

**RESOLUTION IN APPRECIATION OF TAXPAYER
INVESTMENTS IN ADAMS 12 FIVE STAR SCHOOLS**

WHEREAS, Adams 12 Five Star Schools was established in 1950 with less than 250 students enrolled in two school buildings' and

WHEREAS, the population within the District has grown substantially since its inception, with the District now serving approximately 35,000 students in 56 District-managed and charter schools; and

WHEREAS, funding allocated to the District under the various forms of the School Finance Act has been inadequate to construct and maintain schools and school support facilities needed to serve these students and families, and so the District has sought, and voters have approved, a number of bond measures over the past 74 years so that the District could build and maintain these schools and support facilities; and

WHEREAS, the most recent bond measure was approved by District voters in 2016, and consistent with its commitments to voters at that time, the District has not increased its bond redemption levy to make payments on those bonds, and in fact decreased its bond redemption levy for the 2024 tax payment year by 3 mills; and

WHEREAS, the District constructed Thunder Vista P-8, the FutureForward at Washington Square campus, the new STEM Lab facility, and the other projects identified in the 2016 bond package, as well as \$35 million in additional projects not included in the bond plan, including construction of the Independence Academy school serving students with disabilities and investment in significant improvements to the FutureForward at Bollman campus; and

WHEREAS, these investments in school facilities would not have been possible without the support of District taxpayers through elections authorizing property taxes to pay for these investments; and

WHEREAS, as the rate of housing growth and need for construction of new schools has declined since 2016, the need to replace and renovate older facilities has increased, and students, parents and business owners have expressed desire for the expansion of career and technical education programming at the middle and high school level; and

WHEREAS, District leadership has developed, after lengthy and robust community engagement processes, a Blueprint plan for facility replacement, renewal and expansion that can be achieved if voters approve continuation of the District's current bond redemption mill levy at the November 2024 election; and

WHEREAS, the various forms of the School Finance Act have also been inadequate in providing revenues sufficient to pay for the growing costs of education, including expenses for

security measures, computing devices, mental health supports, wages driven by high housing costs, and expansion of career and technical education opportunities in the trades and in disciplines including the culinary arts, nursing, and first responder training; and

WHEREAS, the most recent mill levy override approved by District voters was passed in 2018 for the purpose of expanding career and technical education programs, improving compensation for early career educators, increasing mental health supports for students, enhancing support for students behind grade level expectations in reading and math, updating curriculum, and a variety of other uses; and

WHEREAS, the District's Finance and Audit Committee, which consists of parents and community members with interest and expertise in financial matters, reviews expenditures of the 2018 mill levy override annually and has reported each year to the Board of Education that the District has spent these override revenues consistent with the commitments made to voters in the ballot measure; and

WHEREAS, these investments have played an important part in improving student outcomes, including improvements in the District's graduation rate, the number of students earning college credits for Advanced Placement (AP) courses, and the number of students earning industry certifications for mastering technical skills in the trades and other disciplines; and

WHEREAS, these improvements in student outcomes would not have been possible without the support of District taxpayers through elections authorizing increases in property taxes to pay for these investments; and

WHEREAS, despite these past investments by our taxpayers, the District now finds itself 13th out of 15 Denver area school districts in the per pupil funding it receives from local overrides and now lags most of our neighboring school districts by tens of millions of dollars in annual revenues; and

WHEREAS, these funding gaps against the District's peer school districts have resulted in the District's average teacher salary declining to 8th out of 10 school districts in our regional labor market and has resulted in more than 100 unfilled educator and support staff positions in each of the past three school years, with the greatest vacancy rates present for those serving special education students, students in poverty and multilingual students; and

WHEREAS, current funding levels are inadequate to support expansion of career and technical education programming at the high school level and the introduction of those opportunities at the middle school level; to provide computer science instruction to elementary students; and to maintain academic intervention and mental health staff adequate to meet student needs; and

WHEREAS, these programming and staffing needs can be addressed if voters approve the \$34.5 million mill levy override measure at the November 2024 election, with such measure resulting in an annual tax increase of \$240 per year for the owner of a \$500,000 home;

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Board of Education for the Adams 12 Five Star Schools, as follows:

1. The Board extends its sincere gratitude and appreciation to taxpayers past and present for their investment in the construction and maintenance of our schools and in the operations of the District for which state funding has been inadequate;
2. The Board believes that the District's consistent use of voter approved funds for the purposes described in past ballot questions, as verified by the Finance and Audit Committee; the completion of all projects described in past bond measures, and implementation of all programs and investments described in past mill levy override measures, demonstrate the District's appreciation for taxpayers by using these funds as promised and in an efficient and prudent manner; and
3. The Board recognizes the financial pressures that many families in our community face and sized the bond and mill levy override packages for the November 2024 ballot to minimize tax impacts on property owners while generating enough revenue to meaningfully address some of the most pressing facility and programming needs in the District; and
4. The Board respectfully urges District voters to support both the bond and override measures (Ballot Issues 5D and 5E on the Adams and Broomfield County general election ballots) so that the District can remain competitive with other metro area school districts and respond to the needs of our school community as identified in the Blueprint engagement process.

Adopted by the Adams 12 Five Star School Board of Education at its meeting on October 2nd, 2024