

# DCSD Growth and Decline

Fall/Winter 2024 Update for Families



# Agenda

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- So You Know
- Our Realities
- Where We're Going
- What This Means for Impacted Families
- Data/Information
- We Want You Involved



## Pay Increases for Teachers and Staff

- ✓ Retroactive increases implemented in January.
- ✓ Starting teacher pay up from \$45K to \$51K!
- ✓ Reduced pay gaps by approx. one-half.



## Increased Security Support

- ✓ Campus Security Specialists and School Resource Officers are hired or in progress!



## Cost to Taxpayers (Net)

- ✓ Net change in the school district tax rate is 2.939 mills, costing \$194 on a \$1M home.

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And for 2024...



# We have more work to do!



# So You Know...

- This is one of the hardest, most complicated conversations any school district can have. And we **HAVE TO** have it.
- DCSD is not nearly alone in working through how to deal with declining enrollment (although we're handling it a little differently). These conversations are going on across the Front Range and the country.
- This is a summary of growth and decline data and other related information. You can and should feel free to ask questions if/when you need more information and/or go to our G+D webpage (QR Code later on in the presentation).

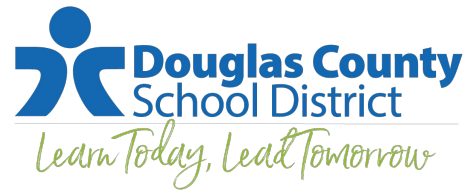
# Our Realities– First Principles

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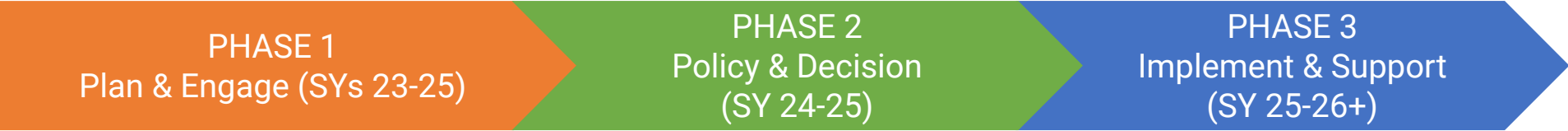
- We take care of our kids. Pairing schools is all about benefiting students by enhancing educational opportunities for them. Part of this is keeping them together as much as possible.
- We love and take care of our employees.
- There is no silver bullet, easy button for this work. We are focused on students and taking care of the families and staff around them in a thoughtful way.
- Our comprehensive efforts will still mean that pairings are especially hard for some in our community.



# Where We are Going



# Timeline for School Pairings



## Plan

- Monthly NPAE Meetings
- Identify and resolve open questions
- Develop policy recommendations

## Engage

- BOE Committees
- District and School Leaders
- **HR School Staff/Communities**
- HR Community Groups

## Policy

- ***Present policy recommendations to BoE re criteria only (Jan 2025)***

## Decision

- Develop recommendations based on policy
- ***Finalize, communicate consolidation recommendation prior to April 8 BoE meeting***
- ***Staff presents consolidation recommendations to BoE (April 8, 2025)***
- ***Board vote on recommendations (April 22, 2025)***

## Implement

- Plan and perform building improvements (the bond!)
- Develop staffing plan

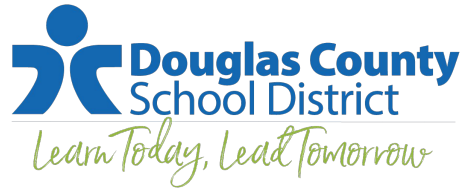
## Support

- Engage community
- Support staff
- Support families
- Support the coming together of two school communities

**\*\*\*Opening of “New” Schools (Aug 2026)\*\*\***



# What Does This Mean for Impacted Families



# What Does This Mean for Impacted Families

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- Of the 16 elementary schools being considered for pairing, either six schools will be paired into three, or four into two. We will still have some small schools after this pairing process. To date, NO decisions on recommendations have been made re which schools will be paired.
- The pairings will take place in August 2026 so that the paired buildings will remain open and staffed during SY 25-26. Because we passed 5A (the bond), improvements will be made to the receiving building ahead of August 2026.
- We are working on a lot of details BUT first principles: We love our kids and our families and this process will give more kids greater access to more learning opportunities.
- We will work with families impacted by pairings by:
  - Providing as much information as possible, as soon as possible;
  - Ensuring that our enrollment policies continue to respect family needs and choices;
  - Engaging with families to ensure as smooth a pairing process as possible;
  - Working with the new paired communities to ensure every child has a GREAT educational experience from now until pairings in August 2026.

# Our Realities – A Tale of Two Actual DCSD Elementary Schools

## Elementary A (600-700 kids)

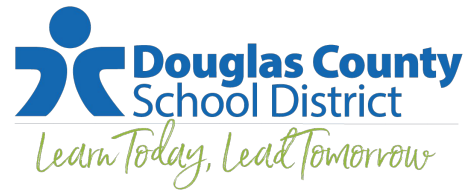
World language offered  
STEM offered separately  
Art offered separately  
Full time Music teacher  
Additional Advanced academic programming  
Multiple grade level teachers collaborating  
Robust intervention support  
Support for center-based programming for student with special needs  
Support for Universal Pre-K  
Robust extracurricular opportunities

## Elementary B (200-350 kids)

No world language programming  
STEM mixed in with Art  
The music teacher is also the interventionist  
Limited advanced programming (combined levels)  
1 or 2 grade level teachers (limited collaboration)  
Limited extracurricular opportunities  
Staff wonderings about their jobs because of lower enrollment



# Data/Information

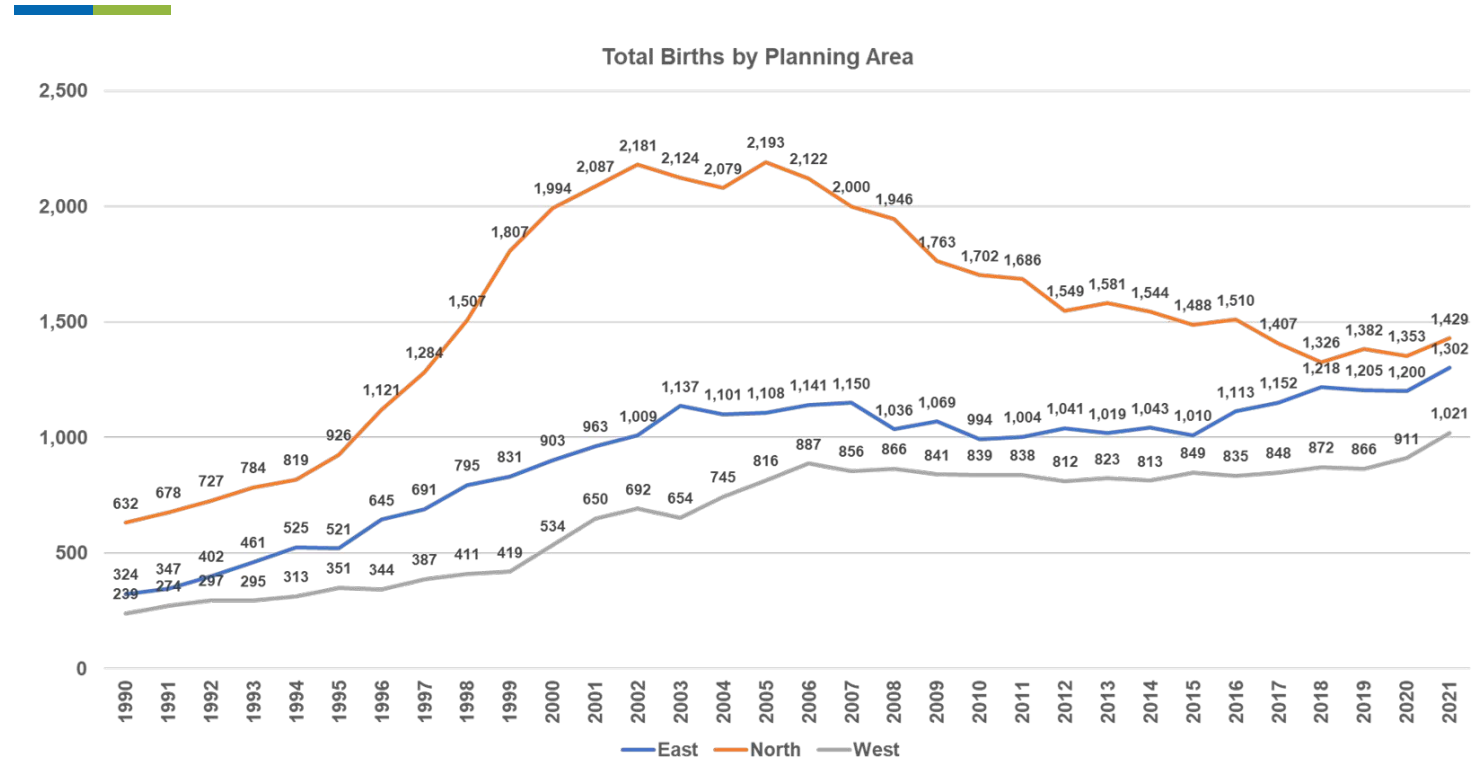


# We are solving...

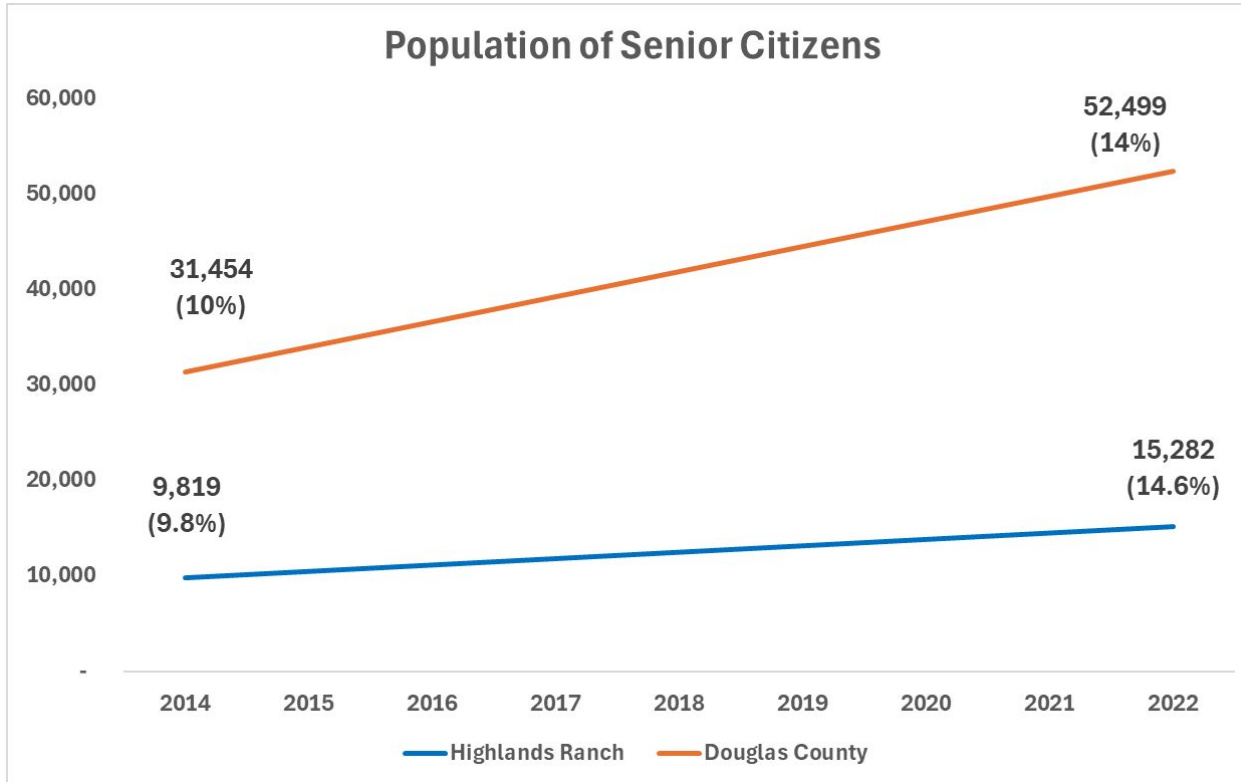


We have too many elementary schools in  
Highlands Ranch for the amount of students  
we currently and will have

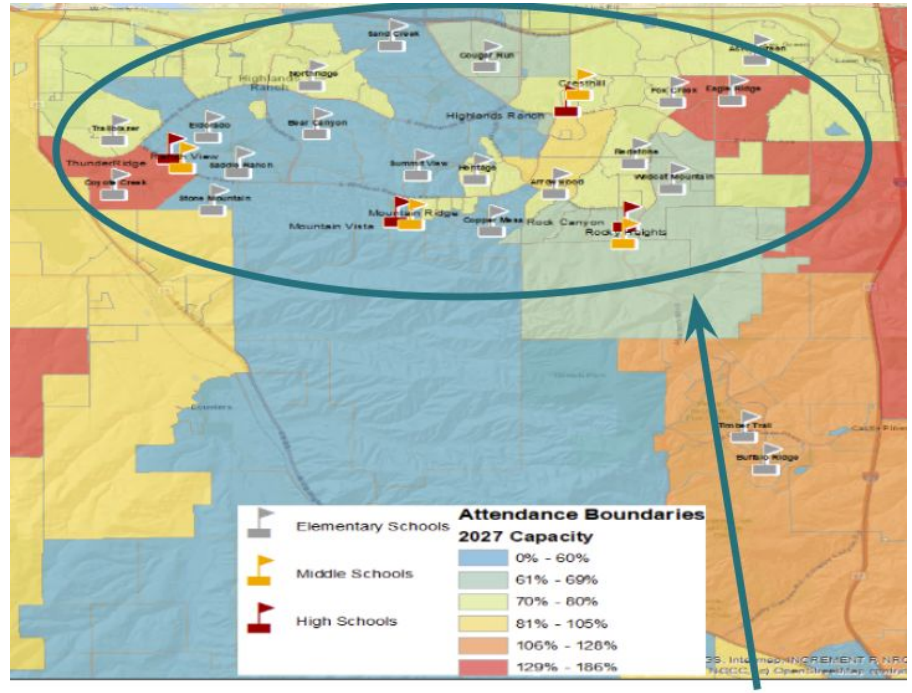
# Our Realities – Birth Rates in Douglas County



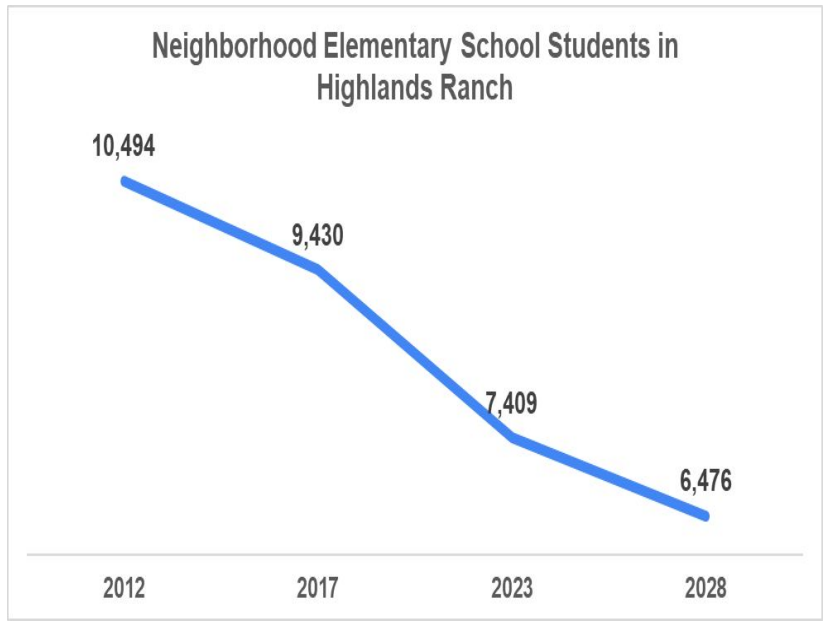
# Our Realities – Population of Seniors



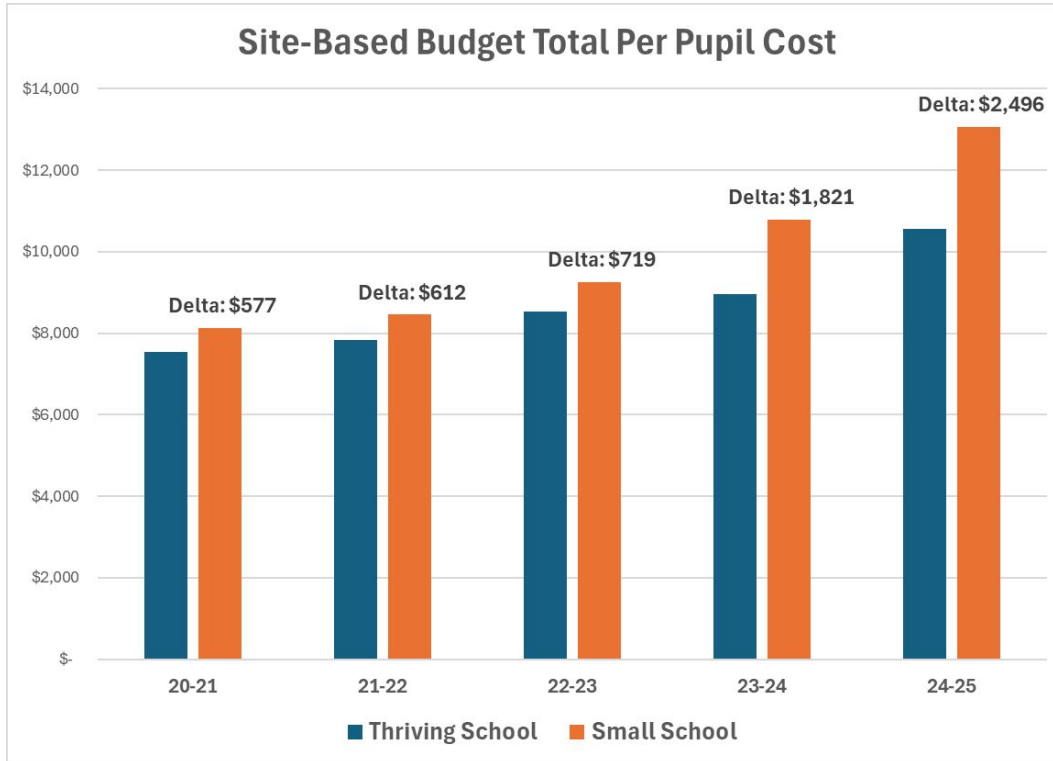
# Our Realities– North Planning Area Enrollment



**Highlands Ranch**  
(38,000 homes)



# Our Realities– Cost



Today in Highlands Ranch there are 3,192 students in small schools, **costing \$8M**.

In 2028, projections show there will be 4,640 students in small schools, **costing \$17M** if the delta grows by 10% per year (the delta grew 27% from 2023 to 2024).

# Our Conversations to Date

Over the last two years...

- Board of Education meetings
- Various community meetings
- District-leader conversations
- Leader-staff conversations
- Initial due diligence through DCSD departments and North Planning Area Engagement Group on a host of related issues.
- Staff meetings with potentially impacted schools

# Just Some of the Questions/Topics Raised So Far



clear is kind	construction timing	sibling priority	SAC	explanation for choice	scope of pairing	Board involvement	SPED programs available	stop gap funding
admin priority or co-leaders	the news: backsliding	open enrollment	office teams	position guarantee	criteria for pairing	Fund raising	GT programs	incentivize staffing for last year
staff priority	new school name and mascot?	feeder integrity	use for vacated school	grade level choice for staff	August 2026 vs. construction additions	IEP hand off	extra curricular	FAQ for impacted parents
PTO	BASE	program pairing	transportation	Is quick/drawn out kind?	Student awareness, questions	hiring– who decides	preK	mobiles

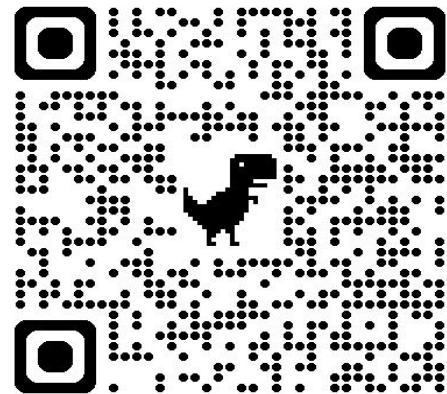
# We Want You Involved

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If you have any questions, please reach out to (in order of the people you probably talk with the most):

- your building leader
- your Executive Director of Schools
  - [John Gutierrez](#) (EHR) or [Ian Wells](#) (WHR)
- your Asst. Superintendent of Schools [Danny Winsor](#)
- your Chief of Staff [Steve Colella](#) (scolella@dcsdk12.org)
- your Superintendent [Erin Kane](#)

Our growth and decline webpage has a lot of info:



# Kids!





# Questions?

