

**Think Kids – Draft Community Vision Document for Duluth Public Schools, ISD 709**  
*To Accompany Resolution E-04-13-3086*

**Through the *Think Kids* initiative, people across Duluth were invited to participate in a community-wide conversation about education.**

Nearly 2,000 citizens from all walks of life took part – community and business leaders, neighbors, groups and organizations, parents, teachers, students and more - sharing their thoughts about what’s going well, what could be improved, what needs to be done now, and what should be done in the future.

Throughout these individual voices run common desires for our schools and community. The result is a set of shared values and beliefs from across the city, and a new vision for Duluth’s schools that will guide future planning and decision making.

**Overall, our community values schools where educational excellence and a supportive environment provide each student with the skills and experiences they need to learn, grow and be successful. Duluthians recognize that strong schools are key to the success of our community.**

**As a community, we value:**

*Setting high expectations* with each student, educator and parent, which leads to greater academic and personal achievement.

*Providing the right tools and curriculum* to maximize each child’s potential, which is key to helping students be independent, lifelong learners.

*Creating safe, welcoming environments* where the uniqueness of each person is honored, respected and valued; recognizing that we all come from many different circumstances and cultures.

*Engaging parents, family and our community* to ensure each child’s educational success, because these relationships enhance a meaningful learning environment for our children and provide a stronger community for all.

*Utilizing school facilities as a shared resource for all;* students, families, neighborhood residents and the broader community.

*Carefully and responsibly using the resources* entrusted to our schools.

**As a community, we believe:**

*Every student is unique* with the potential to learn and achieve personal success.

*All children have the right to a quality education,* delivered by highly qualified educators.

*A wide range of educational opportunities* will lead to lifelong learners and productive global citizens.

*Including all voices* in our community - inside and outside our schools, all ages and backgrounds – makes our schools strong and successful.

*Schools serve the entire community* as places where neighborhoods and families find support, and people of all ages may access learning opportunities.

*It's important to maximize available resources* and identify innovative ways to attain the resources needed to further support education.

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**Community Vision and Priorities For Duluth’s Schools**

We will build on our shared beliefs and values of unity, high achievement and responsible use of resources to create Duluth public schools and classrooms that are safe, supportive and inclusive. We will work to inspire every student to achieve to their potential, and prepare students to lead productive, fulfilling lives as citizens of Duluth and the wider world.

***In implementing our vision and addressing our priorities, we will work to ensure:***

*Teachers and staff are highly qualified and diverse*, providing opportunities for students of every culture and ability to be successful.

*Schools are safe, respectful, caring environments* for children and adults.

*We are closing the achievement gap* by using best practices and by partnering with community, state and national organizations to bring the best possible education to our children.

*Class sizes are suitable and appropriate* to students’ development and needs.

*A wide range of enriching activities and curriculum* are provided for students before, during and after school.

*Our schools serve as community resources* for residents of all ages.

*Strategies are sought to reduce costs and increase funding*; people inside and outside schools are regularly invited to share ideas and creative options.

*People inside and outside schools feel comfortable asking questions and sharing concerns* and feel satisfied that they are heard.