



Adams 12 Five Star Schools will actively seek to influence legislation to preserve local governance, to create more flexibility from state mandates, to promote policies that adequately fund schools, to support accountability for student success and to support parental involvement.

### **Legislative Principles**

**Local Control** – Preserve the responsibility, fiduciary role and authority of locally elected school boards for the operations and decisions of their local schools and districts. The state’s role should be to encourage and recommend but not to mandate changes within local schools. Decisions are best made by locally-elected school board members whose sole responsibility is the education of the community’s children.

**Fewer Regulations and Streamlined Reporting** – Due to the cuts in funding for education and to allow maximum effectiveness with the funds available, the removal and/or flexibility of regulations on funding and program mandates would allow local school boards to better act in the best interest of their students, parents and community. Streamlined and cost effective monitoring and reporting for accountability of regulations must be a primary consideration in legislation.

**Increase Funding** – As local school boards work to improve and transform the educational systems in schools, it is vital to increase funding for operations, capital construction, infrastructure, and maintenance so students can benefit from quality environments, tools, and highly effective personnel needed to facilitate learning.

**Accountability for Student Success** – Adams 12 Five Star Schools affirms the need for every district and school to demonstrate continuous improvement and be accountable in meaningful and useful ways to its students, their parents, and the broader community.

**Parental Responsibility and Involvement** – Parents are vital to the successful education of children. Their responsibility and involvement for their child’s education must be encouraged and supported at all levels of the educational system. Among these are decisions regarding: curriculum, sexual health, character development, budget priorities, sports, extracurricular activities, and school safety and security.

### **Legislative Positions**

- Adams 12 Five Star Schools supports legislation that restores ongoing K-12 funding that was lost during years with state budget shortfalls. Adams 12 Five Star Schools advocates for allocating K-12 funding such that the budget stabilization factor does not grow.

- Adams 12 Five Star Schools opposes any state or federal legislation that imposes unfunded mandates.
- Adams 12 Five Star Schools supports legislation that reduces the amount of time dedicated to state testing while maintaining reliable, high quality data that measures the academic growth of students over time. Testing must provide valuable and timely feedback for use in student instructional planning.
- Adams 12 Five Star Schools supports legislation that addresses the local funding inequities that exist between districts with a higher property tax base (high assessed valuation) and those with a lower property tax base.
- Adams 12 Five Star Schools opposes any state or federal mandate for preschool and full-day kindergarten education without funds to cover costs associated with such programs. Costs include capital construction, transportation and others. However, it is a priority of the Five Star District to offer preschool and full-day kindergarten education as local communities and the school boards deem financially responsible. The Five Star District fully supports the state making funds available for voluntary participation.
- Adams 12 Five Star Schools supports legislation that improves the relationship, in academic accountability and fiscal responsibility, between charter schools and their authorizing public school districts. Adams 12 Five Star Schools does not support the State providing supplemental revenue to charter schools that are authorized through the Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI) because the CSI Board of Directors is not elected and accountable to local taxpayers and funds allocated from the state for this purpose result in funding cuts for all other schools and districts.
- Adams 12 Five Star Schools requests that any legislation contemplating changes to tax increment financing (TIF) law consider the impact on school bond and mill levy override rates.
- Adams 12 Five Star Schools urges the adoption of a new school finance act with additional funding that addresses the lack of adequacy and equity in our current system.
- Adams 12 Five Star Schools supports a change in existing law to provide that new oil and gas operations should be placed no closer than 1000 feet from school outdoor activity areas. The local board of education should have control over whether to designate certain parts of its school properties as school outdoor activity areas.
- Adams 12 Five Star Schools recognizes that for the state's pension system for public employees (PERA) to remain solvent in the long term, adjustments must be made. Any PERA legislation should maintain benefits for vested employees and minimize increased contributions by employees and employers. Increased contributions impact the ability of school districts to offer competitive employee compensation benefits. Adams 12 Five Star Schools favors legislation that establishes new rules for new employees who are not vested in PERA.