

Fiscal Year  
2014-15



## GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING THE BUDGET



CherryCreekSchools



CHERRY CREEK SCHOOL DISTRICT #5 – ARAPAHOE COUNTY, COLORADO

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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We are honored to display the cover graphic design produced by

**Ian Maxey-Bell**

as an example of the quality work of our high school students in the  
Cherry Creek School District Career and Technical Education Program

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Thank you to the members of the Budget Department for their dedicated efforts in preparing the Financial Plan and to the other staff members of the Fiscal Services Division who assisted in this process.

Our utmost appreciation is extended to the members of the Board of Education for the many hours contributed in providing direction to the Cherry Creek School District and to the community for their continued support.

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## INTRODUCTION



This guide is designed to help you understand the Cherry Creek School District budget and how it was developed. It will provide information about the budget's main components: **revenue** and **expenditures**. You will learn about the District's funding sources, see how resources are used to fund educational success for our students, and learn how you can be involved in budgeting decisions.

### This booklet was prepared to answer the following questions:

- ◆ How is the budget approved?
- ◆ Where does the funding (revenue) come from?
- ◆ How does the Cherry Creek School District distribute funding to provide for educational excellence and equity for all students, enabling students to be successful in post-secondary education and careers?
- ◆ How are resources managed?
- ◆ How can you get involved?

## THE ANNUAL BUDGET

The budget is a financial plan for the successful attainment of the District's strategic mission. Schools and departments develop a staffing plan that considers the resources available based on enrollment and funding permitted under School Finance legislation. The Cherry Creek School District's (CCSD) annual budget allocates resources for the purpose of teaching students, transporting them to and from school, feeding them breakfast and lunch, and maintaining school buildings and grounds. These funds provide salary, benefits, and professional development training for teachers and support staff, as well as necessary services, supplies, and equipment to enhance our student's educational experience. It also provides funding for special education and other programs such as English Language Acquisition. Bond funds, which voters approve in local elections, pay for building new schools, renovating and modernizing existing facilities and upgrading the schools' technology infrastructure.

### **BUDGET APPROVAL**

The Cherry Creek School District must adopt an annual budget by June 30th for the following school year. The administrative staff of the District works together to recommend a budget to the Board of Education that considers the needs and values of students, parents, employees, and taxpayers. Our Board members are the fiscal stewards for the community who manage our educational resources in an effective and prudent manner consistent with District values.

Each year the Superintendent and District staff members build a budget based on School Finance legislation in accordance with policy guidelines established by the Board of Education. The budget is submitted to the Board for consideration and adoption at the regularly scheduled monthly Board meeting in June of each fiscal year.

### Considerations during the budget process include:

- ◆ Level of state funding that the General Assembly authorizes under School Finance legislation
- ◆ Compensation agreements with instructional and support staff groups
- ◆ Cost and Resource Management Plan based on current funding and cost assumptions
- ◆ Capital outlay expenditures for schools and support facilities
- ◆ Projected student enrollment for the coming year
- ◆ Additional operations and maintenance costs for new schools and facilities
- ◆ Projected federal grants for programs including No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).



## EFFECTIVE USE OF FUNDS FOR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

An independent study by The Center for American Progress has ranked the Cherry Creek School District among the highest in Colorado for effective use of funds for academic achievement.

The District received a “Green” rating indicating the highest return on investment (ROI) in the use of funding for student success. The return on investment measure rates the academic achievement of school districts for each dollar spent compared to other districts in the State.

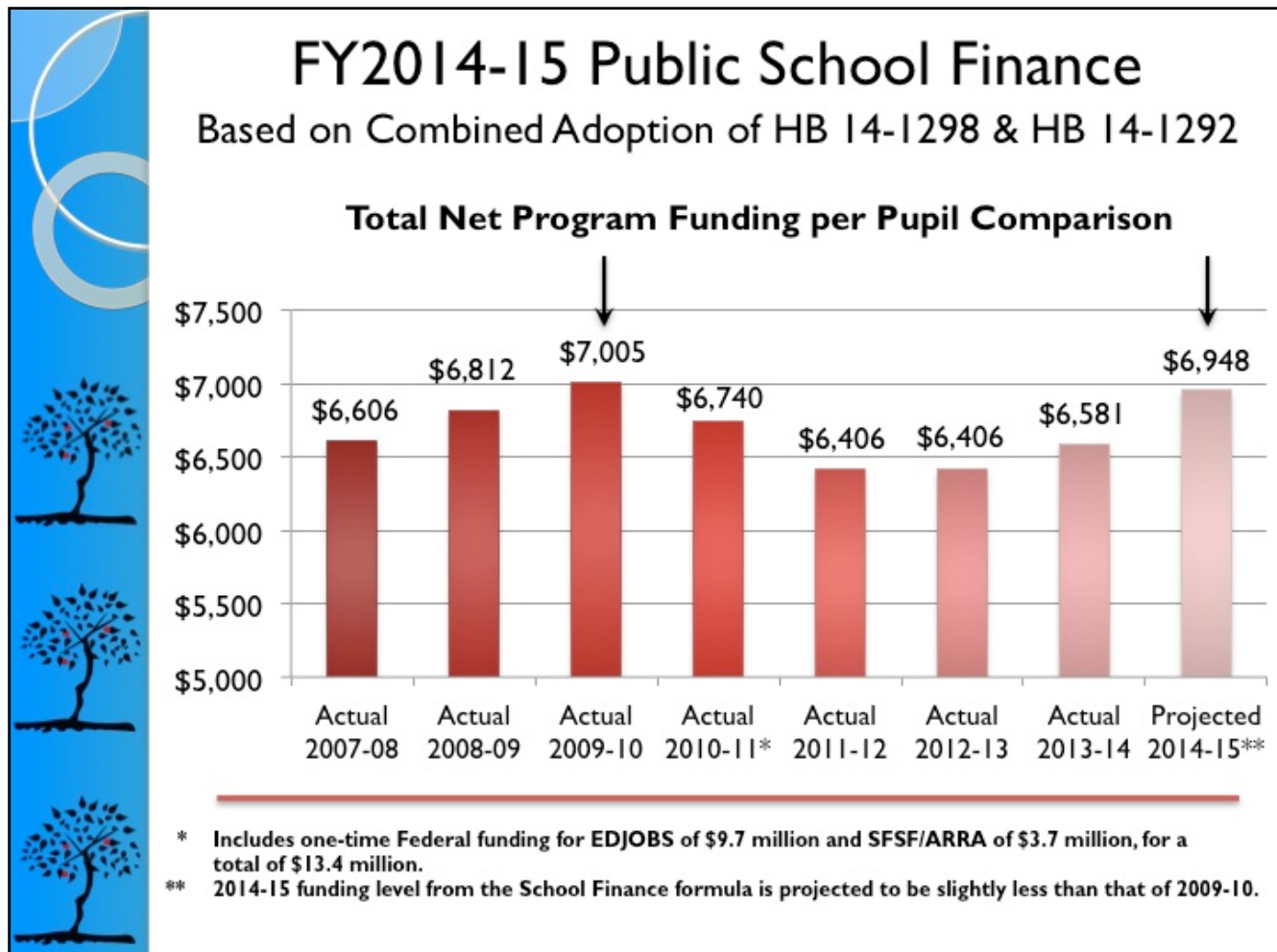
Overall, the study found that school districts that target more dollars to the classroom and less on administration fared much better. Cherry Creek School District spends 83% of its General Fund budget on direct and indirect instruction and less than 5% on central administration costs.

### Our Traditions and the Current Funding Environment

Cherry Creek School District traditions of educational excellence and high academic achievement that are among the best in the State of Colorado, have been strengthened with the support of our community through our 64-year history. For example, a \$25 million override election approved by local voters in November 2012 was critical to the maintenance of educational programs for students in the face of declining State funding.

As the budget has been affected by the declines in State funding, Cherry Creek has delivered on a firm effort to maintain classroom instruction and programs despite funding shortfalls from the State of Colorado.



The Cherry Creek General Fund Budget for FY2014-15 of \$482.48 million supports the mission with nearly 83% of dollars devoted to classroom instruction.





## CURRENT PROJECTED FUNDING

The chart below illustrates the negative impact to the Cherry Creek School District per pupil funding resulting from statewide reductions in K-12 education funding. The “*Negative Factor*” is the mechanism by which funding for school districts statewide is reduced as a means to balance the State budget.

<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <h3 style="text-align: center;">FY2014-15 Public School Finance</h3>  </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Based on Combined Adoption of HB14-1298 &amp; HB14-1292</p>			
CHERRY CREEK	FY2013-14	FY2014-15*	NET INCREASE
TOTAL PROGRAM FUNDING	\$398,364,715	\$415,435,052	\$17,070,337
NEGATIVE FACTOR **	(61,432,260)	(54,555,059)	6,877,201
NET TOTAL PROGRAM FUNDING	\$336,932,455	\$360,879,993	\$23,947,538
TOTAL FUNDED PUPILS	51,197.5	51,936.5	739
FUNDING PER PUPIL	\$6,581	\$6,948	\$367
<div style="border: 1px solid orange; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>* Figures are estimated for FY2014-15 and are adjusted to reflect Cherry Creek's budget projection for enrollment.</p> <p>** Negative Factor is -15.42% for FY2013-14 and -13.13% for FY2014-15.</p> </div>			

### Budget Balancing Measures

A Cost and Resource Management Plan for FY2014-15 utilizes \$2.95 million of General Fund reserves, as a means to offset the budget shortfall for FY2014-15. The General Fund Budget includes \$479.53 million of revenue (including transfers) and \$482.48 million of expenditures (including transfers).

Revenue is anticipated to increase \$25.55 million and expenditures are budgeted to increase by \$28.50 million. The combination of these, along with the managed use of \$2.95 million of General Fund reserves in the FY2014-15 budget year, maintains a balanced budget.

## PUBLIC SCHOOL FINANCE LEGISLATION

The Cherry Creek School District receives the majority of its funding from the State of Colorado through the Public School Finance Act (HB 14-1298) and the Student Success Act (HB14-1292). This legislation uses a formula to determine state and local funding amounts for school districts to provide PreK-12 public education. Each year, during the Legislative session, the General Assembly authorizes a Per Pupil Revenue (PPR) amount for each school district in the State. The formula begins with a statewide base per pupil funding amount. For FY2014-15, the base is \$6,121 which is a 2.8% increase from FY2013-14. This base amount is modified for each district to account for differences among the state's school districts. This Net Total Program Funding is budgeted in the General Fund.

Refer to the chart below for the calculation of the per pupil funding using the School Finance formula.

FY2014-15 SCHOOL FINANCE FORMULA	
Statewide base per pupil funding	\$6,121
Multiplied by District personnel costs factor	X .905
Multiplied by District cost-of-living factor	X 1.261
<b>PLUS</b>	<b>+</b>
Statewide base per pupil funding	\$6,121
Multiplied by District non-personnel costs factor	X .095
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$7,567</b>
Multiplied by District size factor	X 1.0297
<b>Funding per pupil <i>without</i> At-Risk Pupils</b>	<b>\$7,792</b>
<b>Statutory funding per pupil <i>with</i> At-Risk Pupils</b>	<b>\$7,999</b>
<b>Negative Factor—Formula Reduction of –13.13%</b>	<b>(\$1,051)</b>
<b>Net per pupil funding under HB 14-1298 &amp; HB 14-1292</b>	<b>\$6,948</b>

The following factors are considered in the calculation.

1. Statewide base per pupil funding is modified for each district to account for differences among the 178 districts in cost-of-living, the percentage allocated for personnel, and enrollment size.
2. District personnel costs factor is formula driven and differs by districts based on enrollment size. Districts with the largest enrollments receive the largest adjustments.
3. District cost of living factor reflects differences in the cost of housing, goods, and services within each of Colorado's 178 school districts. This factor is applied to the percentage of the statewide base allocated for personnel costs.
4. District non-personnel costs factor is the difference between 100 and the district's personnel costs factor.
5. District size factor compensates for the economies of scale created by differences in district enrollments. The districts with the smallest enrollments receive the largest size adjustments, although districts with over 32,000 students receive an increased rate adjustment.
6. -13.13% Negative Factor is the mechanism by which funding for school districts statewide is reduced as a means to balance the State budget. This Negative Factor decreased from –15.42% in FY2013-14.

### At-Risk Funding

The School Finance Act provides additional revenue for school districts based on their number of at-risk youth. This includes students who are eligible for the federal free lunch program due to the family income or those students who have limited English skills and meet other criteria. The additional funding for at-risk students is estimated to be \$935 per at risk pupil in FY2014-15.



## ENROLLMENT

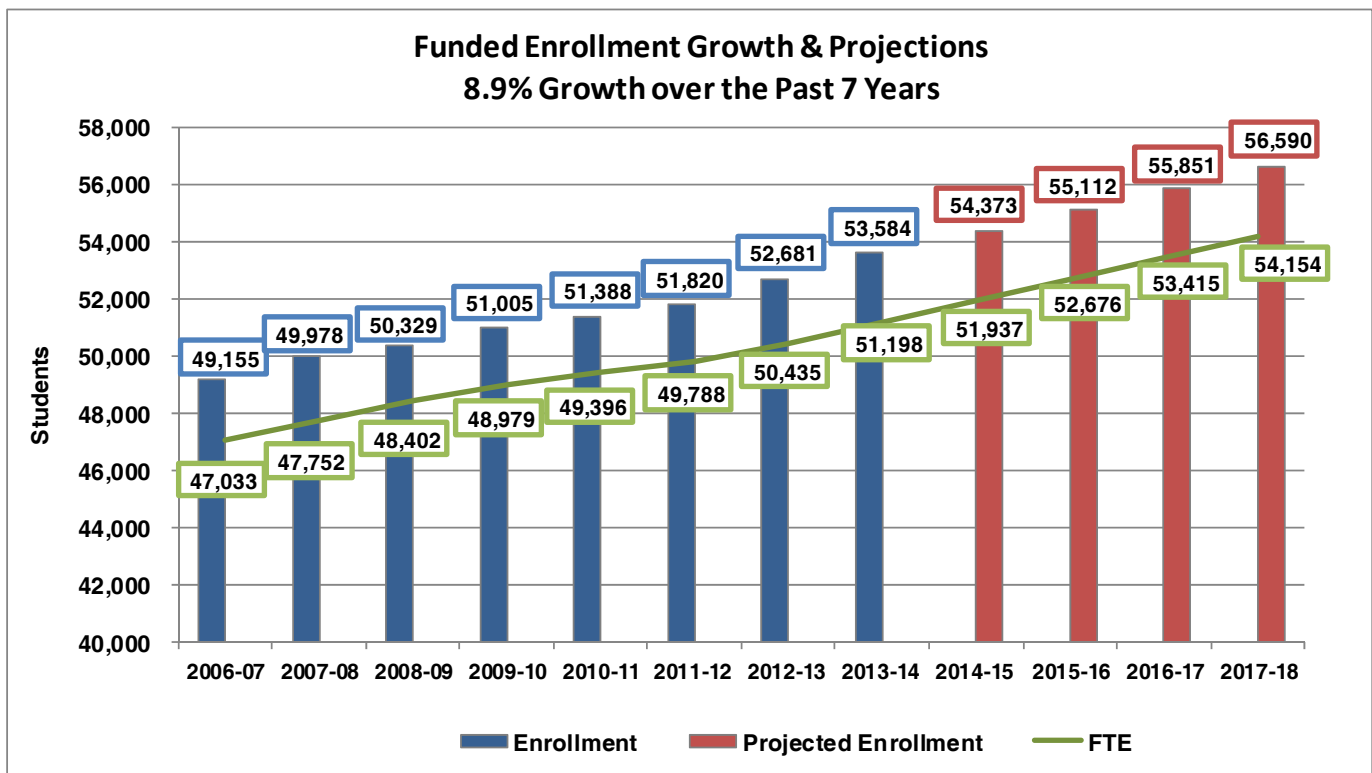


### Enrollment

Enrollment is an important component of the budget process. State funding is based on the District's full-time equivalent (FTE) student enrollment. The Cherry Creek School District has shown a steady growth of 8.9% over the past seven years. Enrollment is expected to grow at a steady rate over the next four years.

The official state count of enrollment is conducted in October of each school year. The number of students enrolled in the District during the count period is the basis used for determining the amount of funding authorized by the School Finance Act. For the 2014-15 school year, the current funding formula estimate provides for \$6,948 per full time student, a 5.6% increase from \$6,581 per full-time student in the 2013-14 school year.

In addition to the students counted in the elementary, middle, and high schools, enrollment totals include students in the Colorado Preschool Program (CPP), the M.W. Foote Youth Services Center, Intensive Treatment Program, homebound, Options Program, and expelled student educational programs.



# DISTRICT REVENUE SOURCES

## GENERAL FUND

District revenue is generated primarily from property taxes, other local taxes, and state equalization funding. A small amount comes from the federal government through the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

### LOCAL REVENUE – \$219.61 MILLION IN 2014-15

#### PROPERTY TAXES

Every homeowner and business owner in Colorado pays property taxes for schools, along with taxes for other public services. Each year, the budget crafted by the governor and legislature determines how much of the total budget is allocated to education. The portion for K-12 education is then divided among the 178 school districts in Colorado using the School Finance Act funding formulas. These formulas determine how much money each district receives per student as well as how much of that funding is paid by the state and how much is paid through local taxes. Currently property taxes make up 41.7% of the District's General Fund revenue.

**Total Property Taxes** for Cherry Creek School District in FY2014-15 are estimated to be **\$256,744,971** composed of **General Fund Property Taxes** of **\$204,609,891** and **Bond Redemption Property Taxes** of **\$52,135,080**. Property taxes are collected by the Arapahoe County Treasurer based on assessed values determined annually by the Arapahoe County Assessor's Office for properties within the boundaries of the Cherry Creek School District. Property taxes have been estimated based on a projection of a 0.9% increase in assessed value for 2014.

#### LOCAL REFERENDA

Colorado law allows local school districts to ask voters, within statutory limits, to approve additional funding through local tax increases referred to as mill levy overrides. Cherry Creek School District voters have approved such overrides as follows:

<u>1991</u>	\$10,263,000
<u>1998</u>	\$10,500,000
<u>2003</u>	\$14,000,000
<u>2008</u>	\$18,000,000
<u>2012</u>	\$25,000,000

#### OTHER LOCAL REVENUE

The District also receives revenue from the Specific Ownership Tax, investment income, tuition, and miscellaneous fees (including rent for the use of District facilities).

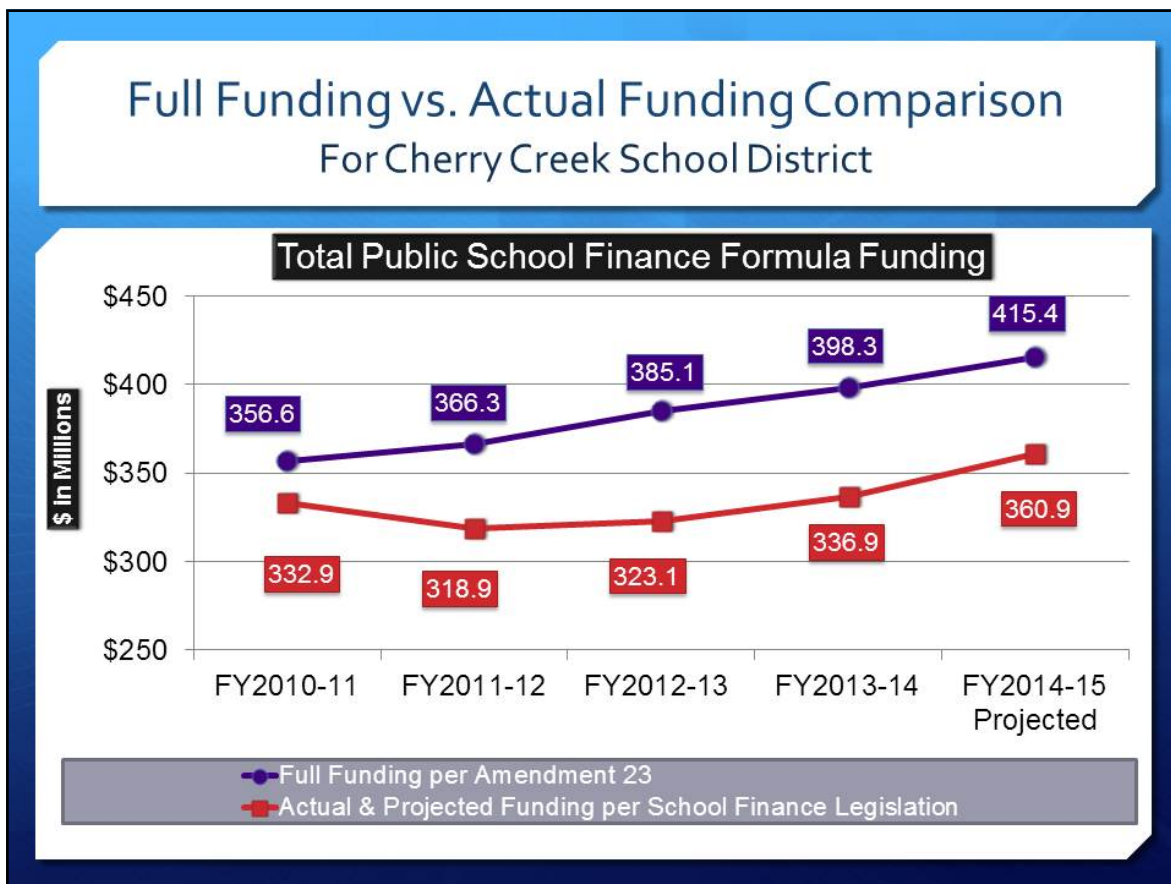


## DISTRICT REVENUE SOURCES GENERAL FUND

### STATE REVENUE – \$257.16 MILLION IN 2014-15

As previously explained in the “Public School Finance Legislation” section, the School Finance Program Funding authorized by the State Legislature for the General Fund is based on a per pupil allocation with adjustment for each district based on personnel, non-personnel, cost-of-living, size, and a “13.13% Negative Factor.” This Negative Factor, enacted through a legislative legal opinion, offsets the Amendment 23 funding formula, which was adopted by voters in 2000. The Colorado Department of Education distributes funding to the state’s 178 school districts based on this allocation. Per pupil funding for Cherry Creek School District is estimated to be \$6,948 for FY2014-15.

Cherry Creek Net Total Program Funding for FY2014-15 is projected to be \$360.9 million, at \$54.5 million below Amendment 23.



The State of Colorado also provides State revenue sources for special education, pupil transportation, gifted and talented programming, vocational education and English Language Acquisition programs.

### FEDERAL REVENUE – \$1.45 MILLION IN 2014-15

The amount shown above is ongoing revenue from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding, received in the General Fund as part of the Build America Bonds program. The FY2014-15 amount is the same as in FY2013-14.



# LOCAL PROPERTY TAXES

## PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENTS

Local tax money goes to the county treasurer who distributes it to each governmental entity in the county. State law sets the property tax assessment rate. Property is reassessed every two years by the Arapahoe County Assessor. In 2014, homeowners will have an assessment rate of 7.96% of the market value of their home, while businesses will have a 29% assessment rate. Property taxes are based on mill rate times the taxable value of property.

**A mill rate of one mill means \$1 of taxes per \$1,000 of taxable assessed value.**

## RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY TAXES

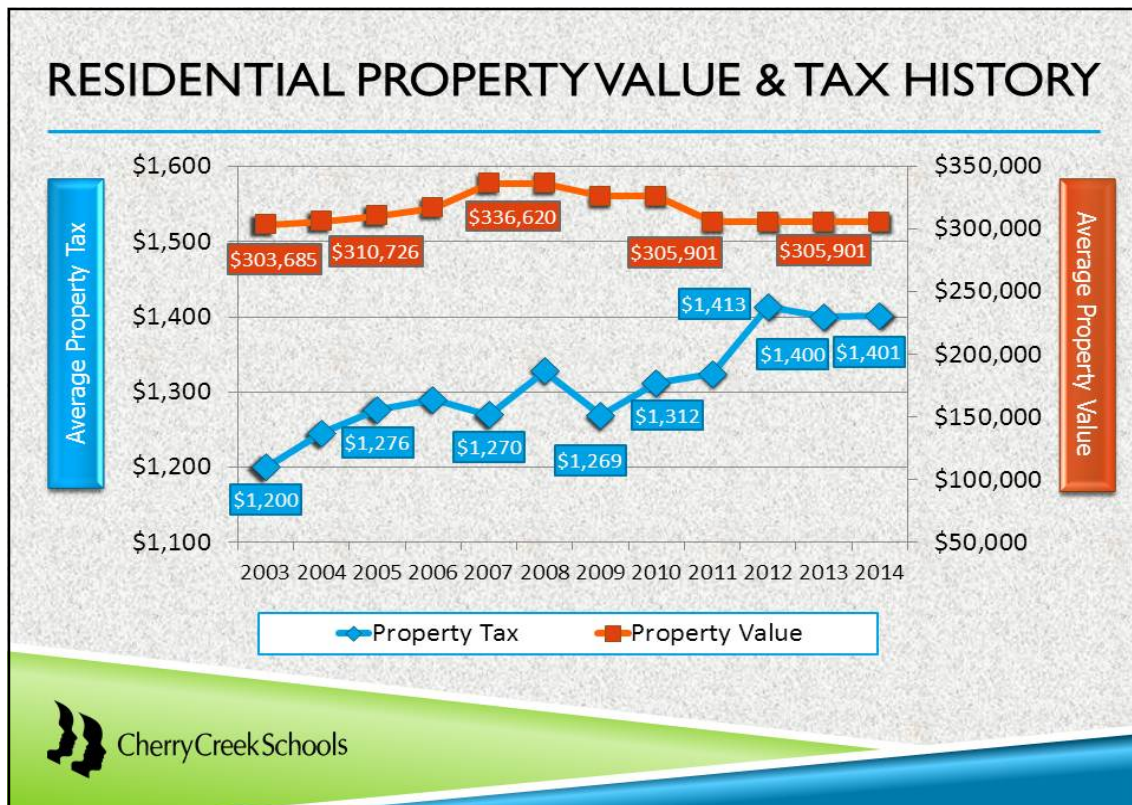
To estimate how much the school district portion of your property tax bill is, use the following formula:

Residential Property Value	X	Assessment Rate 7.96%	X	School Tax Mill Rate - Estimated 57.549 for 2014	/1000=	School Property Tax \$
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General Fund Mill Levy is estimated at **45.863 mills**.  
 Bond Redemption Mill Levy is estimated at **11.686 mills**.  
 Total Mill Levy is estimated at **57.549 mills**.

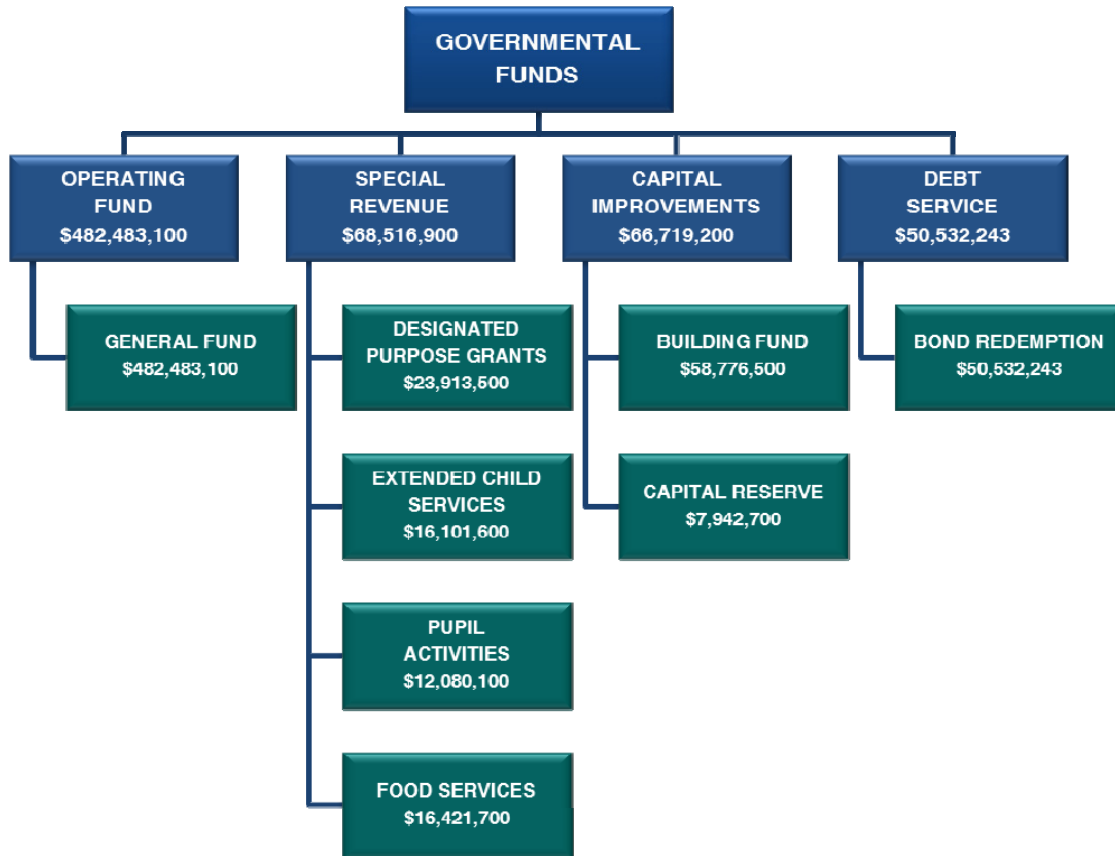
**The determination of the mill levy occurs in December 2014, based on the final certification of assessed value.**

The following graph presents a historical look at the property tax a homeowner pays based on the "average value" of a residence.



# CHERRY CREEK SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET FOR FY2014-15

## BUDGETED EXPENDITURES AND TRANSFERS \$668,251,443



The Cherry Creek School District budget reflects the costs to educate a projected 54,373 students around the District. The funds of the District are classified as Operating, Special Revenue, Capital Improvement and Debt Service. The following describes each fund:

- ◆ **General Fund** pays for day-to-day expenses of running the school system and includes salaries, benefits, supplies, purchased services, transportation, maintenance, and utilities.
- ◆ **Designated Purpose Grants Fund** accounts for the restricted or categorically funded grants; most of the funding comes from the federal government.
- ◆ **Extended Child Services Fund** provides enrichment programs for preschool, kindergarten, before and after school child care, academic summer school, sports camps, and instrumental music.
- ◆ **Pupil Activities Fund** accounts for financial transactions related to certain school-sponsored pupil athletics and activities.
- ◆ **Food Services Fund** provides food services to all District schools. Breakfasts and lunches are served to students and staff and are partially funded by state and federal programs.
- ◆ **Capital Reserve Fund** accounts for the ongoing capital outlay needs of the District.
- ◆ **Building Fund** is the capital improvements fund that accounts for the construction and renovation of facilities with the proceeds from District bonds.
- ◆ **Bond Redemption Fund** is the debt service fund, accounting for property tax revenue to repay the annual principal and interest on outstanding bonds.

# GENERAL FUND BUDGET EXPENDITURES BY ACTIVITY

The largest share of the General Fund, **83 cents out of every dollar**, is allocated to direct and indirect instruction. This includes salaries and benefits paid to teachers, para-educators, school-level administration, and learning support provided by counselors, librarians, nurses, and other professional personnel.

## INSTRUCTION SERVICES



### **DIRECT INSTRUCTION**

Costs associated with the delivery of instructional services to students, which include teachers, supplies, & equipment for regular & special education programs

**69¢**



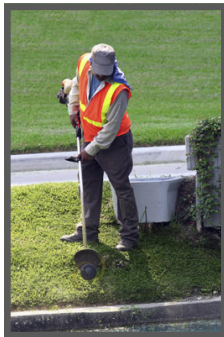
### **INDIRECT INSTRUCTION**

Student support services, instructional staff services, curriculum, staff development, and school-level administration

**14¢**

**83¢**

## OPERATIONS & SUPPORT SERVICES



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### **OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE**

Facility maintenance, operations, utilities, & custodial services

**8¢**

### **TRANSPORTATION**

Bus transportation for students & vehicle maintenance

**4¢**

**17¢**

### **CENTRAL, FISCAL, & COMMUNITY SERVICES**

Fiscal services, county treasurer's fees, purchasing, information systems, community services, interest, & transfers

**4¢**



### **GENERAL ADMINISTRATION**

Board of Education, executive administration, & instructional administration

**1¢**



## DESCRIPTION OF EXPENDITURES BY OBJECT

The six categories of expenditures for the District are listed below.

**SALARIES** in the General Fund alone make up 69.27% of the operating fund budget. Staff salaries are not paid from the Bond Redemption Fund, Capital Finance Corporation, or Capital Reserve Fund.

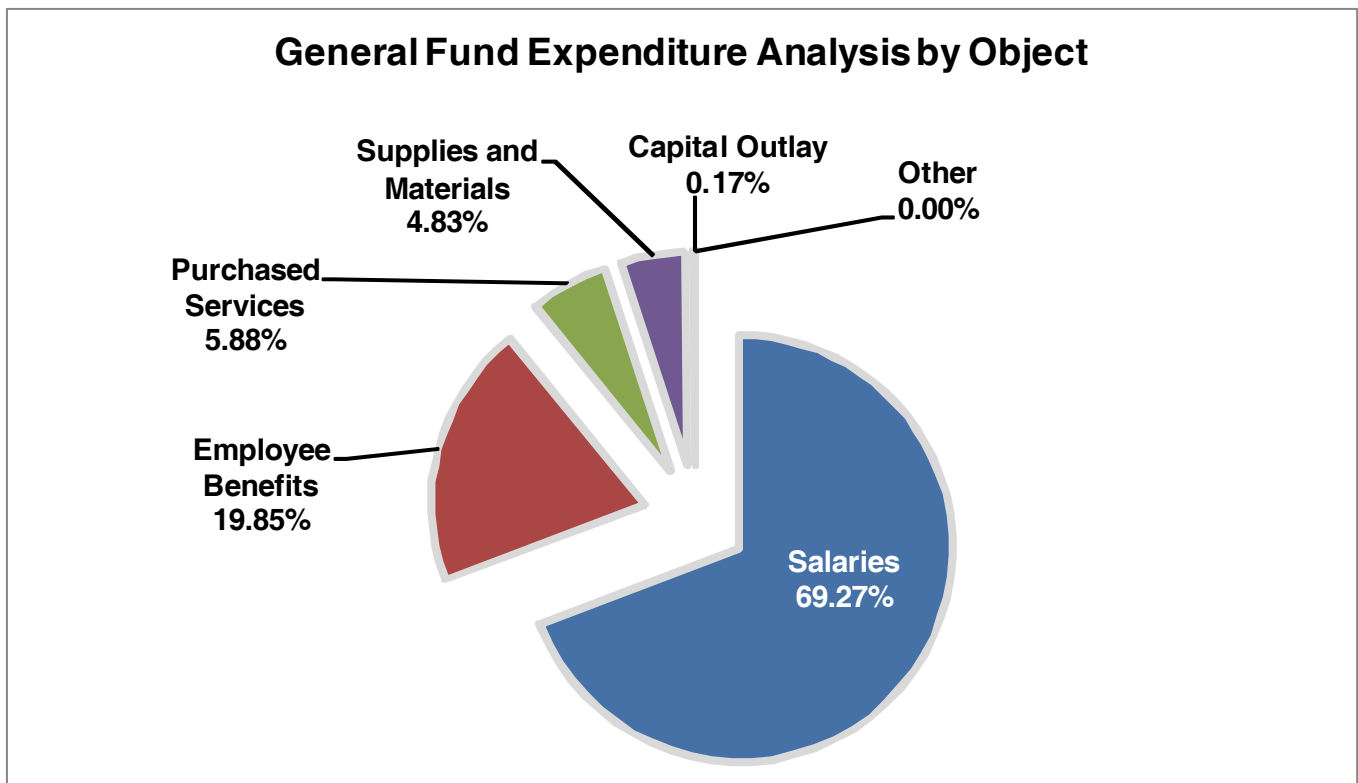
**BENEFITS** consist of District PERA contributions, Medicare, health and life insurance, as well as short and long term disability payments. The PERA employer contribution rate will increase each year to January 2018 when it will be set at 20.15%. Health insurance costs have increased over the past five years and are expected to continue the upward trend. The District contribution for health insurance costs will remain at the same funding level for FY2014-15.

**CAPITAL OUTLAY** includes planned expenditures for renovations of schools and support facilities. The successful \$125 million bond election in November 2012 will finance these projects, including the planned additions to Grandview and Cherokee Trail High Schools.

**PURCHASED SERVICES** comprise payments to outside custodial services, student athletic and activity transportation costs, printing expenses, and payments for professional services provided by outside companies or individuals.

**BOND PRINCIPAL AND INTEREST REPAYMENT** is the repayment of bonds issued by the District to build and renovate schools and other facilities in the District.

**SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS** expenditures include textbooks and library books as well as other classroom supplies.

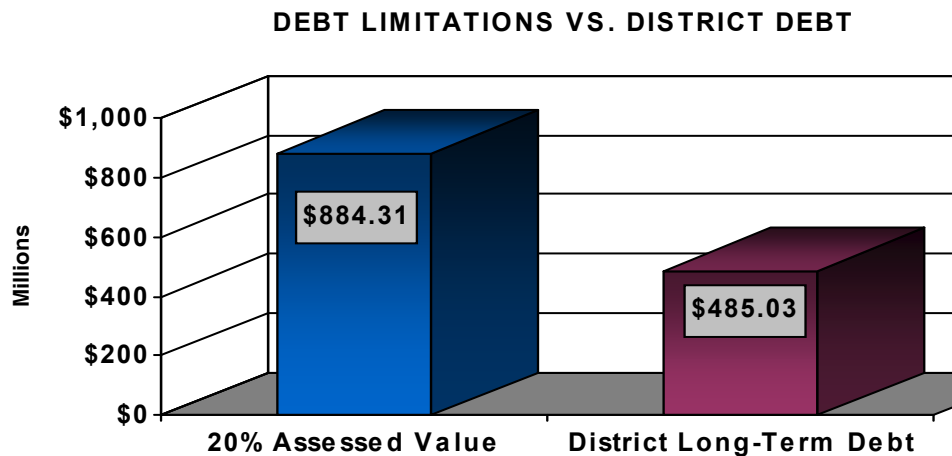


## BONDED GENERAL OBLIGATION DEBT FOR SCHOOL FACILITIES

Funds for building, renovation, and expansion of schools are provided through the issuance of bonded debt. These bonds are authorized by voter approval only and are managed in a separate fund as required by Colorado Law. The District uses the Building Fund for this purpose and provides for debt repayment costs in the Bond Redemption Fund.

**The 1994 school finance legislation includes a limitation on school district bonded debt of:**  
♦ 20% of assessed value

- ♦ The District refers to the 20% of assessed value limit for purposes of debt issuance limits.
- ♦ Under the 20% of assessed value limit, the District debt is approximately 54.8% of the legal debt limit.
- ♦ The following graph represents the legal debt limitations versus the current long-term debt of the District.



## 2012 BOND ISSUE

The District continues to receive support from the community and has been successful in the passage of bond issues to provide funding for construction and renovation of schools and facilities. In November 2012, voters approved the issuance of \$125 million in general obligation school bonds. In December 2012, \$125 million bonds were issued.

**Numerous features are planned for the constructed schools and facilities from the 2012 Bond Issue.**

- ♦ Facility upgrades for additional wings at Cherokee Trail and Grandview High Schools
- ♦ Upgrades to elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools
- ♦ Renovations include energy efficient features, safety, plumbing, fire protection systems, HVAC and environmental systems at over 50 schools
- ♦ Maintenance to carpeting, gym floors, tennis courts, tracks, bleachers, playgrounds, exterior and interior paint
- ♦ Technology for instructional improvement
- ♦ Incorporating the STEM programs in all District high schools:
  - ♦ Instructional/Learning space to meet the identified programming tools
  - ♦ Cutting edge technology integration
  - ♦ An environment that is conducive to accelerated learning
  - ♦ "Green"/environmentally friendly building as an aspect of programming
  - ♦ Responsive to changing technology
  - ♦ Supportive of students' needs
  - ♦ Prepares students for post-secondary and workforce readiness in the 21st century

# CHERRY CREEK SCHOOL DISTRICT ENERGY SAVINGS EFFORTS

The Cherry Creek School District continues its commitment to conservation, energy efficiency, and providing a safe and healthy environment for students and staff members based on the concept of green schools. Our District was named an Energy Star Partner by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for its superior energy efficiency and environmental protection initiatives. Twenty-nine District elementary schools received Energy Star designation for their energy efficiency and conservation efforts, which signifies that the District's energy performance rates among the best across the nation.

## SOME ELEMENTS OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY UTILIZED IN CCSD

### Heating Our Facilities

#### ◆ Solar Panels, Solar Tubes, & Skylights

- Create more natural daylight & warmth to decrease the need for costly electrical lighting & reduce demand for heating

#### ◆ Reflective Roofing

- Roof membrane rejects additional heat gain through the roof and reduces the heat island effect

### Cooling Our Facilities

#### ◆ Ice Storage air conditioning systems

- Makes ice at night to cool during day

#### ◆ Translucent panels over windows

- Reduces heat loss & stabilizes indoor temperature year-round

### Lighting Our Facilities

#### ◆ Converting to More Efficient Electrical Lighting

- Transitioning from T12 to T8 ballasts, reducing the number of ballasts, & transitioning from magnetic to electronic ballasts

### Conserving Energy Usage

#### ◆ Daylight Harvesting

- Daylight harvesting reduces the heating load on the building while reducing electricity usage

### Conserving Water Resources

#### ◆ Minimizing Water Consumption

- Low flow & touch-free fixtures
- Smart Controllers & rain sensors on sprinklers



**MOUNTAIN VISTA ELEMENTARY**

**OPENED FOR PRESCHOOL  
AUGUST 2013**

**OPENING FOR K-5 STUDENTS  
AUGUST 2014**



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Cherry Creek Schools

## ACCOUNTABILITY FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION RESOURCES

The Cherry Creek School District Board of Education is accountable to the community (the taxpayers) for wisely and efficiently using public funds to support District schools. The Board holds the Superintendent responsible for developing and properly managing the District's budget. The State of Colorado also monitors District spending to a certain degree. Federal grants are regulated at the national and state level. Independent auditors, who report their findings to the Board of Education and the public, audit the District's budget and financial condition annually.

The District has been awarded the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) every year since 1994 and the Meritorious Budget Award from the Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO) every year since 1997. In addition, the District has received both the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from GFOA and the Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting from ASBO each year since 1993.

**The financial plan is available for review on the District website or at the following District locations:**

District web site – [www.cherrycreekschools.org/FiscalServices/Budget](http://www.cherrycreekschools.org/FiscalServices/Budget)

LOCATIONS	
Educational Services Center	Auxiliary Services Center
4700 S. Yosemite Street Greenwood Village, CO 80111	4850 S. Yosemite Street Greenwood Village, CO 80111

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## PARTICIPATING IN THE BUDGET PROCESS

Schools are successful only if they have public support. We encourage the Cherry Creek School District Community to get involved. Parents can join their school's Accountability Committee to learn about budget decisions at the school level. All community members are invited to the monthly School Board meetings to share their opinions.

To obtain more information about the Cherry Creek School District's budget process or to find out when public meetings are being held, call 720-554-4475, or access the District's web site at [www.cherrycreekschools.org](http://www.cherrycreekschools.org).

For information on Colorado state education policy and budget, call the Colorado Department of Education at 303-866-6600 or access their web site at <http://www.cde.state.co.us>.







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