

REFERENDUM FAST FACTS

Please Vote on or Before **NOV. 3**

COMMUNITY COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION

Duluth is a special place. Community members here recognize the benefits of education for lifelong learners. Duluthians enthusiastically support colleges and universities. And, we greatly appreciate the role public K-12 education plays in the success of our rich community. We're making strong progress at Duluth Public Schools. Graduation rates, test scores, and enrollment are improving. We have amazing teachers, staff, and educational programs from which every student benefits every day.

OPERATING LEVY FOR LEARNING

While public education at Duluth Public Schools is strongly forging ahead, finances are not as rosy. In fact, we are quickly approaching a financial crisis. State funding increases have not kept pace with inflation, and costs are continuing to rise faster than revenues. We've already made **\$12 million in cuts** over the last three years, and we will need to **cut \$5 million next year** – even if the referendum passes. We are asking taxpayers for a revenue increase to protect student learning and prepare us for the future.

REFERENDUM AT A GLANCE

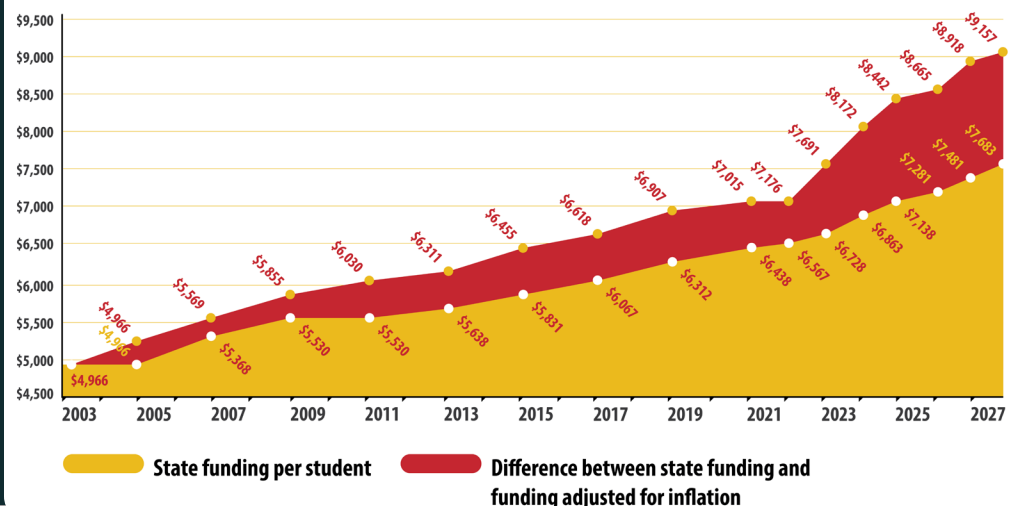
- Duluth Public Schools are nearing a financial crisis.
- We've already cut \$12 million.
- We're freezing hiring of new positions, limiting expenses, and preparing for additional cuts next year.
- We're cutting an additional \$5 million next school year.
- We're asking for a modest investment with an operating referendum Nov. 3.

STATE REVENUE INCREASES DON'T KEEP PACE WITH INFLATION

Had state revenue increased by the rate of inflation each year since 2003, the 2027 allowance per pupil would be **\$9,157**.

The difference between this year's state revenue per pupil and the inflation adjusted potential revenue is **\$1,474 or 19.2%**.

The Duluth school district is requesting a combined increase in property tax revenue of **\$1,315** beginning in year 2 of the levy.



THE CHALLENGE

While public education at Duluth Public Schools is strongly forging ahead, our financial situation is quickly approaching a financial crisis.

- State funding has not kept pace with inflation.
- Costs continue to increase faster than revenues; including fuel, health insurance, unfunded mandates, supplies, and contracted services.
- Special education program costs continue to rise.
- Local operating levy property tax revenues are significantly below the state average.
- 2026-27 reductions included:
 - 16% district and administration reduction
 - 5% school site reductions (48 teachers)
- Cuts alone cannot solve the larger structural problem.



Duluth Public Schools
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Duluth, MN 55811

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THE PLAN

The school board unanimously approved two Operating Levy Referendum Questions for the November 3 General Election.

QUESTION 1 PROTECTS STUDENT LEARNING

Provides the district with \$3.9 million in 2027, then, as debt is retired, revenue increases to \$8.3 million in years 2-10.

QUESTION 2 PREPARES US FOR THE FUTURE

Provides the district with an additional \$3.4 million per year for ten years.

- Question 2 is contingent on voter approval of Question 1.
- Both levies would increase at the rate of inflation each year.

IF THE REFERENDUM IS APPROVED

The additional revenue from Question 1 addresses future deficits and keeps property taxes stable. Combined with right-sizing, Question 2 buys time to fix the long-term financial structure by stabilizing the district's budget.

IF THE REFERENDUM IS NOT APPROVED

Over the next two years, at least \$12 million in additional cuts, equal to roughly 120 positions will need to be made. This could lead to higher class sizes, fewer student supports, and the potential reduction of student educational programs.

EXAMPLES OF TAX IMPACT ON THREE HOMES


\$8.00 + \$7.00
PER MONTH
BASED ON AN AVERAGE \$300,000 HOME IN DULUTH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Home Value	Question 1		Question 2		Both Questions Approved	
	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly
\$150,000	\$48	\$4	\$42	\$4	\$90	\$8
\$300,000*	\$96	\$8	\$84	\$7	\$180	\$15
\$450,000	\$145	\$12	\$126	\$11	\$271	\$23

*\$300,000 is the median home value in Duluth Public Schools



**VISIT OUR
WEBSITE**



**VISIT OUR TAX
CALCULATOR**

REFERENDUM COMMUNITY TOWN HALL MEETINGS

Wed., Sept. 30, 6:30 p.m., Lowell Elementary School, Media Center, 2000 Rice Lake Rd., Duluth, MN 55811

Wed., Oct. 7, 6:30 p.m., East High School, Media Center, 301 N. 40th Ave. E., Duluth, MN 55804

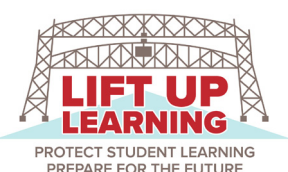
Thu., Oct. 8, 6:30 p.m., Facebook Live, www.facebook.com/duluthpublicschools/

Wed., Oct. 14, 6:30 p.m., Denfeld High School, Media Center, 401 N. 44th Ave. W., Duluth, MN 55807

VOTING INFORMATION | Save These Dates!

September 18 - Early In-person Absentee Voting Begins

November 3 - General Election Day



LEARN MORE: CONNECT WITH US

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Email: referendum@isd709.org

Website: www.isd709.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/duluthpublicschools