

Legislative Platform 2011

Independent School District 709



Integration Revenue

The State of Minnesota should continue funding of both inter-district and intra-district integration revenue. Any redistribution of integration aid should be tied to a specific consensus on the proper use of integration funding. Existing school district integration plans for Minneapolis, St. Paul and Duluth that have been developed over time with significant community involvement should be approved and funded. The MDE should cooperate with these and other districts to further develop programs that provide choice, reduce segregation, close the learning gap, and promote integrated learning experiences for all students.

E-12 Education Reform

The Duluth School District recognizes the importance of a simplified, comprehensive school finance formula to provide the justification for significant revenue increases. Without significant

revenue increases, however, any redistribution of revenue to districts through changes in the school formula should be adjusted by a transition revenue component.

Permanent Structural Change

With the State of Minnesota facing a \$6.2 billion deficit in the next biennium (not including "discretionary" inflation), and another \$5 billion shortfall in the FY 2014-15 biennium; it is clear that short-term solutions such as property tax and state aid shifts have not solved the state's budget problems. Permanent structural change in Minnesota's tax system must be combined with school finance reform efforts already being considered. Tax reform should include replacing school district reliance on property tax increases with other state taxes, greater equalization of the operating referendum, and restoring debt service equalization.

Prevent Further Cuts To E-12

School districts have contributed \$1.89 billion to help resolve the state budget shortfall. Any further adjustments by the 2011 Legislature should not come at the expense of Minnesota's school children. Legislation should clearly state that the \$1.89 billion in shifts and aid reductions will be restored as it becomes available in future legislative sessions.

Even a freeze in E-12 funding for the next school year would mean drastic cuts in programs for the Duluth School District. Declining enrollment, increases in health insurance costs, and other inflationary costs would mean a shortfall of approximately \$6 million next year alone. Budget reductions for the past several years mean there are no more cuts that can be made "away from the classroom".

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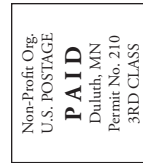
Superintendent Keith Dixon

The Duluth Public 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 8,800 students in the city of Duluth and outlying townships. The district provides PreK and ECFE programs and education at the Area Learning Center and Secondary Technical Center.

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.

(Approved at the January 18, 2011 Regular School Board Meeting.)



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