

Duluth Public Schools ISD 709 Profile

ISD 709 serves approximately 8,800 students in early childhood programs through grade 12. The district provides services to adults of all ages through the Area Learning Center and Community Education.

- 2 High Schools
- 1 Online High School
- 2 Middle Schools
- 9 Elementary Schools
- Birth to Age 5 programs
- Community Education for all ages
- 1 Transportation Office/Bus Garage
- 1 Area Learning Center with Adult Basic Education and offices for district administration and support staff
- Providing educational services and support to 8 alternative schools and community support programs

Total Students Grades K-12.....	8,333
High School Students Grades 9-12.....	2,900
Middle School Students Grades 6-8.....	1,716
Elementary Students Grades K-5.....	3,717
Birth to Age 5 Programs.....	1,193
Receiving Free/Reduced Price Lunch.....	3,514
Students of Color.....	1,922
Receiving Special Education Services.....	1,363

6,525 Students provided with school breakfast and lunch per day

7,350 Students provided with transportation services (includes non-public)

Maintaining 2,577,156 square feet of building space and 349 acres of school grounds

Legislative Platform 2018



ISD 709 Duluth Public Schools

Thank you for supporting these important issues during the 2018 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.

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Legislative Priorities

Special Education

The legislature continues to not fully meet funding commitments for special education made in state statute. Because of this, local districts are obligated to provide special education funding through a cross-subsidy from general fund dollars that would otherwise lower class sizes and provide more opportunities for students.

- Advocate for significant increases in federal special education funding and meaningful special education reforms at the federal and state levels
- Convene a task force to work on special education funding, specifically with a focus on the impacts of the new special education funding formulas, the projected cross-subsidy and recommendations with a timeline to eliminate the cross-subsidy

New Special Education Formula

A new Special Education funding formula was passed in 2015. This was a positive change, however, there were unintended consequences experienced during implementation by many school districts. The cap that was based on a single year. Districts such as Duluth which had significant changes in tuition adjustments for resident students served in charter schools, had a lower than expected special education revenue cap. There are several strategies that could correct this issue.

- Re-establish the cap based on a 3-5 year average
- Increase the amount charter schools are responsible for (currently 10% of unreimbursed expense)
- Provide opportunities for resident districts to participate in charter school IEP service planning (as is required for other districts, private and parochial schools)

Equity through School Based Early Education Programs

The statewide investment from the legislature in pre-kindergarten programming is helping to increase kindergarten readiness and to decrease the achievement gap. To provide equitable opportunities for all students, these programs must be expanded.

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

Former Duluth Central High School

In 2015, the legislature provided an opportunity for tax abatement for the development of the former Duluth Central High School site. While this was an attractive incentive, other challenges with the site prevented development. There is a renewed partnership with the City of Duluth and Saint Louis County to partner in supporting the development of this site. Reconfirming support for **SF3573 & HF3926 (2015-16)** will further these efforts.

- Provide incentive for the development of the former Central High School site with tax abatement on services and materials for up to \$5M.

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.

- Increase State grants to fully fund mental health professionals on an ongoing basis.

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.

Increase Support for Full-Service Community Schools Model

Full Service Community Schools work to coordinate holistic systems of support to ensure the needs of all students are met. Duluth was an early pioneer in the state developing a Full Service Community School model and is now working to create a K-12 pipeline of support by scaling up our Full Service Community School sites. The state provided FSCS funding for the first time during the 2015-16 biennium. Reinstating this funding will allow the continuation of this important work and will position Duluth as an example for other districts around the state.

- Provide funding for planning and implementing Full Service Community Schools