

Monthly Committee of the Whole Board Meeting
Duluth Public Schools, ISD 709

Agenda
Tuesday, March 3, 2026
District Services Center
709 Portia Johnson Dr.
Duluth, MN 55811
4:30 PM

- 1. **CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. **ROLL CALL**
- 3. **AGENDA ITEMS**
 - A. Strategic Plan Alignment
 - 1) Advancing Equity - N/A
 - 2) Supporting Every Student
 - a. READ Act Professional Development 2
 - b. Professional Development 16
 - 3) Improving Systems - N/A
 - B. Teaching, Learning, and Equity Board Summary Report - N/A
 - C. Budget Update
 - 1) Budget Update 41
 - D. Other
- 4. **ADJOURN**

COW Agenda Cover Sheet

Meeting Date: 3/3/2026

Topic: READ Act Professional Development

Presenter(s): Gretchen Karg

Attachment: [READ Act Professional Development](#)

Brief Summary of Presentation or Topic (no more than a few sentences):

The District Leadership Team is dedicated to equipping our educators with the highest level of support to advance student learning and address the ongoing literacy challenges in education. We are pleased to announce an update on our READ Act Phase 1 professional development for elementary, intervention, and special education teachers, alongside the forthcoming details for our upcoming Phase 2 READ Act professional development initiative.

This commitment marks the start of sustained, impactful literacy improvement across our secondary system, which we anticipate will profoundly benefit student achievement in all middle and high school content areas.

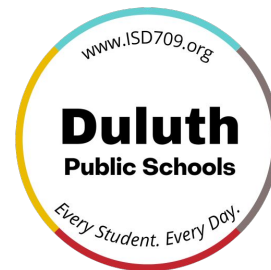
This Requires School Board Approval :

Duluth Public Schools

Committee of the Whole

READ Act Professional Development: Staff Informed with the Science of Reading and Instruction

March 3, 2026



Phase 1 Staff

4

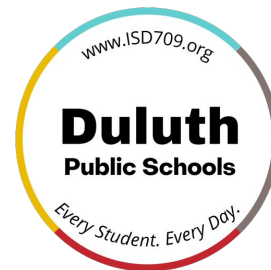
- **Staff required to complete or make progress towards completion by July 2026**
 - Special Education Staff
 - Reading Interventionist
 - PreK - 3rd Grade Teachers (4th and 5th have the option to do Phase 1 or 2)
 - 5 local trainers
- **LETRS (160 hours) or Early Childhood LETRS (40 hours)**
 - EC LETRS: 44 staff have completed in 2024, 1 teach in process
 - LETRS: 273 staff completed in 2025-2026
 - 55 staff will complete 2026
 - 53 staff will complete 2027



Structured Literacy for Paraprofessionals

5

- **Required to complete in 2026-2027 school year**
 - 4 modules: Theoretical Frameworks, Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Vocabulary and Comprehension
 - 5 local trainers
- **August, November, December, January, March, May PD Days**
 - Complete: 163 staff
 - 131 staff in training to finish March 2026



Phase 2 READ Act PD



What is in Phase 2?

7

STRIVE videos and
activities done
whole group
during PD days.



[February 2026 STRIVE FAQ for Participants](#)

STRIVE TLC Structured Literacy for Secondary Teachers



- Training is approx 35 hours - online modules plus activities
- 7 asynchronous modules plus three 45 minute synchronous sessions
- Synchronous Sessions facilitated by Train the trainer option (cost \$500 per trainer through a 2-hr live online training session)
- Asking MS interventionists to facilitate and possible HS staff



Staff in Phase 2

9

- Teachers who provide **foundational reading instruction*** to students in grades 4-12.
- Teachers who provide reading instruction to students in a state-approved alternative program.
- Teachers who provide reading instruction to students in dual language immersion programs (educators in pre-K through third grade should complete a Phase 1 training; educators in grades 4-12 should complete a Phase 2 training).
- Grades 6-12 Curriculum Directors.
- Employees who select literacy instructional materials for grades 6–12.

Any educator from Phase 2 who has already participated in Phase 1 professional development has met the requirement and would not qualify for a second training.

Training must be completed by July 1, 2027



Staff in Phase 2

42 staff required to complete Phase 2 training

No cost to the training - registered through MDE

- 9 4th and 5th grade classroom teachers
 - 5 from Piedmont, 1 each from MW, Lester, Laura MacArthur, Homecroft
- 23 HS and ALC/AEO ELA teachers
- 10 MS ELA teachers
 - 7 MS ELA teachers are currently participating in or finished LETRS

INCLUDE 10 Principals, Asst Principals, Deans



Training Goals - STRIVE TLC Structured Literacy for Secondary Teachers

11

- Meet the READ Act Phase 2 requirements with secondary ELA staff
- Have a teaching staff that's informed in the latest science of reading research, data gathering processes and analysis, and application of instructional literacy strategies to meet the needs of students struggling to access core instruction on grade level standards due to literacy challenges
- Improve student outcomes on standards based assessments including the MCA IV and graduation requirements
- Increase lifelong potential for students in our community
- Potential for more than just ELA teacher training, options for including other staff



Module strengths - STRIVE TLC Structured Literacy for Secondary Teachers

12

- Provide immediate usable Tier 1 classroom application with strategies to support literacy needs in all school subjects.
- Improve assessment of students' literacy development, analysis of the data, and make responsive instructional decisions to support students' literacy needs; tailored to CaptiReadBasix, MCA, MN 2020 ELA standards
- With comprehension being the highest level (and outcome) of literacy, early training addresses students' needs in this area, as it will be relevant to the largest number of students.
- by end of semester 1, support instruction in another big ticket area - teaching vocabulary and oral language.
- The last three modules of training focus on foundational levels of literacy struggles - fluency, phonics, and phonological awareness - help teachers understand the underpinnings of students' struggles that have contributed to their current challenges with Tier 1. These modules will also help our ELA staff and interventionists provide research-based interventions and accommodations that support our students at the lowest levels of literacy.



Additional Condensed Strive Training on Structured Literacy for *All Staff*

13

Disciplinary Literacy Course

1. **8.5 hrs** online asynchronous course with activities:

Disciplinary Literacy Module [L.I.T.E.R.A.C.Y.](#) book and system (Learning through Intentional Targeted Engaging Routines and Strategies to Access all Content and Yield Results)

2. Active Participation kit and bonus module
3. Cost: \$250 per teacher



Disciplinary Literacy Course Participants

14

100 Core Content Area

Middle School and High School staff



- Middle School: 37 teachers
- ALC/AEO: 12 teachers
- High School: 51 teachers



Module	Video time	Flexible activity time
1. Disciplinary Literacy	5 hr 22 min	3 hrs
2.Data-Based Decision Making	1 hr 8 min	45 min
3. Comprehension	2 hr 48 min	3 hrs
SYNCHRONOUS SESSION	45 min	
4. Vocabulary and Oral Language	3 hr 30 min	1 hr 35 min
5. Fluency	5 hr 12 mn	1 hr + optional 1 hr
6. Phonics and Advanced Word Work	1 hr 37 min	2 hrs
SYNCHRONOUS SESSION	45 min	
7. Phonological Awareness	1 hr 30 min	1 hr 50 min
SYNCHRONOUS SESSION	45 min	
Optional Module Active Participation		
Optional Module Dyslexia		
Approx: 35 hours	21 hrs 12 min video + 2 hr 15 min synchronous = 23 hrs 37 min	13 hrs

Phase 2¹⁵ STRIVE Modules

Schedule



COW Agenda Cover Sheet

Meeting Date: March 3rd, 2026

Topic: Professional Development

Presenter(s): Annie Schilling

Attachment: [Professional Development SY 25-26: COW](#)

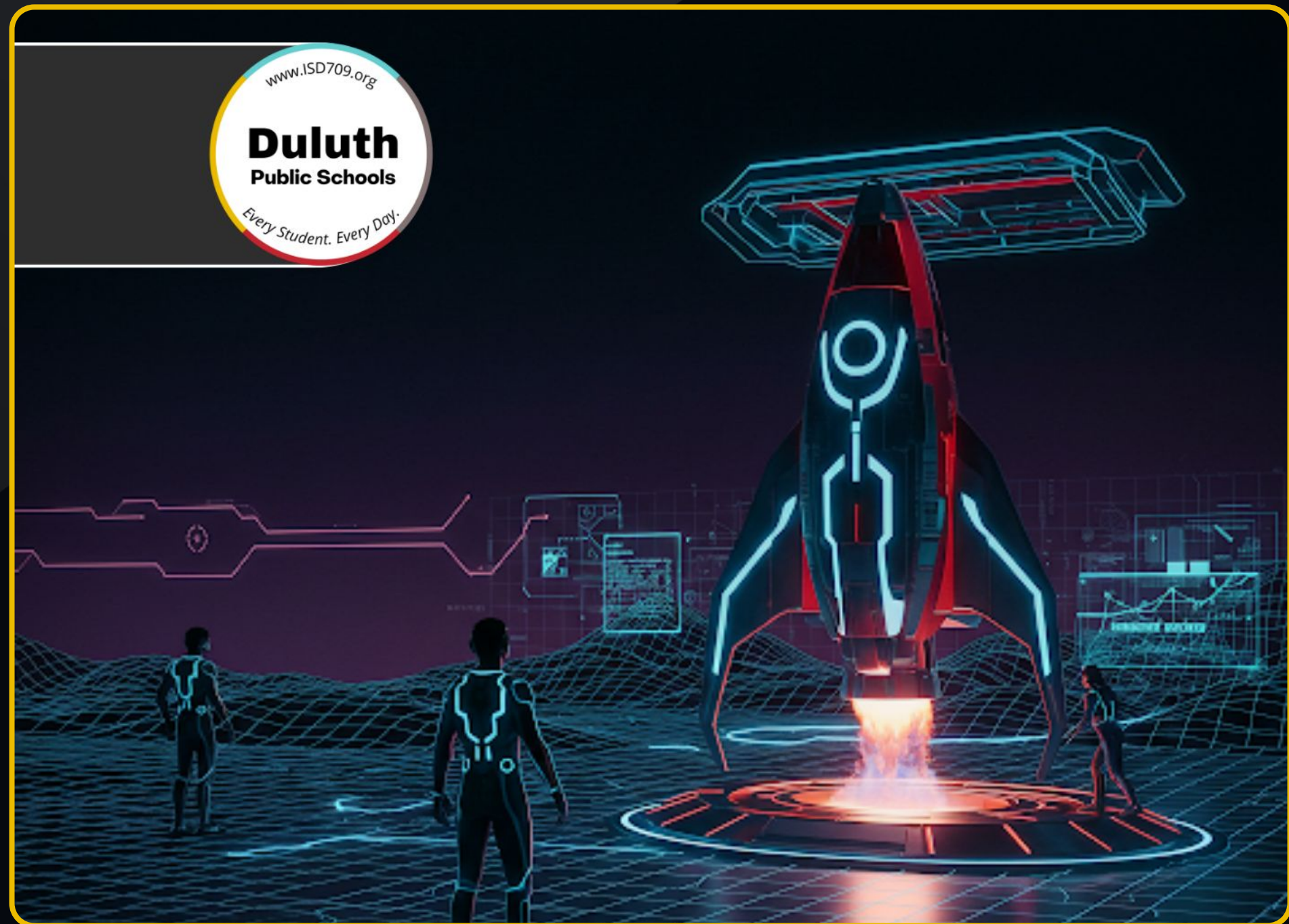
Brief Summary of Presentation or Topic (no more than a few sentences):

Annie Schilling will give a review of the School Year 2025-26 Professional Development Program and a preview into the planning underway for the School Year 2026-27.

This Requires School Board Approval :

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT 2025-26

B.L.A.S.T.
OFF



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Prioritizing the fostering of student belonging is a foundational element for academic success, mental well-being, and positive social development. When students feel valued, accepted, and connected to their school community, they are more engaged in learning, achieve higher grades, and exhibit improved attendance.



Strong literacy is paramount as it underpins all academic achievement, significantly impacting student. Literacy empowers civic engagement and reduces social inequities, equipping individuals to participate fully in society and advocate for themselves, aligning with the state's recent READ Act to address this critical need.



Improving student attendance is a complex but crucial goal for any school district. A comprehensive approach typically involves a combination of strategies, focusing on building a positive school culture, engaging families, addressing barriers, and implementing targeted interventions.



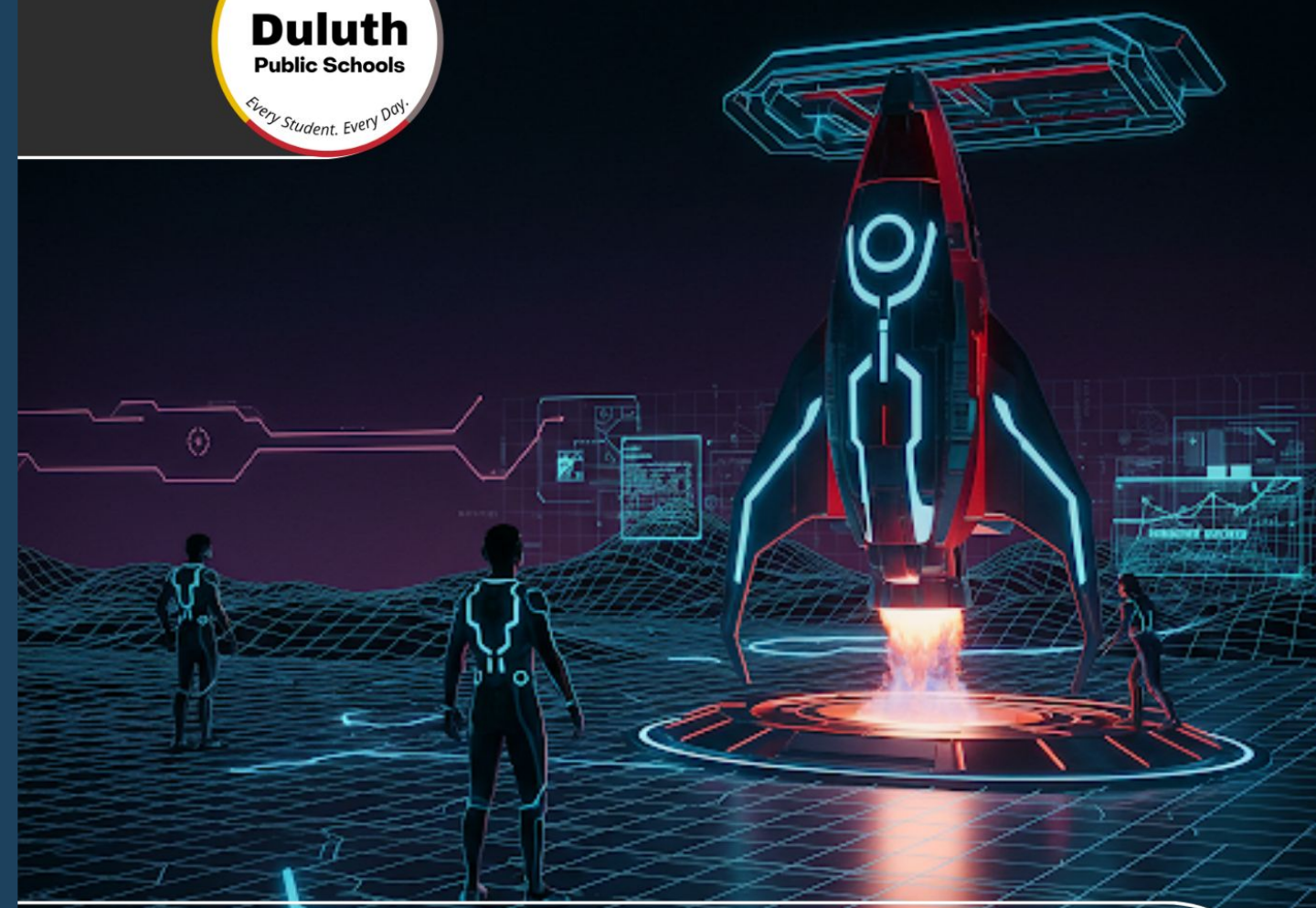
ISD709 prioritizes safety through a multi-faceted plan centered on prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery. The district also emphasizes student mental health support, strong anti-bullying policies, robust communication systems for emergencies, and close collaboration with local first responders to ensure a safe and secure learning environment for all.



Teamwork enables holistic support of students by fostering collaboration among staff for the breadth of student needs. It's crucial for effective instruction, allowing educators to collaboratively develop and implement best practices to address achievement gaps and ensure equity. Focus on teamwork across district departments supports students beyond the classroom.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

AUGUST 2025



AUGUST 25 PARAPROFESSIONAL DAY
AUGUST 26 ALL STAFF KICK-OFF

B.L.A.S.T. OFF

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

GEN ED CERTIFIED GRADES 9-12

**YOU WILL BE AT
DENFELD HS**



SITE TEAM MEETING

8:00-9:00

EAST STAFF: LECTURE HALL
DENFELD STAFF: MEDIA .CTR.
CARE + TREATMENT: 2013 ALC/AEO: 2013



A.I. TRAINING

9:15-10:15

DENFELD MEDIA CENTER



REUNIFICATION TRAINING

10:30-11:00

DENFELD AUDITORIUM

LUNCH 11:00-12:15



DEPARTMENT WORK

12:15-2:00

SEE ROOMS BELOW

MATH: 3306	SCIENCE: 2000	MUSIC, SEC: 1026
ENG/RD INT. 2306	WLD. LANG. 2302	MUSIC, ELEM. 1018
SOC. STUD. 3312	ART: 1301	ELL: 3215
HEALTH: 2216	CTE/CCLR: 1312	MATH INT: 3304
MEDIA: 1010	PHYED: GYM 3	



KEYNOTE ADDRESS

2:15-3:15

DENFELD AUDITORIUM

**CEUS WILL BE
DISTRIBUTED IN
PERSON AS YOU EXIT
THE AUDITORIUM. YOU
MUST BE PRESENT TO
OBTAIN YOUR CEU.**



EXIT TICKET

3:15-3:30

[EXIT TICKET LINK](#)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

DRAFT

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

“11 FOR JACOB”

ALISON FEIGH

Alison Feigh, MS, is the Director of Jacob Wetterling Resource Center, a program of Zero Abuse Project. In her 20+ years of missing children advocacy, she works with students, parents, youth workers, faith leaders, law enforcement and the media to help prevent childhood abuse and abductions. Alison’s work also includes writing curriculum for youth-serving organizations, training professionals about online challenges kids face and advocating for families of the missing. She is the author of two children’s books and co-author of a textbook, “Sex Crimes and Offenders: Exploring Questions of Character and Culture.” She was recently awarded the 2024 Visionary Voice Award from the National Sexual Violence Resource Center.



THIS PD DAY SCHEDULE WAS CREATED WITH INPUT FROM

- ✓ EXIT TICKET RESPONSES
- ✓ DISTRICT LEADERSHIP
- ✓ STATE MANDATES
- ✓ PD ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The #11forJacob movement was born out of a need to shift the focus from how Jacob Wetterling died to how he truly lived. We honor his memory by asking others to live out the 11 traits that Jacob exemplified: Be fair, Be kind, Be understanding, Be honest, Be thankful, Be a good sport, Be a good friend, Be joyful, Be generous, Be gentle with others, and Be positive. This presentation walks through some of what was learned during the abduction/trial process.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

NOVEMBER 3

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY



DRAFT

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

FEATURED SPEAKER

RICKY WHITE



RICKY RECEIVED HIS MASTERS IN EDUCATION FROM ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY/MINNEAPOLIS AND HIS BACHELORS FROM LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY. MR. WHITE HAS EARNED MANY AWARDS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS SUCH AS THE 2014 MINNESOTA AMERICAN INDIAN ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR AND THE MINNESOTA AMERICAN INDIAN TEACHER OF THE YEAR. RICKY HAS 20+ YEARS TEACHING EXPERIENCE AND CURRENTLY IS A PROFESSOR AT NDSU AS WELL AS AN EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANT.



FEEDBACK FROM THE FOLLOWING
INFORMED THIS PD CATALOG

EXIT TICKET FEEDBACK DISTRICT LEADERSHIP
PD ADVISORY COMMITTEE CURRICULUM CYCLES

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

GEN ED CERT

GR. K + 1

MYERS-
WILKINS

7:30-11:30

CURRICULUM: LITERACY + MATH

GRADE K ROOM: 324
GRADE 1 ROOM: 325



LUNCH 11:30-12:30

GRADE K ROOM: 324

12:30-2:00

**CURRICULUM: SCIENCE
+ SOCIAL STUDIES**

2:15-3:15

PBIS + MTSS



GRADE 1 ROOM: 325

12:30-1:00

CURRICULUM: SOC. ST.

1:00-2:00

PBIS + MTSS



2:15-3:15

CURRICULUM: SCIENCE

3:15-3:30

EXIT TICKET LINK

CEU AND RELICENSURE CERTIFICATES WILL BE DISTRIBUTED
IN PERSON AT THE END OF APPLICABLE SESSIONS
**YOU MUST BE PRESENT TO RECEIVE
YOUR CERTIFICATE**

THE FUTURE:
SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF
WHAT YOUR TEAM WILL
ACCOMPLISH THIS YEAR
IN PD.

- 1208: K-5 SITE-CENTERED CURRICULUM FOCUS
- 0102: ASYNCHRONOUS PD CHOICE BOARD
- 0302: CULTURAL COMPETENCY COMPONENT

PD FLIGHT PLAN

PLAN SUBJECT TO CHANGE

SECONDARY GEN ED CERT DENFELD

7:30-8:15

NAVIGATOR TRAINING

REPORT TO DEPARTMENT ROOM (SEE BELOW)
VIRTUAL LINK



8:30-9:15

GRADING ALIGNMENT

DENFELD AUDITORIUM



9:30-11:30

DEPARTMENT BREAK OUTS

- MATH/ MATH INTER. MIDDLE SCHOOL: 3304
- MATH/ MATH INTER. HIGH SCHOOL: 3306
- ENGLISH/ RD INTER. MIDDLE SCHOOL: 2304
- ENGLISH/ RD INTER. HIGH SCHOOL: 2306
- SOCIAL STUDIES: 3312
- SCIENCE: 2000
- HEALTH: 2216
- ART, SEC: 1301
- ART, ELEM: 1305
- WRD LANG: 2302
- CTE/CCLR: 1312
- MUSIC, SEC: 1026
- MUSIC, ELEM: 1018
- ELL: 3215
- PHYED: 3311
- MEDIA: 2010

LUNCH 11:30-12:30

12:30-3:15

CULTURAL COMPETENCY, PT 1

DENFELD AUDITORIUM



3:15-3:30

EXIT TICKET LINK

CEU AND RELICENSURE CERTIFICATES WILL BE DISTRIBUTED
IN PERSON AT THE END OF APPLICABLE SESSIONS
**YOU MUST BE PRESENT TO RECEIVE
YOUR CERTIFICATE**

THE FUTURE:
SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF
WHAT YOUR TEAM WILL
ACCOMPLISH THIS YEAR
IN PD.

- 1208: COMPLETION OF CULTURAL COMPETENCY
- 0102: ASYNCHRONOUS PD CHOICE BOARD
- 0302: DEDICATED TIME FOR YOUR DEPARTMENT

PD FLIGHT PLAN

PLAN SUBJECT TO CHANGE

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

DECEMBER 8



CERTIFIED GEN ED GRADES K + 1

7:30-11:30 **CURRICULUM:** LITERACY+
MATH+SEL **GR. K RM: 324**
GR. 1 RM: 325

11:30-12:30 **LUNCH**

12:30-2:15 **CURRICULUM:** SCIENCE
+SOC.ST.

2:30-3:15 **ARTIF. INTELLIGENCE** **VIRTUAL LINK**

3:15-3:30 EXIT TICKET LINK

CEU + RELICENSURE
CERTIFICATES WILL BE
DISTRIBUTED IN
PERSON AT THE END OF
APPLICABLE SESSIONS.
**YOU MUST BE PRESENT
TO RECEIVE YOUR
CERTIFICATE (!)**

DRAFT

CERTIFIED GEN ED GRADES 6-12

8:00-12:00**NAVIGATING DULUTH'S CULTURAL
LANDSCAPE: A GUIDE, PT II**Relicensure
Component**AUDITORIUM****12:00-1:00****LUNCH****1:00-1:45****GRADING ALIGNMENT****AUDITORIUM****2:00-3:15****DEPARTMENT FOCUS****SEE ROOMS
BELOW****3:30-4:00****ARTIF. INTELLIGENCE****VIRTUAL LINK****EXIT TICKET LINK**

CEU + REL
CERTIFICATE
DISTR
PERSON ATT
APPLICABLE
YOU MUST BE
TO RECEIVE YOUR
CERTIFICATE

DRAFT

MATH/MATH INTERV. MIDDLE SCH: 2057

MATH/MATH INTERV. HIGH SCH: 2059

ENGLISH/RD INTERV. MIDDLE SCH: 2024

ENGLISH/RD INTERV. HIGH SCH: 2025

SOCIAL STUDIES: 2033

WORLD LANG: 3033

SCIENCE: 3001

HEALTH: 2009

CTE/CCLR: 1049

ART 6-12: 2071

ART K-5: 2021

MUSIC K-5: 1091

MUSIC 6-12: 1087

MEDIA: 2045

ELL: 2022

PHYED/DAPE: 2014

ASYNCHRONOUS PD DAY WORKSHEET

Certified Staff

Dec 19-Jan 9

- ✓ Legal Video Required
- ✓ Choose One From Each Row
- ✓ complete Vector Module
- ✓ Must Be Completed by Jan 9

REQUIRED
REQUIRED FOR ALL STAFF

APD-B01
BELONGING
LEGAL VIDEO

APD-B02 BELONGING CULTURES OF BELONGING	APD-B03 BELONGING DARING CLASSROOMS	APD-B04 BELONGING WHAT WE MAKE VISIBLE TO CHILDREN	APD-B05 BELONGING INDIAN HORSE FILM	APD-B06 BELONGING STUDENT CENTERED TEACHING
APD-L01 LITERACY U.S. LITERACY RATES DECLINING	APD-L02 LITERACY STOP TALKING ABOUT THE LITERACY CRISIS	APD-L04 LITERACY TEACHERS GUIDE TO TEACHING ELL	APD-L05 LITERACY EVERY INTERVENTION MORE EFFECTIVE	APD-L08 LITERACY CAPTI READ BASIX
APD-A01 ATTENDANCE SOCIAL STUDIES FIELD GUILDE	APD-A02 ATTENDANCE AERODYNAMICS OF EXCEPTIONAL SCHOOLS	APD-A03 ATTENDANCE ACES AND HEALTH	APD-A04 ATTENDANCE ADHD/AUTISM ACCOMODATIONS	APD-A05 ATTENDANCE EXECUTIVE FUNCTION IN TEAMS
APD-S01 SAFETY AI MISTAKES IN EDUCATION	APD-S02 SAFETY AI + THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION	APD-S03 SAFETY SUICIDE PREVENTION IN SCHOOLS, PT1	APD-S04 SAFETY MENTAL HEALTH + SUCCESS IN SCHOOL	APD-S05 SAFETY PREVENTION DE ESCALATION
APD-T01 TEAMWORK RATIONAL DETATCHMENT	APD-T02 TEAMWORK EXPERIMENTAL MINDSET	APD-T03 TEAMWORK TURNING CONFLICT INTO PROGRESS	SEE EMAIL TEAMWORK MCA/ALT MCA	APD-T04 TEAMWORK FASTBRIDGE

REQUIRED IF NOTIFIED

REQUIRED IF NOTIFIED

REQUIRED IF NOTIFIED

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



PROFESSIONAL

DEVELOPMENT

MARCH 2ND



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PARA PD DAY-JAN 16

- **Individual Schedules for 300+ paras**
- **Read Act compliance**

FACILITIES PD DAYS

- February 17, 18, 19 + 20
 - School day cleaning
 - Summer cleaning
 - East and Denfield
-
- Try again April Break

MAY 4th PD DAY

- **Read Act, phase 2 begins**
- **Social Studies new curriculum**
- **Para Read Act compliance complete**

S.A.F.A.R.I.

- **S=Safety**
- **A=Attendance**
- **F=Family Engagement**
- **A=Acceptance**
- **R=Read Act**
- **I=Informed by Data**



COW Agenda Cover Sheet

Meeting Date: Tuesday, March 3, 2026

Topic: Budget Update

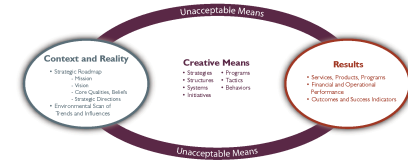
Presenter(s): Simone Zunich, Exec. Dir. of Finance & Business Services

Attachment: Yes - 2026-27 Guiding Change Document

Brief Summary of Presentation or Topic (no more than a few sentences):

Simone will provide an update on the budget reduction and reallocation happening for the 2026-27 school year while covering the main topics of the 2026-27 DPS Guiding Change document.

This Requires School Board Approval : No



Focus Statement: Achieving necessary budget adjustments while aligning resources to the district priorities and positioning us to make effective decisions now and into the future.

Reality “The Why”	Parameters “The How”	Results “The What”
- Increased costs in special education, transportation and insurance - Inflation costs - Continued unfunded legislative mandates requiring resources - Stable enrollment - Current projected deficit of for FY27 \$4M - Priority areas are - supporting every student, advancing equity and improving systems	- Continue alignment of funding and operations to district priorities: - Continue to support student needs throughout the district - Continue to advance equity efforts throughout the district (e.g. Continue to allocate additional resources to students with the greatest need.) - Continue to improve systems throughout the district - Follow laws, policies, regulations & contracts - Avoid going into Statutory Operating Debt - Avoid additional fund balance depletion - Support identified November 2023 referendum commitments - Maintain essential social emotional and mental health supports - Continue to support HS Schedule improvements - Maintain essential academic supports - Develop reduction and realignment options with representative stakeholder input - Make decisions with proper or sufficient data	- Balanced budget for 2026-2027 - Utilize a transparent and engaging process for budget reductions and reallocations for FY27 - Prioritize and protect classroom needs as much as possible - Develop and forecast balanced budgets - Examine all legacy practices with a lens of fiscal accountability - Protects school district's fiscal health by continually seeking efficiencies and identifying new sources of funding, such as grants and investment opportunities