



## Littleton Public Schools Legislative Breakfast March 3, 2025 Key Points

Our elected officials need to make long-term, sustainable investments in our schools and in our future workforce.

### **LPS Needs Funding for Students and Teachers**

Colorado has failed to adequately fund K-12 education for decades, resulting in a teacher shortage crisis, severely understaffed schools, and inadequate resources to help students who may be struggling or falling behind. For fifteen years, the state's budget has been propped up by cuts to K-12 education funding with the budget stabilization factor. Colorado students and teachers should not take on the burden of K-12 education funding cuts again, with the proposed LPS *loss of average pupil count funding totaling \$5.7 million annually*.

LPS is doing all it can to increase teacher pay, but it is becoming increasingly difficult to continue to compete with the starting teacher wages in other metro area school districts. LPS is falling behind, which makes it more difficult to recruit and retain highly skilled teachers.

### **Colorado Schools Need Funding for Mental Health Services**

More than one in five school-aged children have experienced worsened mental or emotional health since the pandemic began, but our counselor-to-student ratio hasn't kept pace.

For over a decade, the LPS Board of Education has held that one of its top priorities is increasing the number of mental health professionals in our schools to support students and staff. The LPS Board has committed millions over the past 11 years to this cause and has significantly increased mental health support in both people and programming in our schools, but it is not enough. The state needs to prioritize mental health funding within K-12 education.

### **Colorado Schools Need More Funding for Special Education**

In recent years, the state has provided additional funding for special education, but it is not enough. Public schools serve students with various disabilities and support needs, and without adequate funding from the federal government through IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act), Colorado and local school districts are left to fund special education programming and services on their own.

### **Colorado Schools Need More Career and Tech Ed Funding**

Better funding of our schools will help prepare students for a dynamic and ever-changing job market by helping schools implement quality STEAM education in science, technology, engineering, arts, and math, as well as vocational education and career training.