

# D<sup>★</sup>51

# Strong Schools

# Strong Community

## STATE OF THE DISTRICT | 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR



**20,323**  
STUDENTS



**2,746**  
STAFF



**46**  
SCHOOLS/  
PROGRAMS

## MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



I want to start from a place of gratitude. Thank you to each of you for your continued support of our school district. Your commitment and dedication have been instrumental in our ongoing journey to provide a high-quality education to our students.

Our collective efforts have made a significant impact, allowing us to achieve many goals and overcome challenges. Your collaboration and contributions have been a driving force behind the success of our district. In these challenging times, your support has been a beacon of hope and resilience. We recognize the sacrifices, time, and resources you have invested, and we deeply appreciate it.

As we continue with a vision to engage, equip, and empower each and every student, each and every day, your involvement remains essential. Together, we can create a brighter future for our students and community.

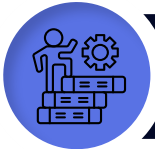
Thank you, once again, for your support, and let's move forward with shared determination to ensure the success and well-being of every District 51 student and staff member.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brian Hill  
District 51 Superintendent

# CHARTING OUR COURSE IN DISTRICT 51

## KEY POINTS AND STATISTICS



### ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE and GROWTH

In the 2022-23 school year, D51 achieved significant progress in student proficiency and early literacy initiatives, surpassing pre-pandemic CMAS levels in ELA and Math for all grades except 4th grade ELA and 7th grade Math. This success reflects our continued focus on academics, strategic resource allocation, and strong community and teacher support. However, we continue to see a decrease in our attendance, which underscores the critical role of regular attendance in student education. We remain committed to engaging, equipping, and empowering each and every student each and every day for their brightest future.



### 2022-23 PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

Every year, schools throughout Colorado receive a "School Performance Framework" rating based on various factors, including the previous academic year's achievement levels, growth, and postsecondary workforce readiness for high schools. For the 2022-23 school year, 27 District 51 schools, or over 2/3 of our schools, received the highest academic rating.



### CREATING A SUSTAINABLE D51

In March 2023, the D51 Board of Education charged the district to form an Elementary Declining Enrollment Committee to address the impact of declining student numbers influenced by COVID-19 and demographic factors...an issue impacting schools across the US. The committee held 10 sessions to develop strategies for creating a sustainable future for D51 as student numbers continue to decrease. District 51 has seen a decline of approximately 1,800 students since 2019, which affects staffing, services, resources, facility use, and safety. We are considering the various pathways to address the issue of continued declining enrollment:

- 1 SCHOOL CLOSURE/CONSOLIDATION
- 2 MILL LEVY OVERRIDES
- 3 PROMOTE AND INCREASE ROBUST & ALIGNED OPTIONS
- 4 SUBSIDIZE & PROVIDE FLEXIBLE SUPPORT THROUGH POSSIBLE INCREASES IN STATE PER PUPIL FUNDING
- 5 ONGOING EVALUATION OF CENTRAL OFFICE STAFFING AND PROGRAMS



### BUDGET + STEPS AND LANES & SALARY INCREASES

#### BUDGET UPDATE

The District Financial Services Department received, for the 29th consecutive year, the prestigious Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its Annual Comprehensive Financial Report.

The district's 2023 - 24 budget continues to prioritize strategic plan focus areas: prepared and supported students, through increases to school spending allocations; prepared and supported staff, through compensation increases to help attract and retain employees; and fiscal responsibility, by setting aside dollars to continue key student supports such as an online program and summer school once federal COVID grant dollars expire after this school year - all while maintaining a balanced budget.

#### STEPS AND LANES & SALARY INCREASES

D51 successfully initiated and implemented the "Steps and Lanes" salary schedule for covered employees, resulting in elevated base pay and enhancing D51's competitiveness in the recruitment and retention of certified staff. Furthermore, we were able to raise the compensation for all support staff, with many benefiting from additional market adjustments, leading to increased pay for various roles across the district.

- 1 STARTING TEACHER SALARY INCREASED TO \$47,000
- 2 SALARIES FOR CERTIFIED STAFF WITH A MASTERS DEGREE NOW START AT \$51,000



### GRAND JUNCTION HIGH SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

***Thank you, Mesa County, for supporting our students, faculty, and staff and voting YES! to GJHS. Because of your unwavering support, we can ensure a bright future and endless possibilities for our students' success.*** The construction of the new GJHS is progressing according to budget and timeline. The foundational and structural components of the building have been successfully completed, the roof has been installed, and both the exterior and interior framing have been finished. Currently, the project is focusing on the ongoing installation of exterior and interior finishes, as well as the site development work.