

Decision Resources, Ltd.
3128 Dean Court
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55416

DULUTH PUBLIC SCHOOLS
RESIDENTIAL SURVEY
FINAL APRIL 2007

**OVERALL
(N=300)**

Hello, I'm _____ of Decision Resources, Ltd., a national survey research firm located in Minneapolis. We are speaking with a random sample of residents about issues facing public schools in your area. Even if you do not have children currently in the schools, we are very interested in your opinions and suggestions. I want to assure you that all individual responses will be held strictly confidential; only summaries of the entire sample will be reported.

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|--|---------------------------|
| 1. Approximately, how many years have you lived at your current address in Duluth Public School District? | LESS THAN TWO YEARS....7% |
| | TWO TO FIVE YEARS.....18% |
| | SIX TO TEN YEARS.....20% |
| | 11 TO 20 YEARS.....26% |
| | 21 TO 30 YEARS.....11% |
| | OVER THIRTY YEARS.....18% |
| | DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....0% |
| 2. How would you rate the quality of education provided by the Duluth Public School District -- excellent, good, only fair, or poor? | EXCELLENT.....12% |
| | GOOD.....63% |
| | ONLY FAIR.....17% |
| | POOR.....2% |
| | DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....6% |

I would like to read you a short list of statements others have told us. For each one, please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree. If you don't know, just say so....

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| 3. During the last couple of years, the Duluth Public School District Administration and Board have spent money effectively and efficiently. | STRONGLY AGREE.....1% |
| | AGREE.....39% |
| | DISAGREE.....34% |
| | STRONGLY DISAGREE.....5% |
| | DON'T KNOW/REFUSED....21% |
| 4. Our community receives a good value from its investment in its public schools. | STRONGLY AGREE.....6% |
| | AGREE.....68% |
| | DISAGREE.....17% |
| | STRONGLY DISAGREE.....1% |
| | DON'T KNOW/REFUSED....9% |

5.	The reputation of the Duluth Public School District schools increases home values for residents in this district.	STRONGLY AGREE.....5% AGREE.....59% DISAGREE.....21% STRONGLY DISAGREE.....1% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED....14%
6.	Duluth Public Schools are a good investment and I would support a property tax increase to protect that investment.	STRONGLY AGREE.....5% AGREE.....55% DISAGREE.....27% STRONGLY DISAGREE.....5% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED....9%
7.	I would recommend Duluth Public Schools to friends.	STRONGLY AGREE.....9% AGREE.....72% DISAGREE.....12% STRONGLY DISAGREE.....1% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED....5%
8.	The Duluth Public School District has been honest with residents about the ways in which they spend tax money.	STRONGLY AGREE.....2% AGREE.....43% DISAGREE.....22% STRONGLY DISAGREE.....4% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED....28%
9.	I'm willing to invest in education by paying higher taxes, provided the schools continue to operate efficiently and offer high quality educational programs.	STRONGLY AGREE.....6% AGREE.....57% DISAGREE.....22% STRONGLY DISAGREE.....7% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED....8%

Moving on....

10.	How would you rate the job performance of the Duluth Public School District Board -- excellent, good, only fair, or poor?	EXCELLENT.....1% GOOD.....40% ONLY FAIR.....41% POOR.....5% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED....13%
11.	How would you rate the job performance of the Superintendent and District Administration -- excellent, good, only fair, or poor?	EXCELLENT.....3% GOOD.....43% ONLY FAIR.....30% POOR.....5% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED....19%

12.	And, how would you rate the job performance of teachers and instructional staff -- excellent, good, only fair, or poor?	EXCELLENT.....20%
		GOOD.....60%
		ONLY FAIR.....9%
		POOR.....2%
		DON'T KNOW/REFUSED....10%
13.	How would you rate the financial management of the Duluth Public Schools -- excellent, good, only fair, or poor?	EXCELLENT.....1%
		GOOD.....27%
		ONLY FAIR.....46%
		POOR.....13%
		DON'T KNOW/REFUSED....14%

Moving on....

14.	In comparison with neighboring areas, do you consider total property taxes in your community to be very high, somewhat high, about average, somewhat low, or very low?	VERY HIGH.....10%
		SOMEWHAT HIGH.....39%
		ABOUT AVERAGE.....31%
		SOMEWHAT LOW.....0%
		VERY LOW.....1%
		DON'T KNOW/REFUSED....19%
15.	In comparison with other neighboring school districts, do you think that school taxes in the Duluth School District are very high, somewhat high, about average, somewhat low, or very low?	VERY HIGH.....7%
		SOMEWHAT HIGH.....30%
		ABOUT AVERAGE.....31%
		SOMEWHAT LOW.....2%
		VERY LOW.....1%
		DON'T KNOW/REFUSED....28%
16.	Which of the following three statements best describes your feelings?	STATEMENT A.....17%
		STATEMENT B.....66%
		STATEMENT C.....16%
		DON'T KNOW/REFUSED....1%
	A. I would vote against almost any tax increases for the schools;	
	B. I would vote for a tax increase under some conditions, but against it under other conditions;	
	C. I would vote for almost any tax increases for the schools.	
17.	In general, how informed do you feel about decisions made by the School Board and Administration -- very informed, somewhat informed, not too informed, or not at all informed?	VERY INFORMED.....10%
		SOMEWHAT INFORMED.....64%
		NOT TOO INFORMED.....24%
		NOT AT ALL INFORMED....3%
		DON'T KNOW/REFUSED....0%

As you may know, the Duluth Public School District has been discussing current and future space needs as well as improvements in its academic programs.

18. Are you aware of the discussions taking place on school district space needs?	AWARE.....78% NOT AWARE.....22% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....0%
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IF "AWARE," ASK: (N=234)

19. How familiar are you with the discussions and reports to date - very familiar, somewhat familiar, not too familiar, not at all familiar?	VERY FAMILIAR.....18% SOMEWHAT FAMILIAR.....75% NOT TOO FAMILIAR.....7% NOT AT ALL FAMILIAR....0% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....0%
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As you may know, enrollment in the Duluth Public Schools declined by 25% during the past 10 years, to today's enrollment of 10,140. This trend will continue until 2013, when enrollment will stabilize between 9,000 and 9,350 students. From 2013 to 2022, enrollment is projected to increase modestly and to fluctuate around 9,600 students.

Each of the three facilities options being considered by the Citizens Task Force and School Board provides the following: first, reducing the number of elementary school buildings from eleven to nine; second, reducing the number of middle schools from three to two; third, reducing the number of administrative buildings from three to two; fourth, selling the five currently unused School District properties and any other school district facilities closed as a result of the adopted plan. The key differences, as we will discuss, focus on the number of high schools and whether to build new or remodel and expand current buildings.

Now, let's focus on one major difference in the options....

Under the "Blue Option" or "One High School Alternative," the Duluth School District would have one high school. Central High School would be remodeled and expanded to accommodate 3,000 students. Denfeld High School and East High School would be remodeled and expanded as the two middle schools serving the District.

Under the two "Two High School Alternatives," known as the "Red Option" and "White Option," the Duluth School District would have

two high schools. One building would serve the eastern part of the School District while the other would serve the western part, each housing 1,500 students. Central High School would be closed.

20. Which option do you support -- the ONE HS/STRONGLY.....5%
"One High School Alternative" OR ONE HS.....4%
the "Two High School Alternative?" TWO HS.....57%
(WAIT FOR RESPONSE) Do you feel TWO HS/STRONGLY.....24%
strongly that way? DON'T KNOW/REFUSED....11%

IF AN ALTERNATIVE IS SELECTED, ASK: (N=269)

21. Could you tell me one or two reasons for your decision?

ONE HS/MORE COST EFFECTIVE, 2%; ONE HS/3000 STUDENTS IS TOO MANY, 42%; TWO HS/SMALLER CLASS SIZES, 22%; TWO HS/LESS BUSING AND TRAVEL, 16%; TWO HS/MORE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, 6%; TWO HS/MORE SPORTS OPPORTUNITIES, 3%; ONE HS/UNIFY THE CITY, 4%; ONE HS/MORE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, 2%; SCATTERED, 4%.

Now, let's talk about two variations in the "Two High Schools Alternative."

In both variations, Ordean Middle School would be remodeled, upgraded, and expanded into a high school facility serving 1,500 students in the eastern part of the District, while East High School would be remodeled as a middle school to accommodate 1,100 students.

Under the "Red Option," Denfeld High School would be remodeled and expanded to house 1,500 students, while a new middle school would be constructed in the western part of the district to accommodate 1,100 students.

Under the "White Option," a new high school would be constructed in the western part of the School District to house 1,500 students. Denfeld High School would be remodeled and expanded as a 1,100 student middle school.

22. Which option do you support -- re-modeling and expanding the Denfeld building to keep it as a high school and building a new middle school OR building a new high school facility and repurposing the Denfeld building as a middle school? (WAIT FOR RESPONSE) Do you feel strongly that way?

NEW MIDDLE/STRONGLY...	25%
NEW MIDDLE SCHOOL....	32%
NEW HIGH SCHOOL.....	9%
NEW HIGH SCHOOL/STRONG	1%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED....	32%

IF A RESPONSE IS GIVEN, ASK: (N=207)

23. Could you tell me one or two reasons for your decision?

NEW MIDDLE/MORE COST EFFECTIVE, 12%; NEW MIDDLE/DENFELD HAS HIGH SCHOOL AMENITIES, 21%; NEW HIGH SCHOOL/DENFELD WILL MAKE A BETTER MIDDLE SCHOOL, 4%; NEW MIDDLE/DENFELD HAS A TRADITION IN COMMUNITY, 36%; NEW HIGH SCHOOL/DENFELD IS OUTDATED, 8%; NEW MIDDLE/MONEY WAS RECENTLY USED TO REMODEL DENFELD, 14%; SCATTERED, 5%.

Now, for an overall judgment....

24. Which of the three alternatives do you most support -- the "One High School Option," OR the "Two High School Option keeping Denfeld as a high school facility, OR the "Two High School Option building a new high school facility in the western part of the District?" (WAIT FOR RESPONSE) Do you feel strongly that way?

ONE HS/STRONG.....	8%
ONE HS.....	4%
TWO HS/KEEP DEN/STR...	33%
TWO HS/KEEP DENFELD...	23%
TWO HS/NEW HS/STR.....	6%
TWO HS/NEW HS.....	4%
NONE (VOL.).....	10%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED....	14%

25. And, which, if any of the three alternatives, do you MOST oppose?

ONE HS/STRONG.....	36%
ONE HS.....	34%
TWO HS/KEEP DEN/STR....	4%
TWO HS/KEEP DENFELD....	2%
TWO HS/NEW HS/STR.....	7%
TWO HS/NEW HS.....	2%
NONE (VOL.).....	9%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....	7%

Let's consider the tax implications of these three proposals....

The cost of each proposal would range between 257 million dollars and 271 million dollars. But, due to savings and sales of unused property, almost half of that total is already paid for. In financing the remainder, the owner of a \$125,000 valued home, the average in the District, would see a property tax increase of between \$8.00 and \$11.00 per month, or \$96.00 to \$132.00 per year.

26. Would you favor or oppose the School District issuing bonds to finance the new construction and renovation of school facilities?
- | | | |
|--|----------------------|-----|
| | STRONGLY FAVOR..... | 18% |
| | FAVOR..... | 51% |
| | OPPOSE..... | 19% |
| | STRONGLY OPPOSE..... | 5% |
- (WAIT FOR RESPONSE) Do you feel strongly that way?
- | | | |
|--|-------------------------|----|
| | DON'T KNOW/REFUSED..... | 7% |
|--|-------------------------|----|

By State law, the Minneapolis, Saint Paul, and Duluth School Districts are allowed to issue bonds for the new construction or improvement of school building facilities without holding a referendum election. In the past, the Duluth School District has held well-publicized public hearings to discuss plans and their costs, rather than holding referendum elections.

27. Does the absence of a bond referendum election make you more likely or less likely to support the issuing of construction bonds, or does it have no impact at all? (IF "MORE LIKELY" OR "LESS LIKELY," ASK:) Is that much (more/less) likely or only somewhat?
- | | | |
|--|-------------------------|-----|
| | MUCH MORE LIKELY..... | 1% |
| | SOMEWHAT MORE LIKELY... | 5% |
| | NO IMPACT AT ALL..... | 71% |
| | SOMEWHAT LESS LIKELY.. | 11% |
| | MUCH LESS LIKELY..... | 8% |
| | DON'T KNOW/REFUSED..... | 3% |

Moving on....

Regardless of the facilities option adopted, the School District may ask residents for an additional operating revenue authority of \$350.00 per pupil unit to undertake curriculum and program changes to enhance education opportunities in the new facilities. This would be an ADDITIONAL tax increase proposal of \$5.00 per month or \$60.00 per year on a \$125,000 home.

28. Would you favor or oppose this operating levy proposal? (WAIT FOR RESPONSE) Do you feel strongly that way?
- | | | |
|--|-------------------------|-----|
| | STRONGLY FAVOR..... | 11% |
| | FAVOR..... | 47% |
| | OPPOSE..... | 24% |
| | STRONGLY OPPOSE..... | 9% |
| | DON'T KNOW/REFUSED..... | 9% |

IF A RESPONSE IS GIVEN, ASK: (N=273)

29. Could you tell me one or two reasons for your decision?

EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT, 26%; TAXES ARE TOO HIGH, 22%;
COST IS REASONABLE, 11%; NEEDED FOR CURRICULUM AND
PROGRAMS, 27%; POOR DISTRICT SPENDING, 4%; NO
NEED/HAVE ENOUGH MONEY, 5%; NO NEED/CURRICULUM AND
PROGRAMS ARE FINE, 3%; SCATTERED, 3%.

If the Duluth School District were to hold a bond referendum election this November, it might also place the operating levy proposal on the same ballot. Voters would be asked to vote on two funding questions....

30. Which of the following statements best describes your vote?	STATEMENT A.....53%
	STATEMENT B.....11%
A) I would vote for both the bond referendum proposal and the operating levy proposal;	STATEMENT C.....3%
	STATEMENT D.....23%
B) I would vote for the bond referendum proposal, but against the operating levy proposal;	NONE (VOL.).....3%
	DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....7%
C) I would vote against the bond referendum proposal, but for the operating levy proposal;	
D) I would vote against both the bond referendum proposal and the operating levy proposal.	

The School District might make the passage of any bond referendum for school buildings contingent on the success of the operating levy proposal. In that way, the funds needed to undertake curriculum and program changes would be available when the construction is complete.

31. Would requiring the passage of the operating levy prior to building any new facilities make you more or less likely to support the operating levy? (WAIT FOR RESPONSE) Do you feel strongly that way?	MORE LIKELY/STRONGLY..10%
	MORE LIKELY.....38%
	LESS LIKELY.....16%
	LESS LIKELY/STRONGLY..12%
	DON'T KNOW/REFUSED....21%
	NO DIFFERENCE.....5%

As we discussed earlier, the cost of each proposal would range between 257 and 271 million dollars. If the School District bonded for the entire amount, the savings and sales of unused

property can be applied to educational programs, curriculum upgrades, and technology opportunities. If the full amount were bonded for, the owner of a \$125,000 valued home would see a property tax increase of between \$16.00 and \$22.00 per month, or \$192.00 to \$264.00 per year.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 32. Would you favor or oppose the School District issuing bonds to finance the full cost of the new construction and renovation of school facilities? (WAIT FOR RESPONSE) Do you feel strongly that way? | STRONGLY FAVOR.....10%
FAVOR.....36%
OPPOSE.....28%
STRONGLY OPPOSE.....16%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED....12% |
|--|---|

IF A RESPONSE IS GIVEN, ASK: (N=265)

33. Could you tell me one or two reasons for your decision?

EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT, 19%; TAXES ARE TOO HIGH, 34%; COST IS REASONABLE, 10%; GOOD FOR THE COMMUNITY, 4%; USE ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR CURRICULUM AND PROGRAMS, 9%; USE ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR TECHNOLOGY, 9%; SHOULD USE FUNDS FROM SALE OF BUILDINGS TO OFFSET COST TO TAXPAYERS, 6%; POOR DISTRICT SPENDING, 6%; SCATTERED, 3%.

Changing topics....

I would like to read you a number of sources of information about the Duluth Public School District. For each one, please tell me if you receive a lot of your information about the school district from that source, some information, a little information, or none at all? (ROTATE LIST)

	ALT	SOM	LIT	NON	DKR
34. School District newsletter?	19%	20%	8%	54%	0%
35. The School District's website?	2%	11%	12%	75%	0%
36. The Duluth daily newspaper?	30%	40%	14%	16%	0%
37. Teachers in the School District you know?	8%	14%	15%	63%	0%
38. School District employees other than teachers?	5%	14%	11%	71%	0%
39. School children, your own or your neighbors?	1%	16%	14%	68%	0%
40. Informal discussions with neighbors or acquaintances?	8%	39%	24%	29%	0%

Now, just a few more questions for demographic purposes....

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| 41. | What is your age, please? | 18-24.....5%
25-34.....10%
35-44.....24%
45-54.....18%
55-64.....19%
65 AND OVER.....23%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....0% |
| 42. | What is the highest level of formal education you completed? | LESS THAN HS GRADUATE..2%
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE..26%
VO-TECH/TECH COLLEGE..10%
SOME COLLEGE.....25%
COLLEGE GRADUATE.....27%
POST-GRADUATE.....8%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....2% |
| 43. | Are there infants or pre-schoolers in this household? | YES.....10%
NO.....90%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....0% |
| 44. | Are there school-aged children in this household? (WAIT FOR RESPONSE) Do they attend public schools in this district, public schools in another district, parochial or private schools, charter schools, or home school? | NO.....77%
YES/DULUTH SD.....20%
YES/ANOTHER SD.....1%
YES/PAROCHIAL/PRIVATE..1%
YES/CHARTER.....1%
YES/HOME SCHOOL.....0%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....0% |
| IF "NO," ASK: (N=231) | | |
| 45. | Have you ever had children in the Duluth Public Schools? | YES.....60%
NO.....40%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....0% |
| 46. | Did you or your spouse/partner, if applicable, attend Duluth Public Schools? | YES.....53%
NO.....47%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....0% |
| 47. | Have you or any member of your household participated in any Duluth School District Community Education programs or offerings during the past two years? | YES.....24%
NO.....76%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....0% |

48.	Which political party do you consider yourself most closely aligned with?	REPUBLICAN.....23%
		DEMOCRAT.....47%
		INDEPENDENT.....21%
		GREEN PARTY.....1%
		SOMETHING ELSE.....0%
		DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....8%
49.	In politics, do you consider yourself to be (ROTATE) a conservative, a liberal, or a moderate? (IF "CONSERVATIVE" OR "LIBERAL," ASK:) Do you think of yourself as very (conservative/ liberal)? (IF "MODERATE," ASK:) Do you lean closer to conservative or liberal?	VERY CONSERVATIVE.....6%
		SOMEWHAT CONSERVATIVE..17%
		LEAN CONSERVATIVE.....4%
		MODERATE.....34%
		LEAN LIBERAL.....13%
		SOMEWHAT LIBERAL.....11%
		VERY LIBERAL.....6%
		SOMETHING ELSE.....0%
		DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....8%
50.	Are you employed by -- a government agency or political subdivision, such as state or local government or a school district; business or corporation; self-employed; work on a farm; student; currently not working, or retired?	GOV AGENCY/POLI SUB...15%
		BUSINESS/CORPORATION..35%
		SELF-EMPLOYED.....9%
		WORK ON FARM.....0%
		STUDENT.....1%
		CURRENTLY NOT WORKING..8%
		RETIRED.....33%
		DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....0%

Please tell me which of the following apply to you:

	YES	NO	DKR
51. Read the newspaper at least 4 to 5 times a week?	64%	36%	0%
52. Listen to talk radio?	55%	45%	0%
53. Watch television news most evenings?	82%	18%	0%
54. Surf the internet for news and information at least every week?	47%	53%	0%
55. Read mail sent to me by interest groups?	41%	58%	1%
56. Are you currently a member of a civic organization?	YES.....11%	NO.....89%	DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....0%
57. Are you a member of a labor union?	YES.....14%		

(IF "NO," ASK:) Are any other members of your household members of a labor union?	NO/YES.....10% NO/NO.....75% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....1%
58. Do you rent or own your current residence? (IF "OWN," ASK:) Is your home valued under \$75,000, \$75,000-\$125,000, \$125,001-\$175,000, or over \$175,000?	RENT.....32% OWN/UNDER \$75,000.....1% OWN/\$75,000-\$125,000..14% OWN/\$125,001-\$175,000.25% OWN/OVER \$175,000.....23% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....4%
59. Finally, thinking about your household finances, how you would describe your financial situation, would you say that -- A) Your monthly expenses are exceeding your income; B) You are meeting your monthly expenses but are putting aside little or no savings; C) You are managing comfortably while putting some money aside; D) Managing very well?	STATEMENT A.....2% STATEMENT B.....47% STATEMENT C.....33% STATEMENT D.....10% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....7%
60. Gender	MALE.....49% FEMALE.....51%
61. High School Attendance Zone	DENFELD.....27% CENTRAL.....35% EAST.....38%