

SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEES (SACs)

Training Module

Overview of SACs

The logo for Douglas County School District features a stylized blue figure of a person with arms raised, positioned to the left of the text. The text 'Douglas County' is in a bold, green, sans-serif font, and 'School District' is in a smaller, green, sans-serif font below it.

**Douglas
County**
School District

Learn Today, Lead Tomorrow

Welcome

Thank you for volunteering to serve as a member of your School Accountability Committee.

Please sign in.

Topics

- Purpose of SACs
- SAC Responsibilities and Duties
- SAC Composition
- Unified Improvement Planning
- Budget
- DCSD Funding Resources
- Discussion
- Additional Resources

SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE

Regional Training

Overview



Learn Today, Lead Tomorrow

Senate Bill 13-193: Increasing Parent Involvement in Schools

- Solicit parent participation on school and district accountability committees, including parents that represent the student population.
- Incorporate strategies on the Unified Improvement Plan to increase parent engagement in schools (Priority Improvement and Turnaround Schools).
- Each school district board of education shall adopt a district policy for increasing and supporting parent engagement in the public and charter schools of the district.
- Districts shall identify a family partnership point of contact for family engagement training and resources.

Why SACs?

Spirit of SAC

The purpose of the SAC is **to inform, encourage and provide opportunities** for parent and community members to be involved in the planning and evaluation of the school's instructional program and quality improvement processes.

SACs are advisory committees – not governing bodies.

- Source: DCSD SAC Handbook

SAC Responsibilities (per DCSD SAC Bylaws)

Include, but are not limited to:

1. To **advise** the Principal concerning the preparation of the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) with goals and objectives for the improvement of education in the school.
2. To **recommend** to the principal its priorities for spending school monies.
3. Meet at least quarterly to discuss:
 - a. Whether school leadership, personnel and infrastructure are advancing or impeding implementation of the school's performance, improvement, priority improvement, or turnaround plan, whichever is applicable
 - b. Safety issues relative to the school environment.
 - c. Community concerns and input.

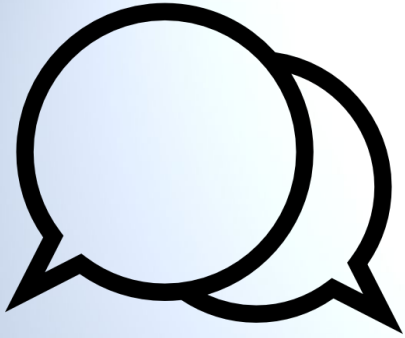
SAC Responsibilities (per DCSD SAC Bylaws)

4. **Gather and provide information** to the principal and DAC on the needs or concerns of the school's community.
5. When a school has been placed on a priority improvement or turnaround plan, the SAC shall **advise the principal** concerning the preparation of such plan, and submit recommendations concerning the content.
6. Report, at least annually, to the community and the Board of Education, on the educational performance of the school and provide data for the appraisal of such performance.
7. Provide **input and recommendations on an advisory basis** to District Accountability Committee and district administration concerning:
 - a. Principal development plans; and
 - b. Principal evaluations

SAC Responsibilities (per DCSD SAC Bylaws)

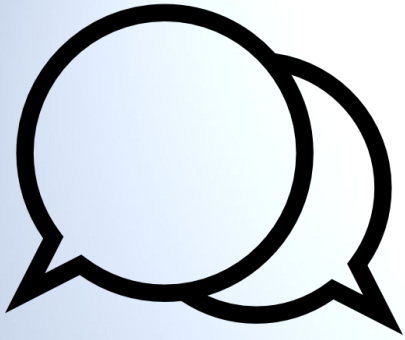
8. Perform such other duties and responsibilities as may be required by Board policy and comply with Superintendent policies and directives.
9. Actively increase parental engagement in the school by, at a minimum; publicizing and soliciting opportunities to serve on the SAC; assisting with the implementation of the district's parent engagement policy; and encouraging parent-teacher interaction.

POP QUIZ -- Which of the Following are Responsibilities of a SAC?



- a. Personnel issues, including hiring or evaluation of individual staff members.
- b. Individual student discipline issues.
- c. Any issue dealing with a specific student, staff member, or parent.
- d. All of the Above
- e. None of the Above

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SAC Composition: (per DCSD SAC Bylaws)

There shall be at least seven voting members as follows:

1. **Principal** – The principal of the school or the principal’s designee.
2. **Teacher** – One teacher who provides instruction at the school.
3. **At least three parents or legal guardians** – Three parents or legal guardians of students enrolled in the school to make the membership as representative as possible of all groups attending the school (Special Education, Gifted and Talented, free or reduced lunches, ELL, traditionally underserved populations, etc.)
4. **PTS Adult** – One adult member of an organization of parents, teachers, and students (PTS) recognized by the school. If the school does not have a recognized PTS organization, a fourth parent or legal guardian of a student enrolled in the school is elected to the SAC by a majority vote of the parent community.

SAC Composition: (per DCSD SAC Bylaws)

There shall be at least seven voting members as follows:

5. **Community** – One person from the community not otherwise included above. “Community” is defined broadly to mean lives or is involved in business or industry within feeder boundaries.
6. **Additional Parent or Legal Guardian Voting Members** – at the option of the Principal, additional voting members may be selected by a simple majority vote of the above voting members.

No more than three voting members (the principal, the teacher rep, and one other) may be employed at the school or be relatives of an employee at the school. (“Employee” includes anyone who is a W-2 employee of Douglas County School District RE-1 and is employed to work at the school.)



Connecting at your Table

At your table, please introduce yourself and discuss the following:

- Why do you want to serve on your School Accountability committee?
- What do you believe is the most important priority for SACs to focus on?

SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE

Regional Training

Unified Improvement
Planning



Learn Today, Lead Tomorrow

Improvement Planning

The Education Accountability Act of 2009 (SB 09-163) requires **each** Colorado school to create and submit an **annual improvement plan**.

The Colorado Department of Education has developed a unified improvement planning (UIP) template and processes to support schools and districts in their performance management efforts. The UIP template has been designed to meet state, federal, and program accountability requirements.

- Source: Colorado Department of Education

§ 22-11-402. School accountability committee - powers and duties

- To advise the principal of the school concerning the **preparation** of a school plan and to submit recommendations to the principal concerning the **contents** of the plan
- To meet at least quarterly to discuss whether school leadership, personnel, and infrastructure are advancing or impeding **implementation** of the school's plan

KEYS FOR SUCCESS

- Unified Improvement Planning should be a collaborative process between school staff and the School Accountability Committee (SAC)

School Leadership Role	School Accountability Committee Role
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review and explain school performance data• Update SAC on school priorities and plan implementation• Solicit feedback from SAC on plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participate in performance data discussions• Provide feedback to school leadership regarding the school's plan

KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL UIP PROCESS

- Clear and consistent communication regarding:
 - School performance data
 - Progress on implementation of current plan
 - Action steps
- Provide opportunities for regular, two-way, and meaningful dialogue on plan
- Focus on student growth and achievement

KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL ENGAGEMENT

- Apply research (and laws) to practice, focusing on student success.
 - Do what works, consistently.
- Share knowledge and responsibility.
 - Use two-way communication.
 - Partner actively and equitably.
- Use data to make decisions.
 - Be strategic and intentional.
 - Action plan, based on what exists and what is needed.
 - Continuously improve.

• Source: SACPIE Best Practices

QUESTIONS TO START THE CONVERSATION REGARDING UNIFIED IMPROVEMENT PLANNING:

- What is our current school performance?
- Are there patterns in the performance framework data? (Achievement, Growth or Postsecondary Workforce Readiness)
- What is the school currently working on?
- What are the future plans?

APPROPRIATE STRATEGIES FOR UIP

School UIP are expected to portray actions at the appropriate level of **scope** and **intensity** depending on the specific school's **plan type assignment**.

*In particular, schools assigned with a **Priority Improvement** or **Turnaround** Plan must select major improvement strategies that will result in dramatic outcomes for students.*



- Source: CDE Accountability Handbook

GENERAL TIMELINE

Date	Task
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Achievement and Growth Data Released● <i>Preliminary</i> School and District Performance Plans Issued and Shared
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Data Dialogue● Plan Prepared for Submission
October 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Plan Submission
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● School Performance Plans Finalized
Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Review data and revise plan

FLEXIBILITY IN UIP SUBMISSION

- **HB 16-1440** – provides flexibility for all schools to submit UIP **biennially** (every other year) for schools with a Performance Plan Type

Plan Type
Performance Plan: Low Participation

- *How should schools and districts handle Accountability Committee expectations when submitting biennially?*

Accountability Committee expectations still stand (e.g., SAC quarterly monitoring of plan implementation), although committees would not need to provide **recommendations** on the UIP until the **plan** is being updated for **public posting**.

- Source: Colorado Department of Education



Connecting at your Table

At your table, please discuss the following:

- What are some steps you can take to increase communication?

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE DATA

- School performance data is available online on the Colorado Department of Education website



- For specific questions about your school's performance, please contact your school leadership team

SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE

SAC Regional Training

Site-Based Budget



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SAC BUDGET RESPONSIBILITIES – COLORADO REVISED STATUTES

- Colorado Revised Statutes Title 22-11-402

(1) Each school district accountability committee has the following powers and duties

(a) To recommend to the principal of its school **priorities** for spending school **moneys**. The principal shall consider the school accountability committee's recommendations regarding spending state, federal, local, or private grants and any other discretionary moneys and take them into account in formulating budget requests for presentation to the local school board , if the school is a district public school, other than a charter school, or in creating the school budget if the school is a district or institute charter school. The school accountability committee for a district public school shall send a copy of its recommended school priorities to the school district accountability committee and to the local school board.

SAC BUDGET RESPONSIBILITIES – PRACTICE IN DCSD

Role of SAC	Role of Principal
Give advice concerning budget priorities (BOE Resolution regarding Priorities for Board Committees signed 8.20.19)	Budget owner for Site-Based Budget (SBB)
Opportunity to review copy of SBB with principal	Determine staffing needs and hire all positions within school
Opportunity to provide recommendations on use of school carry over (savings)	Manage spend to maximize purchasing power and generate carry over
Opportunity to provide recommendations on discretionary budget decisions	Run financial reports and meet with Business Services department

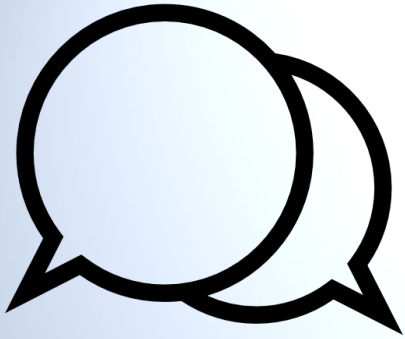
SBB OVERVIEW – DISCRETIONARY VS NON-DISCRETIONARY FUNDS

- Discretionary – allocated to the school per student or by another student count driven formula, but able to be spent at the discretion of the school community
 - Used for staffing and operations
 - Discretionary operations eligible to carry over
- Non-Discretionary – allocated by a District department for a prescribed use either per pupil or through staffing requirements, not able to be spent at the discretion of the school community
 - Typically related to State requirements
 - Not eligible to carry over

SBB DECISIONS – WHAT CAN THE SAC RECOMMEND?

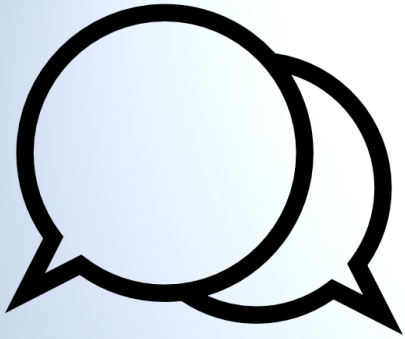
Examples of Budget Decisions SAC May Recommend to Change	Examples of Budget Decisions SAC May NOT Recommend to Change
Class sizes and student to staff ratios	Hiring decisions for all positions
Electives/Specials positions to staff	Counselor positions to staff
Amount to dedicate to classroom supplies and instructional materials	Special Education and English Second Language teacher positions to staff
Priorities for capital equipment purchases and building modifications	Curriculum and staff professional development selections

POP QUIZ -- Which of the Following are Responsibilities of a SAC for budgeting?



- a. Direct the spending on discretionary funds
- b. Make recommendations to the principal concerning priorities for spending school funds
- c. Make recommendations to the Board concerning the adoption of the budget.
- d. Perform annual audits of all site-based spending
- e. Make recommendations for staff salaries

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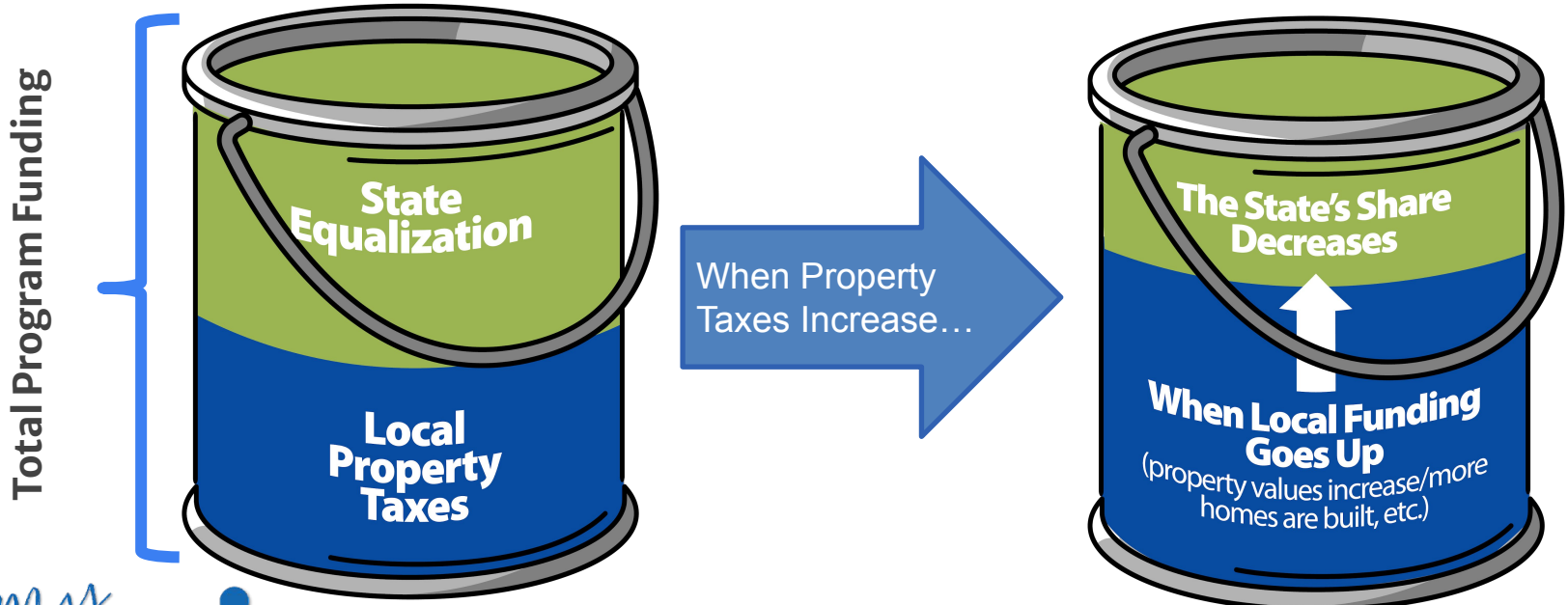
Funding Challenges Continue



DCSD Funding (and local property taxes)

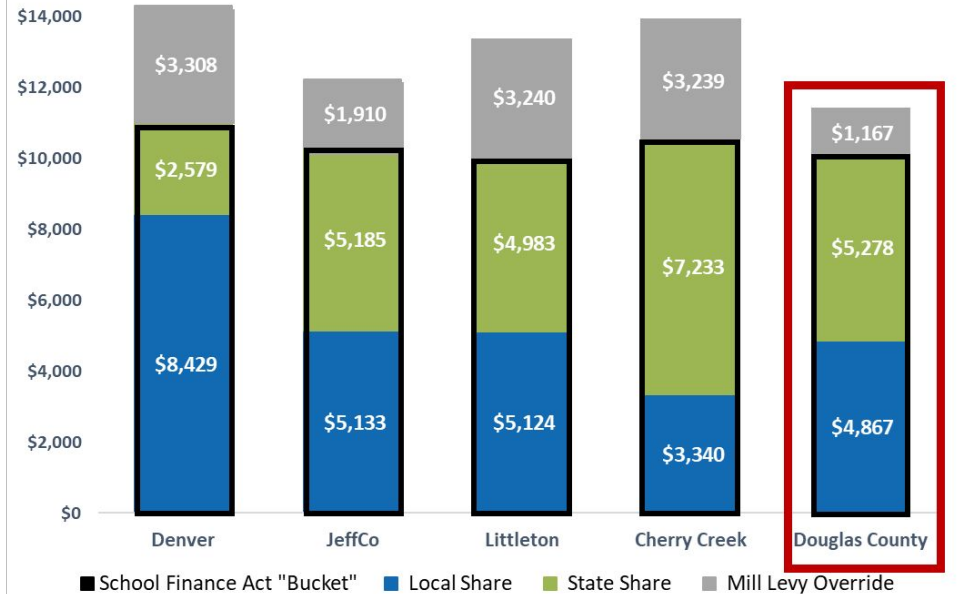
Increased local property taxes **DO NOT** impact DCSD's Total Funding.

Total Funding is set by the School Finance Act and funded by **BOTH** local and state taxes.



The Impact of Local Taxes on Comparative Revenue

Comparative Per Pupil Revenue (23-24)

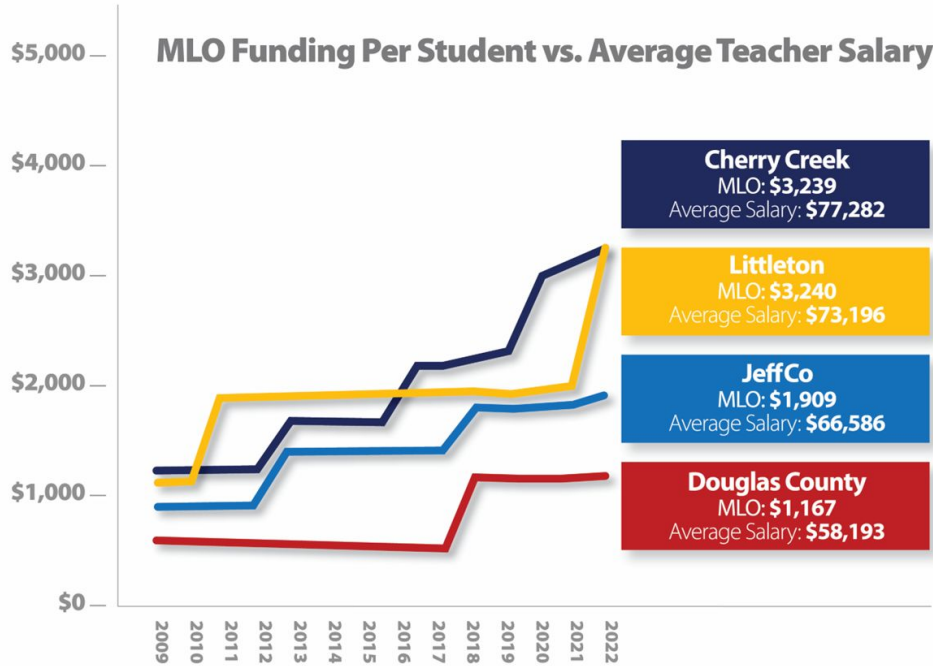


FACT:
 Cherry Creek receives
\$2,072
 more per student in MLO annually.
 equating to a
\$130 million
 Funding gap each year.*

*DCSD's 22-23 student count is 63,876.

**State and local numbers reflect the 2023-2024 School Year, MLO numbers reflect post 2022 election

Compensation, Hiring and Staff Retention Challenges



*MLO per student is total MLO divided by funded pupil count; Average teacher salaries are from CDE data for the 2021-2022 school year.

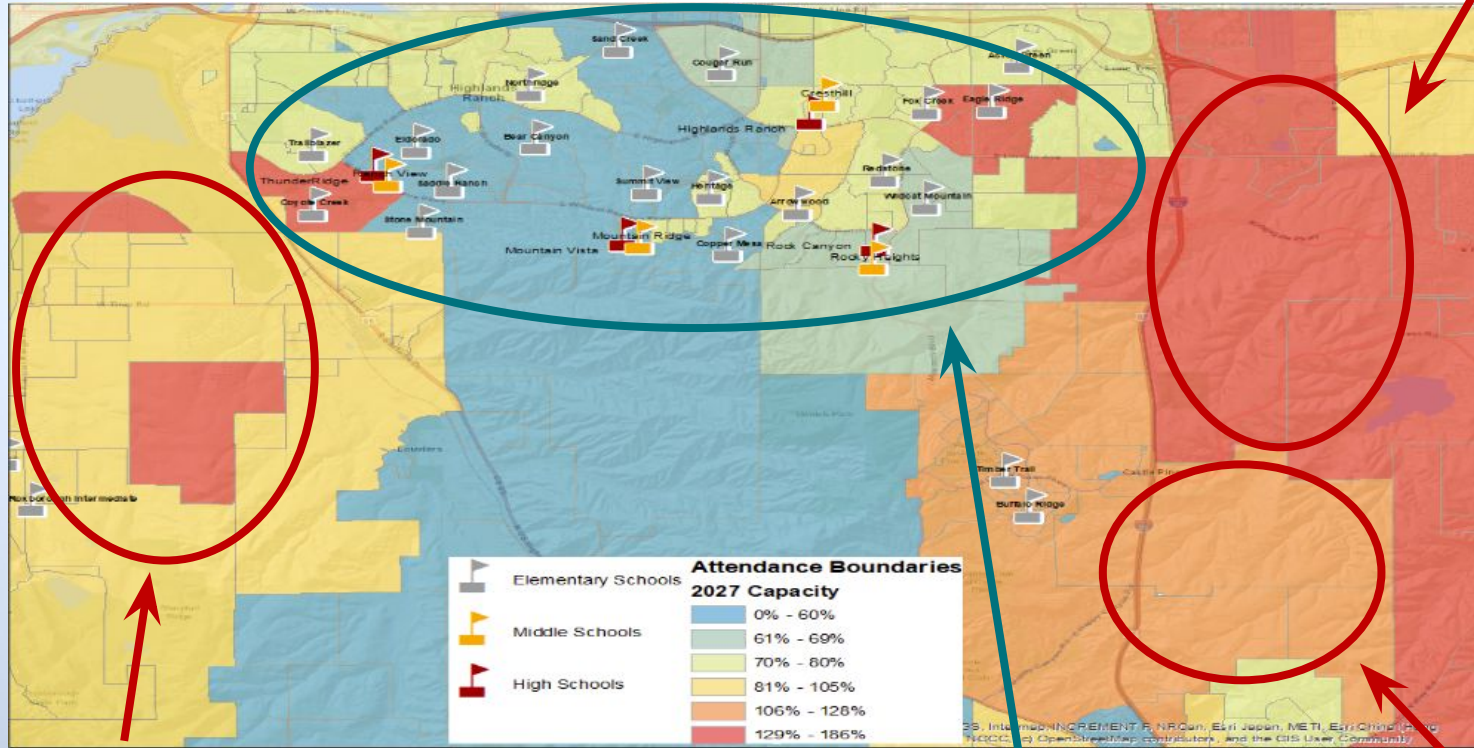
Douglas County starting teacher pay (23-24):
\$45,209

1-Bedroom apartment in Douglas County:
\$1,665+/mo



Growing New Communities are School Deserts

Ridgegate East
(8,000 future homes)



Sterling Ranch/Solstice
(13,000 homes, 16% built)

Highlands Ranch
(38,000 homes)

The Canyons
(5,000 homes, 18% built)

Board Initiated Ballot Measures Summary

- **\$66 Million Mill Levy Override** to pay teachers and staff more competitively and to increase security support for our schools.
- **\$484 Million Bond** to expand career and technical education opportunities, perform safety and security upgrades, and to ensure safe and adequate learning environments for students and staff.
- **Net Impact to Taxpayers** if both initiatives pass is an additional \$20 per year per \$100K in home value*

**compared to what taxpayers currently pay and assuming a 35% increase in assessed values*

Arguments For and Against

Arguments <u>For</u> the Ballot Issues:	Arguments <u>Against</u> the Ballot Issues:
<p>A MLO/Bond would enable the school district to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Retain and Attract Excellent Teachers and Staff by increasing pay to be more competitive with neighboring school districts.● Increase and Maintain Safety and Security with additional support such as School Resource Officers and implementing school safety and security upgrades.● Provide Additional Trades and Career and Technical Education Opportunities for Students to further set students up for success after high school.● Update, Maintain, and Construct Educational Facilities as described in the school district's bond plan to ensure safe and adequate learning spaces and to reduce overcrowding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The MLO/Bond would increase property taxes by \$200 per year for a one million dollar home.● Assessed property values are on the rise in Douglas County resulting in upcoming property tax increases.● The Mill Levy Override does not have a sunset.● The Bond would create additional debt service for the school district.

Campaign ^{“Dos”} & _{“Don’ts”}

Colorado’s Fair Campaign Practices Act (FCPA) prohibits the use of public resources to support or oppose a candidate or ballot issue. Understanding how this law impacts employee conduct during work hours is vitally important to all district personnel/volunteers in the upcoming election period. We hope that the following provides basic answers to frequently asked questions regarding district employees and elections.

FACTUAL SUMMARY:

Allowed

A school district is allowed to spend public funds to prepare and dispense a “factual summary” which includes arguments both for and against proposals on any issue of “official concern” on the ballot.

Not Allowed

A school district is not allowed to state a conclusion or opinion in favor of or against any particular issue addressed by the factual summary.

SCHOOL FACILITIES & EQUIPMENT:

Allowed

School Facilities are allowed to be used by any group to promote or defeat an issue only if the current Facility Use Policy is applied in a nonbiased fashion to both sides of the issue. You are only obligated to provide equal facilities to the opposition if requested to do so.

School facilities are allowed to provide a temporary table or location for the *community* to place campaign and election materials on as long as it does not impact the regular operation of the school and is open to all ballot issues and/or candidates. On Election Day, materials related to any issue may not be made available to the public in a school used as a polling place.

Not Allowed

Facilities may not be used for campaign activities during school hours.

Campaign committees are not allowed to use or rent district copy machines, telephones, faxes, or other equipment.

Campaign materials may not be placed in staff mailboxes, staff lounges, work areas, or offices.

SCHOOL MATERIALS:

Not Allowed

Employees are not under any circumstances allowed to use district-owned equipment, district email, or supplies of any kind to develop or disseminate an opinion about, or to urge the passage or defeat of, any candidate or ballot issue.

Employees are not allowed to use a school’s bulk mail permit to send out materials related to a campaign. This includes an item such as a PTO newsletter, even if the PTO later reimburses the school for the use of its permit.

FLIERS:

Allowed

Employees are allowed to use their own time to distribute fliers off district property in support of or against any issue. No district facilities, supplies or equipment may be used to prepare these fliers.

Members of employee organizations are allowed to deliver materials in favor of or against an issue to their members, provided it is not during regular work hours, does not use district mailboxes, and no district supplies or equipment are used to prepare those materials.

Not Allowed

Employees are not allowed to use the district email or mail service to promote or defeat an issue.

SCHOOL NEWSLETTERS:

Allowed

Employees are allowed to distribute voter registration information.

Not Allowed

Employees are not allowed to use school newsletters in any way to urge people to vote in favor of or against any issue.

BULLETIN BOARDS:

Allowed

Employees are allowed to post factual information regarding ballot issues on a bulletin board.

Not Allowed

Employees are not allowed to post any campaign materials which are intended to promote or defeat an issue or candidate on the bulletin boards or walls of school facilities.

PHONE CALLS:

Allowed

Employees are allowed to factually respond to questions about an issue or candidate if they have not been solicited.

Employees are allowed to use their personal phone on their own time to urge people to vote for or against an issue.

Not Allowed

Employees are not allowed to use any regular work hours or district communication equipment or materials or supplies to promote or defeat an issue.

TALKING TO PARENTS:

Allowed

Employees are allowed to factually respond to questions about any issue, provided that they have not solicited the questions.

Employees are allowed to use their own time to talk with whomever you please, either in favor of or against an issue.

Employees are allowed to encourage parents to register to vote and give them information on registration, absentee voting, and polling locations.

Not Allowed

Employees are not allowed to use any regular work hours or district communication equipment or materials or supplies to promote or defeat an issue.

Employees are not allowed to use their regular work hours to urge parents to vote for or against an issue.

INTERACTING WITH STUDENTS:

Not Allowed

Employees are not allowed to wear campaign buttons or promote the passage or defeat of any issue with students during their working hours and/or during their duty time.

Employees are not allowed to distribute to students any materials which promote the passage or defeat of any issue at school and/or during their duty time.

Employees are not allowed to send campaign materials home with students or solicit the services of students to work on a campaign.

CAMPAIGN PARTICIPATION:

Allowed

Employees are allowed to use their personal time to urge electors to vote for or against an election issue, or to make contributions of their own money.

Employees should keep records substantiating that any time campaigning for or against the election issue was on their personal, unpaid time, which must be time outside of working hours or their vacation time.

Not Allowed

Employees are not allowed to use any regular work hours or district communication equipment or materials or supplies to promote or defeat an issue.

PTO MEMBERS / PARENT VOLUNTEERS:

Allowed

The Fair Campaign Practices Act does not apply to PTO members or parent volunteers because they are not employees of the district. They are allowed to use the school facilities to promote or defeat an issue if the current Facility Use Policy is applied in a nonbiased fashion to both sides of the issue.

PTO members/parent volunteers are allowed, as interested patrons, to participate in a campaign committee. This campaign committee, or "issue committee," can actively seek contributions and promote a position about an election issue.

Not Allowed

Because of limitations on the school district under the Fair Campaign Practices Act, PTO members or parent volunteers are not allowed to use district communication equipment (telephones or email), district mail service, supplies or equipment, (e.g. copy machines) to promote or defeat the passage of any ballot issue in the election.

Parent/school volunteers may not work to promote or defeat a candidate or a ballot issue during duty time.

Questions regarding the application of these Colorado Fair Campaign Practices Act guidelines in specific circumstances should be directed to the Douglas County School District Legal Department at 303-387-0197.

SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE

SAC Regional Training

Discussion



Learn Today, Lead Tomorrow



Questions for our discussion:

- What are some keys to a successful, collaborative SAC?
- What advice would you give SAC?

Contact Information

DCSD School Accountability Committee Liaison

Matt Reynolds
Learning Services Officer
mjreynolds@dcsdk12.org

DCSD Parent and Family Engagement Liaison

Alison Rausch
Director of Parent, Community, and Civic Engagement
arausch@dcsdk12.org

Training and Resources

https://www.dcsdk12.org/parents_students/family_resources/school_accountability_committees


The screenshot shows the Douglas County School District website. At the top left is the logo with the tagline "Learn Today, Lead Tomorrow". Navigation menus include "About", "Schools & Academics", "Parents & Students", "Employees", and "Careers". Social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube are present. A "Planning Today for their Tomorrow" banner is also visible. The main content area is titled "School Accountability Committees" and features a left-hand navigation menu with items like "Parent Resource Center", "Academic Calendars", "Bus Pass (SMART Tag)", "Code of Conduct", "DCSD App", "Dyslexia Information", "Emergency Communications", "Enrollment", "Express Check-In", "Homeless Students/McKinney-Vento Services", "Lunch Menus", "Online Payments (MySchoolBucks)", "Family, Parent and Community Engagement", "Parent Portal (EngagED)", "Parent Portal FAQ", "Parent Portal (Infinite Campus)", and "Password Reset". The main content includes a breadcrumb trail, a heading "School Accountability Committees", a paragraph about the importance of family, schools, and community involvement, a "Regional SAC Trainings" section with a list of dates and locations, a "SAC Responsibilities" section, and a "SAC Resources & Tools" section with links to a handbook, bylaws, and various guides. A "SAC Training Modules (Videos)" section is also present. A vertical sidebar on the right contains utility icons for search, calendar, fork and knife, information, snowflake, speech bubble, bus, and a home icon.

School Accountability Committees

Douglas County School District » Parents & Students » Family Resources » School Accountability Committees

School Accountability Committees

Douglas County School District recognizes the importance, shared responsibility, and partnership between family, schools, and community. Parental (including guardians and other members of the student's family involved in the student's education) involvement in the education of students contributes greatly to achievement, and to the positive school environment and experience. And an important piece of parent and family engagement is School Accountability Committees (SACs).



Regional SAC Trainings

Thank you to those SAC members who attended our trainings. We hope you found the information helpful and shared what you learned with your SACs. The training presentation is linked on the side of this page. Feel free to share and use with your SAC. If you have any questions or would like to request additional training, please let either Matt Reynolds or Alison Rausch know. Thank you!

Mark your calendars! We will be hosting three regional School Accountability Committee training sessions. Topics will include an overview of responsibilities, bylaws, Unified Improvement Planning, and school budgets. SAC members can attend any session.

- September 7 - 6:00-7:30 p.m. at Mountain Ridge Middle School Commons • 10590 Mountain Vista Ridge, Highlands Ranch, CO 80126
- September 14 - 6:00-7:30 p.m. at Legend High School Commons • 22155 Hitting Rd, Parker, CO 80138
- September 20 - 6:00-7:30 p.m. at Castle View High School Sabercave • 5254 N Meadows Dr, Castle Rock, CO 80109

SAC Responsibilities

SAC responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Advising the principal concerning the preparation of the school's Unified Improvement Plan (UIP)

SAC Resources & Tools

- SAC Handbook
- DCSD SAC Bylaws
- DCSD Parent and Family Engagement Policy
- Parent's Guide to DCSD 2023-24
- SAC Duties
- SAC Membership Flow Chart
- SAC Member and Officer Roles
- Sample SAC Recruitment Letter
- DCSD SAC Directory

SAC Training Modules (Videos)

- Overview of School Accountability Committees
- SAC Role in School Performance Frameworks
- Slides from Regional SAC Trainings 2022-2023

SAC Resources & Tools from the Colorado Department of Education

- SAC/DAC Training Materials

ADDITIONAL DCSD BUDGET RESOURCES

[2023-2024 Site Based Budget \(SBB\) Example](#)

[District Accountability Committee Accountability \(DAC\)](#)

[2023-2024 DCSD Adopted Financial Plan and Budget](#)

Individual School Budgets

[FY 2023-2024 Adopted Budget Elementary Schools](#)

[FY 2023-2024 Adopted Budget Middle Schools](#)

[FY 2023-2024 Adopted Budget High Schools](#)

[FY 2023-2024 Adopted Budget Alternative Schools](#)

[FY 2023-2024 Adopted Budget Charter Schools](#)

Thank you again for volunteering to serve as a member of your School Accountability Committee.