



GOVERNANCE PROCESS 4.9 LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

Adopted: December 21, 2004

Revised: December 7, 2022

Adams 12 Five Star Schools will actively seek to influence legislation to preserve local governance, to create more flexibility from state mandates, to promote policies that adequately fund schools, to support accountability for student success and to support parental involvement.

LEGISLATIVE PRINCIPLES

Local Control – Preserve the responsibility, fiduciary role and authority of locally elected school boards for the operations and decisions of their local schools and districts. The state legislature’s role is to provide for a thorough and uniform system of public education with the state board of education providing general supervision as prescribed by law. Maximum flexibility in decision-making and accountability should be given to locally-elected school board members whose sole responsibility is the education of the community’s children.

Fewer Regulations and Streamlined Reporting – In order to allow the maximum effectiveness of funds allocated to public education, the removal and/or flexibility of regulations on funding and program mandates would allow local school boards to better act in the best interest of their students, parents and community. Streamlined and cost effective monitoring and reporting for accountability of regulations must be a primary consideration in legislation.

Increase Funding – As local school boards work to improve and transform the educational systems in schools, it is vital to increase funding for operations, capital construction, infrastructure, and maintenance so students can benefit from quality environments, tools, and highly effective personnel needed to facilitate learning.

Accountability for Student Success – Adams 12 Five Star Schools affirms the need for every district and school to demonstrate continuous improvement and be accountable in meaningful and useful ways to its students, their parents, and the broader community.

Parental Responsibility and Involvement – Parents are vital to the successful education of children. Their responsibility and involvement for their child’s education must be encouraged and supported at all levels of the educational system.

LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS

Adequacy and Equity of School Funding

- Adams 12 Five Star Schools supports legislation that restores ongoing K-12 funding that was lost during years with state budget shortfalls. Adams 12 Five Star Schools advocates for allocating K-12 funding such that the budget stabilization factor is reduced whenever possible but at a minimum does not increase.
- Adams 12 Five Star Schools opposes any state or federal legislation that imposes unfunded mandates or mandates that require districts to incur compliance costs that negatively impact district operations.

- Adams 12 Five Star Schools requests that any legislation contemplating changes to tax increment financing (TIF) law consider the impact on school bond and mill levy override rates.
- Adams 12 Five Star Schools urges the adoption of a new school finance act with additional funding that addresses the lack of adequacy and equity in our current system.
- Adams 12 Five Star Schools supports legislation that would help districts address long term impacts from the COVID pandemic including student learning loss, increased student mental health and behavioral issues, increases in student and family basic needs, continued staffing shortages, and further growth of deferred maintenance.
- Adams 12 Five Star Schools supports legislative efforts to adjust the definition of at-risk and the associated funding formula that makes it easier to include the appropriate students in the count and is fully funded.
- Adams 12 Five Star Schools supports any state or federal legislation that increases special education funding.
- Adams 12 Five Star Schools supports legislation that increases the state's contribution to the pension system for lost fiscal gains in order to keep PERA on-track to achieve its funding goal.
- Adams 12 Five Star Schools supports legislation to modify the PERA automatic adjustment provision which is negatively impacting employees.

Student Academic Success

- Adams 12 Five Star Schools supports legislation that reduces the amount of time dedicated to state testing while maintaining reliable, high quality data that measures the academic growth of students over time. Testing must provide valuable and timely feedback for use in student instructional planning.
- Adams 12 Five Star Schools believes it is imperative for the legislature to increase funding to support early literacy outcomes for all students including:
 - Increased funding for early literacy program per-pupil intervention to address the increase in the number of students needing intervention due to interrupted learning during the COVID-19 pandemic
 - Funding to purchase and provide training for CDE-approved core and supplemental reading programs and assessments
 - Ongoing funding for teacher training in evidence based reading instruction

Charter School Related Equity Priorities

- Adams 12 Five Star Schools supports legislation that improves the relationship, in academic accountability and fiscal responsibility, between charter schools and their authorizing public school districts. Adams 12 Five Star Schools does not support the State providing supplemental revenue to charter schools that are authorized through the Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI) because the CSI Board of Directors is not elected and accountable to local taxpayers and funds allocated from the state for this purpose result in funding cuts for all other schools and districts.
- Adams 12 Five Star Schools supports a standard of review for new charter school application appeals to the state board of education that is the same for the charter school institute and local district boards of education. The standard of review for appeals for both chartering authorities should be whether the chartering authority's decision was arbitrary and capricious, which is the common standard of review for nearly all administrative reviews.
- Adams 12 Five Star Schools supports legislation that gives the local school board sufficient authority to set appropriate policies and direct charter schools to take corrective or remedial action when the school district may have legal liability for actions of the charter school.

Local Control

- Adams 12 Five Star Schools opposes granting BOCES the ability to operate schools within the boundaries of a school district without the agreement of the elected board of education.