

2019 NSPRA Gold Medallion Entry Bond/Finance Campaign



WE ARE JEFFCO: Future Funding, 5a & 5b Ballot Proposals



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Number of Communications Staff: 8

Organization Type: School District
Over 25,000 Students

Synopsis

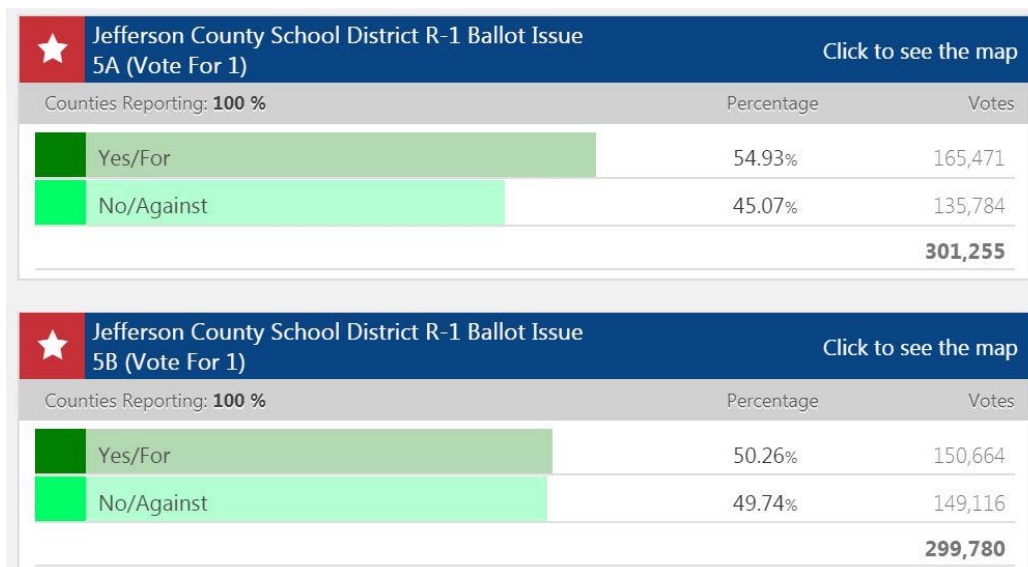
In November 2018, Jeffco Public Schools had two school funding questions on the ballot: Question 5A asked voters to approve a \$33 million mill levy override to attract and retain high quality teachers, expand STEM programs, improve student safety, and increase early childhood education. Question 5B asked for a \$567 million bond to build new schools and career/technical education facilities, upgrade safety and security, repair or renovate older schools, and rebuild or add space at 26 schools. All 155 schools in Jeffco Public Schools would benefit from the bond program.

Jeffco Public Schools faced several challenges in undertaking these ballot questions – complicated local and state funding laws, a compressed timeline, and years of diminished community support for the district. Public education funding in Colorado is complicated; there are numerous state laws that determine school funding and limit locally generated funding. A misperception also exists about the benefit to schools from the [recreational marijuana sales tax](#) – it’s not the windfall that voters believed it would be when Amendment 64 passed in 2012.

Second, the school board began considering the ballot measures in April 2018, and voted to put them on the ballot in August. Political consultants recommend at least an 18-month runway; 5A and 5B had four months of research/prep, and three months to create and execute the campaign. Finally, the district was recovering from a tumultuous time involving the school board, district leadership, and the community. The district experienced a board recall election in 2015, suffered the failure of similar ballot questions in 2016, and hired a new superintendent in July 2017.

Rallying support from voters required an intense community and staff engagement effort, greater transparency to restore trust, and innovative communications tactics to convey the scope and scale of the investment in schools.

On Election Day, 5A passed with 54.93% of the vote. Initially 5B appeared to fail, but after a week of counting absentee and drop-off ballots, it reached the final 50.26% mark with a margin of 1548 “yes” votes. Jeffco Public Schools and the “We Are Jeffco Public Schools” campaign overcame the challenges to win both 5A and 5B!



Summary

Overview

[Jeffco Public Schools](#) is located in Jefferson County, Colorado serving nearly 86,000 students at 155 schools. It is the largest employer in the county, employing 14,000 educators and staff. The county spans over 770 square miles running the length of the western edge of the Denver metropolitan area. It has a population of 574,600 in eight different cities and towns, as well as residents in unincorporated areas. The district is very diverse in both population and geography, from urban to rural including the mountain communities in the foothills west of Denver. Its schools range from 90% free/reduced lunch rates to 5% free/reduced lunch rates. Overall, the district has a 31% free/reduced lunch and 34% minority (25% Hispanic) student population. The district is almost 70 years old and has school buildings with an average age of 50 years. The total general operating fund for the district is over \$720 million with a total budget at \$1.6 billion.



In 2018, the Board of Education placed [two local school funding issues on the ballot](#): A mill levy override of \$33 million that would add on-going funds to the operating budget and a bond that would invest \$567 million into the district's aging infrastructure. In addition, there was a proposal from the state for Constitutional Amendment 73 which would have provided additional operating funding for every district through an income tax on individuals earning more than \$150,000 and businesses/commercial enterprises. The district was obliged to advocate for Amendment 73, while building stakeholder support for its own local ballot measures – a strategic and delicate political challenge that unfolded as Election Day drew near.

The Challenges

There were three main challenges facing the district in its efforts to win favor with voters: complicated local and state funding laws, a short timeline, and restoring trust and community support for Jeffco Public Schools. Jeffco Public Schools' leadership team was tasked with identifying what the community was willing to support from a financial perspective, crafting ballot questions that reflected the needs and addressed community concerns, rallying support from stakeholders, determining clear messaging to inform voters of ballot measures, and doing so on very tight timeline. The communications team was tasked with developing the overall community engagement strategy and tactics, designing captivating and comprehensive marketing materials including an interactive and engaging website, and participating fully in the community outreach efforts to inform voters of the factual issues and ballot questions as permitted by law.

Complicated Local and State Funding Laws

School funding in Colorado is based primarily on property taxes, both state and local. There are a multitude of state laws and budget policies that affect public school funding -- [TABOR](#), [the Gallagher Amendment](#), Amendment 23, the Negative Factor, the Budget Stabilization Factor, marijuana sales taxes, charter school laws,

and teacher effectiveness legislation, just to name a few. The complexity and jargon baffles most voters. The perception is that property taxes are high; increasing home values means more money for education, and marijuana sales taxes “fixed” the public education funding shortage. A recent feature article in [The Washington Post](#), described Colorado as “among the least well-funded systems in the nation.” Colorado’s per pupil spending has been dropping from national averages since the early 1990s and is now nearly \$2,800 less than the national average, according to [Education Week](#)’s school finance map and U.S. Census Bureau statistics. Per public funding in Colorado [ranks 36 to 42 in the nation](#) depending on the inclusion or exclusion of local funding and adjustments for inflation.

Several statewide ballot initiatives to support public school funding have failed over the last 20 years. In the 2018 election, there was yet another proposed statewide effort - [Constitutional Amendment 73](#) which would have raised school funding through a bracketed individual income tax structure increasing taxes for those earning over \$150,000 and increasing the corporate tax rate. Amendment 73 failed by a 54% to 46% margin. Because this was a constitutional amendment, a supermajority vote of 55% was required to pass the issue.

Though the state laws allow for school districts to ask voters for additional funding to use locally, there are limits. Additionally, one of the laws dictates ballot language and another limits how school districts communicate the information. A large district like Jeffco Public Schools is particularly challenged since the complex verbiage and dollar amounts required in the ballot language seem astronomical to the average citizen, especially older voters that are a large segment of the Jefferson County population.

The communications challenge for Jeffco Public Schools was to demonstrate the reality of the school funding situation, how the new funds would be used in a system as large as Jeffco Public Schools, and why 5A and 5B were reasonable and necessary asks in a way that voters could relate to and understand.

A Short Timeline

The Board of Education was in flux on when to put local public education funding issues on the ballot. The history of support for Jeffco Public Schools was hit-and-miss, but the need was clear. Possible school closures, lack of funding to offer competitive compensation, and aging infrastructure had been plaguing the district for years. These escalated when the [Great Recession](#) led to state public education funding cuts in 2009. Though a 2012 small local funding ask targeting specific capital needs with a campaign theme of “Safe, warm, and dry” passed, it was a \$99 million Band-Aid, not a long-term solution. In 2016, the Board of Education had placed two local funding issues on the ballot and both failed. In 2018, with a new superintendent less than a year in the district, the school board faced a decision. Was it too soon to ask voters again? Could the organization handle the task? Would community stakeholders support another attempt? Would voters hear the message considering the November ballot was looking to be very long? Would we be able to help voters understand the differences and synergy between two local school ballot questions and Amendment 73?

In March, the Board informally asked the superintendent, Dr. Jason Glass, to start gathering information about the possibility of putting questions on the November ballot. The anecdotal feedback from staff and stakeholders was mixed, from “yes, we have to, it’s a desperate situation” to “no, it’s too soon” to “it’ll be a low voter turnout and we can’t win” to “if we don’t we’ll lose schools and employees” to “we should focus on the statewide ballot issue Amendment 73 instead.” The Board directed Dr. Glass and other district leaders to do more in-depth research.

In April and May the district conducted an external poll and internal/community survey about future funding of its schools. Jeffco Public Schools traditionally holds budget informational meetings in April, and raised the future funding topic in those meetings. Staff and district committees presented the results to the Board in June.

In June, the Board publicly directed the district to develop a funding proposal to define the capital needs for facilities and the priorities for additional operational funding. An extensive Facilities Master Plan had been developed identifying \$1.3 billion in needs; however, there was overwhelming sentiment that resolving all the identified facilities issues would be far too big of a financial ask for voters. Ultimately, the ask was reduced first to \$600 million and finally to \$567 million with the rationale that the district's annual capital transfer funds of \$23 million, plus a potential for bond sale premiums and interest would increase the total bond program package to \$704 million over six years. This would enable the district to substantially improve its facilities.

In late July through August the district communications team developed a communications plan to clearly define the district's two ballot questions in ways that would resonate with the community, structure the messaging to differentiate the three school funding initiatives (mill levy, bond, and Amendment 73), define and plan an aggressive community engagement effort to begin before and continue after the board voted to place the questions on the ballot. Additional polling research was also conducted to determine which funding priorities resonated most with voters and the ballot language to present the questions.

A citizen support group, "We Are Jeffco Public Schools," began organizing and developing a campaign plan anticipating the questions would be placed on the ballot.

In late August the ballot language was finalized, the Board officially voted on August 23rd to place 5A and 5B on the ballot, and the paperwork was submitted to Jefferson County.

Colorado mails ballots in mid-October, so there was just under eight weeks before ballots landed in mailboxes, and under eleven weeks until Election Day.

Gathering Community Support

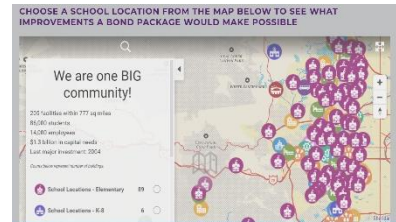
Jeffco Public Schools has a tumultuous recent history.

In 2013, three new Board of Education members were elected and changed the flavor of the school board. The change led to conflicts among board members, the superintendent, and the teachers association. Emotional board meetings were well-publicized in local media. The superintendent, after serving Jeffco Public Schools for over 30 years (12 as superintendent) resigned in February 2014. The Board hired a new superintendent with a vote of 3-2. In 2015, the conflict came to a head – community members gathered enough signatures to place a recall of the three board members on the November ballot. The other two board members chose not to run for reelection. Five new candidates ran on the same ballot as the recall election. An entirely new Jeffco Public Schools Board of Education took office in November 2015.

In early spring of 2016, budget shortages and facilities needs were evident and the school district considered closing or consolidating 10 schools. This issue drew large attendance and criticism at public meetings. The relatively new Board of Education placed two local public education funding issues on the ballot in November 2016. Both failed. In 2017, the district closed one school, again, garnering criticism from the community and negative media coverage. The contract of the superintendent hired by the previous school board was not renewed. An interim superintendent led Jeffco Public Schools from February – June of 2017, and a new

superintendent, Dr. Jason Glass, at the time serving as Superintendent at Eagle County Schools, started in July 2017.

Needless to say, the recent history had a big impact on public perception of Jeffco Public Schools, employee morale, and relationships with associations and community partners. The challenge the district and communications staff had to tackle was to rebuild confidence and trust in the school district as a whole, and the district leadership in particular, and gain support for ballot issues.



Action and Results



The Jeffco Public Schools bond/mill campaign had to tackle these three challenges as well as the traditional communication needed to inform voters. The specific methods and tactics are detailed in the research, analysis/planning, communication, and evaluation (RACE) following this summary. However, it is worth noting the effort was enhanced to address the three big challenges.

To explain to the community without getting mired in the **complexities of local and state funding laws**, the message was simplified. The words “Future Funding” were used by the district to focus attention on what more financial resources would offer Jeffco Public

Schools students. A green button design was placed at the top of every webpage on the district website as well as on printed materials to identify the Future Funding webpage as the single comprehensive source of ballot question information. At the conclusion of the election, the same method has been used to direct community members to the forward looking bond program activities. When addressing the “why” behind the mill levy funding ask, the main messages were how Colorado compared nationally on both per pupil funding and teacher pay and how Jeffco Public Schools compared to its neighboring districts. This messaging easily resonated with teachers and staff who knew that neighboring districts had the ability to pay not only high entry salaries, but greater increases over time. Jeffco Public Schools simply couldn’t compete with Boulder or Denver to attract and retain the best teachers without the mill levy – the messaging was presented with data – it was irrefutable. A voter could easily dig deeper into the data, videos, facility fact sheet and more on the website to find information (like why marijuana funding did not solve school funding issues). The high level messaging was simple and focused on benefits and competitiveness, not desperation or threats of school closings and budget cuts. It was a very different tone and manner for the district than earlier campaigns.



The **short timeline** challenge was met with an all-out dedication to the topic of future funding. A timeline and implementation plan was quickly developed and every platform had “future funding” tied to it in some way. An email to families from the superintendent, a letter to every family from their principal, articles in every district newsletter, the superintendent’s blog, video topics, social media posts relating current happenings to funding, mentions in school newsletters – every platform had something on “future funding” from April through November.

Significant effort was applied to building a new engaging webpage which included videos about the major new school construction plans, a flip book humorously referred to as the “What’s in it for me” book summarizing

what every school was going to receive in terms of renovations or new construction from the bond program, an interactive map showing the location of every school in the district so that visitors could investigate how funds would be used at any particular school or facility. The map can be sorted by school level (elementary, middle, high) and showed other facilities in the district.

School leaders were given specific information to share including the [flip book](#), [main brochure](#) and a large foam mounted poster of the facility improvement plan for their building. Unlike previously failed election efforts, principals were encouraged to discuss the topic with families early and often. They rallied their staffs to engage in the information sharing efforts. Once the main message was developed, it was shared with all supporters. Schools participated in a number of social media campaigns to share their enthusiasm for the ballot questions. One Twitter campaign was a “name that school” contest where principals took pictures with their big posters (name blocked out in the picture) asking followers to name the school. Schools not only participated, but competed to have the best election displays or funny pictures with their big posters. The esprit de corps the campaign generated was real.



The efforts to build a collection of targeted, transparent, and comprehensive materials positioned the district as a trustworthy resource of election information – the published and online materials became the “truth” all supporters referenced, the schools’ and district’s community outreach efforts spoke those truths, and the community responded positively.

Gathering community support for the funding issues was built upon a foundation the new superintendent had already laid. During his first year with the district and with the support of the communications department, Dr. Glass had hosted listening tours at community gathering places, rolled out a new vision, “Jeffco Public Schools Generations,” for the district and developed its companion strategic plan, encouraged media outreach and inviting reporters to schools, and stepped up the district’s social media engagement. Dr. Glass built relationships with employee associations and invited them to discussions with the Board of Education, made school visits a priority, declared there would be no school closures for two years, and communicated with staff via emails and videos regularly. Using this momentum, the district hosted several community budget discussions, conducted polls and surveys about future funding to employees, families, and community members.

In contrast to the 2016 effort, Dr. Glass and the communications team shared the input received not only with the Board, but with families, employees, and the community-at-large. In June 2018, the district convened a meeting of stakeholders from district committees, parent groups, and community partners to share information about the two potential future funding options for Jeffco Public Schools. This community dialogue provided an opportunity for supporters from different areas to work together and move forward.

From August through November, Dr. Glass along with the Chief Communications Officer, Chief Operations Officer and school board members undertook a concerted effort to reach out and speak to community groups, social organizations, Town Councils, Chambers of Commerce, editorial boards, senior centers and more. Principals convened multi-school informational meetings to connect with parents and families; PTAs and other school groups talked about the issues at their meetings. In all, we estimate over 150 “Mill Levy and Bond Factual Information” presentations were made morning, noon and night over the eleven weeks between the board vote to approve the questions and election night. These presentations were fact-based and included balanced information about 5A and 5B without a campaign orientation so district leaders could participate without risk of impropriety. In concert with the district’s outreach efforts, the We Are Jeffco citizen group conducted a number

of campaign rallies, fundraising events, “Get out the Vote” events, and public walks through communities knocking on doors, installing yard signs, and speaking as parents and community members.

A concerted effort was undertaken to secure endorsements from community and civic leaders and the media. The 5A and 5B school ballot measures were endorsed by [local news media](#) including the [Denver Post](#) – something that had never been achieved in the past. Endorsements also came from the town councils, again something missing from previous efforts. The tides turned the night the Arvada Town Council listened the Chief Communications Officer and two Board of Education members’ plea for the council’s endorsement. Notoriously conservative in supporting tax initiatives, and representing the largest concentration of schools in the district, Arvada unanimously agreed on their endorsement. These endorsements influenced the community greatly across Jefferson County and it was evident that things were different this time around.

The chair of “[We Are Jeffco](#)” Sally Kate Tinch shared:



Our vision was pretty straight forward: target every probable voter to educate them on the mill and bond and motivate them to vote.

Personally, I felt this campaign went much smoother than past campaigns. Our networks within the community, district team members were stronger. We had more knowledgeable players after losing in 2016. We knew what to do and what not to do.

There's a point in a campaign where things begin to gel and you feel like you've hit your stride. Everything begins to tip towards the winning side. For me, that happened when we won the Arvada Town Council endorsement because they rarely endorse anything. It happened again after Ron [the Board of Education president] spoke to the Men's Republican Club (usually not a fan of tax raises) and was favorably received. There's an energy...a synchronicity, when all the pieces begin to fall into place. I could feel the momentum continue to tip in our favor throughout the campaign.

The 2016 mill bond election was a big loss. On this go round we were smarter, more unified, and more in tune with the community. We learned what we did wrong there and corrected those issues. If we hadn't lost and learned from 2016, we probably wouldn't have won in 2018.

In the end, a clear message, cohesive effort, learning from past efforts, engaging stakeholders, and hard work paid off. Both 5A and 5B passed in November 2018!

RACE: Research

History and Community Perception:

The initial research portion of the Jeffco Public Schools Future Funding 5A/5B Ballot Proposals included extensive review of the 2016 campaign, review of past successes and failures, evaluating the facilities needs assessment, reviewing various advisory committee recommendations, and focus groups on what missteps from 2016 could be avoided. Some key findings:

- School closures were an emotional topic to avoid
- Addressing teacher compensation directly could increase buy-in, especially tied to April 2018 teacher walk-outs
- The district had been too restrictive in 2016 and did not share enough information about the needs and ballot issues
- School leaders and teachers were previously discouraged by district leadership from sharing factual information about the ballot issues with families
- Schools were hesitant to share information as well and feared legal violations
- School safety was an ongoing area of concern
- Only targeting the schools in most need instead of all schools hurt the 2016 effort
- Relying solely on the citizen campaign to engage the community was not enough – the district needed to participate to fullest extent possible under the law in the process

New Polling Data:

A Community Climate Survey was conducted in addition to an external poll to gather information on school district support and possible ballot issue priorities.

Community Climate Survey 2018

2 Data Sources

Internal/Community Survey	External Poll
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data gathered 5/18 to present• Jeffco Public Schools• Online Survey• 2,068 Respondents<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Mostly connected to Jeffco• Not necessarily representative	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data gathered from 4/16-19• Public Opinion Strategies• Phone Poll• 400 Registered Voters<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Stratified random sample• Representative (scientific)

The information clearly demonstrated the community perception of the district had improved since the days of the recall election, and there was support to provide Jeffco Public Schools with additional funding in specific areas. Respondents provided insights about both ongoing priorities for mill levy fund use, as well as construction priorities for the bond.

Support for Jeffco Public Schools

Favorable/Unfavorable Opinion of Jeffco Public Schools

- 74% Total Favorable
- 14% Total Unfavorable
- 10% No Opinion

Letter Grade of Jeffco Public Schools

- 56% Gave "A" or "B"
- 26% Gave "C"
- 10% Gave "D" or "F"

Right Direction/Wrong Track

- 53% Right Direction
- 30% Wrong Track
- 17% Don't Know/Refused

Need Additional Funding?

Top 10 Spending Priorities (percent "important")

Spending Priority	Percent "important"
Instruction & skills necessary for college & workforce	98%
Maintaining safe environment	97%
STEM & hands on learning	97%
Equipment, classrooms, technology for vocational education	95%
Computers, technology for digital literacy.	94%
Continuing commitment to high standards & accountability	93%
More access to college-level coursework	91%
Attracting & retaining best teachers through salaries & benefits	90%
Repairing, renovating buildings for safety, efficiency, accessibility	90%
Renovations to address backlog of repairs	89%

Construction Priorities

Construction Need Area	Percent "Extremely" or "Very" Important
Safety and security improvements (locking doors, cameras, window reinforcements, entrance systems).	80.1%
Address basic building needs such as roofing, HVAC, paint, flooring.	79.1%
Improved building technology access (fiber systems, high-speed Wi-Fi).	74.3%
Career/Technical options (such as science, technology, engineering, and math career education).	74%
Improved building efficiency (better insulation and lighting).	58.4%
Modernized classroom learning spaces (movable seating, flexible learning spaces).	56.3%

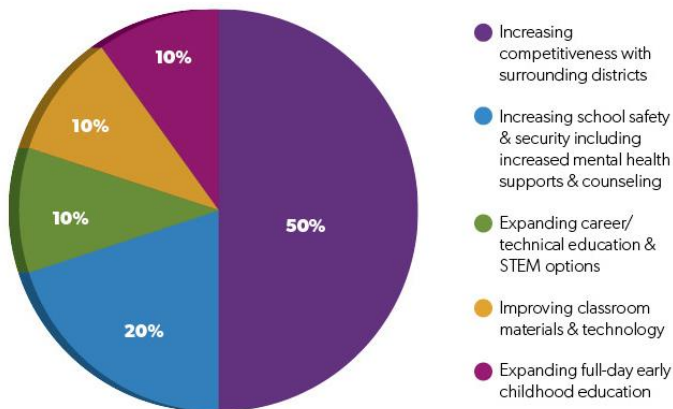
Ongoing Priorities

Ongoing Needs	Percent "Extremely" or "Very" Important
Attracting and retaining talented teachers and staff.	95%
Add more counseling and mental health supports.	79.6%
Lower class size.	72.7%
Replacing outdated textbooks and learning materials.	71.4%
Adding career/technical education programming.	71.3%
Adding arts, music, and theater programming.	69.1%
Provide greater student access to technology for learning.	67.6%
Expanding early childhood education options.	65.9%
Adding physical education and outdoor programming.	64.7%
Eliminating or reducing student fees for things such as technology, athletics/activities, and transportation.	32.7%

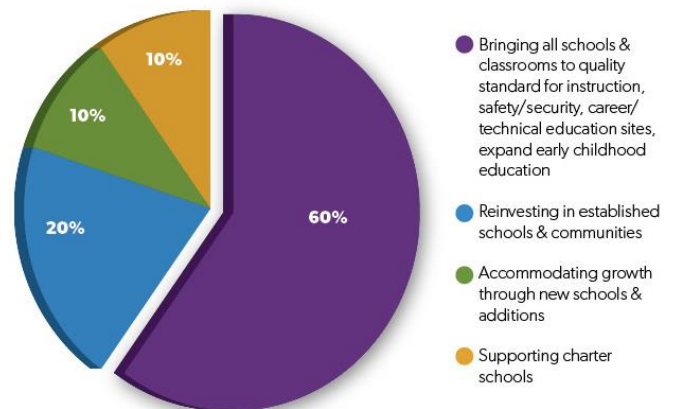
Based upon the combined insight of all the data available, the key funding priorities began to take shape for the mill levy specifically, and the bond from a thematic messaging perspective.

- Retaining and attracting quality teachers
- Safety and security for students, staff and facilities
- Mental health supports and education, particularly in the areas of suicide prevention and substance abuse
- Expanding STEM programming and facilities in which to house those programs
- Providing more capacity and programming in career/technical education
- Increasing early childhood programs
- Updating curriculum materials and equitable access to technology
- Engaging Charter Schools and providing equitable support

MILL LEVY PRIORITIES



BOND PRIORITIES



Facilities Conditions Analysis:

Every year Jeffco Public Schools prepares a [Summary of Findings on Facilities Condition Assessment](#), which is essentially a periodic update to the District-wide Facilities Master Plan. Used in conjunction with an [Enrollment Projections Report](#), it aids in determining how resources are prioritized for facility maintenance and improvements based on conditions and utilization. The district Planning & Property team leads the work, with the support of facility managers, principals, and other construction and facilities staff. The report is first reviewed by the Capital Asset Advisory Committee (CAAC), an advisory group to the Board of Education made up of community volunteers who work in related fields for public and private industry. Both [staff](#) and [CAAC make recommendations](#) to the Board of Education about facilities needs and priorities.

PROPOSED 2018 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

- EFFICIENCY & MODERNIZATION
- All Sites Reviewed
- Eleven Categories and Ten Sub-Categories
 - Exterior Envelope, Roofing
 - Fixtures, Furnishings & Equipment
 - Mechanical & Electrical Systems
 - Information Technology
 - Interior Finishes, Systems
 - Food Service Equipment
 - Paving & Playgrounds
 - Security
- Reduce District Wide FCI by 50%
- Reduce Maintenance & Operations Costs by 20%

JEFFCO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

KEY FINDINGS

- The district portfolio includes 392 permanent buildings and 313 transportable buildings at Jeffco, with ages (based on original construction data and not accounting for additions to the main building over time) ranging between zero and 161 years old. 30 percent of these buildings were built since 1990, 68 percent were constructed between 1950 and 1989, and about 2 percent were constructed prior to 1950.
- There is 311,912 square feet of space contained in 313 portable classroom buildings. Currently, cottage buildings comprise 0.3% and transportable buildings comprise 2.6% of the district's total portfolio, in square feet.
- Current facility condition costs, including general condition and educational adequacy deficiencies, total \$588 million. Of that total, \$453 million are related to the general condition of the site and buildings, while nearly \$135 million are related to educational adequacy deficiencies that contribute to functional equity district-wide.
- The evaluation of Facility Utilization identifies 41 schools that are significantly over-utilized (High Utilization) and 17 schools that are significantly under-utilized (Low Utilization) in the 2017-18 school year. In some cases schools have elected to cap choice enrollment in order to keep their utilization within acceptable ranges.
- Sixteen Articulation Areas show enrollment trends as flat or decreasing.
- In addition to identified current deficiencies, information is included regarding site and building systems. These systems each have a projected life expectancy, at which point they may no longer be serviceable. When this occurs, an investment is generally required to replace these systems. The assessment forecasts that over the next five years, \$209 million, stated in un-escalated dollars, will be required for life cycle renewal.
- The Facility Condition Index (FCI) is an industry recognized formula that provides a general indicator of a building's health. This index is calculated by dividing the total repair costs into the total replacement costs for a like facility. The district-wide FCI for Jeffco Public Schools is currently 20.4 percent.
- Based on the weighted FCI with life cycle at a campus and building level, there are 12 campuses that are candidates for replacement due to the buildings' current condition and age.

DISTRICT-WIDE HISTORIC TRACKING

Year	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Change
Facility Condition Index	19.5%	19.6%	18.9%	20.4%	20.9%	20.4%	4.62%
% Utilization	83%	82%	82%	81%	81%	80%	-3.61%
Educational Adequacy	\$129,560,022	\$126,332,884	\$121,917,280	\$123,378,693	\$135,057,662	\$134,776,211	4.03%
Condition Assessment	\$466,566,951	\$468,555,853	\$451,155,102	\$520,118,756	\$575,061,515	\$588,177,919	26.07%

District-Wide Historic Tracking: Since 2012-13, the District has seen an increase of 4.62% in the FCI. The District has also seen an increase of 4.0% in Educational Adequacy and an increase in 26% in Condition Assessment Needs. These increases are caused by inflation, newly identified deficiencies, life-cycle replacement needs, and lack of adequate major capital funding. The percent Utilization is following enrollment trends, showing a slight decline.

JEFFCO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2017-18 Facility Condition Assessment Summary of Findings

The Facilities Condition Index (FCI) is the key measurement referenced in regards to facilities condition assessment. FCI is an industry-recognized formula that provides a general indicator of a building's health. The index is calculated by dividing the total repair costs into the total replacement costs for a like facility. To better illustrate what FCI meant to constituents, a color coded ranking system was incorporated in the facility fact sheets and flip book and used on the Future Funding webpages. The rankings were poor (red), fair (yellow), or good (green). Within the flip book and school posters, rankings were shown as "before bond investment" and "after bond investment" to clearly demonstrate improvements to the facilities with the bond funds.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME - FLIP BOOK

Facility Fact Sheet: Everitt Middle School
 3900 Kipling St. Wheat Ridge, CO
 Education is not a destination
 Age of Facility: 52 years (built in 1966)
 Square Footage: 103,698
 Enrollment: 437
 Utilization: 54%

Alameda Articulation Area*
 *Based on 2018 Capital Improvement Plan. Subject to project scope.

School	Before	After	Category
Alameda International Jr./Sr. High	17.1%	22.8%	Good
Doane Elementary	18.4%	9.7%	Good
Emory Elementary	14.4%	4.7%	Good
Lasley Elementary	15.1%	4.2%	Good
Patterson International Elementary	35.1%	13.3%	Fair
Rose Stein International Elementary	22.5%	18.2%	Fair

2018 Bond Ballot Initiative Proposed School Improvements

List of Priorities:

- Replace old carpet and floor tile.
- Update interior paint, wall-coverings.
- Replace old sink cabinets, overhead shelving, and bookcases.
- Replace old student furniture, cafeteria tables, and library furniture.
- Update existing technology.
- Update security cameras and classroom security door hardware.
- Secure building vestibules, entries, and office location.
- Replace interior lighting with energy-efficient LEDs.
- Update old electrical wiring, panels, and increase capacity.
- Update old heating and cooling equipment, plumbing fixtures, and piping.
- Parking lot, sidewalk replacements.

JEFFCO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
 2018 Bond Ballot Initiative
 Proposed School Improvements

For additional information, please visit www.jeffcopublicschools.org
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Voter Analysis:

As stated previously, Jeffco Public Schools has a history of inconsistent results at the polls. Previous bond and mill levy ballot initiatives for Jeffco Public Schools:

BONDS	MILL LEVY OVERRIDES
1998 – \$265 Million	1998 – \$35 Million <i>Defeated</i>
2004 – \$323.8 Million	1999 – \$35.8 Million (\$45 Million authorized)
2008 – \$350 Million <i>Defeated</i>	2004 – \$38.5 Million
2012 – \$99 Million (“Safe, Warm and Dry”)	2008 – \$34 Million <i>Defeated</i>
2016 – \$535 Million <i>Defeated</i>	2012 – \$39 Million
	2016 – \$33 Million <i>Defeated</i>

Results from the 2016 election presented a significant margin among voters. It was clear that not only did the campaign fail in resonating with voters, but that partisan politics and the active naysayers were alive and well in Jefferson County. The conservative base and public opinion focused on what was wrong with public schools and district leadership, how schools were failing and student achievement was below standard, and how state funding should be sufficient if district administrative costs were reduced. The implication that the district was not managing its resources efficiently was strong and the divisiveness that existed during the recall election was still ever present. The results from 2016 spoke volumes about the work ahead in 2018.

Jefferson County School District R-1 Ballot Issue 3A

48.13% YES (154,437)
51.87% NO (166,471) = 320,908

Jefferson County School District R-1 Ballot Issue 3B

47.42% YES (151,309)
52.58% NO (167,742) = 319,051

Voter affiliation in Jefferson County had and would continue to have an impact on how the district and We Are Jeffco campaign needed to align their tactics to address unaffiliated voters and also how to change the longstanding mindset of the known areas of conservative voters. From previous losses, particularly in 2016, those involved with the campaign were well aware of areas where voters routinely did not support school ballot issues, even when their neighborhood schools might have the most to gain. In addition, the percentage of voters in Jefferson County without children in school is estimated at 70%. Appealing to, engaging and providing effective messaging for those without children in school was an enormous challenge.

Jefferson County registered and active voters:

DEMOCRATS: 117,595
REPUBLICANS: 109,085
UNAFFILIATED: 156,793
OTHERS: 6,749

Total Registered Active Voters: 390,222

The district also examined the comparative data from other districts including school funding and teacher salaries. Building the case for increasing Jeffco Public Schools ability to compete for talented teachers among neighboring districts was a core key message that resonated with educators and parents alike.

How does Jeffco's funding compare to nearby districts?

Comparisons per pupil revenue, mill levies and bonds:

District	# of Students	State Per Pupil Funding 2017/18	Mill Levy Override Per Pupil 2017/18	Outstanding Bonds Per Pupil 2016/17
Denver	91,794	\$7,925	\$2,266	\$20,585
Jeffco	86,112 (2nd)	\$7,478 (4th)	\$1,316 (5th)	\$4,485 (6th)
Douglas	67,597	\$7,369	\$499	\$4,513
Cherry Creek	55,657	\$7,630	\$2,048	\$10,299
Boulder	31,282	\$7,582	\$2,217	\$23,203
Littleton	15,643	\$7,373	\$1,842	\$8,695

Jeffco does not offer competitive salaries:

District	Starting Teacher Pay	10 Year Teacher w/ Masters
Cherry Creek	\$39,405	\$67,756
Boulder	\$46,336	\$64,905
Denver	\$42,790	\$62,694
Littleton	\$40,843	\$62,017
Jeffco	\$39,923	\$57,163
Douglas	\$37,531	\$56,651



RACE: Analysis/Planning

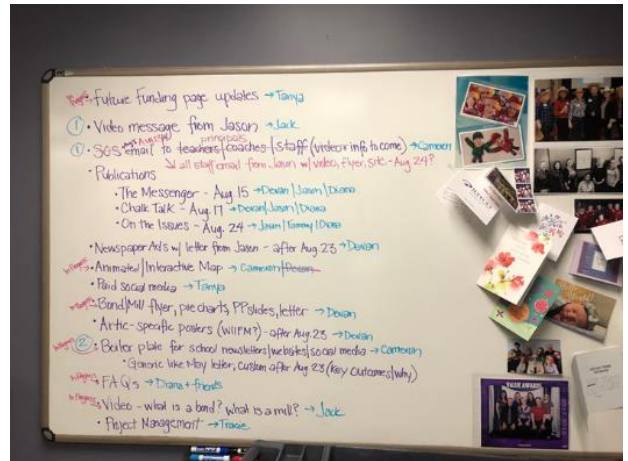
With all the data in hand and institutional knowledge of what had worked and mostly not worked in the past, what a mill/bond levy override should and could fund began to take shape. Using both quantitative and qualitative feedback from stakeholders and assessing the facility needs in great depth served to inform the development of core key messaging. How the story would be told to engage a diverse electorate and what new strategies and tactics needed to be devised to insure a successful result now needed to be determined.

Coordinating district communications and citizen committee efforts was a priority, as well as quickly putting together a plan of action and the necessary materials following the August 23rd board vote to place 5A and 5B on the ballot.

A communications tactics plan and timeline for developing the initial district produced materials was developed at the end of July. A new Chief Communication Officer who had proven success with ballot initiatives in Eagle County Schools in 2016, had been recruited by Dr. Glass as he recognized the need to expand the strategic capabilities of the Communications Services department. Quickly, the team went to work to devise a back-of-the-napkin plan for immediate needs to support the public announcement of the two ballot questions and support the Board in its initial messaging efforts.

This photo is the white board action plan after two days of intense planning and creative thinking about how to marshal the resources, determine the specific activities including designing materials and building a website, and have it all delivered in two weeks' time.

The white board evolved to a more comprehensive plan including identifying community groups with influence on voters, calendaring hundreds of community outreach meetings, developing a pitch for the Future Funding discussions, enlisting the support of school leaders to participate in social media initiatives, and more.



Our expenditures of just under \$90,000 included:

All design, writing, and production were completed by district staff. Printing was in-house with the exception of the June mail piece.

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	COST
June printing & mailing	Principal letter & facility fact sheet to 85,000 families	\$65,000
Print ads	Arvada Live-work-play and Colfax Lately magazine ads	\$2,500
Movie theater ads	Summer 10 second ads at three local theaters	\$5,000
Community survey	Phone poll by contracted agency	\$12,000
Printing & production	Four-page brochure , WIFM booklet , postcards , and posters	\$4,900
Total		\$89,400

BELOW is the plan for the month of August which worked in concert with the start of school, launch of the We Are Jeffco citizen group, and the Board of Education vote. A number of links within the document point to the specific materials developed during the month long sprint.

COMMS PLAN SUMMER 2018 – WORKING DOCUMENT FOR AUGUST

Project	Owner	Notes
Video - Message from Dr. Glass – Ballot ?s Video - What is a mill and bond?	Jack	In progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● August 9 - Email to principals letting them know bond/mill/73 info coming Mon or Tues, gave link to future funding webpage ● August 13/14 - Email to cabinet, principals, achievement directors ● Aug 16 & Aug 24 - All staff email <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Letter from Jason ○ Flyer ○ Webpage ○ Video with Jason 	Cameron Diana	Aug 13/14 email will include flyer, PP slides, staff do’s/don’ts, boilerplate stuff, link to short video
Boilerplate for school newsletters/website/social media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Generic like May letter, custom after August 23 (Key Outcomes/Why) 	Cameron	Draft shared; some edits rec’d 8/8; not yet finalized, plan to send with Aug 13/14 email
Future Funding Webpage with Interactive Map	Tanya/Cameron	http://www.jeffcopublicschools.org/futurefunding Updated the design. Also updated some bond, mill, Amendment 73, FAQ, and facility facts info. Will update content and add additional information, videos, and graphics, as available. Map is almost done and will go live ASAP.
Publications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Aug 15 – Messenger ● Aug 17 - Chalk Talk 	Devan/Jason/Diana	On track

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aug 24 - On the Issues 		
Newspaper Ads w/letter from Jason - After Aug 23	Devan	On track
Interactive District Map	Cameron/Devan	Completed 8/9
Paid Social Media	Tanya	After 8/23 - not worth expense ATM
Bond/Mill flyer, pie charts , PP slides, letter	Devan	Completed
Articulation area school specific posters (WIIFM?) - After Aug 23	Devan	On track
FAQ's	Diana & Friends	On track/on-going

List of Key Distribution Dates:

August 13/14 - Email announcement to cabinet, principals, achievement directors

August 15 – **Messenger (employee newsletter – 14K distribution)**

August 16 - Email to staff

August 17 - **Chalk Talk (community newsletter – 160K distribution)**

August 18 - Materials handed out at PTA Fall Conference

August 24 - **On the Issues (community newsletter – 160K distribution)**

August 24 - Generic letter customized by schools

August 24 - Paid ads for social media, newspapers (with Jason letter)

August 24 - Articulation school posters distributed – revised to Sept.

TBD:

- **Generic letter (date?)**
- **Newspaper Ads (date? /what materials?)**

Sample of Messenger 8/22/18

Future Funding for Jeffco: Info to Share & New Video Link



Our Board of Education will decide whether to put a bond and/or mill levy override on the November ballot on August 23. Amendment 73 will be on the November ballot statewide.

Staff resources are available online [here](#), printable info sheets, staff dos & don'ts, video links, and more for employees and to share publicly when appropriate.

The August 16 email link to the video narrated by Dr. Glass has been updated. Please use this [link](#). The video is about eight minutes long and gives a basic overview of the bond/mill levy and Amendment 73 issues.

The public webpage - www.jeffcopublicschools.org/futurefunding - has information, as well.

RACE: Communication/Implementation

Before the ballot items were final the district sent out a mailer customized to every school consisting of a letter from their principal and a snapshot of what their school might gain if a mill/bond levy override passed.



Campbell Elementary School
 6500 Oak St.
 Arvada, CO, 80004
 303.982.1440

May 25, 2018

Dear Campbell Elementary Families,

As the school year comes to a close I wanted to take a moment and share a few thoughts with you.

First, thank you for a wonderful school year. Watching our students learn, grow, and discover is a gift. I appreciate your support of our school programs and our children.

Second, I hope you take some time over the summer to keep minds active! Taking advantage of our local library, rec center, and parks is another way our kids learn and grow. Summer is the time when children have fun and bond with their loved ones; please enjoy this precious time with your student.

Lastly, our school district, Jeffco Public Schools, is considering asking voters for a bond in November. I would like to share with you what that could mean to our school.

- If voters passed a bond, we could make capital improvements. On the back of this mailer you will see a snapshot of our school building and what additional funding may support.
- If voters passed a mill levy increase, we would have more operating funds for technology, and staff at our school.
- If voters sign to have a statewide school funding measure (currently Initiative 2018-001) on the ballot and it passes, all schools in Colorado would receive significantly more funding.

I urge you to learn more about these issues at www.jeffcopschools.org/future or a survey monkey form set up to give input: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Jeffco>

Again, thank you for a great school year. Have a wonderful summer and I look forward to seeing our students in August and wish our 5th and 6th graders the best in middle school!


Sincerely,

Ryan Stadler, Principal

Our mission: To provide a quality education that prepares all children for a successful future.

FACILITY FACTS


Campbell Elementary School
 6500 Oak St.
 Arvada, CO



*FCI: 39.7%

POOR

*FCI is a measurement of the physical condition of the school's interior, exterior, and grounds.
 Good: less than 10%
 Fair: 11% to 30%
 Poor: greater than 30%.



Age of Facility: 54 years (built in 1964) Enrollment: 276
 Square Footage: 48,487 Utilization: 76%

If funding were available, below is a list of priorities.

- New paint to protect exterior.
- New, more secure, and energy-efficient windows.
- Replace old carpet and floor tile.
- Replace old student furniture, cafeteria tables, and library furniture.
- Update existing technology.
- Update security cameras and classroom security door hardware. Secure building vestibules, entries, and office location.
- Replace interior lighting with energy-efficient LEDs.
- Update old electrical wiring, panels, and increase capacity.

A webpage titled Future Funding was expanded and updated as new information was gathered and decisions made. A key feature was the icon navigation (similar to an iPad) housing all of the detailed information about bond investments in school and an ever increasing database of FAQs. Further down was the interactive searchable district map showing where every school was located and when clicked, pointed to that school's facility fact sheet. The webpage was kept up to date with new video and information throughout the campaign.



In a special meeting of the Jeffco Board of Education on August 21, the Board decided to place new initiatives on the 2018 ballot:

- A **mill levy override** that would provide financial resources to support operations directly related to student learning and success.
- A **bond** that would enable needed upgrades to our facilities.

Read the resolutions and ballot language.

Additionally, there will be an attachment to the ballot concerning the ballot to November. **Amendment 73**. This is a statewide effort to raise funds for PK-12 public education.

A MESSAGE FROM DR. JASON CLASS



[REGISTER TO VOTE](#) [COMMUNITY MEETINGS](#)

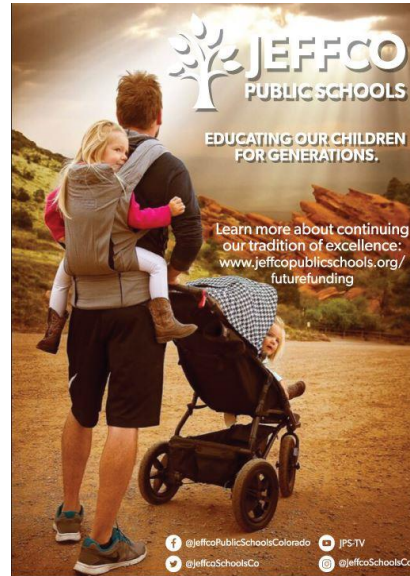
LEARN MORE ABOUT THE JEFFCO BOND AND MILL LEVY OVERRIDE BALLOT INITIATIVES, AND AMENDMENT 73 THROUGH THE ICON LINKS BELOW



CHOOSE A SCHOOL LOCATION FROM THE MAP BELOW TO SEE WHAT IMPROVEMENTS A BOND PACKAGE WOULD MAKE POSSIBLE



Advertising was placed in local newspapers and in cinemas prior to finalizing the ballot measures to generate interest and awareness that something big was about to happen. Ads pointed community members to the Future Funding webpage to learn more information.



Social media was utilized extensively by both the district and the We Are Jeffco campaign.

All district platforms – blogs, website, social media, newsletters, emails, videos and more – were utilized to reinforce the key messages.



[SUPERINTENDENT'S BLOG](#)

[YOUTUBE PLAYLIST OF VIDEOS](#)

Jeffco Public Schools / About Jeffco / Publications / News 2018

March 20, 2018



[NEWSLETTERS](#)

August 24, 2018

School Funding at Risk Right Now

I want to let you know of an important opportunity to make your voice heard in the Colorado Capitol.

An ad hoc coalition of school districts from across the state has come together to form the Kids Matter Too Coalition. This statewide coalition is calling on lawmakers to ensure Colorado's growth benefits families by increasing funding for schools.

Colorado school districts are coping with a teacher shortage crisis, shrinking special education, and inadequate mental health services. **Next week, the projections will be released, and many expect a surplus. Lawmakers will be making decisions about what to do with this additional funding,** and the Kids Matter Too Coalition is asking Coloradans from every corner of the state to call for action to benefit students.

Consider:

- Colorado currently ranks 42nd in the nation in per pupil funding and 49th in teacher salary competitiveness. Next year, Colorado public schools will need to fill 3,000 vacant positions. This will be difficult with low teacher salaries.
- Funding additional mental health services is more than just a resource for students. It is a critical component of a comprehensive approach to addressing the needs of our students.



At a special meeting of the Board of Education on 8.23.18, the Board took actions for the ballot in November. In this edition of *On the Issues*, I'd like to take a moment to explain how Jeffco would use resources from a statewide effort called Amendment 73, and what you can expect from two local ballot efforts – a mill levy override and a bond.

At the state level, Amendment 73 is a proposed change to the Colorado Constitution that would generate \$1.6 billion in new ongoing revenue for PreK-12 education. It is funded through an income tax on filers earning more than \$150,000 annually and C-corporations. It also locks in and sets state residential property rates at 7% and state commercial property tax assessment rates at 24%, which is a -.2% and -5% reduction, respectively, compared to current levels for education.

For Jeffco Public Schools, this would mean about \$1,609 per student in additional revenue.

Our district would use these funds in the following ways (with the percentages that were approved by the Board of Education in a resolution): attract and retain quality teachers and staff (50%), address class size and staffing shortages (15%), add mental health and

Printed and downloadable online materials such as the 4-page brochure describing all three school funding ballot questions served as the guideposts for the factual discussions district leaders organized with community groups such as Chambers of Commerce, Rotary and Optimist clubs, Economic Development Council, and many others. Materials were published in English and Spanish. The We Are Jeffco campaign reprinted these materials at their expense so that they were free to use them as well. Postcards (below) and the 4-page printed brochures were also available at every school.



WHAT IS A MILL LEVY OVERRIDE?

A mill levy override is a voter-approved property tax that provides funds for the school district's general fund. These funds go to our local schools and not to the state.

The Board of Education has approved a \$33 million mill levy override ballot question (adjusting annually for inflation) that will appear on the ballot as question 5A.

WHAT IS THE TAX IMPACT?

Residential: \$2.10/month per \$100K in value
 • \$300K home = \$6.31/month
 • \$500K home = \$10.52/month
 Non-Residential: \$8.47/month per \$100K in value
 • \$300K property = \$25.41/month
 • \$500K property = \$42.35/month

*Figures are approximations based on available data.

RESTRICTIONS & ACCOUNTABILITY

- No revenue ... will be used for senior district administration
- The spending ... will be reviewed by the citizen's Financial Oversight Advisory Committee
- The funds are subject to an annual independent audit

MILL LEVY OVERRIDE USES FROM BALLOT QUESTION 5A

- Expanding programs in science, technology, engineering & math (STEM) & in career/technical education
- Attracting & retaining high quality teachers by ensuring the district is able to be competitive in compensation & benefits for teachers & staff
- Improving student safety by increasing mental health & counseling professionals to improve student mental health services, including suicide prevention & substance abuse counseling
- Updating aged & outdated instructional resources such as books, supplies & technology
- Increasing early education programs

ARGUMENTS MADE FOR BALLOT QUESTION 5A

Jeffco Public Schools is underfunded compared to surrounding districts. 5A will help Jeffco compete for quality teachers and staff. 5A will expand STEM and career/technical education, preparing students for college and the workforce. These funds support students, classrooms, and schools — keeping them safe. 5A has strong oversight/accountability provisions.

WHAT IS A BOND?

Bonds are a voter-approved method of borrowing funds that are used for local school and district capital construction projects.

The Board of Education has approved a \$567 million bond ballot question that will appear on the ballot as question 5B.

WHAT'S THE TAX IMPACT?

\$567 MILLION PROPOSAL

Residential: \$1.81/month per \$100K in value
 • \$300K home = \$5.42/month
 • \$500K home = \$9.03/month

Non-Residential: \$7.28/month per \$100K in value
 • \$300K property = \$21.84/month
 • \$500K property = \$36.40/month

*Figures are approximations based on available data.

RESTRICTIONS & ACCOUNTABILITY

- The funds cannot be used for senior district administration
- The spending of these funds is over the Board of Education's Capital Asset Advisory Committee
- The funds are subject to an annual independent audit

BOND USES FROM BALLOT QUESTION 5B

- Adding & expanding career/technical education facilities
- Upgrading safety & security in school buildings
- Repairing, renovating, equipping, or reconstructing school buildings to ensure all schools are more safe, efficient & accessible to all students, including those with disabilities
- Constructing, furnishing, equipping & supporting needed school buildings & classrooms at all types of schools, including schools chartered by the district

To see the needs & plans for every school, view the Facility Fact Sheets at www.jeffcopublicschools.org/futurefunding.

ARGUMENTS MADE AGAINST BALLOT QUESTION 5A

Jeffco's teachers and staff already receive competitive wages compared to other districts and similar private sector jobs. This measure imposes an additional tax burden on property taxpayers without any guarantee of increased academic achievement. Jeffco Public Schools already has all the money it needs and should make do with what it already receives.



WHAT IS AMENDMENT 73?

Amendment 73 is a statewide Constitutional Amendment that would increase state taxes by \$1.6 billion annually to fund PreK-12 public education and create an exception to the single rate state income tax for revenue that is dedicated to the funding of public schools. It requires a 55% statewide voter approval to pass. Specifically, Amendment 73 would:

- Increase income tax rates incrementally for individuals, trusts & estates using four tax brackets starting at .37% for income above \$150K and increase to 3.62% for income above \$500K
- Increase corporate income tax rate to 3.7% for income above \$500K
- Reduce current residential assessment rate to 1.37%
- Reduce current non-residential assessment rate of 2% to 2.4%
- Purposes of school district property taxes to be deposited in a dedicated public education fund, allowing revenue collected to be retained & spent on income tax increases
- Require the legislature to annually appropriate revenue changes to fund to school districts to support PreK-12 public education from the decreasing general fund appropriations
- Direct the legislature to enact, regularly review & revise when necessary, a new public school finance law that meets specified criteria
- Require money in the fund to be annually appropriated for specified education programs & purposes until the legislature enacts a new public school finance law
- Require money in the fund to be used to support only public schools
- Require general fund appropriations for public education to increase by inflation, up to 5%, annually
- Require the Department of Education to commission a study of the use of the money in the fund within five years

WHAT WOULD THIS MEAN FOR JEFFCO PUBLIC SCHOOLS (ESTIMATED)?

- \$1.609 additional per pupil, each year
- \$134 million annually

To learn more about Amendment 73, register to vote, or learn about other ballot measures and elections, please visit: www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/elections/

HOW WOULD JEFFCO PUBLIC SCHOOLS USE THESE DOLLARS?

Attracting & retaining quality teachers & staff
 college preparation, arts & music, & more
 Addressing chronic underfunding and investing in public education supports a prepared workforce, safe and healthy communities, a vibrant economy, and the next generation of leaders, entrepreneurs, and innovators

At-Risk Students
 English Language Learners

WHAT IS A MILL LEVY OVERRIDE?

A mill levy override is a voter-approved property tax that provides funds for the school district's general fund. These funds go to our local schools and not to the state.

The Board of Education has approved a \$33 million mill levy override ballot question (adjusting annually for inflation) that will appear on the 2018 November ballot as question 5A.

WHAT IS A BOND?

Bonds are a voter-approved method of borrowing funds that are used for local school and district capital construction projects.

The Board of Education has approved a \$567 million bond ballot question that will appear on the 2018 November ballot as question 5B.

WHAT IS AMENDMENT 73?

Amendment 73 is a \$1.6 billion tax increase that may impede economic expansion. Increasing state income taxes reduces the money households have to spend/save, resulting in declining consumer spending and overall economic activity.

This measure imposes an additional tax burden on state taxpayers without any guarantee of increased academic achievement.

Graduated income tax decreases productivity. As a person's income rises, the percentage of their income they take home decreases because the marginal tax rate increases. It will drive wealth out of the state.

ARGUMENTS MADE FOR BALLOT QUESTION 5A

Jeffco Public Schools - Colorado
 JEFFCO ADVOCATES
 @jeffcoadvocates
 @jeffcoadvocates

For more information about FUTURE FUNDING for Jeffco Public Schools visit: jeffcopublicschools.org/futurefunding

JEFFCO PUBLIC SCHOOLS - COLORADO
 @jeffcoadvocates
 @jeffcoadvocates

JEFFCO PUBLIC SCHOOLS - COLORADO
 @jeffcoadvocates
 @jeffcoadvocates

Print media and endorsements from their editorial boards as well as endorsements from civic groups, Town Councils, and civic leaders including State Senator Ed Perlmutter and County Commissioner Leslie Dahlkemper were key to the success of the ballot measures.

Colorado Community Media

NEWS - LIFE - CALENDAR - SPORTS - VOICES - SUBMIT NEWS - ADS/DEALS - ADVERTISING
CLASSIFIEDS - CONTACT - READER SERVICES - PUBLIC NOTICES

Jefferson County schools' mill levy override focuses on bringing classrooms to life

Jeffco residents will vote on the \$22 million on 16 November

Local News: Seniors likely won't be able to return to Windermere apartment building hit by fire with at least next week.

Posted Tuesday, October 16, 2018 2:29 pm

Colorado Community Media

Shanna Parton
shanna@ccm.com

In addition to the County Public Safety facility needs, voters in support of which will have students.

Mill levy override. The largest focused on

The override will help raise teacher salaries and improvements. The bond — which also new facilities to meet population growth.

IF APPROVED, THE \$22 MILLION MILL LEVY OVERRIDE OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS.

SHANNA PARTON

Posted Tuesday, September 25, 2018 2:41

HOW MUCH WILL YOU PAY?

The proposed \$22 million mill levy override would cost about \$2.70 per month per \$100,000 in residential value. That means the owner of a \$500,000 home would pay \$6.51 a month. The owner of a \$100,000 home would pay \$1.32 a month.

THE MILL LEVY OVERRIDE AT A GLANCE

Chalkbeat

Education news. In context.

Locations - Topics - Connect - About Us

NEWSLETTERS **DONATE**

FUNDING SAFETY

Colorado school districts seek voter support for school safety and mental health resources

BY HESHA RAOLES - OCTOBER 24, 2018

to patrol the halls and check in

note by Kathryn Scott/The Denver

Editorial: It's time to do our part for our Jeffco schools



In August, just before the start of school, leaks in the roof at Green Mountain High School in Lakewood saturated the gym floor to the point that gymnastics and volleyball events had to be canceled.

Because most buildings in Jefferson County Public Schools were built about 50 years ago, they do not meet the security requirements necessary for keeping students safe today.

Higher salaries in nearby districts are continually drawing away quality teachers, making Jeffco more of a training ground than a place to live out a career.

Jeffco Public Schools, many parents and educators say, is at a crisis. It needs money to repair and renovate aging buildings so that all students, including young people with not only college-ready skills, but also the technical abilities that businesses are demanding. And to recruit and — most importantly — needed to maintain and grow the district's excellence in education.

We agree.

Toward that end, Colorado Community Media urges Jefferson County voters to support the override, and Ballot Question 5B, a \$567 million mill levy override, and Ballot Question 5B, a \$567 million mill levy override, and Ballot Question 5B, a \$567 million mill levy override.

THE DENVER POST

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OPINION > EDITORIALS

Endorsement: "Yes" on school tax increases in Aurora, JeffCo, DougCo and Adams 12

We have looked into these four tax requests and know that while some of them might stretch the pocket book, they are worth the investment.

RACE: Evaluation

From the beginning of the 2018 Bond and Mill Levy undertaking there was only one thing in the minds of district leadership and the We Are Jeffco citizen group – this time we had to win. The district had suffered through board turmoil, leadership changes, and years of underfunding with buildings in need of repair. Fundamental to the Jeffco Public Schools vision and strategic plan was the concept that the student experience in learning needed to change – students needed to be doing authentic tasks and learning skills to prepare them for successful lives in a global economy. Yet our buildings, infrastructure, learning materials and technology were not meeting that call. Something, and something big needed to change to marry the new vision with an ability to deliver on that promise to students and families.

The success of 5A and 5B at the polls will enable the district to do the work necessary to live up to that promise to students. Renovating, repairing and building new schools to accommodate growth, and deliver modern curriculum such as STEM and career and technical training in fields such as health care, computer science, game design, and more is a dream come true for the community, and in particular the generations of Jeffco Public Schools families.

The strategy of being as transparent as possible about the ballot questions, district finances, uses of the funds, and even the areas where we would not be able to do as much as we wanted to, spoke to voters. They dug into our data, read and studied the information on the website and in the printed materials, attended community forums and information sessions, asked questions, and ultimately, supported the district with their vote.

However, we know that we didn't win by a wide margin – in fact, just the opposite. Had any number of things not gone just right, the outcome could have been very different indeed. With the knowledge that this will not be the last time we will be turning to voters to supplement school funding resources, we are already looking ahead to how we would appeal to voters next time.

At the conclusion of the election we met with the We Are Jeffco campaign leadership to debrief on lessons learned:

- Coordinating efforts with the citizens campaign to the extent possible from a legal perspective was instrumental in relaying accurate information to voters
- More advance planning on all fronts
- Community engagement and outreach was key – meeting with community groups should continue as the bond construction moves forward to keep all informed of progress
- Utilizing internal district resources was key to developing, producing and updating materials quickly
- Obtaining the support of teachers, the associations, and support staff transformed the effort into unified front in the community
- Connecting with areas in the county known to vote down tax initiatives turned the tide in our favor

The 2018 ballot issues brought our community together. We had our share of virulent naysayers who went out of their way to stir up controversy, imply or blatantly state that the district was lying about where the funding would go, tried to derail many a community meeting with their misinformation based questions and derogatory remarks to district leaders, and more. Throughout, the district took the high road, repeating the facts, pointing

to the transparency of the website and materials, and discussing openly to counter the misinformation. At times it was a contest of wills to pursue the facts.

In the end, Jeffco Public Schools and the We Are Jeffco campaign team are proud to have taken the journey and make the vision of Jeffco Generations a reality for the students of Jeffco Public Schools.

