
- District Administrators
- Counselor/Social Worker
- Special Education Administrator
- Transportation Administrator
- Food Service Administrator
- Maintenance Administrator



FIRST RESPONDERS

- Dispatch
- Police
- Fire
- EMS
- County Sheriff
- Highway Patrol



COMMUNICATIONS

- School Communications Officer
- City Public Information Officer
- Law Enforcement/First Responders Public Information Officer
- 2 additional PIOs



COMMUNITY

- Mental Health
- Community based emergency response (Red Cross, etc.)



CITY/COUNTY

- Emergency Management
- GIS Personnel
- Coroner/ME



Impacted Site

- All students from that site
- ALL STAFF from that site
- You will assist as much as possible with keeping students organized and orderly.
- You can assist with keeping them calm and distracted.
- You will be supported as a staff member who was also in any potentially traumatic situations.
- ASK for help if you need it.
ADVOCATE for yourself.

Reunification Team

- Leadership Roles will be pre-designated.
- Staff from other sites will be recruited to assist.
- **COMMUNITY SUPPORT** will be present
 - Mental Health
 - First Aid
 - Law Enforcement
 - Others

Reunification Team Unites!

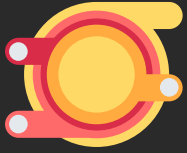


We will need A LOT of staff. Though other sites will likely be in some chaos and stress, too, or experiencing lots of early pickups, we will **NEED** sites to send as many staff as possible. The priority has to be reunification.



STAFF HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED TO ADVOCATE FOR THEMSELVES:

- If asked to report to help, and you are uncomfortable with your assignment, **SPEAK UP**.
- If you KNOW you won't be able to successfully participate, **SPEAK UP**. You may be asked to cover for another staff member so they can come support.
- If you have a family member at the impacted site, **SPEAK UP**. Do not volunteer to help.
- This will be HARD for anyone who helps. It's okay to advocate for yourself. We understand that we are all bringing different history with us. Yours matters. We don't want to cause additional trauma!



ROLES OVERVIEWS

You may be asked to be:

- Parent/Guardian Greeters
- Parent/Guardian Checkers
- Student Request Runners
- Reunifiers
- **Mental Health Support**
- Child Supervision Personnel
- Entertainment/Distracton Coordinator
- Administrative Scribe
- Logistical Support
 - Snacks, water, supplies, etc.
- Parking Directors
- Accountant (no \$ just people)
- Parent/Guardian Staging Area Announcer



Team Tags Front



Team Tags Back



1

CHECK IN

Bring your school ID.
Report to volunteer
check in table.

2

GEAR UP

Read about your role.
Put on a vest. Gather
materials you need.



3

CHECK INS

Keep an eye on other
volunteers. If you need
a break, TAKE ONE.

4

AFTER CARE

This will impact everyone.
Taking care of self and
others will be critical to
recovery.



Thinking about Special Needs

- These are the students who get evacuated to reunification site last.
 - Need more support, more staff, more time to move
 - Their teachers and staff should be the ones to move them, and when appropriate, the SRO who may know them.
- Any unique equipment needs must be addressed by special services team and delivered to these students immediately!
- Keep them separated at reunification site to protect them from noise, etc.
- They must be the FIRST to be reunited!
- This staging area near handicapped accessible parking/loading areas.
- Assign special parent liaison who will be familiar with their unique concerns and needs.



When it's all done...

- How do you care for the staff who cared for the people?
 - After action debrief
 - Expect secondary trauma (reunification team)
 - Primary trauma needs for those at impacted site
 - Mental health supports ready to go in the immediate, and in the days/weeks/months/years to follow
- District must keep staff in the loop.
 - Expect frequent updates, whatever that may be.
- Consider finding a partner who was in a similar role at the reunification or impacted site AND a partner who was not impacted. We can help find those connections if needed. It's important to be able to talk it out.
- Plan for the recovery team to intentionally check in on impacted staff.