

Duluth Public Schools – 2024 Legislative Platform

The Duluth Public Schools (DPS) legislative platform recognizes and appreciates the significant investments made by the Legislature in public education in 2023. We believe the 2024 Legislative Session is another opportunity to invest in public schools and continue the progress made in meeting the academic, social, and emotional needs of students and to ensure equitable outcomes for every student. Supplemental education investments in 2024 will provide stability for Duluth Public Schools as federal pandemic era funding expires and enrollment fluctuates. DPS appreciates the notable funding increases in 2023, but our district, like so many others, is experiencing shortfalls that put progress made by students and teachers at risk.

- DPS supports an additional increase in the basic general education formula by an additional 2% for the 2024-2025 school year to address staffing shortages, Elementary and Secondary Education Relief (ESSER) federal funding running out, student and staff mental health supports, staff salary increases, decline in enrollments, and interrupted learning recovery efforts.
- DPS supports the allocating of additional resources and funding for the READ Act for professional development of our staff who are mandated by the legislation to be trained.
- DPS supports the creation of a permanent state funding stream for unemployment insurance for non-licensed school district employees and free school breakfast and lunch for all students, and requests that the Legislature fully fund the cost of programs.
- DPS supports the Legislature eliminating the cap on Long Term Facilities Maintenance Revenue, allowing districts like Duluth to address critical facility needs.
- DPS supports a one-time investment in Career and Technical Education, allowing funds to be used for equipment, supply, and technology to support the CTE mission and helping to get students into the workforce.
- DPS supports additional state funding for technology support to protect data and systems from increasing attacks on networks.
- DPS supports House File 336 (Kozlowski & Olson) & Senate File 423 (McEwen & Hauschild), reimbursing DPS \$1,000,000 for a state formula error in FY16-FY19 which resulted in DPS filling a \$5.8 million special education funding gap.
- DPS supports a one-time allocation per pupil for school safety and support allowing local authority for schools to increase safe school levy revenue to address safety concerns.
- DPS supports adding additional funding to the Solar for Schools Grant Program and increase the grant opportunity to 100% of total costs for a 40-megawatt array and help schools with federal matching dollars for EV charging stations at school properties.