



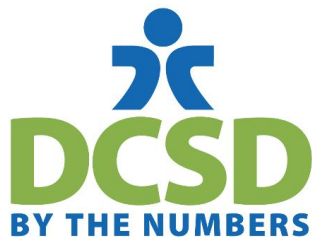
# State of the District





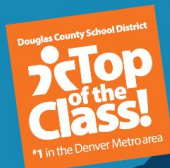
# Taxpayers are Seeing a Real Return on their Investment





|         |                     |
|---------|---------------------|
| 89      | SCHOOLS             |
| 45      | ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS  |
| 9       | MIDDLE SCHOOLS      |
| 9       | HIGH SCHOOLS        |
| 6       | ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS |
| 20      | CHARTER SCHOOLS     |
| plus 38 | PRESCHOOL LOCATIONS |

DCSD is the  
**largest employer**  
in Douglas County  
**7,500 EMPLOYEES**  
3,700 are licensed educators  
excluding substitutes



**62,000**  
STUDENTS  
PreK-12

**3rd largest**  
school district in the state



**EXCELLENCE**  
GRADUATION RATE

DCSD has one of the  
**highest graduation rates**  
in the Denver metro area.  
Rates have climbed from  
83.1% in 2010 to 93.6% in 2025.

**93.6%**  
GRADUATE

**2026:** more than  
**\$124,000,000**  
IN SCHOLARSHIPS

**SCHOLARSHIPS**  
AWARDED TO DCSD STUDENTS

The class of 2026 earned more than  
\$124 million in scholarships.

Students  
**VOLUNTEERED**  
**174,900 HOURS**  
during the **2025-2026**  
school year.



**INNOVATION**

**CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT**  
Students and parents saved more than \$25 million  
(2025-2026) in college expenses through  
DCSD's concurrent  
enrollment  
partnerships  
and Advanced  
Placement  
course offerings.

**2025-2026:** more than  
**\$25,000,000 SAVED**



**Highest  
Graduation  
Rate (93.6%)!**

**\$124 M in  
Scholarships**



**Top-Performing  
School District in  
the Denver metro  
area**



**Lowest Staff  
Turnover Rate in  
the Denver metro  
area**



**90 Career &  
Technical  
Education  
Pathways  
(including Trades)**

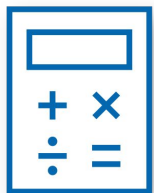


**Top Rated  
by Families**



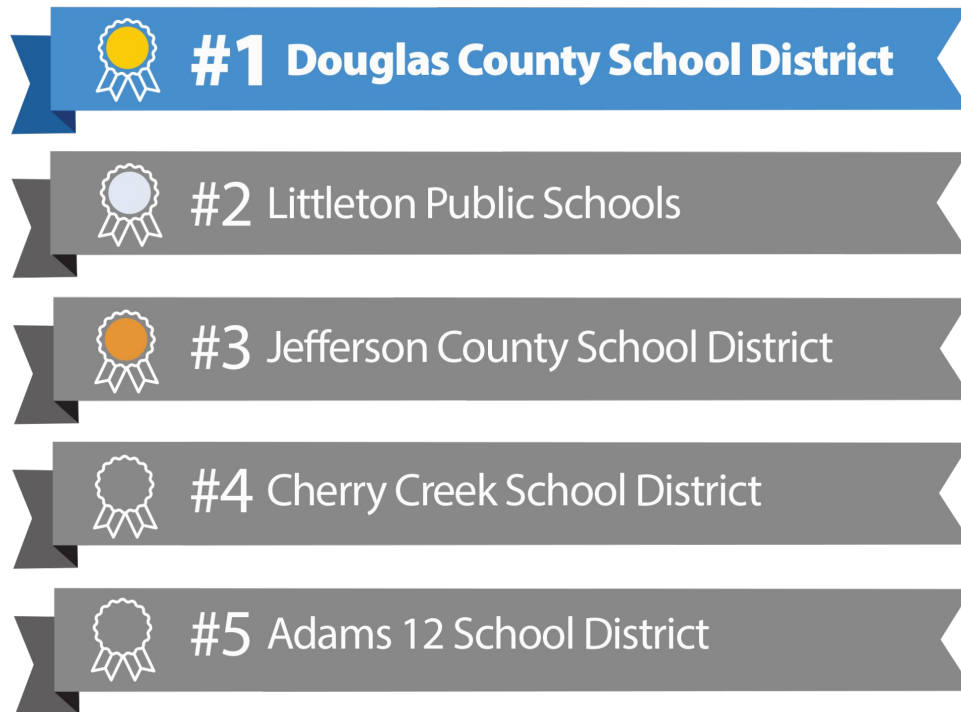
# Academic Excellence | Rankings by District

Students who met or exceeded expectations, ranked by school district, for 2024-2025 school year.



**English  
Language Arts  
and  
Math** Rankings

Source: [Based on chart by The Denver Post.](#)  
Data from Colorado Department of Education.



# Award-Winning Schools

In 2025, DCSD schools received **42 awards** for academic achievement and growth!



# Top 15 Schools in DCSD (Based on 2025 Colorado State Report Card)

1. **Bear Canyon Elementary** (97.6%) - Highlands Ranch
2. **Challenge to Excellence** (93.3%) - Parker
3. **Wildcat Mountain Elementary** (92.4%) - Highlands Ranch
4. **Lone Tree Elementary** (91.8%) - Lone Tree
5. **Timber Trail Elementary** (91.4%) - Castle Pines
6. **Northridge Elementary** (91.2%) - Highlands Ranch
7. **Eldorado Elementary** (90.0%) - Highlands Ranch
8. **North Star Academy** (89.9%) - Parker
9. **Copper Mesa Elementary** (89.0%) - Highlands Ranch
10. **Larkspur Elementary** (88.7%) - Larkspur
11. **Rock Canyon High School** (87.7%) - Castle Pines
12. **American Academy** (87.5%) - Castle Pines and Parker
13. **Pine Grove Elementary** (86.0%) - Parker
14. **Stone Mountain Elementary** (85.4%) - Highlands Ranch
15. **Flagstone Elementary** (85.3%) - Castle Rock

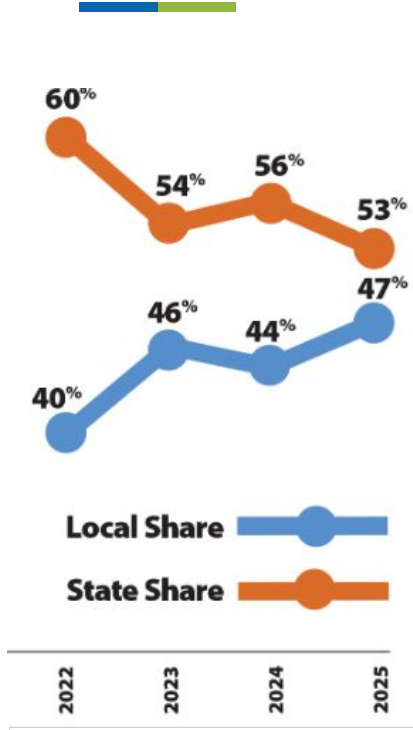




# How Our Schools are Funded & Where the Money Goes



# How Our Schools Are Funded



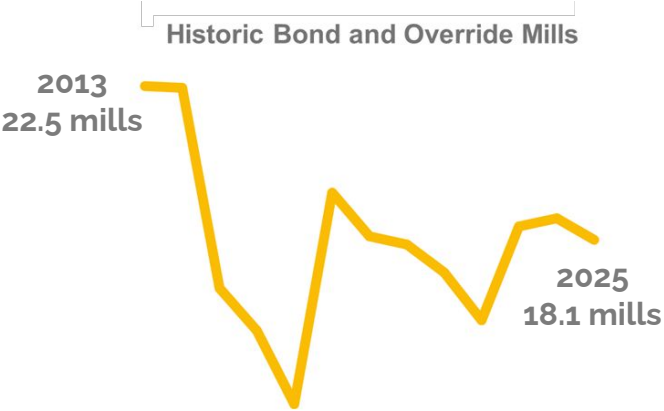
## Did you know?

Total funding is set by the state. When local funding goes up, state funding goes down.

Education funding is not keeping pace with inflation causing districts to make painful cuts

## Did you know?

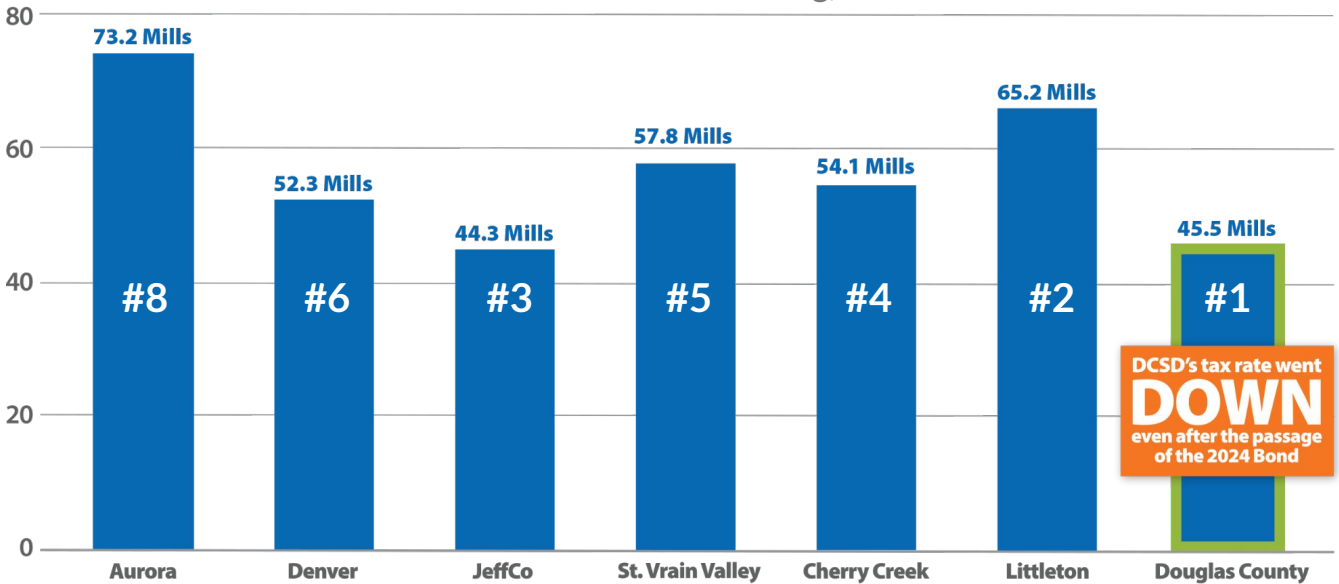
DCSD's tax rate has dropped significantly since 2013 - even with recent ballot initiatives.



# DCSD ROI for Taxpayers (Post-Ballot Initiatives)

## 2026 School District Tax Rate

Rates include School Finance Act funding, Bonds and MLOs



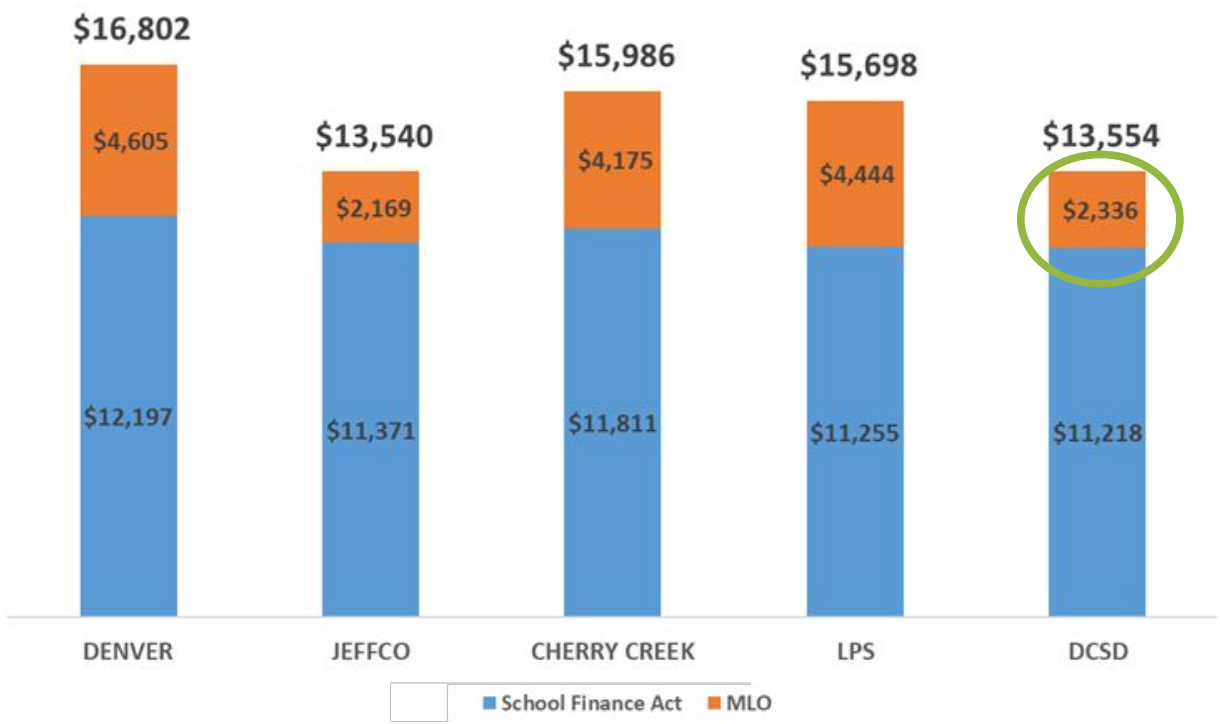
DCSD's tax rate went  
**DOWN**  
even after the passage  
of the 2024 Bond

**Did you know?**  
*DCSD is the top scoring district and has one of the lowest tax rates.*

SOURCE: CDE Fiscal Year 2025-26 Mill Levy Table

# District Funding Comparison

*Dollar amounts represent Per-Pupil Funding per year.*

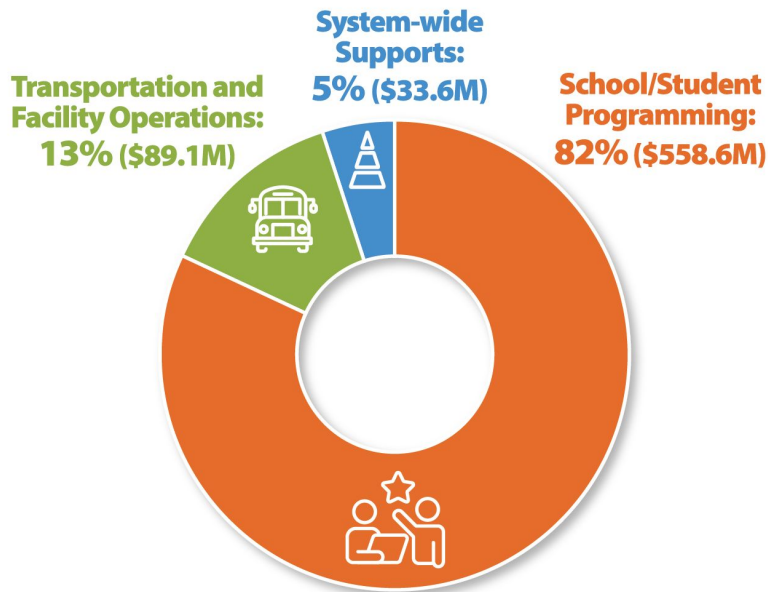


## Did you know?

*The 2023 Mill Levy Override approved by DougCo voters meant our MLO funding increased over \$1,000 per student (thank you taxpayers!). We are still behind our peers but great progress has been made.*

# How Taxpayer Funding is Spent on Students

Combined General Fund Expenditures (\$M)



## Did you know?

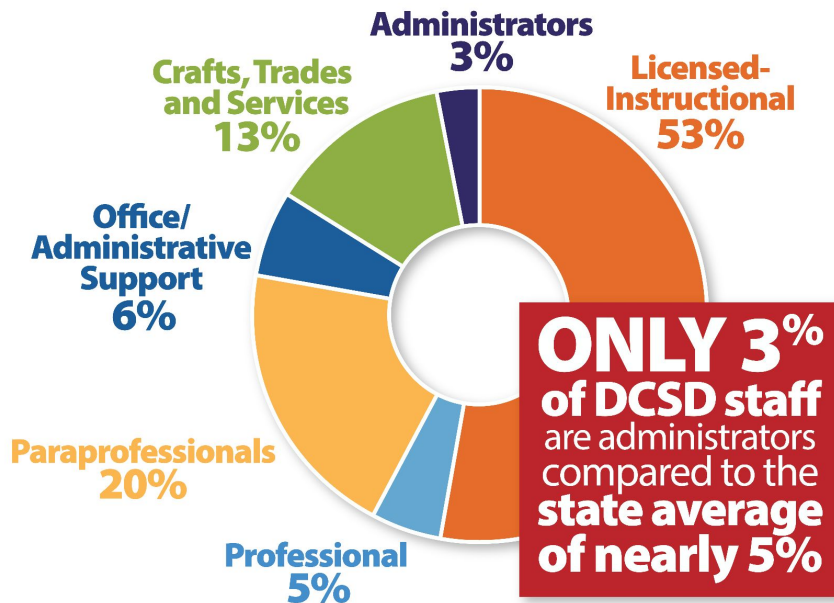
*DCSD has 23 Human Resources employees which serve 7,500 employees? This equals a ratio of 1:350. A ratio of 1:50 is recommended in the private sector.*

## Did you know?

*DCSD's IT team supports 63,000 devices and 100 buildings (all of which have WiFi and other technology needs)?*

# Central Administration Costs

## School District Employees (excluding charter schools)



## Did you know?

*DCSD consolidated schools in declining enrollment areas to provide better opportunities for students and to be fiscally responsible.*

*DCSD will be consolidating central administration buildings as well to cut ongoing costs.*



# Growth and Decline



# Growth & Decline Challenges

Douglas County spans over 850 square miles.

- Declining Enrollment Areas & School Consolidations
- Rapidly Growing Areas & New Schools

We want to ensure that every DCSD student has amazing opportunities no matter where they live.

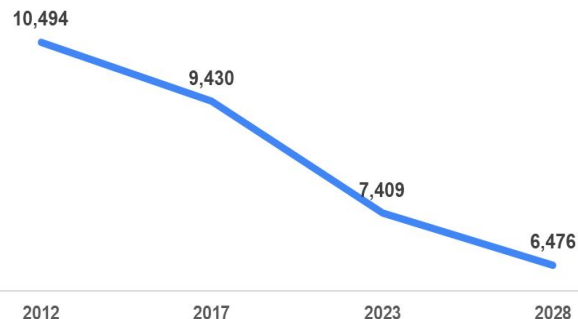
## Did you know?

*DCSD has the right number of schools in all the wrong places.*

LEARN MORE

[dcsdk12.org/about/growth-and-decline](https://dcsdk12.org/about/growth-and-decline)

Neighborhood Elementary School Students in Highlands Ranch



# Thriving Schools: Highlands Ranch

In the 2026-2027 School Year:



Acres Green Elementary and Fox Creek Elementary will become **Silver Spruce Elementary**.



Heritage Elementary and Summit View Elementary will become **Mountain Peak Elementary**.



Saddle Ranch Elementary and Eldorado Elementary will become **Golden Ridge Elementary**.

[LEARN MORE](#)

[dcsdk12.org/about/growth-and-decline](https://dcsdk12.org/about/growth-and-decline)



# Looking to the Future



# BOE ENDS

## Global Ends

*All students will develop the knowledge, skills, mindsets, and dispositions needed to achieve their highest individual potential in a safe, accessible, thriving, and welcoming learning environment. These results shall be produced at a cost that demonstrates good stewardship of resources.*



### Ends-1 Academic Excellence and Life Skills

*1. Students have the knowledge and skills appropriate to their age and learning ability, to qualify for higher levels of learning, employment of their choice, or independent living.*

*1.1. Students graduate with cognitive skills, digital skills, and civic responsibility, to each student's individual potential.*

*1.2. Students graduate with workforce readiness skills.*

*1.3. Students graduate with independent learning skills.*



### Ends-2 Mindsets and Dispositions

*1. Students acquire the necessary self-leadership skills and interpersonal skills that enable them to become responsible and engaged members of society.*

*1.1. Students develop their individual strengths, to support their social, emotional, and physical well-being.*

*1.2. Students graduate as responsible and engaged members of society, contributing positively within their individual ability and interests.*



## PURPOSE

By 2038, all DCSD graduates will be empowered to meet their future with competence, purpose, and optimism.

## END STATEMENT

All students will develop the knowledge, skills, mindsets and dispositions needed to achieve their highest individual potential in a safe, accessible, thriving, and welcoming learning environment.

## FOUNDATIONAL COMMITMENT

Cultivate a culture and climate that strives for excellence and promotes hope and resiliency.

## CORNERSTONE COMMITMENTS



**Academic Excellence**



**Strategic Technology Integration**



**Essential Mindsets and Behaviors**



**Future Ready Graduates (post-secondary readiness and life skills)**



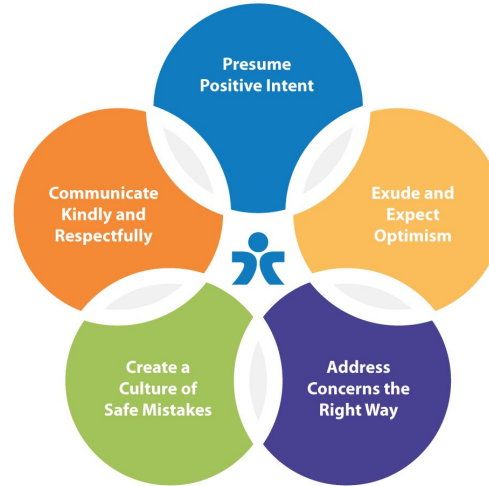
**Thriving Schools and Thriving Communities**

# FOUNDATIONAL COMMITMENT

Cultivate a culture and climate that strives for excellence and promotes hope and resiliency.



## DCSD Climate & Culture Norms





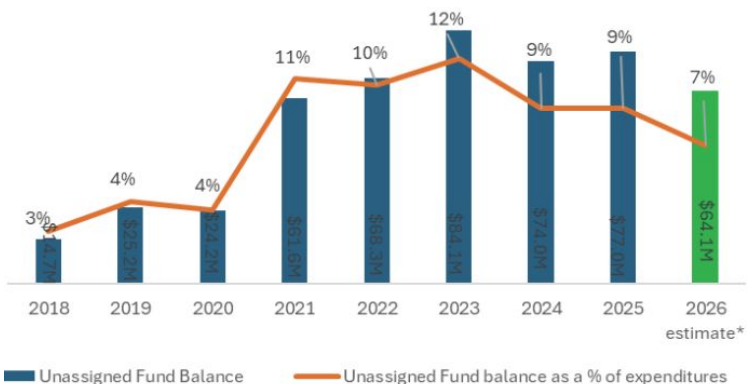
# Funding Challenges Continue



# Our Financial Reality

## Revenue is NOT covering expenses:

- Expected NEW Revenue: **\$6M**
- Benefits Increases (DCSD): **\$5M**
- Salary Increases (\$7M & \$3M): **\$10M**
- Inflationary Expense Increases: **\$6M**



## Did you know?

*The state of Colorado has a \$1B shortfall - again... and it is not getting better.*

Investing in our employees is a priority! DCSD is absorbing all benefits cost increases.

Minimum Amount We Need to CUT by 27-28

**\$15M**

# Sources of Additional Funding



School districts can request additional funding from voters through two primary options: Mill Levy Overrides and Bonds. These are separate buckets of local dollars and cannot be reduced by state funding levels.

## General Mill Levy Overrides (MLOs)

General Mill Levy Overrides are ongoing funding from a fixed or indexed dollar amount each year, limited to 28% of School Finance Act funding.

MLOs are generally used for ongoing expenses such as operations, salaries, staffing, and student programming.

General MLOs are not used for capital expenses *(there is a separate Debt-Free Schools MLO that is used for capital expenses)*.

## General Obligation Bonds

General Obligation Bonds generate one-time dollars for capital needs such as constructing new school buildings, additions to existing school buildings, facility repairs and upgrades, security upgrades, classroom equipment, buses, and technology.

Bonds cannot be used for operational, ongoing, expenses.

# 2026 Mill Levy Override (\$54 Million)

- **Retain and attract top-quality teachers and staff** by providing salaries that are more competitive with neighboring school districts and to better keep pace with inflation.
- Support increasing cost of **school security**, including school resource officers.
- **Reduce student waitlists for Career and Technical Education** programming, including **the trades**.
- **Restore student programming** such as instrumental music in elementary schools.

## Did you know?

*Even with 2023 MLO staff pay increases, DCSD is not yet keeping up with inflation and cost of living.*



# 2026 Mill Levy Override (\$54 Million)

## Compensation \$21.4 M



4% increase for teachers and staff to keep pace with inflation and improve competitiveness by further closing the gap with the market.

## Specialized Student Programming \$5.1 M



Establish and enhance intensive in-district programming to provide comprehensive support for students with specialized needs.

## Career and Technical Education \$4.2 M



Invest in expansion of CTE pathways (existing and new) to better meet student and family demand.

## Safety & Security \$2.0 M



Annual investment for school security support, such as school resource officers. Additional dollars help offset escalating costs for security support, including SROs, so we can maintain our current SRO to student ratios.

## Curricular Investment \$3.3 M



Annual investment in literacy and math curricula to ensure resources are available to serve all children.

## Athletics and Activities \$1.2 M



Address disparities in programming and facilities across schools and add Unified programs at the elementary level for students with special needs.

## Student Programming \$3.8 M



Restore elementary instrumental music, invest in the middle school teaming model, and support systemic implementation of emerging technologies.

## Charter Schools \$13.0 M



Charter Schools receive a proportionate share to spend on ballot priorities (24% based on enrollment).

View the complete [Proposed 2026 Mill Levy Override Plan](#)

# District Compensation Changes

- Teachers and other licensed staff: **4% Increase**
  - [Revised Salary Schedules](#) (schedules move up 4%)
- Substitutes: **\$10 increase** to daily pay rate
- Support Staff (classified): **4% Increase**
- Administrative and Professional/Technical: **4% Increase**
- Post-retirement employees (110/140): **2% increase**
- *All increases retroactive to July 1, 2026*
  - Jan. 27 Payroll: Lump sum retroactive payment (July-January)
  - Feb. 27 Payroll: New rate of pay begins.



# Post-MLO Competitive Position (Teachers)

| DISTRICT                  | STARTING SALARY  | MAX SALARY       |
|---------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| DCSD (Current)            | \$54,718*        | \$115,646        |
| <b>DCSD (4% increase)</b> | <b>\$56,906*</b> | <b>\$120,271</b> |
| JeffCo                    | \$56,085         | \$112,955        |
| Littleton Public Schools  | \$58,038         | \$131,116        |
| Cherry Creek Schools      | \$62,000         | \$126,184        |
| Aurora Public Schools     | \$61,805         | \$127,750        |
| Denver Public Schools**   | \$57,666         | \$124,233        |

*\*weighted across the three schedules based on the percentage of employees on each schedule (general: 53%, hard-to-hire: 30%, extremely-hard-to-hire: 17%).*

*\*\*DPS starting pay shown is for 2025-2026 (updated schedule for DPS not yet available).*

## Did You Know?

A 4% increase will place DCSD's **starting teacher salary** just above JeffCo.

# Keeping Pace (Fixed MLO vs. Indexed MLO)



An Indexed Mill Levy Override means the District can better keep pace with inflation and growth.

## Fixed Mill Levy Override

- Fixed dollar amount does not adjust with inflation or growth.
- Value of the dollar does not keep pace with inflation or expenses.
- Share of cost per household decreases over time.
- Very unusual (other municipalities collect tax rates that adjust with inflation and growth each year).

## Indexed Mill Levy Override

- Indexed (aligned) to the Colorado School Finance Act, which adjusts over time based on inflation.
- Dollar amount generally increases by inflation each year to hold purchasing power.
- Cost generally remains the same per household over time.

# MLO Financial Details

- In 2027, the proposed MLO would cost residential taxpayers approximately \$33.70 per year (about \$2.81 per month) for every \$100,000 in home value. **For a \$700,000 home this would equal \$236 per year.**
- DCSD believes that financial transparency helps build public trust by ensuring that taxpayer dollars are managed responsibly, expenditures are publicly accountable, and voter-approved funds are used only for their intended purposes.
- DCSD's citizen-elected Board of Education reviews and approves all district budgets and provides fiscal oversight of the entire budget and voter-approved funds.
- DCSD has a citizen-led Mill Bond Oversight Committee and Fiscal Oversight Committees that help ensure that taxpayer dollars are spent as promised.
- DCSD's award-winning Budget and Accounting departments are responsible for accurate financial planning, reporting and analysis.

## COST TO TAXPAYERS

Additional funding via a potential MLO would cost residential taxpayers approximately **\$33.70** per year (about \$2.81 per month) for every **\$100,000** in home value.





# 2024 Bond



# 2024 \$490 Million Bond

The 2024 Bond is allowing the school district to:

- Update and equip aging schools and facilities;
- Expand Career and Technical Education classroom spaces;
- Construct new elementary schools in Lyric & Sterling Ranch;
- Expand Sierra Middle School;
- Construct Phase 2 of the Legacy Campus; and
- Enhance safety and security at every school across the district.

Interactive Bond Map



[bondmap.dcsdk12.org](https://bondmap.dcsdk12.org)





# 2023 Mill Levy Override



# 2023 \$66 Million Mill Levy Override

---

## ✓ Increased Teacher and Staff Pay

- Turnover dropped to the lowest in the metro area and academic scores continue to climb!

## ✓ Increased Safety and Security at Schools

- Additional SROs and Campus Security Specialists in place at all schools.



