



# Assessment of the District's Mill Levy Override (MLO) Spend Plan 2000 and 2017

Colorado Springs School District 11

Final Report  
July 2019

PCG | *Education*

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## Introduction

### Purpose of the Study

In February 2019, Colorado Springs District 11 (D11) selected Public Consulting Group, Inc. (PCG) to conduct the 2019 assessment of the 2000 and 2017 Mill Levy Override (MLO) Spend Plans.

The assessment, which is conducted on a biennial/triennial basis, provides a third-party, independent review of the MLO funds to 1) report on the District's progress toward stated goals since the last review, 2) assess the effectiveness and the alignment with the Strategic Plan; and 3) determine whether the MLO management program and structure is meeting the intent of the 2000 and 2017 MLO Tax Ballot questions.<sup>1</sup> The triennial MLO Assessment is one of several mechanisms used in D11 to promote accountability and transparency. PCG conducted the last review in 2016.

This report describes the current state of the MLO initiatives in D11 and is designed to guide the District toward continuous improvement and effective use of its resources. It examines the following guiding questions:

- I. *What is the current context of District 11 in relation to the 2000 and 2017 MLO?*
- II. *What are stakeholder perceptions of: communication about the MLOs; transparency with regard to decision-making, finances, and activities conducted with MLO funds; resource allocation and the impact of MLO funds; and challenges that limit D11 from achieving its goals?*
- III. *What is the awareness of the Performance Implementation Plans (PIPs), and what initiatives has the District undertaken for each?*
- IV. *What is the status of strategic planning in D11, and how do the MLOs support the new Strategic Plan?*
- V. *What are recommendations for the future implementation of the 2000 and 2017 MLO?*

These questions frame the subsequent sections of the report.

The report is divided into six sections, one of which is the introduction. This introductory section is followed by a description of the current state of District 11 including a description of the history of the MLO, practices in peer districts, district demographics and outcomes. Chapter II examines stakeholder perceptions regarding communication, transparency and accountability, the impact of MLO funds, points of pride in D11, and challenges to reaching D11's goals. Chapter III provides a review of the activities under each PIP, stakeholder awareness, and staff priorities. Chapter IV reviews the strategic planning process in 2019 and alignment with the MLOs. And finally, Chapter V provides recommendations to support the implementation of the MLOs in the future.

### Methodology

During spring 2019, PCG conducted a mixed-methods study of the 2000 and 2017 MLO. The findings and recommendations related to the MLO and PIPs are grounded in a comprehensive analysis of four data sources, including 1) Data and Document Analysis, 2) Focus Groups and Interviews, 3) Staff, Community, and Peer District Surveys. Details of each data source are included below.

### Data and Document Analysis

PCG analyzed student demographic, programmatic, and outcomes data and reviewed current documents related to the MLO including information about the 2017 vote as well as recent accountability reports. In

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<sup>1</sup> The 2000 MLO required a biennial performance review. In 2016, the District 11 Board of Education approved an extension of the frequency of the performance reviews to at least every three years to more effectively utilize resources.

addition, PCG reviewed up-to-date information about the strategic planning process that was being completed concurrently with this review.

## **Focus Groups and Interviews**

PCG conducted a series of interviews and job-alike focus groups with over 150 stakeholders, including district officials and staff, teachers, students, and community members. PCG collaborated with District staff to identify the most appropriate stakeholders who could discuss the topics of the MLO Assessment. Participants were solicited to represent a range of views and perspectives. Focus groups and interviews were conducted primarily in person during three days on site in April 2019, with a few conducted by telephone afterward. Each interview and focus group lasted from 30-60 minutes.

Focus group questions were developed by PCG for this project in collaboration with District staff and were tailored to each stakeholder group and by the role of participants. Responses were recorded in a set of notes taken during the meetings. PCG systematically reviewed these notes to identify themes within and across stakeholder group responses.

## **Staff, Community, and Peer District Surveys**

PCG developed three online surveys for the purpose of the MLO Audit. A community survey and a staff survey were administered to learn more about the MLOs in District 11. PCG also conducted a survey of Chief Financial Officers to learn more about MLO management and accountability practices in other selected school systems.

Survey items for each survey were developed in collaboration with D11 staff. Some survey items were developed for the 2016 assessment and were also included in the 2019 administration to gauge changes in stakeholder perceptions. Other survey items were newly developed for this assessment.

The staff and community surveys were administered on April 29 – May 10, 2019, and the CFO survey was administered on May 13 – 24, 2019. The link to the staff survey was sent by the Office of Research and Evaluation to all D11 staff. The community survey links (one for the English version and one for the Spanish version) were posted to the D11 website, social media accounts (Twitter and Facebook), and included in the D11 community email newsletter. The CFO survey was sent by PCG to an email listserv of CFOs statewide that D11 staff provided.

A total of 1,315 D11 staff members responded to the survey, representing a response rate of 22.8%, and a total of 690 parent and community members responded. The peer district survey received 11 responses from Chief Financial Officers across the state.

Responses to selected survey questions appear within the main body of the report to support discussion of particular topics. All open-ended responses were coded by PCG staff by theme and are discussed in the body of the text.

## I. Current State

*What is the current context of District 11 in relation to the 2000 and 2017 MLO?*

### Background

When PCG conducted the last MLO assessment review in 2016, District 11 was facing a different future than it is today. At the time, the District was establishing the groundwork for the passage of a potential MLO or bond in 2016, a measure that ultimately failed. Though this defeat was unfortunate, it galvanized the District 11 community during a subsequent attempt in 2017. The 2017 passage of the ballot measure, known as 3e, was a huge victory that transpired only because of the community's coordinated rallying, canvassing, and outreach. District 11 then selected a new superintendent in 2018 and launched a new strategic planning process in 2019. Taken together, these events have charted the District on a different course. The optimism felt in the D11 community today is palpable. Though the District still faces declining enrollment and revenue, it has invested leadership, with a renewed focus, ready to face these challenges and propel the District forward.

### Mill Levy Override Funding 2000 and 2017

In November 2000, District taxpayers sent a message of support to their schools by approving a \$26.9 million ballot issue (Ballot Issue #3B) to supplement educational funding in D11. To minimize the impact on property owners, the MLO funding was phased in over several years. The District began to receive the full additional annual funding of \$26,998,822 in 2009. This money earmarked to be used to fund the following ballot items, termed "elements," related to improving education in the District:

1. Reduction in class size
2. Attraction and retention of superior teachers and support staff
3. Core academic subjects such as mathematics, reading, writing, and science
4. Purchase of classroom instructional materials and supplies
5. Increase in teacher training
6. Expansion in student assessment and interventional support
7. Library support
8. School safety and security
9. School start times
10. Technology integration in the classroom
11. Citizens oversight committee to develop independent comprehensive performance plan

The District then adopted a spending plan, which broadened these 11 targeted areas into 24 specific program improvement plans (PIPs). The PIPs include budget codes, budget amount, item description, quantification of costs, a history of implementation costs, and a breakout of full-time equivalent (FTE) personnel funded through the MLO. Also included are any plan amendments, PIP relationship to the election questions and how each PIP fits into D11's strategic plan (known as the Business Plan in prior years).

The District began collecting monies from the 2000 MLO in early 2001. All PIPs were expected to be implemented in 8 to 10 years as the MLO funding was phased in. The 24 programs corresponding to the eleven targeted elements were intended to receive some form of funding through MLO dollars by 2010. The 2000 MLO ballot measure did not include an inflationary clause, so the funds, though they renew each year, have remained static.

Then in November 2017 Colorado Springs voters approved Ballot Issue #3E, an additional mill levy override, to fund the following educational needs in D11:



1. Attracting and retaining high quality teachers and support staff, not to include administrators, by offering salaries and benefits that are competitive to other school districts
2. Extending the life of existing schools by repairing, maintaining, and modernizing aging buildings
3. Expanding technology access to more students by upgrading and replacing outdated computers and equipment
4. Providing equitable funding for charter schools
5. Improving student safety and security by adding a school resource officer at every middle school
6. Supporting student success by providing more school counselors, nurses, psychologists, or social workers
7. Reducing long-term interest costs by paying off existing debt sooner

The 2017 MLO funding follows the same structure as the 2000 MLO, with the development of PIPs that align to the ballot items, and a phase-in of funding over several years. The District received a partial amount of \$40 million in the 2017-18 school year. By 2023-24, the amount is expected to be \$43.4 million.

On the community and staff surveys administered by PCG in the spring of 2019, respondents shared reasons why they voted for or against the 2017 ballot measure.

Of those that voted for it, they cited the following reasons:

- Commitment to public education and general improvement of schools
- Improve infrastructure (facilities and technology)
- Make teacher pay competitive
- Support district's overall financial needs
- Reduce class size

Of those that voted against it, they cited the following reasons:

- Don't want to see taxes increase, already feel overtaxed
- Thought that marijuana tax money was funding schools
- Believe District already receives enough money and/or "top heavy" with administrative positions
- District lacks accountability and transparency
- Lack of confidence and specificity in District's spending plan

The total of both mill levy overrides is approximately \$70 million.<sup>2</sup>

## Accountability

Over the course of the past nearly 20 years, D11 has developed a robust accountability and reporting structure for managing MLO funds. At the core of it is a commitment to transparency. Focus group participants reported that the District has fundamentally adhered to the requirements established in the 2000 ballot measure and that without having solid, consistent structures in place, including the well-established MLO Oversight Committee, biennial/triennial performance audits, MLO annual summaries, and the MLO governance/spending plan, the 2017 ballot measure would not have passed.

### Mill Levy Override (MLO) Citizens' Oversight Committee

The Ballot Issues approved by voters in 2000 and 2017 called for the formation of a Citizens' Oversight Committee to monitor implementation performance and use of the new Mill Levy Override (MLO)

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<sup>2</sup> District 11 2019-20 Proposed Budget

funding. The Committee meets monthly at the District 11 Administration Building to review and monitor both the 2000 and 2017 MLO monies.

Committee Members are asked to perform the following:

- Monitor MLO spending plan progress
- Make recommendations regarding any program modification
- Familiarize themselves with the MLO spending plan and the D11 business plan and mission
- Participate in periodic public briefings to inform the community about implementation progress
- Attend regular meetings, at least six per year

For several years, the MLO Oversight Committee was merged with the Audit Committee. However, after the passage of the 2017 MLO, it again became a separate committee. MLO Oversight Committee meeting notes are posted to the D11 website.

### **MLO Audits: Performance Excellence Assessment Reports**

Consistent with both the 2000 and 2017 Election Ballot Questions, D11 has conducted a number of biennial/triennial audits of the MLO fund to review its progress in meeting requirements of the comprehensive district performance plan/business plan/strategic plan. Copies of past assessment reports are available on the D11 website for review.

### **MLO Annual Summaries**

District 11 prepares a Program Implementation Plan (PIP) for each of the 25 items contained in the MLO spending plans. The PIPs include budget codes, budget amount, item description, quantification of costs, a history of implementation costs, and a breakout of full-time equivalent (FTE) personnel according to employee group to be hired. Also included are any plan amendments, PIP relationship to the election questions and how each PIP fits into the District's existing business plan. PIP summaries and the annual reports are available on the D11 website for review.

### **MLO Governance/Spending Plan**

The MLO Governance Plan, last amended on September 13, 2017, provides details on how the MLO funds will be administered and the process for amending the spending plans in order to address changing circumstances or innovations (such as new regulatory requirements or technologies). This plan is routinely updated to ensure spending priorities are aligned to District need and have MLO Oversight Committee approval.

## **Peer District MLO Practices**

As part of this review, PCG conducted a survey of other Colorado districts to assess the extent to which they have MLO funding and how they manage it. The survey was sent to Chief Financial Officers and/or Budget Directors.<sup>3</sup>

The following 10 school districts responded to the survey:

1. Weld RE- Windsor/Severance
2. Denver Public Schools
3. Cheyenne Mountain School District 12
4. Mesa County Valley School District 51
5. Douglas County School District

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<sup>3</sup> There were two responses for both Douglas County and Mesa County.



6. Academy School District
7. Poudre School District
8. Widefield School District
9. Littleton Public Schools
10. Thompson R2-J

All respondents reported that their district have MLO funds and that funds ranged from \$6.1M to \$210M.<sup>4</sup> The vast majority (91%) put these monies in the general fund. Just over one-quarter of responding districts (27.3%) indicated that their MLOs have an inflationary clause.

### Funding Allocation

Regarding the allocation of MLO funds:

- 72.7% reported that their district has an MLO “spending plan” or a plan that details exactly how the money is spent.
- 54.5% reported that their district is allowed to make changes to how the money is allocated.

Survey respondents also shared the process used for making changes to MLO funding allocations. Responses varied primarily based on how the ballot language was written.

The following are excerpts:

- We have a Mill Oversight committee that helps with any changes, and we have board authority to change it (as long as it ties back to the mill language).
- Funding allocations are determined at the Board's discretion, during the typical budget development.
- Our first 4 MLOs have no spending plan. Our new 2018 MLO has an oversight committee that sunsets in 3 years.
- While we do have a broad spending plan, our ballot language is loosely written on most of our 5 MLOs to allow maximum flexibility. For example, we are allowed to make changes in the “technology” allocation from student technology, to staff technology, to district technology, and infrastructure.
- There was not direct case for how the money would be spent. It was generic enough we can use it for most anything.
- Annual needs are evaluated with recommendations made by staff as to which categories should receive funds each year. Those recommendations are then reviewed by the Superintendent's Cabinet before being included in the annual budget. The budget is then presented to the Board of Education for consideration, questions and ultimately, adoption. The categories within each MLO are defined as to type of purchases, but there is some latitude in how much is funded from year to year in each of those categories.
- We had a “plan” to spend the funds included in the 1999 and 2008 ballot questions but when the overrides were approved, there was no negative factor in Colorado... The MLO funds are not “extra” funds in the current environment.

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<sup>4</sup> In some cases, districts have had multiple MLOs and/or bonds pass. Respondents were asked to address their spending plans and accountability broadly, not for each ballot measure.

- We have a process for internal consideration of MLO spending requests prior to dollars being allocated to ensure that they fit within the confines of the original ballot language.

### Accountability

Regarding the oversight of their district's MLO funds:

- 45.5% reported having a citizen's oversight committee specifically for the MLO
- No district reported having an external evaluation process of the MLO, other than an annual financial audit.
- 9.1% reported publishing an annual report on the MLO.

Survey respondents were also asked to share their accountability practices.

The following are excerpts:

- For a period of time after a bond/mill election, we have a citizen's oversight committee. It is more focused on the bond side and ceases meeting as bond projects wrap up.
- We do board presentations on MLO plans.
- We had a communication plan as to how we would spend the funds, we communicated it again once it passed that we would spend the funds as first communicated, then through the community oversight committee we are showing again that we spend the funds in accordance with that plan.
- On our district website, we have a page that describes both the Bond and Mill, as well as quarterly expenditures with types of expenditures. All of the projects are included by school. Transparency!
- We have had override fund elections in 2001, 2007 and 2016. All of the funds, except for \$487,000 of the 2016 election, are for the operating costs of new schools. Details are kept of what the funds were used for in the first year of the school. The funds received do not increase and were specifically meant to cover the operating costs of having an additional facility. The \$487,000 in 2016 was for technology in classrooms. We keep track of what was spent each year.
- The 2017 MLO had a 10-year sunset clause so it will end in 2027. There are four specific areas of funding: adding 5 days to instructional calendar; acquiring student instruction resources and implementing staff training; up to date technologies and ongoing maintenance.
- Each of the 3 MLOs in place in the district are tracked in separate sub-funds of the General Fund to ensure that funds and spending restrictions of one of the MLOs are not co-mingled with those of another MLO. Each of the MLO sub-funds roll up to the "all-inclusive" General Fund. The MLO oversight committee reviews expenditures to make sure they fit within the confines of the ballot language, but they do not have authority to direct how the funds will be budgeted/spent.

## The District Today

District 11 is a large urban/suburban school district located in Colorado Springs, CO region with an enrollment in 2018 of 26,518, inclusive of preschool. The District has experienced several decades of declining enrollment, a trend that is expected to continue during the next five to ten years, according to a recent 2018 demography report commissioned by D11.<sup>5</sup> Among the potential causes are: a declining birth rate, student departures to adjacent districts and to charter schools, the growth in online education

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<sup>5</sup> Western Demographics, Inc., 2018. Colorado Springs District 11 - Competitiveness Strategies and Potential Enrollment Forecast Effects Report.

providers, and departures of families from houses in the city of Colorado Springs in favor of the surrounding suburbs. The difference between the 2014-15 pupil count and the 2018-19 is 2,023 pupils.<sup>6</sup>

Though D11's enrollment has decreased over time, it is still the largest district in the Pikes Peak Region and is the 10<sup>th</sup> largest in the state.<sup>7</sup> The demography report notes that the District is well positioned to use competitive strategies to reduce the departure rate of students and to attract students from throughout El Paso County. Implementing these deliberate and proactive strategies, specifically focused on developing specialized curriculums, employing pragmatic marketing, inventorying existing resources, improving school facilities, could possibly defray 25-33% of the forecasted departure over the next several years.<sup>8</sup>

Because of its financial constraints, which are exacerbated by declining enrollment, D11 has struggled to develop innovative academic programs, upgrade its facilities and technology, and support students' social emotional learning. Those participating in focus groups and interviews, though, demonstrated a strong commitment to the District and an optimism that D11 has the potential to be a premier district. The passage of the 2017 MLO buoyed community spirits and commitment to improving the District.

## Demographics

The demographics of the District have changed considerably since the passage of the MLO in 2000. They have continued along the same trajectory as was reported in the 2016 MLO Assessment Report, with increasing diversification of its student population with regards to race/ethnicity and socio-economic status. The District's 2017-18 Annual Report to the Public noted that there are 67+ different languages spoken by the student population, requiring a sustained focus on community and parent outreach that is sensitive to cultural and linguistic differences.<sup>9</sup> Data show that from 2000 to 2018, the District's Hispanic and multi-race populations have increased significantly, while the number of white students has decreased. Data from 2014 and 2018 demonstrate that these trends are continuing.

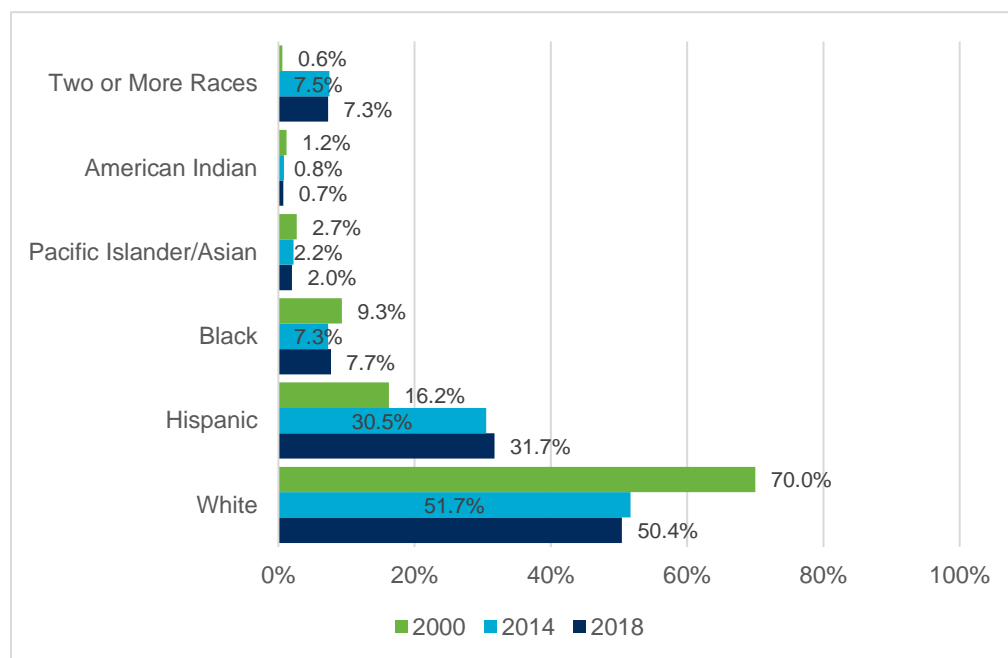
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<sup>6</sup> District 11 Pupil Count Summary (Head Count)

<sup>7</sup> <http://cde.state.co.us/cdereval/pupilcurrent>

<sup>8</sup> Western Demographics, Inc., 2018. Colorado Springs District 11 - Competitiveness Strategies and Potential Enrollment Forecast Effects Report.

<sup>9</sup> <http://d11.org/AnnualReport/Pages/Default.aspx>

**Exhibit 1. Student Population by Ethnic/Racial Group (2000, 2014, and 2018)**

Moreover, in 2000, there were 1,947 (6.4%) identified students with disabilities and zero students identified as homeless; in 2018, there were 2,666 (10.1%) students with disabilities and 354 students who identified as homeless. Over time there have also been increases in students eligible for the Free and Reduced Lunch program, which is the indicator used to determine poverty rates for the district and individual schools within the district.<sup>10</sup> The District reported that in 2018, 58% of students qualified for free or reduced-priced meals, a slight decrease from 59.9% in the 2014-15 school year, but a marked increase since 2003 when the percentage was 34.8.<sup>11</sup> Staff anecdotally reported that D11 has a high transiency rate, with students frequently moving between schools, or in and out of the district altogether.

As was also noted in the 2013 MLO Assessment Report, D11 continues to have an increasing student population impacted by chronic stress and poverty, which can translate into a form of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and affect learning.<sup>12</sup> The District has jumpstarted its efforts to create a comprehensive student support model following the passage of the MLO in 2017 and to provide more robust interventions for struggling students. Additional details regarding these efforts can be found in subsequent sections.

## Academic Achievement

Improving its academic achievement remains a top priority for D11. The District's official accreditation rating for the 2018 school year is "Accredited with Improvement Plan," the same rating as in 2014.<sup>13</sup> Districts are designated an accreditation category based on the overall percent of points earned for the official year. Performance Indicators show that the District met finance, safety, and test participation

<sup>10</sup> <http://co-uip-cde.force.com/?dcode=1010>

<sup>11</sup> <http://co-uip-cde.force.com/?dcode=1010>;  
<http://cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/documents/cdereval/download/pdf/2003pm/2003f%26rbydistrictpk-12.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.newyorker.com/tech/elements/what-poverty-does-to-the-young-brain>

<sup>13</sup> <http://cde.state.co.us/>

requirements. The District's percentage of points earned in the areas of Academic Achievement, Academic Growth, and Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness decreased in all categories from 2014 to 2018.

**Table 1. Colorado Springs School District Accreditation Rating (2014 and 2018)**<sup>14</sup>

Performance Indicators	2014		2018	
	Rating	% of Points Earned out of Points Eligible	Rating	% of Points Earned out of Points Eligible
Academic Achievement	Approaching	58.3%	Approaching	47.2%
Academic Growth	Meets Requirements	64.3%	Approaching	53.3%
Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness	Approaching	53.1%	Approaching	48.6%
Accountability Participation Rate	Meets 95% Participation Rate	-	Meets 95% Participation Rate	-
Finance	Meets Requirements	-	Meets Requirements	-
Safety	Meets Requirements	-	Meets Requirements	-
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>57.7%</b>		<b>50.1%</b>

The District continues to develop and enhance its quality educational opportunities for all students, a key focus of its recent strategic planning efforts. Highlights of the District's award-winning academic program are extensive. Recently five District 11 Schools earned state awards, specifically:

- Edison Elementary School, Henry Elementary School, and Carver Elementary School each earned the Center of Excellence Award
- Buena Vista Elementary School earned the Governor's Distinguished Improvement Award
- Chipeta Elementary School earned the John Irwin School of Excellence Award

## Finances

### 2019-20 Proposed Budget

District 11 personnel presented a proposed 2019-20 budget totaling \$284.4 million to the Board of Education on May 29, 2019.<sup>15</sup> The presentation included an overview of revenue sources, proposed expenditures, and cost reduction areas, as summarized below.

The majority of District 11's revenue comes from three sources:

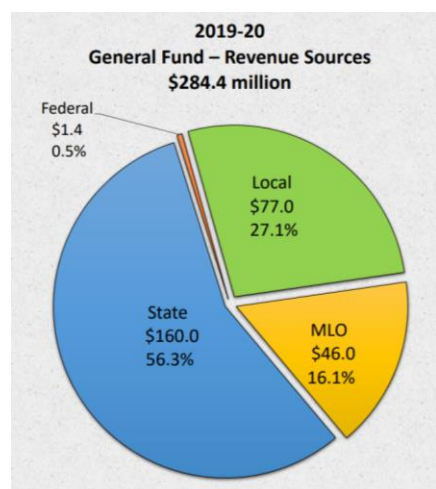
- 56.3% or \$160.0 million from state funding
- Another 27.1%, or \$77.0 million from local tax dollars
- 16.1%, or \$46 million, from the MLO<sup>16</sup>

A small fraction, \$1.4 million is from federal grants.

<sup>14</sup> <https://cedar2.cde.state.co.us/documents/DPF2018/1010-3-Year.pdf>

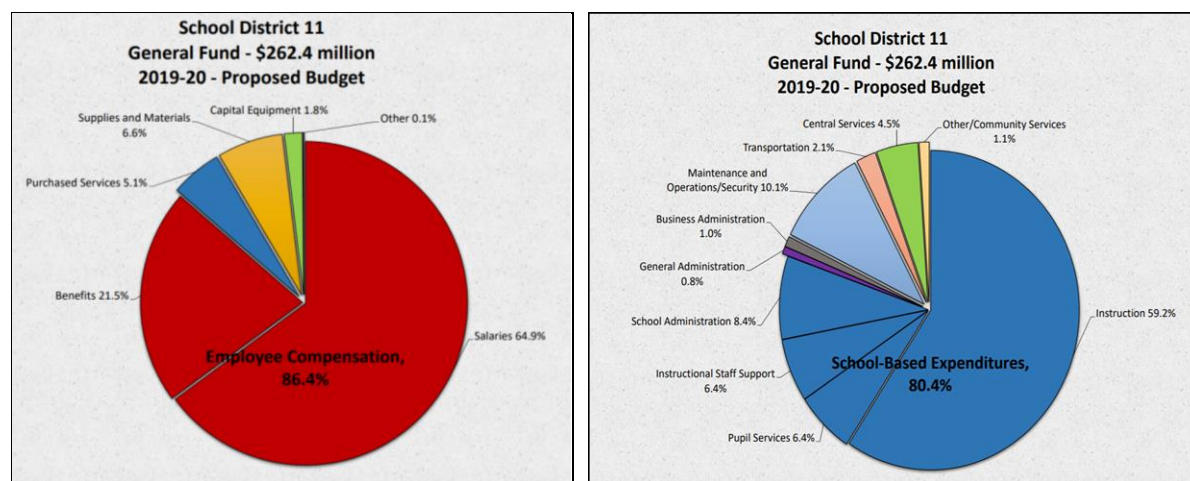
<sup>15</sup> FY 2019/20 Proposed Budget, Board Presentation 5/29/19

<sup>16</sup> \$46 million from the MLO represents dollars in the General Fund. A full summary of the MLO dollars can be found here: [https://www.d11.org/cms/lib/CO02201641/Centricity/Domain/181/MLO%20Phase-In%20Worksheet\\_5-14-19.pdf](https://www.d11.org/cms/lib/CO02201641/Centricity/Domain/181/MLO%20Phase-In%20Worksheet_5-14-19.pdf)

**Exhibit 2. General Fund Revenue Sources, 2019-20<sup>17</sup>**

The general fund operating budget is approximately 85% salaries and benefits. Much of the rest of budget is obligated to required expenditures such as utilities, operational systems, and program costs.

Of the proposed budget, the vast majority, 80.4%, is committed to school-based expenditures, followed by another 10.1% for maintenance and operations/security.

**Exhibit 3. General Fund Proposed Budget, 2019-20<sup>18</sup>**

Significant new expenditures from general fund dollars for 2019-20 include the following.

**Table 1. General Fund Proposed New Expenditures, 2019-20<sup>19</sup>**

Expenditure Category	Dollar Amount
Compensation and benefits	\$6,275,000

<sup>17</sup> <https://cedar2.cde.state.co.us/documents/DPF2018/1010-3-Year.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> <https://cedar2.cde.state.co.us/documents/DPF2018/1010-3-Year.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> <https://cedar2.cde.state.co.us/documents/DPF2018/1010-3-Year.pdf>



School Improvement Team (ACT Team)	\$800,000
Expand preschool program	\$500,000
Utility rate and consumption increase	\$300,000
Pre-Advance Placement at two high schools	\$250,000
Replace outdated analog camera systems	\$200,000
Expand Global Education program	\$139,000
Purchase two activity buses	\$100,000
Maintain student planning system for additional year	\$92,000

**Table 2. Significant Expenditure Reductions, 2019-20<sup>20</sup>**

Expenditure Category	Dollar Amount
Adjust school staffing to BOE ratios	\$4,296,000
Roy J. Wasson Academic Campus restructure	\$665,000
Reduce administration	\$550,000
Restructure school LTT model	\$350,000
Assistant principal reduction	\$300,000
Transfer Title I teachers to grant funds	\$300,000
Reduce school teachers on special assignment (TOSAs)	\$225,000
Convert student personnel coordinators/counselors	\$206,400
Eliminate vacant instructional aide positions	\$180,000
Reduce administration non-staff budgets	\$144,810

### **Budget Context**

Decreasing enrollments and decreasing revenues, coupled with the passage of the 2017 MLO and the anticipated launch of new initiatives identified through the strategic plan, have resulted in a complex 2019-20 budget development process. Legislative and state tax regulations have also impacted D11's future budgeting.

In March 2019, District 11 started to discuss the possibility of staff layoffs for the 2019-20 school year, a consequence of the loss of more than 1,000 enrolled students, the District's largest yearly decrease in student population. Enrollment is projected to decrease by another 700 next year, translating to more than \$8 million less in revenue.<sup>21</sup> Though enrollment in D11 has been steadily declining for more than a

<sup>20</sup> <https://cedar2.cde.state.co.us/documents/DPF2018/1010-3-Year.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.d11.org/cms/lib/CO02201641/Centricity/Domain/181/BudgetFAQs.pdf>

decade, the number of teachers and staff has not decreased proportionately to match the enrollment decreases. The declining enrollment trend will continue to drain District resources in the future as the incremental resources shrink and fixed costs remain the same or increase.<sup>22</sup>

The District was in a position of having to “right-size” its staffing model to align with current enrollment changes. During the 2018-19 school year, the District conducted a Budget Balancer exercise, with significant stakeholder input, in anticipation of a projected \$10 million budget shortfall in 2019-20. The Superintendent then assembled a team to meet and determine the recommendations to present to the Board of Education. The results of the Budget Balancer exercise played a role in the team’s reduction recommendations, as did detailed comparisons to other similar-sized school district budgets. It also included recommendations to reduce non-staffing budgets. These included:

- Reducing staff at all levels (teacher, executive-professional, and education support professional) throughout the District
- Restructuring the Roy J. Wasson Academic Campus, including closing the Springs Community Night School in 2019-20
- Reducing three non-instructional days for classroom aides
- Reducing school instructional supplies allocations and administration non-staffing budgets
- Restructuring student personnel coordinators and library technology technician models
- Adding a furlough day for top administrators
- Reducing the Board of Education's individual member accounts<sup>23</sup>

However, once these reductions were discussed publicly, D11 received unexpectedly good news regarding its revenue. An additional \$10M from the state, approved by the legislature on May 5, 2019, allowed the District to reevaluate its potential reductions and maintain teaching positions.

District 11 maintains a strong commitment to financial transparency, as evidenced by detailed documents about its budgeting process and expenditures posted on its website. The District produced a guide titled “Preliminary Budget Development Assumptions FY 19/20: Frequently Asked Questions” and also publishes detailed records of financial transactions, individual school and district-wide spending plans, and guides to understanding District finances and taxes. There are also links to the Colorado Department of Education’s Financial Transparency website, which provides historical and comparative financial information for school districts across the state.<sup>24</sup>

### ***Impact of the 2017 MLO Dollars and Legislative Changes***

The 2017 MLO funding allows the District to make strategic investments in the specific areas listed in the ballot measure: salary increases, capital projects, security measures, student support initiatives, class size reduction, and technology, among others. Without the approval of this funding, the District would have had to further delay necessary investments to improve its educational program and infrastructure.

There is considerable confusion among taxpayers and staff as to why the District has been considering making staffing reductions following the approval of the \$42 million MLO. In short, MLO funding cannot be

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<sup>22</sup> District 11 Proposed Budget 2019-20

<sup>23</sup> District 11 Proposed Budget 2019-20

<sup>24</sup> <https://coloradok12financialtransparency.com/#/organizations/2402>. This financial transparency website is the result of state legislation passed in 2014. It requires the Colorado Department of Education to create a website that breaks out certain revenues and expenditure for school districts into a format that is easily understandable. To be consistent with federal reporting requirements established by the US Department of Education, the method used on this website excludes certain records from revenue and expenditure totals. These records are excluded to avoid duplication or inflation of revenues and expenditures.

used to balance the budget. Similar to a grant, MLO funds are designated for specific spending plan items and cannot be used alternatively without a rigorous change process.

There is one area of overlap, however, and a limited ability to use some MLO funds to prevent further staffing reductions. In the spring of 2019, the Colorado legislature funded statewide full-day kindergarten, which released MLO funding already in place for full-day kindergarten in D11 and prompting a plan amendment for 2000 PIP 14. This plan amendment added a one-time increase of \$750,000 to 2000 PIP 2B (class size reduction). This funding will support 10 additional teachers for the upcoming fiscal year. The remaining \$1,650,550, originally committed to full day kindergarten, will remain in 2000 PIP 14 until it is reallocated at a later time.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> [https://www.d11.org/cms/lib/CO02201641/Centricity/Domain/181/MLO%20Phase-In%20Worksheet\\_5-14-19.pdf](https://www.d11.org/cms/lib/CO02201641/Centricity/Domain/181/MLO%20Phase-In%20Worksheet_5-14-19.pdf)

## II. Stakeholder Perceptions

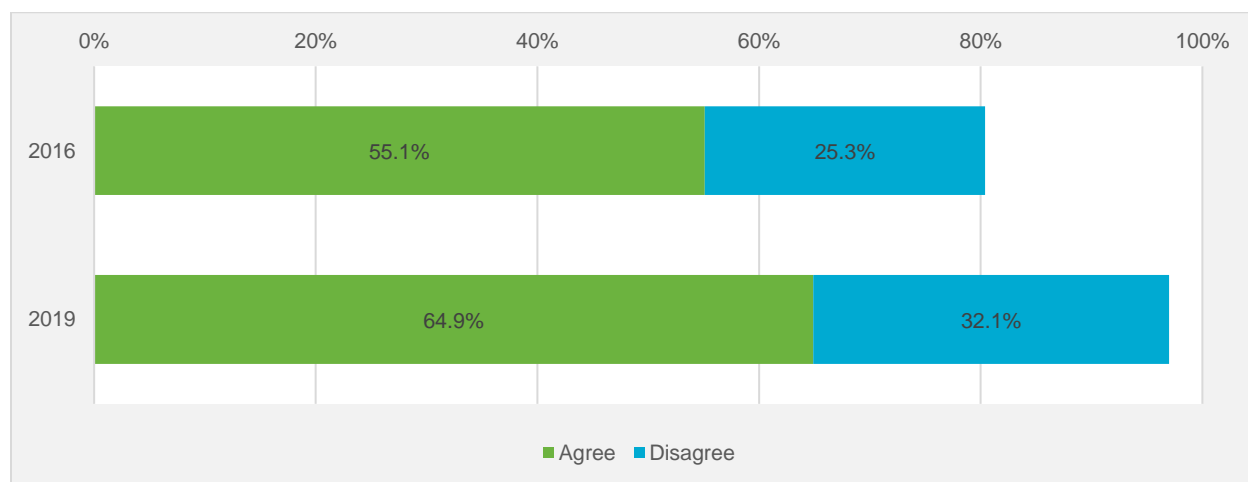
*What are stakeholder perceptions of: communication about the MLOs; transparency with regard to decision-making, finances, and activities conducted with MLO funds; resource allocation and the impact of MLO funds; and challenges that limit D11 from achieving its goals?*

PCG's review sought to gauge stakeholder perceptions across several key areas: communication about the MLOs; transparency with regard to decision-making, finances, and activities conducted with MLO funds; the impact of MLO funds; and perceptions regarding constraints that limit D11 from achieving its goals.

### Communication

PCG's review sought information regarding staff and community perceptions of communication about district initiatives and, more specifically, those funded by the MLO. Because the timing of the 2017 MLO passage coincided with the Superintendent's listening tour and the launch of the strategic plan, focus group participants often viewed these as intersecting, sharing both specific feedback about the MLO and more general information about what they understand about the future direction of the district, perceptions of how D11 struggles to generate a positive public relations image, and recommendations for how to improve its overall communication strategy.

**Exhibit 4. Staff Survey Comparison (2016 to 2019): I believe communication from D11 keeps me well informed about district priorities and expectations.<sup>26</sup>**



### MLO 2017/3e Communication Plan

Focus group participants commented that in the lead up to the election, they heard a lot about the 2017 MLO, the ballot measure known as 3e. The communication and outreach strategy for it were managed by Friends of D11, a nonprofit grassroots organization, which was formed solely to help pass the MLO. The organization mobilized community outreach to knock on doors, managed the PR campaign (including social media and television appearances), and conducted fundraising. Many noted that the Friends of D11 efforts was far reaching and successful in generating positive “buzz” about the impact new MLO dollars could have on the District. There is a general consensus that through Friends of D11, the District

<sup>26</sup> Excludes Don't Know and Neutral responses

did a "good job" marketing the benefits and highlighted how the funds would impact the whole community, inclusive of charter schools.

Following the passage of 3e, Friends of D11 was dissolved, and the District developed an ongoing communication plan to update the public about its MLO spending. This plan centers on 3e (rather than the 2017 MLO), as this was the branding most community members knew from the election.

### Ongoing Communication Efforts

The District uses multiple methods to distribute information to the community about both MLOs. Most outreach done at this point centers on the initiatives related to the 2017 MLO, but efforts are made to ensure ongoing 2000 MLO updates are also included. Outreach and training efforts include the following.

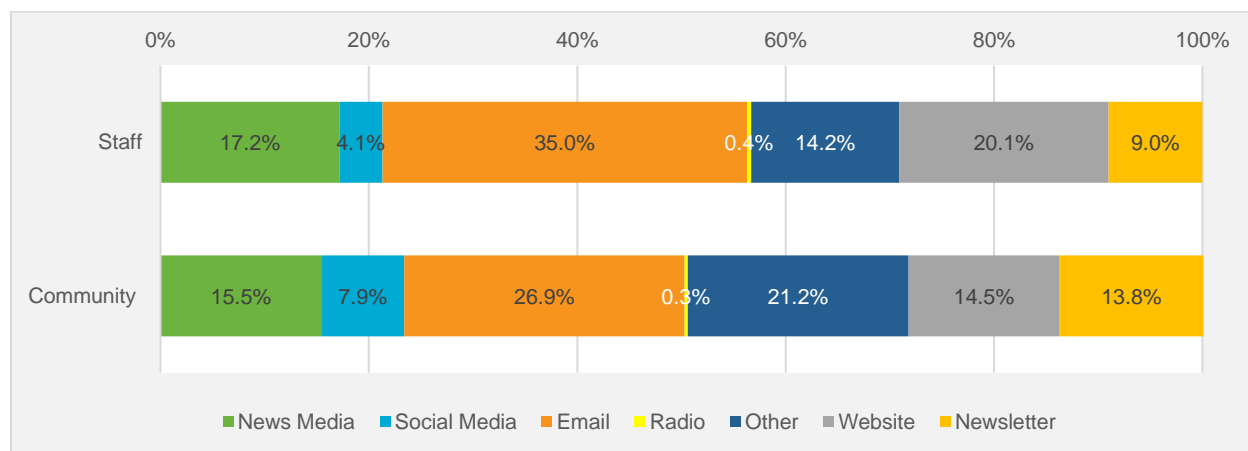
- The D11 Monthly Insights newsletter is sent to staff and the community every month and features an update on 3e.
- Various District committees, including the District Accountability Committee (DAC) and school Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), receive four training sessions per year and are updated on MLO spending.
- The District places advertisement updates in The Gazette (CO Springs Newspaper) about the initiatives underway as a result of 3e.
- D11 uses e-mail to communicate MLO spending updates and features MLO related stories on its website and Facebook and Twitter feeds.
- Recently there was a new section added to the Superintendent's monthly update around the MLO.
- Capital projects funded through the MLO can be tracked by school on the D11 website. Pictures of projects underway or completed are posted and updated monthly.
- The Business Services Office created a community presentation for teachers, principals, District leadership staff, parents, etc. to report on the use of the 2017 MLO funds. They conducted community forums in which they shared this information.

Focus group participants said that the District should continue to have multiple channels for delivering information and that there should be a central place to access it as needed. Others said that it would be helpful to have a detailed annual 2017 MLO report on spending and usage so it is clear to see its impact.

### Methods of Outreach

On both the staff and community surveys, respondents were asked to identify the primary ways in which they learn about activities related to the MLO.

**Exhibit 5. Staff and Community Survey Response Comparison: Communication Sources**



The majority of staff (35%) access information about the MLO through email, followed by the District website (20.1%). Over a quarter of community members (26.9%) primarily learn about the MLO through email as well, with another 21.1% using another means to find information (such as board meetings or school PTAs).

### Communication Challenges

Ensuring the right amount of communication, by the right means, to all stakeholders on a consistent basis is a challenging endeavor in a community as large and diverse as Colorado Springs. While the District also has an active and broad MLO communication strategy, few focus group participants felt informed about how the dollars are spent or initiatives specific to the PIPs (unless they were actively managing PIPs as D11 staff or were on the MLO Oversight Committee). Many also said that they do not hear consistently about MLO initiatives and overall would like more information about them.

Additionally, the following themes emerged from focus group sessions.

***Integration of 2000 MLO Dollars.*** The 2017 MLO is very fresh on the minds of staff and community members and is widely known. The 2000 MLO, on the other hand, is so integrated into the District at this point that most do not think about it as a separate source of funding. Participants mentioned that the District could be more cognizant of the limited scope of understanding among community members. They may not have been in the community when the 2000 MLO passed and have limited understanding of its intent and continued impact.

***Misunderstanding Use of MLO Dollars.*** Some focus group participants equated the MLO dollars to a grant, in that funds can only be used in specific ways and for initiatives connected to the ballot measures. Others expressed confusion as to why MLO 2017 funds could not be used to prevent budget reductions.

***Messaging for Community Members.*** Many focus group participants noted that D11 “struggles to win the publicity battle,” especially with community members who do not have children in the District and/or who are not on social media, and that “misinformation is rampant in pockets of the community.” They noted that the District needs a method to communicate to this population clearly and routinely, especially since any future MLOs will depend upon their support.

***School vs. District Impact.*** The 2000 and 2017 MLO funds are managed at the central office. This means that while some MLO funds are directed toward specific schools (such as a new School Resource Officer position at a middle school), the majority of funds support district-wide initiatives. As a result, school-based staff generally have a limited understanding of the PIPs and how the funding supports the District overall. Teachers, for example, may not know that trainings they attend, such as AVID or NextGen, or that substitute teacher costs, may be funded in part through the MLO. School staff did, however, have in depth knowledge about initiatives impacting them or their buildings directly. In short, the further removed staff are from central leadership positions, the more misunderstandings about how the MLO funds are distributed and used occur.

Because charter school MLO funding must be tracked by each school, the charter school leadership staff was well informed about all PIPs and understood how MLO funding could be used to support key functions or projects at their schools.

### District Branding

Many focus group participants also spoke to the larger concern about D11's branding and image in the community and the need to correct misinformation. The “great things” happening in the District are not well known. From inaccurate online school ratings to incorrect information spread to young families by real estate agents, focus group participants expressed an urgent need to change the dialogue about the District. Further, D11 employs 10,000+ staff across multiple school levels and various position types. As some focus group participants noted, it is easy to repeat rumors or misinformation when staff are not



aware of what might really be happening in another school or in connection to an initiative outside of their day to day function.

They suggested the District consider adopting many of the same measures used during the successful 3e campaign— door to door canvassing, radio and TV marketing, etc. – to showcase the positive aspects of the District in the community. Schools are also beginning to take on various aspects of generating a positive PR image. The following examples were shared:

- Some schools are having their staff canvas the local neighborhoods to talk about the positive attributes of the local school
- Some principals are hosting information nights at local apartment buildings and advertising in neighborhood magazines
- One school hosted a realtor breakfast at the school, offering a tour of the building and talking about their programs.

School based marketing is not consistently done right now. Some are focused on it and others are not. Focus group participants said that over the next 3-5 years, the District will need to develop a stronger, overarching marketing campaign and clearly lay out what schools' roles should be in it.

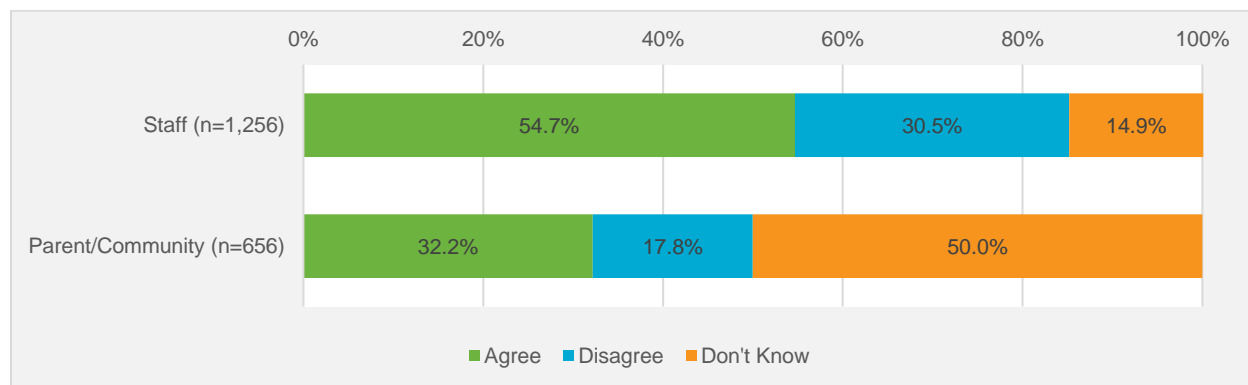
## Transparency and Accountability

Since the passage of the 2000 MLO, the District has established a foundation of transparency and developed accountability structures to monitor the funding. Focus group participants stated if the District had not been able to show a strong track record of financial stewardship over the past nearly 20 years, it is unlikely that the 2017 MLO would have passed. The following section provides information about stakeholder perceptions specific to transparency and the systems established for accountability.

### Transparency

On the staff and community member surveys, respondents were asked about the District's transparency in its management of MLO funds. Over half (54.7%) of staff agree that the District is transparent in its management of MLO funds, while 32.2% of community members agree.

**Exhibit 6. Perceptions of D11's transparency in its management of MLO funds (2019 survey)**



### Expenditure Tracking, the Annual Report, and Key Performance Indicators

The 2000 and the 2017 MLO funds are tracked at the district level in designated accounts beginning with the Mill Levy Override Funds and then transferred to other funds. The District receives MLO funds in monthly installments from the county office that collects the tax, and monthly financial statements are compiled by the Business Services Office for the MLO Oversight committee. PIP managers present spending plan proposals to the MLO Oversight Committee for review and approval (i.e., the Technology

Department presented its spending plan for the new phone system acquisition to the MLO committee and with detail on how the purchase is aligned with the 2017 MLO). The MLO Oversight Committee ensures that the PIP funds are directed toward categories that the voters approved.

Additionally, each year, the Business Services Office produces an MLO Summary report. The report is publicly available on the D11 website and contains detailed information about the intent of each PIP, its alignment to the District's Business Plan,<sup>27</sup> the initiative(s) it funds, and the financial record of the expenditures. For the 2000 MLO, it also includes historical accomplishments associated with each PIP and documents how PIPs may have been consolidated over time.

For many years, the 2000 MLO PIPs had key performance indicators (KPIs) associated with them to measure the impact of the funding. The KPIs were aligned to initiatives within the Business Plan and updated regularly. The District stopped actively using KPIs after the last MLO review was conducted in 2016, in part because it was anticipating putting forth a new MLO ballot measure and then because of the change in superintendent leadership. The new strategic plan launch happened soon thereafter, so new KPIs for the 2017 MLO funding and revised ones for the 2000 MLO funding were not developed. Many existing KPIs for the 2000 MLO PIPs are no longer relevant.

Focus group participants voiced their support for developing new KPIs, citing how the lack of current and pertinent KPIs has created a void. PIP managers and other senior leadership staff agreed that now is the time to focus on developing new KPIs, ones which are useful and consistent across all PIPs for 2000 and 2017 and aligned to the strategic plan priorities.

### **Charter Schools**

Charter school leaders shared that because they are more hands on with their budgets and spending, they have a deep understanding of MLO funding and the PIPs. D11 meets monthly with charter school leaders to review school finances, specifically how they are planning to spend MLO funds and to plan for multi-year capital projects. Charter schools provide monthly financial statements to the District so that it can run financial health ratios (established by the state). Charter schools annually update D11 on how they spend MLO funds through the Annual Performance Review (APR) report.

Charter school leaders also shared that the District provides supportive technical assistance, sees them as partners, and is willing to problem solve.

### **MLO Oversight Committee and Performance Review**

Over time, the MLO Oversight Committee has taken on different forms, but its mission has remained the same. As one committee member shared: "we're the public arm that gives the community confidence that the money is being spent appropriately." The requirements both to establish a citizens' oversight committee and to have routine, external MLO reviews were cemented in the 2000 MLO ballot measure and have been core components of the District's accountability structure. They were also included in the 2017 MLO ballot question.

The intent of the oversight committee is to make sure that the District is upholding its promise to the voters to make improvements with the MLO funds. Committee members come from various backgrounds. Some have children in D11 schools, others are former employees or school board members. The current MLO Oversight Committee has 21 active members. The Committee is led by a chairperson and reports to the School Board. It is supported by the District's CFO, Glenn Gustafson, who serves as the District liaison. As noted previously, for a brief period of time, the MLO Committee was merged with the Audit Committee since the 2000 MLO funds had become an integral part of District finances. After the 2017 MLO passed however, the MLO Oversight Committee was reconstituted as a separate entity. Focus

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<sup>27</sup> The Business Plan was the guiding strategic document for D11 and will be replaced by the new strategic plan once completed.

group participants note that the MLO Oversight Committee takes its responsibilities seriously and asks important questions of PIP managers regarding funding allocation.

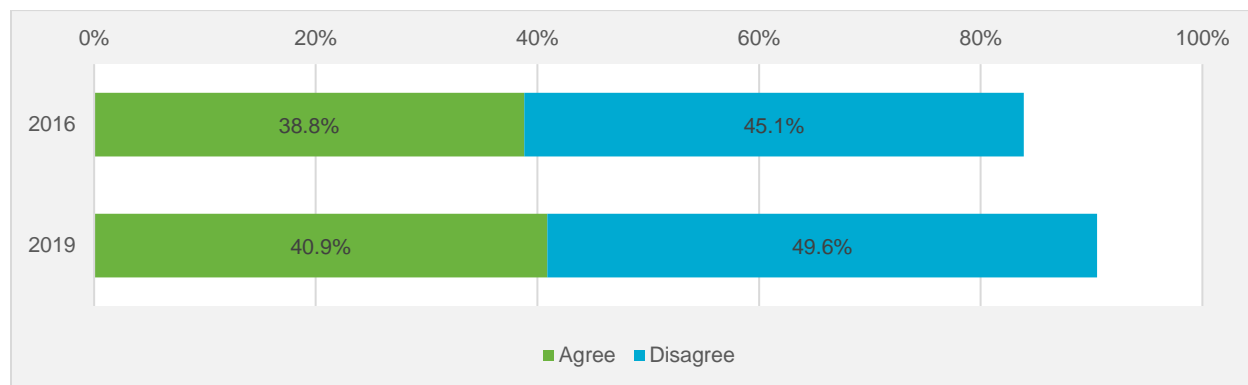
While there is no formal training for the MLO Oversight Committee members, they did receive binders with the 2000 and 2017 MLO information tabbed by PIP, when they joined. Overall, committee members indicated that they feel the meetings are well run and organized and that the binder is a helpful tool. Agendas for monthly meetings are provided in advance of each meeting, along with any updates to the PIP documentation.

## Impact of MLO Funds

The passage of the 2017 MLO had a positive impact on both District staff and the community and boosted morale. As some focus group participants noted, it generated a two-sided equation – teachers felt grateful the community supported them and the community felt grateful they were engaged. Despite recent conversations about the ongoing financial strains of the District, the 2017 MLO allows D11 to develop news programs, upgrade infrastructure, and attract and retain talent.

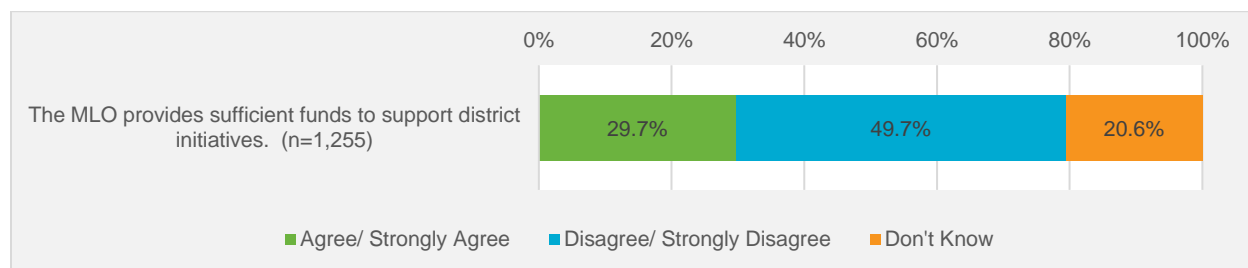
The following questions provide comparisons between the 2016 and 2019 staff surveys regarding the extent to which priorities and resources are believed to be aligned. In 2016, 38.8% of staff agreed with this statement, and in 2019, 40.9% of staff agreed.

**Exhibit 7. Staff Survey Comparison (2016 to 2019): Priorities and resources are well aligned.**

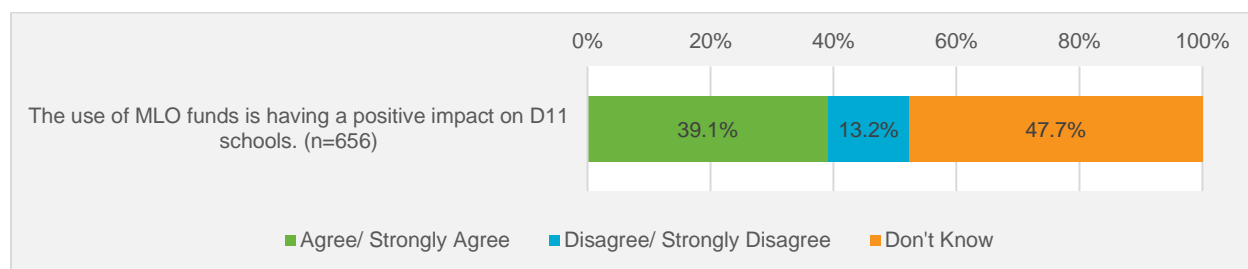


Nearly 30% of staff agree that the MLO provides sufficient funds to support district initiatives.

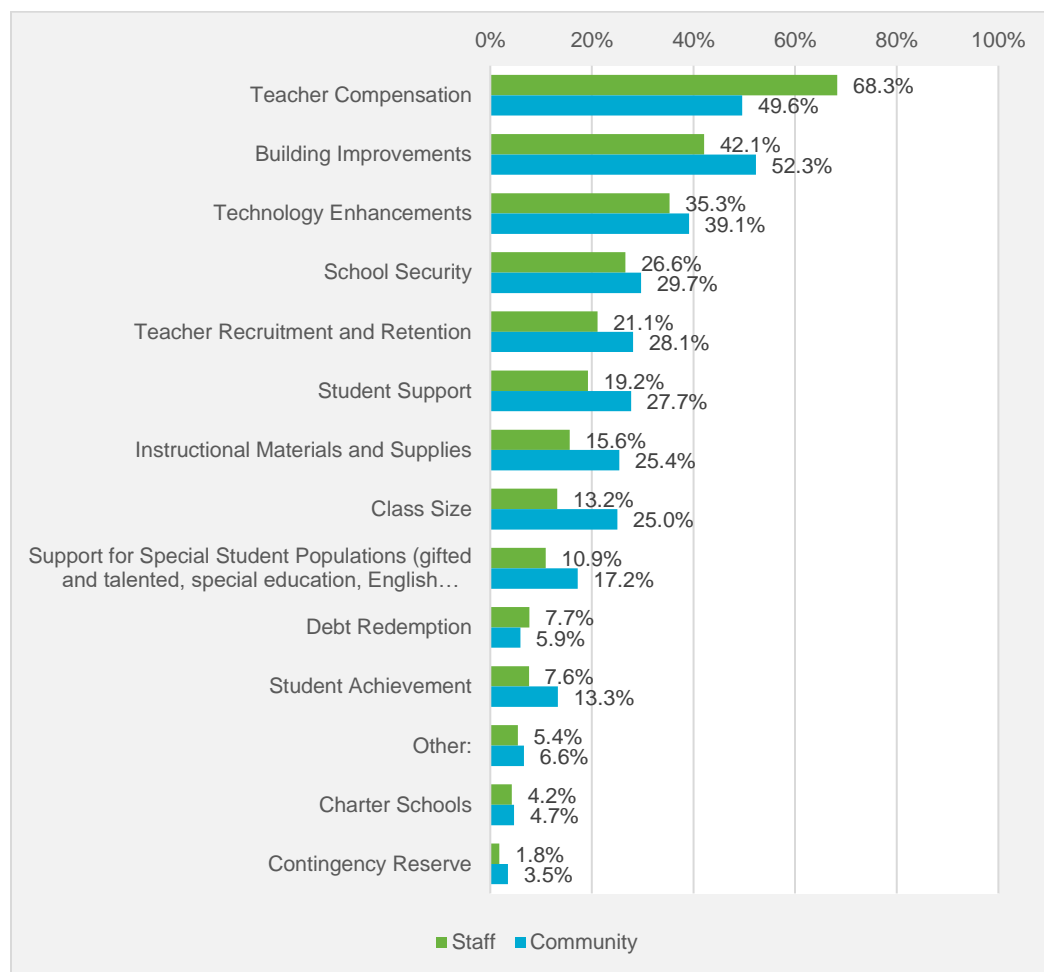
**Exhibit 8. Staff Survey: The MLO provides sufficient funds to support district initiatives.**



Nearly 40% of community members agree that the MLO is having a positive impact on D11 schools. A large percent (47.7%), however, did not know if the funds were having a positive impact.

**Exhibit 9. Community Survey: The use of MLO funds is having a positive impact on D11 schools.**

The following chart compares staff and community survey responses regarding the positive impact stakeholders believe the MLO are having in specific areas.

**Exhibit 10. Staff and Community Surveys: The MLO funds are having a positive impact in the following areas.<sup>28</sup>**

<sup>28</sup>Respondents could select more than one area.

On both the staff and the community surveys, respondents rated teacher compensation, building improvements, and technology enhancements as the top three areas that MLO funds are impacting.

## Points of Pride

Staff and community members who participated in the surveys offered many positive and enlightening descriptions of what is going well with the District. Participants shared the following affirmative insights:

- *Teachers* – wonderful staff who really care about students, well-educated/trained teachers, hire quality teachers, incredible teachers who are devoted to the growth of all students, teachers care and try to do their best, teachers who teach to the whole child, staff is very supportive of each other and work as a team
- *Administrators/Leaders* - school administration sets a good tone, administration cares about our children, hired new excellent superintendent, strong leadership (principals) who place emphasis on student growth, school leadership is supportive and caring, and goes to great lengths to communicate with parents and foster a sense of community, great leadership program for principals, administration is wonderful and they support the teachers well.
- *Programs and Overall Education*- provide a variety educational opportunities and activities, fine arts in the schools, challenging International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum, after school programs are great, especially math and STEAM clubs, exceptional Odyssey program, gifted programs to meet academic needs, variety of quality non-traditional high school options, reading, writing and math are priorities, opportunities for every child to find something to thrive in (academics, sports, arts), help all the children to achieve their best, academically challenging, innovative thinking is encouraged through teaching beyond a textbook, quality of the instruction is very good, maintains high academic standards and appropriate college / high school prep, implementing new and exciting instructional methodologies, innovative and forward-thinking.
- *Communication* - communicates with parents on a regular basis, D11 is very informative and lets parents know what is going on with the students at all times, communications expectations of students, maintaining the parent connect site, informs citizens, continuous notifications of events, transparency is a strength in regard to finances.
- *Supports All Students* - help all the children to achieve their best, believe in ALL students, meet the needs of students on a regular basis, provide education to a vast and diverse group of students, a diverse and inclusive environment for students, phenomenal at getting students involved and creating positive culture among students, offer learning opportunities to students at all levels, embracing a diverse student population, all-inclusive environment where children feels welcomed and academically challenged, celebrates diversity, opportunities for all levels of learners, exceptional academic programs and opportunity for all students, D11 offers a PERFECT FIT for every child in this city - they just need to find it.
- *Safe and Welcoming Environment* - providing a safe and fun learning environment, safe campus, children feel happy and safe at school, building safety, keeping the kids positive and safe, maintaining a safe and secure environment, making kids' safety a priority, welcomes new students, foster a sense of community, environment is conducive to learning, creating a welcoming building for parents and community members, providing a safe place for all to take risks, create connections, and belong.
- *Efficient* - D11 has shown time and again that it is capable of doing more with less, staff and teachers step up consistently to minimize impact of cuts, meeting the needs of a diverse population with a "bare to the bones" budget, meeting the educational needs with the few resources.

## Challenges

In both the staff and community surveys, respondents were asked to identify the areas that they believe prevent D11 from exceeding expectations.

**Table 3. Staff and Community Surveys: Areas that Prevent D11 from Exceeding Expectations.<sup>29</sup>**

	Staff Survey	Community Survey
Retaining student enrollment	39.5%	19.7%
Hiring and retaining quality educators	35.7%	37.1%
Addressing the economic/financial stress on the D11 caused by reduction in state and local funding	33.7%	33.8%
Meeting the broad academic and social needs of an increasingly diverse student population	28.3%	16.6%
Maintaining school facilities	25.9%	28.3%
Keeping up-to-date with technology hardware, software, applications and associated support, and WiFi	24.4%	21.4%
Addressing the growing external stressors on families (i.e. social/emotional needs)	18.3%	16.2%
Challenging/supporting each student at an appropriate level	17.9%	21.7%
Addressing changing expectations and priorities	12.8%	9.3%
Maintaining a safe and secure environment that is conducive to learning	11.3%	12.5%
Meeting the needs of students with disabilities	10.8%	9.6%
Providing and maintaining a variety of desired programs	10.5%	11.9%
Having opportunities to collaborate with colleagues	6.4%	N/A
Meeting the Colorado Academic Standards established by the state for student performance	4.5%	7.7%
Meeting the health needs (including nutritional demands) of students	2.7%	6.7%
Meeting the needs of English language learners	2.7%	3.1%

Staff identified retaining student enrollment, hiring and retaining quality educators, and addressing financial issues as the top three challenges facing the District. Similarly, community members identified hiring and retaining quality educators and addressing financial issues as top challenges. The third area community members identified is maintaining school facilities.

<sup>29</sup> Respondents could select more than one area.



Staff and community members also had the opportunity to share areas for improvement in an open-ended question on the survey. These themes emerged from the responses:

- *Building/facilities* - older facilities have not been improved; more funding needed to upgrade facilities; need newer buildings and to create a welcoming environment; need air conditioning in all buildings, better heating during winter, and water fountains
- *Enrichment and after school opportunities* – more enrichment opportunities and after school care; foreign language in elementary schools; need more after school activities (not just athletics), more arts programs
- *Safety* – concerns about safety and security measures in buildings (e.g., double set of doors vestibule at main entrance); fire safety and ADA compliance; bullying prevention; better security at school doors
- *Student Supports* - difficult for teachers to support wide range of learners and learning types; trauma support needed for impacted children; need full time nurses at all schools; anti-bullying programs; student attendance continues to be a problem at the high school level and is significant problem for students who really struggle, both with disabilities and the general education population
- *Food* – quality and nutritional value of food lacking; amount of food available for school lunches not sufficient; not environmentally conscious (not using reusable trays, use of plastic water bottles, hot food on Styrofoam)
- *Special Education* – more services are needed; current services not meeting children's need; accountability needed for teachers that chose not to read and/or follow an IEP
- *Class Size* – hard to differentiate or personalize learning with larger class sizes; reduce class sizes
- *Inequity and culture* - programs promoting inclusion for all their students; more culturally diverse staff; district is segregated, and test achievement is low in schools with diverse student populations and high in the most affluent neighborhoods; resources not equitable distributed
- *Communication* – more communication on ongoing basis with parents; parent/teacher conference time allotted to schools in the calendar during the spring time; earlier advising of school activities so parents know when activities are taking place; breakdown in communication at all levels in that nobody seems to know what is happening, how to answer question, or who to contact for help
- *Student Discipline* - expectations and what is appropriate and not appropriate behavior; threats of discipline referrals but no follow through; teachers/staff need to handle disciplinary actions with students better
- *Technology* – severely lacking in technology; need better infrastructure to support technology upgrades; need upgraded technology for today's students to be successful
- *Positive PR* – tell positive stories to recruit and retain students; more local recognition of great students in D11 and their achievements; change the digital image on school review pages; encourage D11 supporters to share on social media
- *Increase rigor and engagement* - providing advanced learning paths for advanced learners; meeting the needs of kids who excel at learning
- *Funding* – more transparency in budgets; administration is top-heavy; inequitable allocation of funds; salary increases needed for teachers, better pay to attract teachers

### III. Review of the Program Implementation Plans (PIP)

*What is the awareness of the Performance Implementation Plans (PIPs), and what initiatives has the District undertaken for each?*

#### PIP Overview

For each of the areas supported through the 2000 and 2017 MLO, District 11 prepares a Program Implementation Plan (PIP) that specifies budget codes, budget amount, item description, quantification of costs, a history of implementation costs, and a breakout of full-time equivalent (FTE) personnel according to employee group to be hired. PIP summaries and the annual reports are available on the D11 website for review.<sup>30</sup> PIP descriptions may change with the transition from the existing business plan to the new strategic plan.

As part of this assessment, PCG probed the appropriate stakeholder groups (e.g., PIP managers as well as those most affected by them) specifically about each PIP. The purpose of our questions was to understand the management and reporting of each PIP, the overall awareness of the PIPs, perceived progress toward their goals and overall impact.

The table below presents the complete list of the 25 current PIPs, for both the 2000 and 2017 MLO. The sections that follow provide more detailed descriptions of what is covered within each PIP<sup>31</sup>, our findings related to stakeholder awareness of the PIPs, and the initiatives undertaken within each. The PIPs are presented for each MLO but because there is topical overlap among some of the PIPs in each year (e.g., class size reduction) information from focus groups and interviews may appear in both sections as stakeholders do not always delineate between them. Staff and community members did not have equal information to share across the PIPs. If there was very limited or no information about a particular PIP, it is not included in the findings.

**Table 4. Program Implementation Plans for the 2000 and 2017 Mill Levy Override**

PIP Category and Number
<b>2000</b>
<b>Compensation</b>
PIP 1B Employee Compensation
<b>Class Size Reduction</b>
PIP 2B Class Size Reduction
PIP 2C Middle School Implementation
<b>Instructional Staffing Enhancements</b>
PIP 6 Literacy (LRT) (TLC)
PIP 12 ESL, Special Education, and Gifted and Talented
<b>Instruction</b>
PIP 5 Instructional Supplies and Materials
PIP 14 Research Based Interventions/Full Day Kindergarten
<b>Technology</b>
PIP 7B Teacher Staff Development and Technology Training
PIP 9B School Library Services, Security, Assessment Staff
PIP 11B Technology Support

<sup>30</sup> For example, see summary of the 2017-2018 PIPs:

<https://www.d11.org/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=461&dataid=36670&FileName=MLO.Book.17-18..pdf>

<sup>31</sup> Some PIP descriptions have been edited for brevity and may differ from the descriptions that are available on the D11 website.

PIP Category and Number
<b>2000</b>
PIP 20 Align DALT (Terra Nova) (MAP) (GK12)
<b>Other</b>
PIP 21A Charter Schools
PIP 21B Charter Schools – District
PIP 23 Student Achievement and Performance Review
PIP 24 MLO Contingency Reserve
<b>2017</b>
<b>Safe and Healthy Learning and Working Environment</b>
PIP 1 Comprehensive Student Support Model
<b>Attraction, Recruitment, and Retention of Quality Staff</b>
PIP 2 Teacher Attraction and Retention
PIP 3 Education Support Prof. Attraction and Retention
<b>Security Enhancements</b>
PIP 4 School Security Enhancements
<b>Class Size Adjustment</b>
PIP 5 Class Size Reduction
<b>School Technology Requirements</b>
PIP 6 Technology Replacement Cycle
PIP 7 Technology Support Enhancements
<b>Maintain School Buildings</b>
PIP 8 Capital Renewal and Capital Improvements
<b>Charter Schools Equity</b>
PIP 9 Charter Schools Funding
<b>Debt Service Redemption</b>
PIP 10 Debt Redemption
<b>Contingency Reserve</b>
PIP 11 Contingency Reserve

## 2000 MLO

### Compensation

**PIP 1B Employee Compensation** (2000 MLO; link: [1B: Employee Compensation](#)): This program is used to account for the value of **pay raises for teachers and ESP employees** for mid-year FY00- 01 and for FY01-02. In FY17-18, this PIP was revised to include former PIP 15, **Substitute Teacher Pay** (\$250,000), PIP 16, **Beginning Teacher Salary** (\$400,000) and PIP 19 **Crossing Guard Pay** (\$100,000).

- Employee compensation is understood as one of the primary purposes of the MLO by community/parents and staff and the reason many voted in favor of it
- Community and staff comments indicate competitive pay is vital for attracting and retaining a high-quality workforce
- Diminished capacity, over time, to provide raises due to inflation
- Among the top three areas of impact of the MLO among staff (68.3%) and parent/community (49.6%)

## ***Class Size Reduction***

**PIP 2B Class Size Reduction** (2000 MLO; link: [2B: Class Size Reduction](#)): This PIP combines former PIPS 2, 4 and 10 into one PIP that funds the **hiring of additional teachers to reduce class size** ratios at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. The number of teachers and the funding breakout of the original PIPs are listed below.

- Class size reduction is a major concern and is perceived as an important reason staff and community members voted for the MLO
- Staff expressed frustration with the staffing model, which they feel is not equitable or transparent
- Staffing projections are perceived as out of step with actual enrollments
- Parents and community members expressed frustration that D11 is not making progress toward the goal

## ***Instructional Staffing Enhancements***

**PIP 6 Literacy (LRT) (TLC)** (2000 MO; link: [6: LRTs/TLCs](#)): Literacy Resource Teachers (LRTs), now **Teaching and Learning Coaches (TLCs)**, are essential to the coaching and professional development of teachers, implementation of the Colorado READ Act and supplemental literacy legislation, and the implementation of standards-based education; the critical mission of TLCs is to support effective teaching and learning to improve student achievement. These individuals provide coaching, modeling, and staff development to support teachers in developing professional capacity for the consistent delivery of quality instruction that will prove effective in ensuring improved student performance.

**PIP 12 ESL, Special Education, and Gifted and Talented** (2000 MLO; link: [12: ESL/SPED/GT](#)): Funds supplement services for children who are **English language learners (ELL/ESL), have disabilities (special education), and have gifts and talents (gifted/talented)** which require specialized instructional support services. Funds will be used to employ additional teachers and/or psychologists. Funds are used to staff the following: • 4.5 gifted/talented teacher FTE • 4.5 English as second language teacher FTE • 12.5 special education teacher FTE.

- Staff who were in place in 2000 might know this PIP, but more likely familiar with the 2017 MLO and PIPs.
- Staff are unaware which positions are funded by MLO or other funds

### **English Learners**

- Some staff indicated that EL students are underserved in district based on data and the current comprehensive support model does not support EL
- Recruitment of qualified EL staff is challenging
- Population decline in ELs (15%)
- EL services funded through multiple sources (Title III, grant funds, general funds)
- Limited support at HS level for college and career readiness

### **Special Education**

- Special education staffing model revised to reflect three - year average of direct service minutes and five-year average of caseloads to account for fluctuations in student population—helps mitigate significant changes in enrollment

### Gifted and Talented

- Gifted and Talented programs were called out by a handful of parents as successful and both as something D11 does well and an area for improvement in the district

## Instruction

**PIP 5 Instructional Supplies and Materials** (2000 MLO; link: [5: Instructional Supplies and Materials](#)): The intent of these funds is that they will **go directly to schools to help support the increased costs of supplies**, materials, textbooks, software, printing, library furniture and materials, etc. at the building level.

- Understood as one of the purposes of the MLO by community and staff
- Supports acquisition of new, standards-based materials
- Provides flexibility to meet current needs: purchase materials and resources or can be used to support staff to develop standards-aligned curricular materials and resources

**PIP 14 Research Based Interventions/Full Day Kindergarten** (2000 MLO; link: [14: Full Day Kindergarten](#)): **Researched-based interventions** will be put into place to address the needs of students who are partially proficient or unsatisfactory in achieving the standards. The funds are allocated based on student achievement and will vary by site. To be approved for funding, the interventions must be data-driven, based on identified needs included in the unified school improvement plan and research-based. This funding provides the necessary recurring funds for the transition from half-day kindergarten classes to **full-day kindergarten** classes. The majority of these funds are used for the **hire of additional teachers to convert each kindergarten classroom** from a .5 FTE to a 1.0 FTE. Remaining funds **support the professional development** of these teachers.

- Bulk of PIP funds support kindergarten staffing and benefits
- Smaller proportion supports intervention training for staff in interventions
- Limited discussion of this PIP during interviews/focus groups

## Technology

**PIP 7B Teacher Staff Development and Technology Training** (2000 MLO; link: [7B: Instr. and Tech. Staff Development](#)): This program provides **training for teachers in standards, literacy, and assessment. Technology training is also provided for both school and administrative staff** to include application, integration, and system training. The primary focus is school-based staff.

- Support from 2000 MLO is helpful but impact in 2019 is limited by inflation
- Training and support provided for teachers, administrators and ESP at all school levels (attend outside trainings)

- Teachers may be unaware that training funds are provided through the MLO, although D11 staff report that teachers may look to MLO to cover subs or stipends for trainings that might not otherwise be supported
- Staff and students note more training is needed to integrate technology more fully into classes
- As up-to-date equipment becomes available teachers need to be poised to integrate it with their teaching; at the same time, teachers need to believe technology is reliable in order to use during lessons. Students cited experiences in which internet was erratic or unavailable and impeded planned class activities.

**PIP 9B School Library Services, Security, Assessment Staff** (2000 MLO; link: [9B: CITS/LTEs/Security/EDSS](#)):

This item represents the additional dollars above the 1996 mill levy funding necessary to **sustain the current configuration of library technology educators (LTEs) and library technology technicians (LTTs)**. The LTE provides direct support for the integration of technology and personalized learning into the instructional process and also serves as the librarian. The LTT supports the LTE in both areas of library media and technology. **Add personnel to the Security Department** staff in order to improve safety and security. Staff FTE is provided to support professional development for teachers and school leadership with the aim of increasing data literacy of instructional staff in order to improve instruction in under-performing areas.

- Staff are unaware of which positions are funded through the MLO and those which are not—positions are part of the fabric of the system, not distinct
- Funds are (necessary but not sufficient) helpful but not to the degree they once were
- Awareness is higher regarding the 2017 MLO
- Enhanced school security was highlighted as a purpose of the MLO by community and staff
- LTE/LLT positions being restructured; LTE will remain in every building but LTT will serve district and support all schools; LTT will be “the first line of defense” on the new system and technology support; staff report missing the previous iteration of the LTT position (in school and available)
- Technology is among the top three areas of impact of the MLO among staff (35.3%) and parent/community (39.1%)

**PIP 20 Align DALT** (Terra Nova) (MAP) (GK12) (2000 MLO, link: [20: Align DALT/Assessments](#)):

These funds are used to **purchase an assessment system** that a) provides teachers with actionable, instructional information for determining what their students know and are able to do as well as informs whether there are needs for remediation or extension to best serve students’ academic needs; b) provide a system with reporting features that can be used to let parents know how their student is performing compared to other students; c) provide leadership with summary reports on student achievement. Includes assessment of kindergarten readiness with the TS Gold system.

- Supports one position, an Assessment Facilitator, that supports schools to help understand data “to make meaningful change in instruction”
- Facilitator has provided training to a number of staff
- Funding an evaluation of the assessment system, specifically use of system upon rollout. Tool used as a “thermometer” to determine if the assessment system overall impacts instruction.
- Quarterly benchmarks are being used in the classroom that are teacher developed (summative and formative assessment)



## Other

**PIP 21A Charter Schools** (2000 MLO, link: [21A: Charter School Funding- External](#)): Each **charter school receives MLO funds based on its** programs directly related to the MLO Spending Plan. . This amount is distributed in an equal payment each month.

**PIP 21B Charter Schools – District** (2000 MLO, link: [21B: Charter School Funding- Internal](#)): These funds are used to offset the financial impact to the District for D11 students that transfer to one of the six authorized D11 charter schools.

- Expenditures documented in end-of-year report for 2000 and 2017 separately
- Public perception of competition with traditional D11 schools for students and funds
- Need stronger communication about charter's role in D11 ecosystem

**PIP 23 Student Achievement and Performance Review** (2000 MLO; link: [23: Assessment Staff](#)): The District commissioned (through a citizen task force) the **review of a comprehensive written performance plan review that studies the academic and financial goals and objectives for performance measures** and allows the administration, board of education, academia and the public to identify the actions the District is taking to achieve these agreed upon goals and objectives.

- Review has been conducted by an external vendor every two, and now three years (2016 and current, 2019, audits were conducted by PCG)
- 2016 audit recommendations led to changes in the frequency of the performance audit

## 2017 MLO

### *Safe and Healthy Learning and Working Environment*

**PIP 1 Comprehensive Student Support Model** (2017 MLO; link: [1: Comprehensive Support Model](#)): This proposal addresses K-12 student needs with the implementation of a coordinated program of professionals and resources. The purpose is to **implement comprehensive school counseling programs and the development of student coordinated teams to address individual and school-based barriers** to student achievement. Staff additions will be new to the elementary schools and augment what is currently in place for the middle and high schools. This model will support students with a preventative and interconnected approach to enhance student outcomes, social/emotional interventions, behavioral supports, and health related needs.

- Build on prior grant to D11 to expand counseling services
- Need felt by parents and staff on survey; noted by community and staff as one of the important reasons to vote for the 2017 MLO
- Needs assessment led to this PIP and its specifics, re: staffing (e.g., counselors, psychologists)
- Phase-in is underway (first cohort of 6 elementary schools) for mental health positions—schools apply based on readiness assessment

- High school students report classroom-level outreach; building student's trust of counseling services; students indicate more support is needed to address students' emotional needs
- Staff know where to go to access support for students
- Climate and culture surveys collect data to inform decision making about programs
- Implementing new socio-emotional learning (SEL) curriculum—Random Acts of Kindness (RAK); D11 vision is to integrate throughout curriculum (ELA, etc.) and with existing PBIS implementations; support student engagement; attendance, discipline, restorative practices
- MLO funding supplemental materials
- Program design is well-regarded, D11 considered a model for other Colorado school systems
- Supported professional development and trainings for parents and staff
- Pay scale for psychologists and nurses is the teacher scale. Competition with private sector is a challenge

### *Attraction, Recruitment, and Retention of Quality Staff*

**PIP 2 Teacher Attraction and Retention** (2017 MLO; link: [2: Teacher Compensation](#)): The proposal is to increase the starting teacher pay to the current FY 17/18 teacher salary schedule, which is an approximate 7.2 percent across the board increase. By increasing the base pay, which is Step 1 / Bachelor's Degree, every step within the nine lanes in the salary system will increase.

- Understood as one of the primary purposes of the MLO by staff and community/parents
- Among the top three areas of impact of the MLO among staff (68.3%) and parent/community (49.6%)
- Affirmative vote show support for teaching staff and wish to make D11 competitive in labor market
- Teachers acknowledge (and are grateful for) salary increases
- Staff note D11 does not yet have a handle on/successful strategy for hard to staff positions
- D11 benefits are considered "better" than comparable districts
- Staffing diminished with loss of student enrollment; D11 actively seeking to retain and attract students and teachers but recognizes the need for innovative methods
- MLO funds for staffing keep D11 on par with other districts in competitive labor market

**PIP 3 Education Support Prof. Attraction and Retention** (2017 MLO; link: [3: ESP Compensation](#)): The proposal is to provide a **10 percent across the board compensation increase** for six (6) job families (clerical, crafts, food service, instruction/education aides, service maintenance, and transportation) within the Education Support Professionals (ESP) and a **five percent across the board compensation increase** to one (1) job family (specialist) to help the District attract and retain the most highly qualified candidates.

- Understood by stakeholders as one of the purposes of the MLO
- Pay increases implemented
- ESPs are hired by schools, not district which impacts recruitment
- Additional compensation helps retain staff; staff noted it has improved morale

## Security Enhancements

**PIP 4 School Security Enhancements** (2017 MLO; link: [4: School Security Enhancements](#)): The requested resources will provide for an **additional five (5) contracted full time school resource officers** who will be assigned to the nine (9) middle schools.

- School security is understood as among the primary purposes of the MLO by parents/community
- School security is among the top three areas of impact of the MLO among staff (27%) and parent/community (30%)
- New positions created
- SROs are considered part of school team and work with teachers and administrators on building level initiatives to “support, but not enforce” school policies and directives
- SRO role covers safety in many areas (for example, threats, sexual assault, drugs, harassment)
- At open campus high school, patrol neighborhood to support students making appropriate choices
- SROs reach out directly to students through classroom presentations
- SROs are interested in more training on specific topics to better support students (e.g., special education)

## Class Size Adjustment

**PIP 5 Class Size Reduction** (2017 MLO; link: [5: Class Size Reduction](#)): This proposal will **add teachers to reduce pupil/teacher ratio in classrooms as follows:**

- Ten (10) teacher recurring full time equivalent (FTE) for the start of the school year to address immediate class size needs. Distribute teacher FTE to schools within 10 days of the start of the school year for students to impact large classroom size immediately.
  - Fifteen (15) teacher recurring FTE for differentiated program needs and student impact needs (e.g. special education and high impact student needs).
- Class size reduction is understood as one of the primary purposes of the MLO by staff and community/parents and an important reason that both groups voted in favor of it
  - Perception that class size has not been reduced
  - Some staff and parent/community members expressed concern and frustration about staffing ratios and increases in class size which they perceive as “a betrayal to the intention of the MLO vote”
  - D11 team is reviewing the complexity ratio in 2019-2020 school year, specifically around special education staffing, and superintendent request to view resource distribution through equity lens
  - Staff noted a need to increase efforts at special education teacher recruitment (not included in general education teacher recruitment/retention plan)

## School Technology Requirements

**PIP 6 Technology Replacement Cycle** (2017 MLO; link: [6: Technology Replacement Plan](#)): Funds will support replacement cycle plan and continue server upgrades. Capital Equipment:

- Student Computer Replacement

- Server Replacement
- Network Infrastructure Replacement
- School Infrastructure Replacement
- Security Camera Replacement

- Technology upgrades is understood as one of the primary purposes of the MLO among staff and community/parents (based on survey data)
- Technology in district has been extended significantly beyond its life cycle. Pre-MLO allocation vs. student enrollment would have a 26-year refresh cycle on hardware. A teacher commented, "student's smart phones are more powerful than the computers students are working on"
- Middle and high school students, community/parents and staff highlighted a significant need; students noted assignments are sometimes hampered by technology challenges; disparities in technology availability across schools; laptop carts do not have enough machines and competition for time with computers
- New ticketing system tracks efficiency of response time for issues (not purchased with MLO funds, but tracks performance)
- New phone system is installed; upgrades support school security with emergency notification capacities; infrastructure to support other security enhancements
- Security camera updates are planned
- Technology is among the top three areas of impact of the MLO among staff (26.63%) and parent/community 39.1%%)

PIP 7 Technology Support Enhancements (2017 MLO; link: [7: Technology Support Staff](#) ) **Four additional FTE:** two technical operations support specialists and two junior network engineers.

- Understood as one of the primary purposes of the MLO (based on survey data)
- Staffing increased
- Impact of new staff is felt in response time, turnaround of equipment, general efficiency of work: "We're getting the work done faster. There was a time when people thought things [sent to central] would never come back."
- Positions would not exist without the MLO

## **Maintain School Buildings**

**PIP 8 Capital Renewal and Capital Improvements** (2017 MLO; link: [8: Capital Renewal/Replacement](#)): This line item proposed to protect the District's investment in real property (facilities), assets (schools), and update facilities to accommodate modern teaching methods and technology. External facility managers generally recommend funding annual maintenance and repair budgets at two percent of the replacement cost of the facilities

- Understood as one of the primary purposes of the MLO (see survey data)
- Among the top three areas of impact of the MLO among staff (42.1%) and parent/community (52.3%)
- Needs assessment conducted for all facilities; prioritized up-dates; five-year plan in place
- Hired staff to manage and administer projects
- 90% of work initiated by June 2019

- Some MLO funds will pay back funds used for emergency projects
- Significant facilities needs noted by all stakeholder groups
- Some confusion about priorities and schedule at school-level and among parents/community;

## Charter Schools Equity

**PIP 9 Charter Schools Funding** (2017 MLO; link: [9: Charter School Funding](#)): Each existing D11 authorized charter school, in recognition of the contribution to student learning, will be **given a share of the 2017 MLO**. It is estimated that this will be an additional \$1,700 per-pupil in addition to the 2000 mill levy override funds to charter schools. Charter schools will be required to report annually on the use of funds.

- Charter schools actively campaigned for the 2017 MLO
- Expenditures documented in end-of-year report for 2000 and 2017 separately
- Charter principals are very aware of MLO funds and the specific use of those funds
- Public perception of competition with traditional D11 schools for students and funds
- Need stronger communication about charter's role in D11 ecosystem

## Debt Service Redemption

**PIP 10 Debt Redemption** (2017 MLO; link: [10: Bond Debt Reduction](#)): The proposal is to use the mill levy override (MLO) funds to **create a debt service reserve account** in the general fund in order to pay off bonds prior to final maturity.

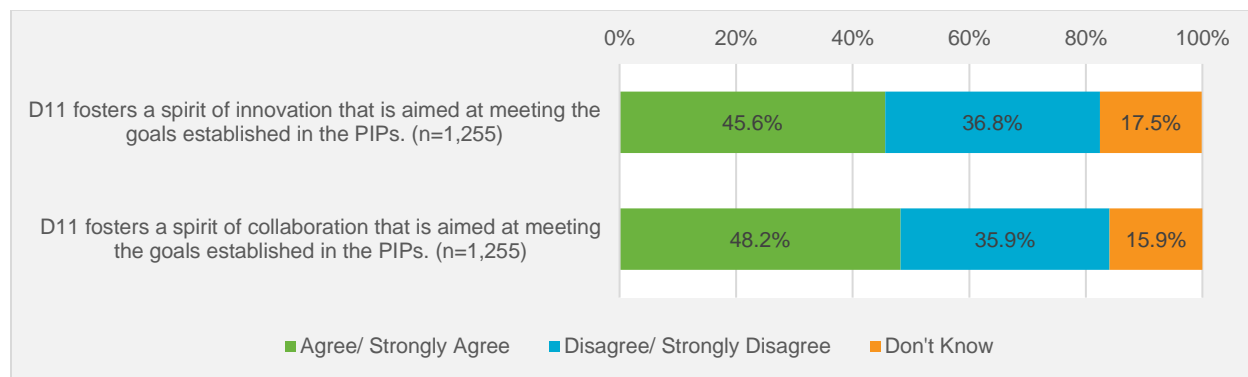
- Funds transferred to PIP 10; a significant proportion were used to pay debt in 2018-2019
- Holding and accumulating to pay off debt through 2021
- There has not been any specific separate communication to stakeholders regarding PIP10

## Staff and Community Understanding of the MLOs and PIPs

As part of the review, PCG sought to measure stakeholder perceptions related to the intent of the MLOs and District 11's capacity to meet the goals of the MLOs. Survey and focus group questions also probed stakeholder's understanding of the purpose of the MLOs, including its relationship to the daily work of the District.

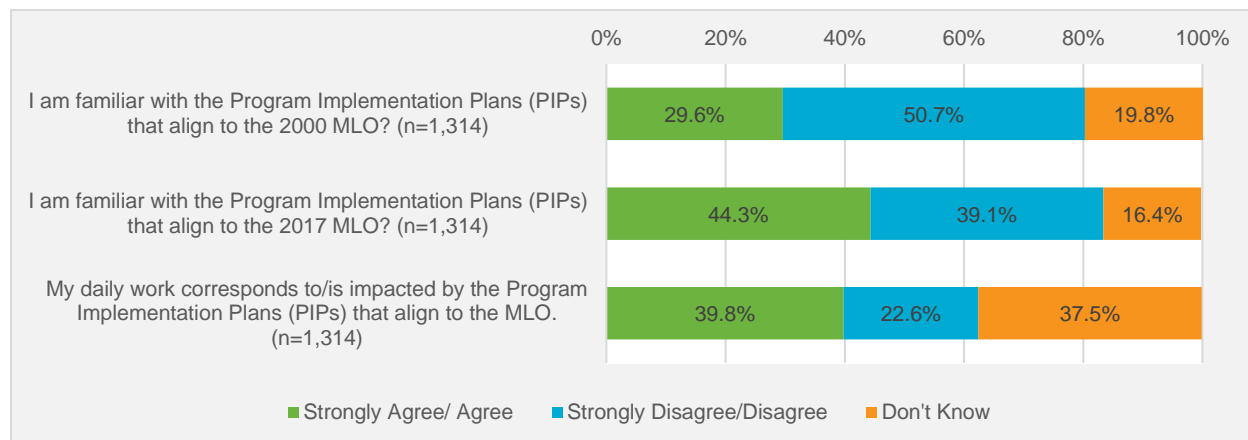
As a measure of perceptions of District capacity, staff were asked questions about innovation and collaboration, two key aspects of D11's existing business plan. Less than half of staff survey respondents (46%) agree/strongly agreed that D11 fosters a spirit of innovation that is aimed at meeting the goals established in the PIPs. Similarly, only half agree/strongly agree that D11 fosters the spirit of collaboration aimed at meeting those goals (48%). A parallel question was asked during the 2016 MLO Review in relation to the business plan (instead of PIPs) and yielded similar results.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>32</sup> In 2016, survey questions asked about the relationship to the business plan: 42% agreed that D11 fosters a spirit of innovation, and 47% agreed that D11 fosters the spirit of collaboration aimed at meeting the goals of the business plan.

**Exhibit 11. Staff perceptions of innovation and collaboration to meet the goals of the PIPs**

Staff perceptions of the relationship between innovation and collaboration, and the PIPs may be low due to the overall awareness of specific PIPs among staff.

The exhibit below shows survey responses related to staff familiarity with the PIPs. Responses from staff indicated that staff are not familiar with the PIPs that align to either the 2000 MLO or the 2017 MLO. Specifically, only 30% of staff reported that they are familiar with the PIPs for the 2000 MLO, while 44% were familiar with those for the 2017 MLO. Furthermore, only 40% of staff agreed or strongly agreed that their daily work is impacted by the PIPs which is surprising given the reach of the MLO into most aspects of schooling in D11.

**Exhibit 12. Staff familiarity with PIPS and daily work**

When asked the purpose of the MLO, the most prominent comment from parents and community respondents was that the MLO was to provide additional, needed funding for D11 (43%). Parent comments included:

- To provide supplemental monies that the district uses to cover shortfalls in budget that ensures children have the tools and teachers they need.
- Fund improvements to our schools and funding for our classrooms and teachers.
- To avoid having to otherwise 'trim the fat.'

Parents and community members did not mention PIPs by name or number, but they articulated the primary purposes of the MLO including buildings and infrastructure (31%) and teacher salary increases and related topics of recruitment and retention (25%).

### Priorities of PIPs

Staff were asked to identify, from a list of all PIPs and the work supported under each plan which were most important to them. Consistent with other findings presented elsewhere in this report, staff were the most concerned about the interrelated issues of employee compensation (48.3%), class size reduction (2000 PIP2B: 27.8% or 2017 PIP5 37.8%), and teacher attraction and retention (36.5%). Staff also indicated the importance of attracting and retaining support staff (16.6%) as well as capital renewal (15.4%). The comprehensive student support model, and school security enhancements and security were each selected among the top three by 13.8% of staff, and finally, ESP, special education and gifted and talented was selected by 11.8% of staff.

**Table 5. 2000 and 2017 Program Implementation Plans (PIPs) rated most important by staff\***

PIP	Percent
2000 PIP 1B Employee Compensation	48.3%
2000 PIP 2B Class Size Reduction	27.6%
2017 PIP 5 Class Size Reduction	37.8%
2017 PIP 2 Teacher Attraction and Retention	36.5%
2017 PIP 3 Education Support Prof. Attraction and Retention	16.6%
2017 PIP 8 Capital Renewal and Capital Improvements	15.4%
2017 PIP 1 Comprehensive Student Support Model	13.8%
2017 PIP 4 School Security Enhancements	13.8%
2017 PIP 6 Technology Replacement Cycle	13.7%
PIP 12 ESL, Special Education, and Gifted and Talented	11.8%

\*Note: The survey asked, "From the following 2000 and 2017 Program Implementation Plans (PIPs), please indicate three (3) that are the most important to you?" The most frequently selected PIPs (over 10%) are presented in the table.



## IV. Strategic Plan Alignment

*What is the status of strategic planning in D11, and how do the MLOs support the new Strategic Plan?*

### D11's Strategic Planning Initiative

Under the leadership of Dr. Michael Thomas, Superintendent, D11 has embarked on the invigorating process of developing and implementing a new strategic plan focused on educating the whole child. The Superintendent's vision for the new strategic plan is to move the community from co-existing with the District to becoming dynamic partners and co-creators of a plan which models transparency and effective, equitable stewardship of public resources. Engaging all stakeholders in this process will allow "individuals to speak their truth" and will begin the process of identifying and aligning highly effective practices being implemented across the District. Finally, the strategic plan will help chart D11's future and build a school system which promotes ownership and pride for all stakeholders involved.

The passage of MLO 2017 engendered a spirit of confidence in both schools and community and offered an ideal springboard to address vital changes needed to improve and address the District's challenges. Superintendent Thomas shared he is uncompromising in his approach of leading the District from a position of equity. He laid the groundwork for the strategic plan by conducting and leading several listening tours intended to embed him in the community and to share his vision of it being "a new day in D11" and ensuring the community their "voice matters." D11's formal process for beginning the development of the strategic plan utilized "World Cafés" to gather community input. This input is crucial to the development of the District's plan for creating a framework of equitable decision making and for a student-centered approach to navigate D11 for the future.

In alignment with D11's approach, the remaining sections of this report follow the District's sequence of events. Specifically, it begins with the World Cafés, which laid the foundation for, and provided the initial data to help, the strategic planning committee begin their work. Additionally, because some responses had a direct correlation to the 2000 and 2017 MLO PIPs, specific PIPs are highlighted after each question with a "Strategic Highlight" identifying the correlation. This is followed by an overview of the recently approved strategic plan which was approved by the Board on June 12, 2019. The section ends with a review of overall PIP alignment to the strategic plan.

### World Cafés

The World Café methodology allowed D11 to engage large groups of parents, community members, staff and students in a simple, but effective, conversational format about the District's strategic planning process. The format helped identify patterns in how different groups across D11 were thinking about strategic questions regarding the direction of the district for the future. Community members were able to collaborate and share insights across the city with over 300 community members participating in person and over 1,200 participating online.

The following five questions were posed to all participants via face to face meetings or participation in an online survey. The following section includes each question and the respective themes which surfaced from each.<sup>33</sup>

#### 1. What are the qualities and skills that you would like to see in a graduate of our district?

- Real-world, life skills (34%)

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<sup>33</sup> <https://www.d11.org/StrategicPlan>

- Strong sense of self/identity (14%)
- Critical and creative thinker (13%)
- Adaptable life-long learner (11%)
- Good interpersonal skills (10%)
- Strong sense of character (9%)
- Global awareness and understanding of own role in community (9%)

**Strategic Highlight:** The main themes identified in this question move beyond the academic skills traditionally taught in schools (learning outcomes) and focus on the need for equipping students with the soft skills they need to be successful (educational outcomes). **MLO 2017 PIP 1 – Comprehensive Student Support Model (CSSM)**, features an integrated set of services which enhance “student outcomes, social/emotional interventions, behavioral supports, and health related needs.” By addressing these needs, D11’s CSSM prepares students with the skills they need to adapt to a rapidly changing workforce. The soft skills identified in these themes are inherently embedded in D11’s CSSM approach by providing students with the opportunities and support they need to develop skills such as collaboration, leadership, time-management and problem-solving.

## 2. What do you really value about our district that you would not want to see change as we plan our future?

- Educational programming options /choice (24%)
- Valuing community engagement (18%)
- Talented and committed administrators/ faculty/staff (13%)
- Valuing differences/ being inclusive (12%)
- Leadership commitment to improvement (11%)
- Enrichment and extra-curricular programming (9%)
- Facilities/district resources (9%)

**Strategic Highlight:** D11 recognized the value of full day kindergarten long before the State passed a bill funding this educational programming approach. The District’s foresight to offer this option reinforces its commitment to individualized instruction and students’ long-term achievement. **MLO 2000 PIP 14 – Research Based Interventions/Full Day Kindergarten**, provided the recurring funding necessary to move from half-day to full-day kindergarten. This PIP allocated monies to hire teachers and provided the professional development needed for this transition. D11’s developmentally appropriate approach to early childhood education is child/student-centered and research shows the long-term benefits include reduced retention rates, higher self-esteem and independence, and improved student achievement.<sup>34</sup>

## 3. What are the greatest untapped resources of our staff and community that will contribute to the success of our students?

- Partnerships with the larger CS community that contribute to our students’ learning (24%)
- The talents & commitment of D11 teachers, administrators and staff (22%)
- Reframing our approach to learning (13%)
- Community programs and resources that enhance our students’ learning (11%)
- Building an inclusive and supportive community of learners across D11 and the community (11%)
- Increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of what we already have (9%)
- Engaging our parents more fully (5%)
- Engaging our students more fully in their own learning (3%)

<sup>34</sup> [https://www.naspcenter.org/assessment/kindergarten\\_ho.html](https://www.naspcenter.org/assessment/kindergarten_ho.html)

**Strategic Highlight:** While this question generated a variety of themes, one of the most important to the community is utilizing the talents of D11's staff at large. The District has a history of supporting the attraction and retention of high-quality teachers and staff. Both **MLO 2000 PIP 1B and MLO 2017 PIP 2**, address the District's desire and commitment in recognizing the role teachers play as the most important factor affecting student learning. D11's Senior Leadership said it best when asked if they had any closing thoughts during their focus group; there was immediate consensus regarding "our teachers are our best resources." D11's commitment to hiring and developing quality staff is recognized as a way to continue to contribute to the success of students.

#### 4. What do you believe will be our greatest challenges, as a district community, in the coming 3-5 years?

- Funding/resources/infrastructure (19%)
- Adapting to the changing structures for learning (17%)
- Shifts in population/enrollment (17%)
- Meeting students' needs (16%)
- Developing a strong identity internally and with our community (13%)
- Maintaining our committed, talented workforce (10%)
- Competition from charters and other districts (7%)

**Strategic Highlight:** The need to address infrastructure (both technological and facilities) and security were a constant theme throughout most focus groups. **MLO 2017 PIP 8 – Capital Renewal and Capital Improvements**, clearly targets the maintenance and upkeep of the District's investments. This PIP also addresses the need for "modern teaching methods and technology" while also including budget for repairs. Strategically, D11's MLO committee also recognizes the need to update schools and stated, "it's almost like a recruitment and retention tool for students." Recognizing the impact declining student enrollment is having on the District, this same theme of retention and recruitment was voiced in several different focus groups and was consistently cited as a constraint in both the staff and community surveys. This PIP is clearly aligned to the themes needing to be addressed in the strategic plan.

#### 5. What do you believe will be our greatest opportunities, as a district community, in the coming 3-5 years?

- Developing programming that meets our students' needs (31%)
- Supporting our committed and ambitious Team D11 (16%)
- Engaging our diverse community (15%)
- Establishing strong community partnerships (14%)
- Innovation/revitalization and growth (11%)
- Sharing the "new" D11 story (10%)

**Strategic Highlight:** The main themes in this question reflect the interconnectivity of the PIPs from both MLO 2000 and 2017. Examples of this include the District's trailblazing efforts in being an early adopter of full day kindergarten programming, referenced in Question 2, to its commitment of retaining and developing the talent of its staff referenced in Question 3. **MLO 2017 PIP5 - Class Size Reduction**, though sometimes misunderstood due to teacher reassignment because of declining enrollment, is intended to "add teachers to reduce pupil/teacher ratios" and provide additional support for differentiated programming and student impact needs. The District is in the nascent stages of implementing staffing models which is aligned to the superintendent's vision of equity around class size and high priority schools.

A detailed summary of verbatim responses and main themes for the strategic plan can be found on the District's website.<sup>35</sup> The D11 strategic planning committee used World Café data as a basis for developing its strategic plan, which is now approved, and will serve as a decision-making framework for District and school leadership.

## D11's Strategic Plan

This section of the report follows the same order as the approved strategic plan found on the District's website.<sup>36</sup> Each section includes the language from the plan (italicized) with a brief synopsis of how this section aligns to information shared during focus groups with a general reference to the PIPs. Specific alignment of the draft strategic plan and the MLO 2000 and 2017 PIPs will follow and conclude this section of the report.

### CORE VALUES

*We believe:*

- *In the inherent worth of every individual and the power of equitable practices to unleash potential.*
- *Diversity enriches the human experience and strengthens community.*
- *Healthy relationships provide mutual understanding and enhance life.*
- *Continuous learning nourishes life.*
- *Integrity is fundamental to building trust.*

The current version of the Strategic Plan begins with D11's Core Values. While parts of the strategic plan are student-centric, the Core Value section is applicable to a broader group which includes the community, parents, district leaders, staff and students. This is consistent with the District's goal of having core values which focus on building a relationship with the community D11 serves in addition to honoring the input provided via World Cafe participation and surveys.

The first core value immediately recognizes the superintendent's goal of leading the District using an equity lens, "***We believe in the inherent worth of every individual and the power of equitable practices to unleash potential.***" It is important to note word choice and meaning, in this strategic plan, equity does not mean equality, where each student has an equal opportunity for success, rather that each student is afforded the opportunities and support needed to be successful. This support requires an understanding of D11's demographics, and equity can manifest as resources, funding, or additional academic supports based on students' needs. Leading with the student in mind supports the remaining themes of D11's core values; diversity, integrity, mutual respect and life-long learning.

### MISSION

*We dare to empower the whole student to profoundly impact our world.*

Whereas the Core Values address a broader audience, D11's Mission is student-centric. This mission statement reflects the influence of new leadership and the progressive direction the district is going, in terms of addressing the whole child. The mission supports using a whole-student model, much like the Comprehensive Student Support Model found in MLO 2017, which addresses every level of core instruction and the resources and support needed for each child's success. The mission statement also provides the community opportunity to engage with D11 as a partner versus an observer. The passage of MLO 2017 is a good example of the faith the community has placed in the schools and the transparency

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<sup>35</sup> <https://www.d11.org/Page/11161>

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.d11.org/cms/lib/CO02201641/Centricity/Domain/67/StrategicPlan.pdf>

in which D11 needs to operate because of the MLO's strategic, line item emphasis on successful outcomes for all students which will extend beyond their K-12 experience.

## MISSION IMPACTS

- *Each student will innovatively adapt to evolving challenges.*
- *Each student will actively pursue learning that continually challenges them to grow and achieve their personal best.*
- *Each student will develop personal, social, and cultural competencies and apply them intentionally in their lives.*

The Mission Impacts following the Mission statement extend the District's vision of an equitable education for all students. The PIPs in MLO 2017 specifically address supporting the whole child through a variety of integrated supports. There is an emphasis on reducing class size, providing social and emotional learning strategies, focusing on school and student safety, school security, facilities improvements and enhancements, and attracting and retaining high-quality staff, all with the goal of increasing engagement which positively impacts student learning, behavior, and attendance. The relevance of the Mission Impacts emphasizes their importance when considering some high school students expressed a desire for more support in addressing emotional issues like stress, anxiety and depression. It will be important for the District to be creative regarding how to measure progress towards these goals in order to appropriately monitor and maintain accountability towards successful goal attainment.

## VISION

*We are a dynamic, collaborative community of energized educators, engaged students and supportive partners with a passion for continuous learning.*

While a strategic plan should be motivating it should also define the District's purpose. D11's Vision statement serves the important function of building capacity for all stakeholders who are working towards the goals of equity, diversity, integrity, mutual respect, and life-long learning (summarized from the Core Values). This vision also supports the superintendent's leadership focus on equity and should serve as an internal decision-making tool when considering supports for students. When asked about one thing they could wish for their school, a middle school student answered, with consensus from the group, "I would wish for a more diverse staff and more focus on learning about other cultures and historical figures." It is these types of statements which can energize the district in knowing they are headed in the right direction.

## STRATEGIES

- *We will cultivate a collaborative culture that promotes intentional, mission-driven change.*
- *We will align our actions to our shared understanding of and commitment to the strategic plan.*
- *We will guarantee an ecosystem of equitable practices to meet the unique needs of all.*

As previously mentioned, making Mission Impacts measurable, as well as these strategies, will help the District stay focused on implementing these objectives and goals. These strategies can also be used as a decision-making tool guiding the day-to-day operations at both the school and District levels. The effectiveness of these strategies is directly linked to their ability to be measured because it is these measure that will be used to evaluate progress. Evaluating goals can also provide the District guidance if they need to change course if the current strategies are not supporting the achievement of District goals.

## Strategic Plan Alignment

The following section includes three parts. First, alignment considerations will be addressed to establish the basis of how alignment of the PIPs to the strategic plan was determined. Second, a table has been included to represent the alignment of the MLOs and the recently approved strategic plan. This table

includes the MLO 2000 and MLO 2017 PIPs. Finally, a summary will follow to reinforce any notable conclusions based on the alignment exercise depicted in the table.

## Alignment Considerations

At face value, the alignment between the MLO 2000 and MLO 2017 PIPs and D11's strategic plan (DSP) is not easy to conceptualize. Whereas the PIPs are concrete and measurable (e.g., you either hire new school resource officers or not (MLO 2017 PIP 4)), the core components of the DSP are more aspirational in nature (e.g., how do you align PIPs to empowering "the whole student to profoundly impact our world"?). However, upon closer inspection, the MLOs and the DSP target three specific audiences: students, the district at large, and parents and community members. This is evident not only in the meaning of the language used in the DSP and MLOs but was also gleaned from the focus groups conducted with the superintendent, chief of staff, and other key district stakeholders. The target audiences are categorized as:

- Students – this pertains to all students, and none are exempted based on differentiated programming or student impact needs (e.g., special education and English Learners). This establishes the foundation for D11's focus on student equity.
- Colorado Springs District 11 – this includes all staff employed or contracted by the district. It is important to include ancillary staff like contractors in this definition because of the direct and indirect impact they have on students.
- Parents/Community – this refers to all parents, guardians, and community members within the boundaries of D11.

Within the three target audiences addressed by the strategic plan, we identify sub-categories impacted within each one. For the table, the sub-categories are specifically defined in the context of the DSP and MLOs and include the following:

### Students

- Equity – This was defined in the previous section as ensuring all students are receiving the support needed to be successful.
- Engagement – Does the PIP contribute to a student's abilities to progress in their learning?
- Outcomes – Does the PIP impact a student's learning and educational outcomes? Learning outcomes are the objectives and standards schools and teachers want students to master; and educational outcomes are the educational, societal and life effects achieved because students are educated (e.g., "Each student will develop personal, social, and cultural competencies and apply them intentionally in their lives.")

### Colorado Springs District 11

- Equity – Does the PIP support and equip D11 staff to provide equitable learning environments for all students?
- Engagement – Does the PIP support D11 staff with the tools they need to provide students with better access to learning; and do they have the tools needed to support and motivate their delivery of high-quality instruction?
- Outcomes – Does the PIP impact the ability for D11 staff to provide a learning environment and instruction conducive to improving learning and educational outcomes; and does the PIP impact staff's quality of life in terms of being more successful and able to do their work?
- Foundational – Does the PIP impact and support the district's ability to provide better learning environments for staff and students; and does it support or improve its ability to support and operate as a school system overall?

### Parents/Community



- Equity – Does the PIP support families, neighborhoods, and the community with appropriate access to the support needed for successful collaboration with the District's Core Values?
- Engagement – Does the PIP support families, neighborhoods, and the community with opportunities to successfully partner with D11 and students to encourage a "passion for continuous learning?" (DSP – Vision)

## Alignment Table

The table on the following page illustrates the relationship between the DSP and the PIPs of the MLOs. The table lists the PIPS by MLO in the left column and the three components of the DSP in the top row: first, the overarching DSP as a whole, second, the three target audiences embedded as part of the DSP, and lastly, the sub-categories, by target audience. Checks are present where there is evidence of alignment.



Table 6. Alignment of PIPs with District's New Strategic Plan

MLO	Colorado Springs D11 – Strategic Plan								
	STUDENT			Colorado Springs District 11				Parents*/Community	
	Equity	Engagement	Outcomes	Equity	Engagement	Outcomes	Foundational	Equity	Engagement
YEAR: 2000									
1B. Employee Compensation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
2B. Class Size Reduction	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2C. Middle School Implementation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5. Instructional Supplies and Materials	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
6. Literacy (LRT) (TLC)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
7B. Teacher Staff Development and Technology Training	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
9B. School Library Services, Security, Assessment Staff	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
11B. Technology Support					✓		✓		
12. ESL, SPED, G&T	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
14. Research Based Interventions & Full Day Kindergarten	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
20. Align DALI, (Terra Nova) (MAP) ((GK12)							✓		✓
21A. Charter Schools	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	
21B. Charter Schools – District							✓		

MLO	Colorado Springs D11 – Strategic Plan								
	STUDENT			Colorado Springs District 11				Parents*/Community	
	Equity	Engagement	Outcomes	Equity	Engagement	Outcomes	Foundational	Equity	Engagement
23. Student Achievement Performance Review							✓		
24. MLO Contingency Reserve							✓		
YEAR: 2017									
1. Comprehensive Student Support Model	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Teacher Attraction & Retention	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
3. Education Support Professionals Attraction & Retention	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
4. School Security Enhancements	✓			✓		✓	✓		
5. Class Size Reduction	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6. Technology Replacement Cycle	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
7. Technology Supports Enhancements					✓		✓		
8. Capital Renewal & Improvements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
9. Charter School Funding	✓	✓	✓					✓	

MLO	Colorado Springs D11 – Strategic Plan								
	STUDENT			Colorado Springs District 11				Parents*/Community	
	Equity	Engagement	Outcomes	Equity	Engagement	Outcomes	Foundational	Equity	Engagement
10. Debt Redemption							✓		
11. Contingency Reserve							✓		

## Alignment – Final Thoughts

The alignment of a PIP to the DSP cannot be solely linked to one specific target audience or sub-category of that group. PIPs can impact and align to any or all of the target audiences encompassed by the DSP.

A checkmark was placed within each sub-category of the target audience group where the PIP demonstrated alignment. It is within these sub-categories that the alignment of the PIPs, in the current state in which they are written, can be made to the DSP. It is important to note that the sub-category definitions provided were created in the spirit of this alignment exercise and are specific to the support of the strategic plan. They are in no way intended to define equity, engagement and/or outcomes in a definitive or comprehensive manner, simply within the alignment to the DSP. Clearly alignment arguments can be made for each PIP in most, if not all the sub-categories. The intent of this table is not to establish the inherent worth of each PIP but rather its alignment, in its current written state, to the district's strategic plan. D11, or any interested party, can extend this exercise to focus on the alignment of any aspect of district performance, its strategic plan initiatives, or any defined comparative analysis where the PIPs are part of the evaluative focus. It will be up to the user to define the categories to align with the comparison that is being made.

D11 has focused on budgetary and financial transparency and their line item approach for spending MLO dollars reflects this clearly. When each PIP was compared to the strategic plan, there was integrated alignment to support it. The use of "integrated alignment" is notable because on their own, it would be difficult to make a direct connection between many of the PIPs to the DSP. However, when considering the PIPs impact on the district at large, it is easy to see they are integrated across all target audiences and sub-categories. While the table illustrates how the PIPs support both students and D11, it also reflects there is an opportunity for the District to think creatively about how to best engage parents and the community in their pursuit of their equity goals.

In summary, the previous table illustrates that both MLO 2000 and MLO 2017 PIPs can be aligned to the overall support and improvement of the District and the DSP. With the passage of these MLOs, D11 has done an excellent job in putting measures in front of the community that are in the best interests of students. The addition of the new strategic plan will help inform students, the District, and the community about the importance of leveraging MLO funds as part of their goal for providing an equitable education for all students.

## V. Recommendations

### *What are recommendations for the future implementation of the 2000 and 2017 MLO?*

Based on our analysis of the data collected for this review, we offer the following recommendations to build on the successes achieved to date and to continue to meet the goals of the MLO in the future.

#### 1. Enhance MLO Communication Strategy

- A. Redesign the D11 website to make MLO information easier to access and for stakeholders to better understand the impact of the MLO dollars
  - i. Feature both 2000 and 2017 MLO updates more prominently on the main page of the D11 website
  - ii. Provide more interactive videos and short descriptions on the status of MLO initiatives underway so that it is easier for community members to gauge progress on them and understand the instructional and operational impacts
  - iii. Review other Colorado district websites to see how they share MLO information with their community members
  - iv. Update the information on the progress of MLO initiatives on the website on a routine basis
  - v. Continue featuring MLO news in the monthly superintendent's update
- B. Create 1-page printed updates on the impact of the MLO dollars at least quarterly. Develop an outreach strategy to distribute these updates broadly, especially to those stakeholders who might not access social media. Send these updates to all school-based staff via email.
- C. Ensure that the MLO Communication Strategy is embedded within the District's larger rebranding strategy. With new leadership and the passage of MLO 2017, D11 has a unique opportunity to engage in a marketing approach which can be used as a recruiting and retention tool for both staff and students. The District may consider leveraging marketing guidance from an outside agency in order to leverage and extend all efforts the District is currently implementing.
- D. Set a goal to increase awareness of the MLO for each stakeholder group, as measured by survey data in the next triennial review
- E. Revise language/descriptions for PIPs so they are actionable, concise, and current

#### 2. Establish a Data Dashboard with Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- A. Develop measurable KPIs for each PIP, or group of PIPs.
  - i. Gather input from MLO Oversight Committee members, board members, community members, and district staff as to how the KPIs should be developed, what they should measure, and how progress will be tracked. Note areas where initiatives are only partially fully funded through the MLO and document % contribution of MLO dollars.
  - ii. When considering KPIs for each PIP, the District should seek alignment with how the strategic plan will be measured in order to determine progress towards its equity goals.
- A. Create a standard reporting template for each PIP, or group of PIPs, and require it be completed by PIP managers at least annually
- B. Consider the development of a complexity index for any staffing models developed or currently in place to factor in all the data which factors into equitable staffing based on student need.

#### 3. Embed MLO initiatives in the Strategic Plan

- A. As currently demonstrated in the Strategic Plan Alignment table, consider shifting the focus to District initiatives first, and then how the MLO supports and contributes to the realization of these goals.
- B. Consider implementing MLO initiatives through an equity lens as well. Misperceptions on how MLO monies are being spent can be mitigated if the District commits to and communicates that MLO funding will still be used in the capacity in which they are written, and disbursement

of funds will be made using a decision-making process focused on providing equitable access to learning for all students.

## VI. Appendix

### Mill Levy Override Fund 2000 Election Questions<sup>37</sup>

On August 30, 2000, the Board of Education passed a resolution that included placing a request for a mill levy override on the November 7, 2000 ballot.

The ballot read as follows: "Colorado Springs School District No. 11 taxes would be increased \$26,998,822 annually to fund educational efforts to:

1. Reduce class size
2. Attract and retain superior teachers and education support staff (not to include administrators) by offering competitive salaries and benefits
3. Focus on academic core subjects like math reading, writing and science
4. Purchase classroom instructional supplies and materials
5. Increase teacher training
6. Expand student assessment and interventional support
7. Increase library support
8. Increase school safety and security
9. Improve school day start times
10. Support technology integration in the classroom
11. Establish a citizens' oversight committee to develop an independent comprehensive performance plan and to fund, under the oversight of the citizens' oversight committee, development of an independent comprehensive district performance plan and a related independent review conducted every two years thereafter to assess and report to the public about the district's progress in meeting the goals set forth in the performance plan, and to address other priority educational needs, all as described in the district's "Mill Levy Override Spending Plan" dated August 30, 2000, which plan is subject to amendment in accordance with the plan; provided that unless otherwise authorized, there shall be no increase in the district's total mill levy (excluding the mill levy for a tax abatement, refunds and credits) above the greater of 39.064 mills (the 1999 tax levy) or, in any year, the mill levy required to generate the amount of tax revenue generated under this ballot issue in the previous year, and in any event the increase shall not be greater than the maximum amount allowed by applicable law, with all limits herein determined after considering any applicable tax cuts or credits; and shall the direct and indirect revenues from such taxes, and any earnings from the investment of such revenues be collected and spent as a voter-approved revenue change and exception to the limits which would otherwise apply under Article X, Section 20 of the Colorado Constitution."

On November 7, 2000 the majority of voters approved the mill levy override ballot issue. The main purpose of this fund is to provide an accounting process to monitor the use of the mill levy override funds. After all of the funds have been expended for recurring purposes, the fund will cease. The expected life of the fund is eight to ten years.

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<sup>37</sup> <https://www.d11.org/cms/lib/CO02201641/Centricity/Domain/181/MLO%202000%20and%202017%20Election%20Questions.pdf>



## Mill Levy Override Fund 2017 Election Questions<sup>38</sup>

### Ballot Issue 3e

Shall School District 11 taxes be increased \$42 million dollars annually which shall be used to fund the educational needs including but not limited to:

8. Attracting and retaining high quality teachers and support staff, not to include administrators, by offering salaries and benefits that are competitive to other school districts;
9. Extending the life of existing schools by repairing, maintaining, and modernizing aging buildings;
10. Expanding technology access to more students by upgrading and replacing outdated computers and equipment;
11. Providing equitable funding for charter schools;
12. Improving student safety and security by adding a school resource officer at every middle school
13. Supporting student success by providing more school counselors, nurses, psychologists, or social workers; and
14. Reducing long-term interest costs by paying off existing debt sooner;

The District shall ensure accountability with a citizen's oversight committee which shall annually review and report to the public on the use of funds;

For 2019 and thereafter shall such revenues be adjusted annually for inflation; and shall the District be allowed to collect, retain, and spend the full amount of these revenues as a voter approved revenue change and shall the Mill Levy authorized by this question be excluded from previous limits which would otherwise apply.

On November 8, 2017 the majority of voters approved the mill levy override ballot issue. The main purpose of this fund is to provide an accounting process to monitor the use of the Mill Levy Override funds.

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<sup>38</sup> <https://www.d11.org/cms/lib/CO02201641/Centricity/Domain/181/MLO%202000%20and%202017%20Election%20Questions.pdf>



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