DULUTH PUBLIC SCHOOLS ISD 709

Potential Budget Reductions: If the Operating Levy Referendum Does Not Pass

Mandatory Financial Requirement: Under Minnesota law, Duluth Public Schools must maintain a balanced budget and avoid Statutory Operating Debt (SOD). Over the past three school years, the district has reduced $12 million (8% of spending), including a 16% reduction in district administration/supports and the loss of 48 positions across the district.

The Potential Shortfall: Because state funding has failed to keep pace with inflation ($1,474 per pupil state funding gap), if the Nov. 3 referendum does not pass, the district will be required to eliminate an additional $12 million over two fiscal years — the equivalent of roughly 120 staff positions.

POTENTIAL BUDGET REDUCTIONS *(In nonspecific order nor by priority)*	
I. District Administration and Supports	• **District and Site Administration:** Staffing reductions • **Operational Staffing:** Reduce staff across all departments under Business Services. (est. $275K) • **Teaching, Learning, and Equity:** Reduce staff across departments • **Building Use:** Evaluate closing all facilities access during weekends. (est. $1.04M) • **Professional Spending:** Cap summer curriculum hours, restrict travel/conferences, and reduce external consultants. (est. $195K) • **Student Transportation:** Eliminate hub busing and increase secondary walking distance to 2 miles. (est. $160K-$320K) • **Technology Department:** Reduce technology staff. (est. $275K) • **Software and LMS:** Cut or downgrade district software subscriptions, smartboard tools, and secondary learning management system. (est. $100K) • **Technology Hardware:** Extend 1:1 student device cycles and phase out classroom desktops. (est. $170K)
II. Personnel Structure	• **Workforce Adjustments:** Potential non-renewal or reductions affecting non-tenured teachers, paraprofessionals, and support staff.
III. Classroom Instruction and Academics	• **Elementary Class Sizes:** Raise class sizes, combine grade sections, and add more splits throughout the district (est. $2.65M) • **School Closures:** Consider closure and/or boundary changes for smaller elementary schools. (est. $760K-$1M) • **Language Immersion:** Restructure or eliminate elementary and middle school immersion programs, returning students to neighborhood schools. (est. $745K - $1.55M) • **High School Schedule:** Transition from 7-period to 6-period day and reducing electives. (est. $270K) • **Student Supports:** Consider reducing intervention and behavior supports
IV. Electives, Co-Curriculars and Athletics	• **Electives:** Reduce music, career technical education, and other electives. (est. $400K) • **Athletics and Activities:** Restructure athletics, eliminate freshman/C-teams, or move toward single district teams. • **Alternative Programing:** Adjust staffing for alternative, specialized, and online learning options. (est. $500K-$650K)
V. Student Supports and Special Education	• **Special Education:** Efficiencies in services and maximizing medical assistance reimbursements. (est. $800K-$1.4M) • **Summer and Enrichment:** Scale back K–8 summer school and non-mandatory after-school programs (est. $187K) • **Safety Resources:** Reduction of School Resource Officer program (est. $93K-$376K)