



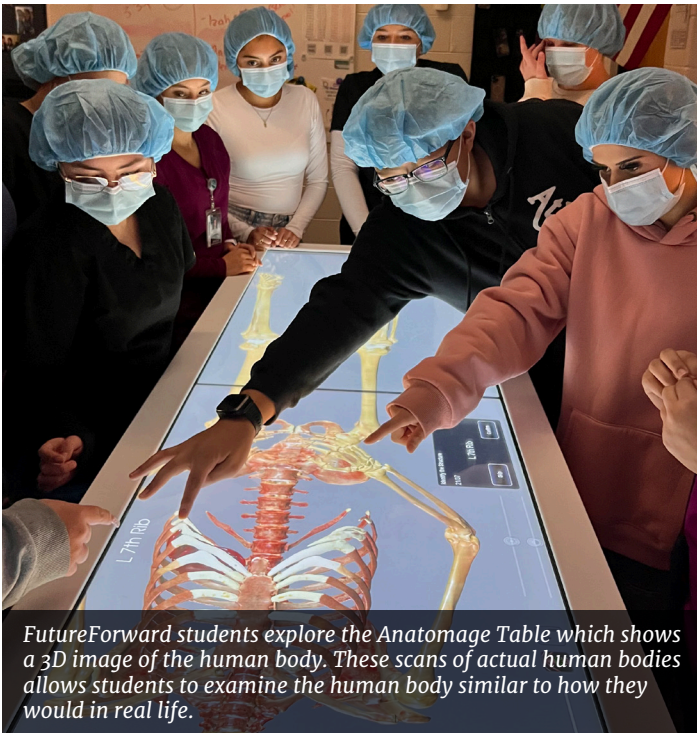
# 2025 Legislative Platform

*Adams 12 Five Star Schools Board of Education*



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.

[adams12.org](http://adams12.org)



*FutureForward students explore the Anatomage Table which shows a 3D image of the human body. These scans of actual human bodies allows students to examine the human body similar to how they would in real life.*

## 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 opposes any legislation that indirectly brings back the Budget Stabilization Factor through another mechanism such as the elimination of 4-year enrollment averaging, and cuts K-12 education funding.
- Adams 12 Five Star Schools urges the legislature to use the adequacy study to inform the adoption of a new school finance act that includes additional funding to address the lack of adequacy and equity in our current system; and that supports today's needs, expectations, and current realities of staff, students, families, and community members.
- Adams 12 Five Star Schools supports a state mill levy override match formula that provides a predictable and consistent funding stream to property-poor districts that have passed local overrides.
- Adams 12 Five Star Schools advocates that public funds be used for the sole purpose of public education, and opposes any legislation that creates school vouchers which would only perpetuate and even increase inequities in our public school funding and fail to meet the needs of marginalized students.
- 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 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, and continued staffing shortages.
- 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.

### 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.



*In Adams 12 Five Star Schools, students begin learning computational thinking and advanced problem solving at a young age through computer science.*

## 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, including the requirement to provide adequate safeguards for subgroups of students such as special education and multilingual learners, and direct charter schools to take corrective or remedial action when the school district may have legal liability for actions of the charter school.

## Our Students

**34,746**

Total students enrolled

**30,940**

District

**3,803**

Charter

**17,285**

Students on free or reduced priced lunch

**6,624**

Students with limited English proficiency

**4,565**

Students served through special education

**5,306**

Students participating in Gifted & Talented Program

**4,159**

Students traveling to school by bus

**101**

Languages represented

## Demographics

**44.25%**

Hispanic

**41.96%**

White

**6.90%**

Asian

**4.69%**

Two or more ethnicities

**1.61%**

African-American

**0.46%**

Native American

**0.13%**

Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

# Local property wealth drives funding inequities

Colorado has a regressive tax structure when it comes to funding education. Districts with more property wealth pay lower tax rates than poorer districts, which creates inequity. Both of the state's funding adequacy studies published in December 2024 call out this inequity as something that the legislature must address.

In Adams 12 Five Star Schools, in order to raise the same amount of revenue to support student learning, residents have to tax themselves at higher rates as compared to neighboring districts. The charts below illustrate this problem. Assessed valuation per student is a measure of local property wealth on a per-student basis. For illustration purposes, the district with the lowest property wealth (Adams 12), must tax itself at a three times greater rate than the district with the highest property wealth (Englewood) to generate the same amount of revenue.

## CURRENT COMPARATIVE ASSESSED VALUATION

assessed valuation \$ per student

Englewood	\$388,163
Boulder Valley	\$350,940
Sheridan	\$328,339
Denver	\$302,071
Adams 14	\$239,468
Littleton	\$189,098
Mapleton	\$186,265
Jefferson County	\$183,736
Douglas County	\$177,655
Cherry Creek	\$175,197
St. Vrain	\$172,543
Aurora	\$151,436
Westminster	\$151,314
27J	\$141,872
<b>Adams 12</b>	<b>\$119,756</b>

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## CURRENT COMPARATIVE MLO VALUATION

per student override \$

Englewood	\$4,749
Boulder Valley	\$4,676
Aurora	\$4,061
Denver	\$4,061
Cherry Creek	\$3,892
Sheridan	\$3,796
Westminster	\$3,784
Littleton	\$3,730
Adams 14	\$2,866
Mapleton	\$2,825
Douglas County	\$2,396
St. Vrain	\$2,284
Jefferson County	\$2,077
<b>Adams 12</b>	<b>\$2,009</b>
27J	\$1,170

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**Fiscal Policy Challenge:** To develop a school funding system that accounts for differences in fiscal capacity by allowing a district with lower fiscal capacity (i.e., less property valuation per student) to raise a similar amount of revenue at a similar tax rate as districts with higher fiscal capacity.



## ELEVATE

ELEVATE, the district's strategic plan, reflects the values and priorities of the more than 7,000 parents, community members, students and staff who helped develop it.

In Adams 12 Five Star Schools, we

- Care
- Collaborate
- Empower
- Engage
- Focus on Students

[adams12.org/elevate](https://adams12.org/elevate)

## Adams 12 Five Star Schools

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High performing schools in Broomfield, Federal Heights, Northglenn, Thornton and Westminster.