

**Regular School Board Meeting**

Duluth Public Schools, ISD 709

Agenda

Tuesday, July 21, 2020

VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE

Google Meet

6:30 PM

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
3. ***Virtual Meeting Statement in Place of Pledge of Allegiance***
4. **Approval of the Agenda**
5. **School and Community Recognition**
6. **Audience**
7. **Reading Communications, Petitions, Etc.**
8. **Report of the Superintendent**
  - Superintendent Magas
  - A. Reports from Student School Board Representatives
  - B. Schedule of Meetings and Events
9. **Report of Standing Committees**
  - A. Policy Committee (*see separate report*)
  - B. Monthly Committee of the Whole (*see separate report*)  
*Attendees: Durick Eder, Kirby, Loeffler-Kemp, Lofald, Oswald, Sandholm, Trnka*
  - C. HR/Finance Committee (*see separate report*)
10. **Consent Agenda**
11. **Special Resolutions and Action Items**
  - A. SP-7-20-3751 - School Board Support for School Resource Officer (SRO) Contract Negotiations, Policy and Procedure Review and Engagement Efforts
12. **Questions / Other**
  - A. Public Comment

Public comment may be submitted via email to [public.comment@isd709.org](mailto:public.comment@isd709.org) (email comments must be kept to three minutes when read aloud), or recorded by calling 218-336-8730 no later than 4:00 PM the Monday prior to the regular board meetings. Please follow the civility code when submitting your comments.
13. **Adjournment**

# Superintendent's Entry Plan

John Magas  
July 21, 2020

ISD  
709  
**Duluth**<sup>2</sup>  
Public Schools



*Duluth Public Schools are working to inspire every student to achieve their potential and preparing students to lead productive, fulfilling lives as citizens of Duluth and the wider world.*

### Dear Duluth Public Schools Community



I am deeply honored and humbled to serve as your superintendent and to be entrusted with the education of our students as well as the goals of our community and the Duluth School Board. Having grown up on the shores of Lake Superior, I feel like I've returned home.

I am excited to begin our journey together as the leader of our school district. Throughout the interview process and weeks of on-boarding, several things became clear. Duluth is committed to our schools. We have outstanding educators, leaders and staff, and our students and families are amazing. Through meetings with staff and Duluth citizens, I listened and learned about ISD709. It's clearly evident, through these conversations, that the education and well-being of our youth is a top priority. We all recognize that the seeds of educational greatness that we plant today will produce a bright future for our community.

We're experiencing incredible challenges and opportunities for growth for education as we work together to remain safe during the COVID-19 pandemic and strive to produce meaningful engagement for each learner. Recent events emphasize the need to identify and address systemic racism, the root cause of inequities for so many. We are at a crossroads where there is no room for error in planning and where turning a blind eye to injustice risks additional decades of progress in reducing opportunity gaps and achieving excellence for all. For me, education was an opportunity to be lifted from poverty and I feel a strong responsibility to ensure that it does the same for all whom I serve. I am deeply dedicated to this collective work.

Good intentions are no more than wishful thinking without careful planning and strategic action. I have outlined my initial work in the district with a structured 100 Day Entry Plan that will begin, pending board input, on July 22, 2020 and end on November 1, 2020. The activities are focused on both the immediate and long term needs of the district.

Knowing that there are uncertainties in the coming months that could cause us to modify these plans, I want to assure you that trusting relationships built upon authentic, inclusive listening are the cornerstone of my leadership. This will be central to my work in the Duluth Public Schools, not only during the next 100 days, but throughout the many years that I hope to serve you.

I'm grateful to the many people that have shared their thoughts and advice with me, and look forward to the many opportunities we will have to work together.

With sincerity and gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Magas". The signature is fluid and cursive.

John Magas, Superintendent  
[Superintendents@isd709.org](mailto:Superintendents@isd709.org)



### My vision for this entry plan is focused on three critical structures sharply focused on supporting student learning in three areas:

- Alignment of district actions and resources to support and empower students, staff, and community
- Advancement of equity practices to ensure student success, safety, and well being
- Maximizing learning for each student, every day



## ENTRY PLAN

A significant focus of my first 100 days is centered on listening deeply to learn about our district and community. I seek to understand diverse perspectives on our strengths and areas for growth. My goal is to develop an initial plan for how we can best serve the students of the Duluth Public Schools, as well as to inform next steps for deeper strategic planning later this year.

### My entry plan consists of three phases:

- **Phase 1** began months prior to my start. It has focused on initial relationship building, listening, and learning.
- **Phase 2** continues with relationship building, listening, and learning with our students, families, staff, and community. It also focuses on strategic actions to support academic excellence, equity, cohesive leadership teams, and systems of continuous improvement for greater student success.
- **Phase 3** continues many of our 100 Day Plan strategic actions. It also focuses on a collective review of data from the first two phases and through additional sources. This information will be used to begin developing a five-year strategic plan in collaboration with the board and community stakeholders that will define our collective goals for the District.



## PHASE 1 ACTIVITIES **COMPLETED**



### Transition focused on relationship building and learning through:

- One-on-one meetings with central office administrators, principals, all school board members and student representatives
- Meetings with various stakeholders such as the Duluth Federation of Teachers president and other bargaining group members, community partners, officials of cities within our district, and a wide variety of other community members, staff, and higher education partners
- Engagement in an initial analysis of student achievement and climate data
- Review of financial data including an overview of the district budget, and attendance in a class on Minnesota finance and levies
- Facilitation of a needs analysis and hiring processes for key leadership positions
- Leadership in the development of our fall Return to Learning plans

I am deeply indebted to the phenomenal administrative team, staff, students, board and community members that supported my learning and planning.

## PHASE 2 ACTIVITIES



### Will focus on listening and learning applied to actions in the following areas:

#### Academic Excellence

The primary function of schools is to maximize learning for each student. With the recent Covid closures never has this purpose been more clear.

- Develop leadership planning teams to construct feasible and engaging learning plans to safely reopen schools in the fall of 2020 for in-person, hybrid, and enhanced distance learning models
- Create a plan for professional learning for the upcoming year that aligns with the delivery models

Setting a high bar of achievement, removing barriers to success, and modeling that we are all life-long learners are critical to creating a culture of academic excellence.

- Support Monitoring and Evaluation and Curriculum and Instruction teams in the development of recommendations for a guaranteed and viable curriculum
- Begin development of a long-term professional development plan that prioritizes student learning and student well-being, including a system for support and accountability

## PHASE 2 ACTIVITIES *continued*

### Equity

Educational equity has been the driving force throughout my entire career. Finding systemic ways of increasing our capacity to meet each students' learning and social emotional needs and courageously challenging and changing structures that demand improvement is vital to the success of the district and community.

- Review the Implementation and Accountability Plan for the existing Education Equity Framework and consider next steps for revision and implementation
- Complete an analysis of district policies, procedures and practices and use the results to create a prioritized revision plan utilizing the Equity Framework and resources such as the Tool for Equity Accountability
- Conduct a review of district behavioral practices and plans to ensure the ongoing implementation of current best practices in all Duluth Public Schools
- Launch dialog sessions with high school student groups to discuss issues of equity, race, and power

### Cohesive Leadership Teams

Cohesive, aligned leadership teams are essential to district success. A great board provides support, focused feedback and clarity of direction through proper governance for great district leaders. Great district leaders support and improve great principals. Great principals support and improve great teachers. Great teachers support and improve the efforts of our outstanding students.

- Improve practices of hiring and consider next steps for improving onboarding of new leaders at all levels
- Propose, plan and participate in a board retreat focused on governance, process/communication protocols, superintendent goal setting and evaluation, as well as planning for ongoing next steps
- Conduct a district self assessment of supports for instructional leadership and prioritize steps to implement a principal support framework
- Align district leadership entry plan efforts through a cabinet professional book study on 100 Day Leadership by Reeves and Eaker

### Continuous Improvement

The constant drive to do better or create better outcomes impacts nearly every decision. We will utilize tools for root cause analysis, plan/do/study/act cycles of inquiry, and best practices of implementation and monitoring, all of which will increase our understanding and ability to adapt.

- Review current student achievement and behavior data as well as previous continuous improvement plans to identify interim measures of success for our schools and district for the 2020-21 school year
- Conduct an initiative audit as well as begin exploration of improvement science based processes for implementation and monitoring
- Investigate initial steps for strategic, fiscally responsible allocation of limited resources within the budgeting process
- Re-examine previous boundaries and study efforts with the board and discuss potential next steps
- Explore options for strategic planning to begin in late fall or winter of the 2020-21 school year that include broad stakeholder input

## PHASE 3 ACTIVITIES



**Planning for our ongoing long-term work. Create a study and steering team including school and central office leaders and other stakeholders. This team will analyze lessons learned in Phase 2 to inform next steps to:**

- Engage the district in the development of a five-year strategic plan to begin in 2021-22
- Align organizational structures and resources to strategic priorities identified within the strategic plan through the clarification of structure, roles, and responsibilities

### Conclusion

Thank you for your commitment and flexibility as we engage in this plan for our District. In normal transition circumstances, this would be an ambitious plan. Given the current realities with COVID-19 and the health and financial implications of this crisis, we may need to adjust as we prioritize student and staff safety and learning needs. I believe it is vital that I am clear and transparent about my plans, but I also believe deeply in community feedback and collective responsibility. If we do make modifications, I will communicate any changes that may arise. We will continue to move forward as our students, families, staff, and community are depending on us. I am excited to begin our journey together!





**Independent School District 709**

**Duluth Public Schools**

215 North First Avenue East

Duluth, MN 55802

*[www.ISD709.org](http://www.ISD709.org)*



# Why SROs are Harmful in Our Schools



# Creating an unwelcome learning environment

37.7% of students of color said they would not tell their SRO if they knew about something unsafe or illegal

43.3% of students of color said they would not feel comfortable going to their SRO if they needed help

**“having a cop in school feels like it’s assuming the worst of the student population - which hurts.” - a current Denfeld student**

Is this really what we want the environment of our schools to be?

[2019 Semi-Annual Report to MDHR: Disproportionate Suspension/ Expulsion](#)



**Students have all seen the positive impacts of counselors, but the same cannot be said for SROs.**



## **They don't achieve their goal of community building for every student**

Community building was heavily emphasized, however, SROs don't establish positive relationships with all students.

How can we justify some good, for all the hurt that they can cause students of color.



# School to prison pipeline

What is it?

- The disproportionate tendency of minors and young adults from disadvantaged backgrounds to become incarcerated.

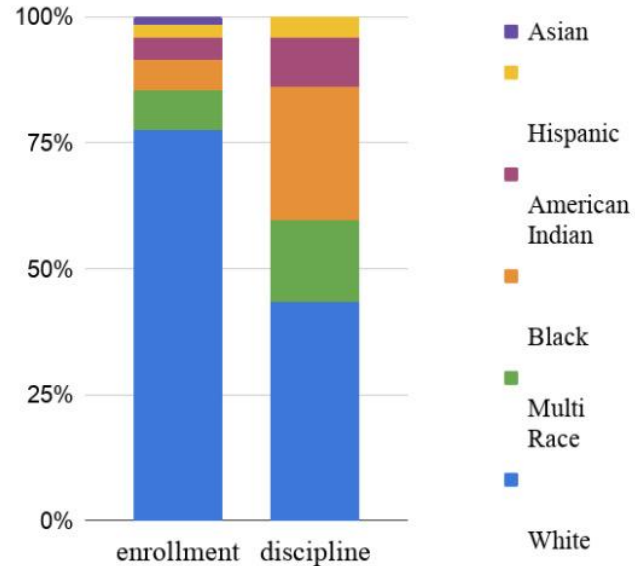
Data Includes incidents at East High School, Denfeld High School, Lincoln Park Middle School and Ordean East Middle School during the school year where the responding Officer was an SRO			
Gender	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
Female	29	27	29
Male	49	61	62
Total	78	88	90

Age	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
10-11	1	1	1
12-13	22	16	16
14-15	31	43	52
16-17	24	28	21
Total	78	88	90

Race	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
Black	26	27	35
Native	12	16	8
White	39	44	45
Other	1	1	2
Total	78	88	90

Crime Type	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
Assault	30	28	20
Tobacco/Alcohol	28	24	35
Disorderly Conduct/Harassment	27	32	43
Drugs	14	34	28
Truancy	2	0	0
Theft/Possession Stolen Property	3	5	5
Obstruct Legal Process/False Name/Fleeing	4	3	4
Trespassing	3	17	15
Indecent Exposure/Criminal Sex Conduct	4	0	0
Damage to Property	1	2	1
Total	116	145	156

## Enrollment and Discipline by Racial Category in Duluth Public Schools, 2014-2019





# Their responsibilities could be, and already are, better handled by others

Duties according to the DPD presentation:

1. Role model
2. Mentor
3. Community Liaison
4. Law Related Educator
5. Law Enforcement Officer

All teachers and staff are wonderful role models and mentors for students

Law enforcement officer is last on the list. This shows that it is less essential than their other capacities that are already fulfilled by others.



# Alternatives to SROs

The PBIS (Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports) 3 tier system

<https://www.pbis.org/pbis/getting-started>

Average salary of a high school counselor: \$56,310 (Bureau of Labor Statistics)

Budget for SROs in 2019-2020: \$251,906



# Respecting students, our future

The school board is inaccessible to students. This minimizes the board's understanding of problems that students face because they can't communicate the magnitude of them.

Harmful language being used:

- Helping students overcome their fear vs. Dealing with what's causing the fear



“It is our responsibility and our duty as elected officials of the Duluth School Board - and as humans - to challenge the systems that we have created or perpetuated, as those systems continue to create results that, for some, end with adverse and unequal outcomes.

We must remember that many in our community, especially our children, are grappling with the fear they have just because of the color of their skin, and it is critical that we as elected officials continue to commit ourselves to equity and justice in the systems in which we have power.

We on the School Board of ISD 709 choose change”

**How can we say we choose change, when we continue to partner with an oppressive and outdated system?**

DULUTH PUBLIC SCHOOLS ISD 709  
**SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS AND EVENTS**

**All meetings are scheduled at Historic Old Central High School, 215 N 1st Avenue East, unless otherwise noted.**

*Subject to change: Due to the declared health pandemic, and the declared state of emergency in the City of Duluth, and pursuant to Minnesota Statute 13D.021, July school board meetings will be held by teleconference or other electronic means. Public comment for the regular school board meeting on July 21, 2020 may be submitted to [public.comment@isd709.org](mailto:public.comment@isd709.org) (email comments must be kept to three minutes when read aloud), or recorded by calling 218-336-8730 no later than Monday, July 20th by 4:00 PM. The public is encouraged to watch Board meetings online at [www.isd709.org/district/school-board](http://www.isd709.org/district/school-board) and live on cable channel 187. There will NOT be a viewing room set up at HOCHS. Thank you for your understanding.*

**July 20-24, 2020**

Tuesday	July 21, 2020	6:30 p.m.	Regular School Board Meeting* Electronic Participation/Live Streamed
---------	---------------	-----------	---

**July 27-31, 2020**

No meetings scheduled at this time

**August 3-7, 2020**

Tuesday	August 4, 2020	4:30 p.m.	Monthly Committee of the Whole To Be Determined
---------	----------------	-----------	--

Thursday	August 6, 2020	4:30 p.m.	Policy Committee To Be Determined
----------	----------------	-----------	--------------------------------------

**August 10-14, 2020**

<b>MONDAY</b>	August 10, 2020	4:30 p.m.	HR/Finance Committee To Be Determined
---------------	-----------------	-----------	--

**August 17-21, 2020**

Tuesday	August 18, 2020	6:30 p.m.	Regular School Board Meeting* To Be Determined
---------	-----------------	-----------	---

**August 24-28, 2020**

No meetings scheduled at this time

*\*If a Regular School Board meeting is cancelled and cannot be held on the regularly scheduled date listed above, due to weather or unforeseen circumstances, it will be held the very next day at the same time and location.*

Office of the Superintendent  
July 17, 2020

**RESOLUTION**

School Board Support for School Resource Officer (SRO) Contract Negotiations,  
Policy and Procedure Review and Engagement Efforts

WHEREAS, the School Board of the Duluth Public Schools recognizes the timing of creating contracts does not always fall within the school board meeting schedule for approval; and

WHEREAS, the School Board of the Duluth Public Schools recognizes that policies, procedures, and contractual agreements are reviewed in an effort to reduce inequitable practices outcomes; and

WHEREAS, the School District is deeply engaged in fall planning while awaiting the Minnesota Departments of Education and Health the 2020-21 school year; and

WHEREAS, the School District has an approved budget for a contract for the 2020-21 school year for school resource officers.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the School Board directs District administration to engage with the City of Duluth Police Department to create a School Resource Officer Contract for the 2020-21 school year only and that the contract language be considered by the School Board for deeper alignment with district philosophies and practices.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ALSO BE RESOLVED that the School Board directs District administration to complete a district policy and procedures analysis, and create a prioritized and revision plan using the Equity Framework and resources.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ALSO BE RESOLVED that the School Board directs District administration to launch dialog sessions with high school student groups to discuss issues of equity, race, and power, including a focus on the role of the School Resource Officers.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ALSO BE RESOLVED that the School Board directs District administration to assess the impacted communities' experience of, and perspective on, the SRO program and seriously consider that input for possible structural or contractual changes if future contracts are pursued.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ALSO BE RESOLVED that the District administration will provide the School Board with regular updates as well as a mid-year report on these efforts.