2017 NSPRA Gold Medallion Entry

Bond/Finance Campaign:

Five Star Needs

Investing in Every Student, Every School, Every Community

Adams 12
Five Star Schools
www.adams12.org/bond

Submitted March 2017 by:

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Additional Background Information
Number of PR/Communication staff: 5
Type of School District: Over 25,000 students
SYNOPSIS
The success of Adams 12 Five Star Schools’ 2016 Bond Communication Plan was built upon comprehensive research, intentional planning based on research findings, effective community engagement and ongoing evaluation of the plan in changing behavior.

In terms of its 50-plus buildings, the district was at a crossroads. The last time voters passed a bond to invest in school buildings was 2004. The senior class of 2017 was in kindergarten back then. The district had more than $90 million in building components that were past their service life such as furnaces, roofs and sewers. Existing schools could not absorb the increase in student enrollment - 4,200 additional students since the last bond.

This need prompted the district to explore placing a $350 million bond proposal (largest in district history) on the November 2016 ballot.

The bond communication plan started more than a year before Election Day. The plan - before, during and after the election - was seamlessly integrated so that even before a grassroots campaign started, community leaders were well aware of the district’s research, engagement and communication efforts. The plan included:

- Conducting comprehensive formal and informal, primary and secondary research.
- Analyzing the research to develop a strategic plan with key messages targeted to specific audiences.
- Utilizing communication channels and tactics that primary audiences respond to – web, social media, social pressure, canvassing, media relations, direct-mail, print, face-to-face meetings, telephone town halls and school tours.
- Periodically evaluating the effectiveness of the plan and making necessary adjustments.

The challenges included:
- Making the needs case.
- Motivating volunteers and supporters to mobilize.
- Overcoming "legalese" ballot language.

The 2016 Bond passed, gaining 62% voter-approval - the highest in district history. The communication efforts have not stopped with the passage of the bond. A comprehensive communication plan for the implementation of the bond program is underway.
SUMMARY

The State of Colorado has no dedicated funding source to support capital needs within school districts. As a result, Colorado’s 178 school districts must rely on other sources of funding to address building needs. The most common funding mechanism is a bond issue that must be approved by a majority of local voters.

Adams 12 Five Star Schools had a track record of passing bonds during the years with the most dramatic growth in student enrollment - the early 2000s. The district was growing by about 1,000 students a year and passed a $180 million bond in both 2000 (58% voter-approval) and 2004 (53.5% voter-approval). Then the Great Recession of the late 2000s hit.

The district continued to grow in enrollment, albeit at a slower rate, and the district’s capital infrastructure continued to age, leading to significant growth in deferred maintenance - building components that are past their service life such as furnaces, roofs and sewers. The district was unsuccessful in passing an $80 million bond in 2008 (47.7% voter-approval) - although an override for $9.9 million annually in operations narrowly passed - and was again unsuccessful in passing a $220 million bond in 2014 (40.5% voter-approval).

Moving forward, the district wanted to leverage the positive views of the district and its ongoing relationship and trust-building work to develop a bond plan that reflected the community’s values and priorities for its schools.

The primary challenge of this campaign was **making the needs case**. While supportive of schools, the Five Star community is tax averse. In a live telephone survey of voters in the Five Star District, only 33% said the district “definitely” needs additional funding, while another 40% only said “probably”. The research allowed the district to identify and debunk myths around funding, as well as understand what building investments the community most-intensely supported.

The second challenge involved **motivating volunteers and key supporters to mobilize** a grassroots campaign in support of the issue. The most recent bond campaign (2014) had relied on a small group of staff and parent volunteers that had not been organizing, recruiting and planning in advance of the issue being placed on the ballot. The district also faced a supportive but civically disengaged parent population. Research showed only about **50 percent of parents were registered to vote**. It was clear to have success at the ballot box the district and grassroots campaign had to set civic engagement goals.

The last challenge was **overcoming confusing and “legalese” ballot language**. TABOR or the Taxpayer Bill of Rights puts restrictions on how tax and debt issues are worded on the ballot. While the bond would result in a “no tax rate increase”, TABOR does not allow for such wording since the ballot issue involves issuing additional debt. While the no tax rate increase was part of the message development, it was not a primary message. Research showed support would come from “value” voters, not “cost” voters. Voters who value investments in education and see a need were the strongest supporters over those looking at the cost of the measure.

Planning for the potential of a bond issue on the November 2016 ballot began more than a year before Election Day. Research, community engagement and message priming were ongoing from September 2015 - August 2016. The school board placed the bond issue on the ballot on Aug. 24, 2016. From that time until Election Day, the district’s informational communication about the bond complemented the efforts of the well-organized grassroots advocacy campaign.

**Just two years after the district only earned 40.5% voter-approval for the 2014 bond at $220 million, the district earned 62% voter-approval (highest in district history) for the 2016 bond at $350 million.**
After the bond issue loss of 2014, a post-election informal survey along with a content analysis indicated:

- Social media was important in connecting with and mobilizing strongest supporters.
- Canvassing neighborhoods (face-to-face), providing literature was effective.
- Must communicate clear and compelling needs case early and often.
- Broad-based and organized coalition of support (parents, staff, business leaders) essential.
- Confusion over ballot language and between two ballot issues - bond with no tax rate increase and override for operations with tax rate increase.

Registered voter analysis showed:

- Voter turnout projected to be high in 2016 presidential election, but percentage of parents registered to vote was low, about 50%.
- Parent share of the electorate in 2014 was 19%, and projected to be 15% in 2016 due to more people voting across other demographics.
- Analysis showed need to register more parents and turn them out to vote.

A formal random sample live phone survey of district voters was conducted April 2016.

- Positive perceptions of the school district.
  - Voters had positive views of education quality.
  - Majority expressed confidence in the school district to do the right thing.
- Despite positive views, voters unsure if district needs more funding (33% say “definitely”, 40% “probably”).
- Support for a bond is broad (60%), but shallow with only 29% indicating “definite” support.
- When also putting an override for operations on the ballot, support for the bond drops.
- Messages focused on a bond were most persuasive.
  - 48% found expanding career and technical education opportunities very persuasive (#1 performing message).
  - 46% believed addressing overcrowding in schools was very persuasive (#2 performing message).
  - 44% indicated improving school safety was very persuasive (#4 performing message).

Annual formal employee survey through the National Center for School Leadership administered January 2016 (benchmarked nationally to other school districts).

- Results met or exceeded national benchmark data in key areas.
- 80% believe schools and district make meeting student needs the highest priority (78% nationally).
- 74% would recommend district to families with children (74% nationally).
- 76% indicate leadership is accessible (74% nationally).
- 74% believe overall information is communicated effectively (72% nationally).
- 77% say they work in a positive, professional environment (75% nationally).
- 74% are confident district will successfully address future educational challenges (72% nationally).

Parent survey through the National Center for School Leadership administered February 2016 (benchmarked nationally to other school districts).

- Over 80% say their school is welcoming and safe, and that staff is courteous, committed and enthusiastic about teaching - all an increase over the last survey administration in 2012.
- Nearly 80%, an increase from 2012, indicated their child’s school was well-regarded in the community.
- 16% percent more parents than in 2012 said their school plans regular family events.
- While parents believe overall communication is effective, the percentage of parents who feel well-informed about their child’s school life dipped below the national average.

The district engaged a citizen-led committee called the Long Range Planning Advisory Committee (LRPAC) over an eight-month period from September 2015 through April 2016. Their task was to
prioritize the nearly $500 million in capital needs within the district. After developing three “Drivers of Need”, the LRPAC made its recommendation (summary/full report) to the Superintendent and Board of Education in April 2016, which included:

- Fix schools with most critical maintenance needs now to ensure safe, comfortable and dry buildings and avoid increased costs later.
- Address current overcrowding through new schools and additions.
- Expand in-demand programming such as career and technical education.
- Make equitable improvements, impacting all students and communities.

### Analysis/Planning

- Research indicated the district must make a clear and compelling needs case for a bond. To prime the issue, the district communications team started with the first phase of its plan that focused on building an understanding around school funding through a campaign called Funding 101. This included touchpoints with key influencers through the Five Star Leadership Academy (FSLA) which is made up of more than 50 parents and community members who come together on a monthly basis to learn more about the operations of the district and engage on important education issues. The campaign also provided valuable tools to a newly-formed grassroots organization, Adams 12 Community Action Network (Adams 12 CAN), that advocates for the district’s schools and students.

- In January 2016, the district engaged a strategic thought partner to inform development of the second phase, a civic engagement plan focused on the facility needs of the district that would begin in late March and run through the summer. The engagement was branded as “Five Star Needs”. It focused on two of the key challenges associated with gaining voter-approval for a bond: building the needs case and mobilizing parents to register to vote. School principals, Adams 12 CAN, FSLA and LRPAC all utilized a Five Star Needs toolkit developed by the communications team.
  - In 2014, the district’s challenge wasn’t parents who voted against the ballot issues, it was the parents who did not vote.
  - Civic engagement goal was to increase voter registrations by 25% per school.

- Throughout the spring and into the summer of 2016, the communications team built and implemented a detailed social media calendar and campaign to support the needs case and build pride around the academic successes of the district and its financial stewardship. The campaign used the following hashtags: #FiveStarNeeds, #FacilityFriday and #FiveStarFact.

- In late July, the third and final phase, the District’s Bond Proposal Communication Plan (Complete Toolkit) was complete and shared with key staff such as department leaders and school principals, as well as volunteers with the grassroots organization Adams 12 CAN. The district set the following goals:
  - Ensure school leaders know how the bond will address critical needs at their schools and arm them with supports to implement a cascading communication plan within their school community.
  - Connect every school with parent volunteers from Adams 12 CAN.
  - Provide easy access to information about the bond proposal, including details of the investments to be made in every school within the district.
  - Ensure rapid response to questions or issues.
  - Provide face-to-face opportunities at Back-to-School events for parents to check their voter registration online and learn about their school’s proposed investments.

- Leaders of Adams 12 CAN registered a volunteer citizen’s committee in July, Adams 12 CAN for Kids, and created an advocacy campaign. The campaign repeated the district’s key messages, raised $137,000, developed a network of 1,500 members in their database and enlisted 300 parent/community volunteers.

- The Board of Education passed a resolution to place a $350 million bond with no tax rate increase on the ballot at a special meeting on Aug. 24, 2016. At this time, the Fair Campaign Practices Act kicked in and the district could only provide information on Ballot Issue 3D and had to include both arguments for and arguments against to be in compliance with state law.
Communications Tactics/Tools

Five Star Needs Phase - March 2016 through Summer 2016
- **March 25:** Community Q&A with Superintendent Chris Gdowski on Twitter using #AskSuptGdowski.
- **April 20:** Superintendent letter to parents/community about funding and budget concerns (including video intro).
- **April 11-April 22:** Community online survey about critical operational and facility needs.
- **April 13:** Long Range Planning Advisory Committee presents recommendation of priority needs to Superintendent and Board of Education.
- **April 26:** Over 1,000 community members join a Telephone Town Hall on critical needs.
- **May:** Every district parent receives in the mail a facility scorecard sheet for their school that identifies areas of critical need. What schools would specifically receive if a measure passes will be communicated in August.
- **May:** District’s quarterly publication, Five Star Journal, features pullout section “Funding 101”. Paper distributed to all families and to high-traffic public buildings such as city halls and recreation centers.
- **April through May:** Schools run voter registration awareness campaigns at end-of-school-year events.
- **March through Summer:** Comprehensive social media campaign busts myths about school funding, shares facility needs and celebrates district accomplishments.

Bond Proposal Phase - August 2016 through Election Day 2016
- **Early August:** Mailed 61,500 "Five Star Needs: The Road to the 2016 Bond Proposal" to all households with registered voters highlighting The Need, What You Told Us, The Plan and What’s Next. This was the district’s most-referenced source of information that news media, key influencers and the campaign used for key messages.
- **Early August:** Spent a day with school principals working through a bond proposal toolkit that they would in turn share with their respective school communities. It included voter registration data for each school, principal letters and back to school event checklists.
- **Early August:** Launched the district’s bond proposal website, www.adams12.org/bond, a one-stop information source for The Need, What You Told Us, The Plan and What’s Next. The website included the investment flyer for each of the district’s more than 50 schools, a FAQ section and contact form for community members to connect with the district about bond-related questions or concerns.
- **Throughout August:** Every back-to-school event had a volunteer from Adams 12 CAN help parents check to make sure their voter registration was up-to-date online and to share with them the proposed bond investments for their child’s school.
- **September:** The center spread of the Five Star Journal, distributed to all parents in the district and placed in high-traffic public buildings, featured The Road to the 2016 Bond Proposal.

Campaign/Advocacy Phase - August 25 through Election Day
- Direct-mail pieces used the district’s key messages around expanding career and technical education opportunities, building new schools and additions to address overcrowding, and investing in existing schools to provide a safe, comfortable and dry learning environment.
- Nearly 500 volunteers participated in a weekend canvass of every precinct in the school district, talking face-to-face with voters and providing information.
- Phone banking resulted in personal conversations with 1,000s of voters.
- Volunteers used social media to apply “social pressure on parents to make sure they checked the voter list to see if their ballot had been turned in yet since it was an all mail-in election.
Evaluation

- Bond Issue 3D earned **62% voter-approval**. It was record-level support for any funding question in the history of the district and exceeded the district’s pre-election survey prediction.
- The **bond passed in 112 out of 114 precincts** in the district demonstrating broad geographic support. This reflected voter sentiment that the ballot issue mirrored the needs of the entire district and its nearly 39,000 students. “Investing in every student, every school, every community” resonated with voters.
- Data showed **early voting brought out some of the bond issue’s strongest supporters**. Much of this was attributed to social pressure tactics used in the campaign and discovered through phone-banking, canvassing and turn-out tracker.
- **Local newspapers were favorable**, using many of the district’s key messages.
- Social media was a major catalyst for sharing information and building a strong network of support.
  - The #FiveStarFact campaign (**as an example**) was not only a way to inform the community but also to provide easy ways for supporters to share facts and important information with their own networks.
  - Social media was also used to share updates such as the letter from the superintendent detailing the $350 million proposal, which reached over 3,000 people with more than 25 shares on Facebook alone.
  - Finally, after confirmation of a successful outcome, a victory celebration video reached over 20,000 people with nearly 9,000 views on Facebook alone.
  - Over the past year, the district’s social media network on Facebook has **increased by 97.2%** due to greater engagement throughout the bond process, which will be a catalyst for engaging community throughout the implementation of the bond program.
- Small group **face-to-face meetings** with key staff and parents (school principals, parent leaders, bus drivers, food service and before- and after-school childcare staff) generated confidence and excitement in sharing information and encouraging others to vote.
- Strong engagement post-election supports future ballot issues. **Regular community updates** on the bond implementation are building trust, accountability and transparency.
Registered Voter Analysis:

### Demographic Comparison (2014-2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>2014 Polling Proj. %</th>
<th>2014 Actual #</th>
<th>2014 Actual Vote %</th>
<th>2016 Proj. %</th>
<th>2016 Actual #</th>
<th>Standard Deviation of Vote Share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2,589</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4,584</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0.28%</td>
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<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>7,457</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>16,096</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>1.55%</td>
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<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10,202</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>19,632</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>1.09%</td>
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<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>11,954</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>20,266</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>2.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>12,710</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>18,661</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>1.42%</td>
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<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>12,829</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>19,008</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>1.31%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Under 45</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>20,248</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>40,312</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>2.60%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Over 45</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>37,493</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>57,935</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>57,741</td>
<td></td>
<td>98,247</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>2014 Proj. %</th>
<th>2014 Actual #</th>
<th>2014 Actual Vote %</th>
<th>2016 Proj. %</th>
<th>2016 Actual #</th>
<th>Standard Deviation of Vote Share</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>33,549</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>0.40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>29,418</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>0.82%</td>
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<tr>
<td>No R-D</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>35,280</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>0.92%</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>98,247</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likely Parent (Model)</th>
<th>Nov-14</th>
<th>Current</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>57,741</td>
<td>98,247</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adams 12 Parent (Match)</th>
<th>Nov-14</th>
<th>Current</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registered</td>
<td>17,134</td>
<td>17,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voted(ing)/Turnout of Reg. Parents</td>
<td>10,946</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adams 12 Turnout Share of Vote</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parents Registration Rate</th>
<th>Nov-14</th>
<th>Current</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registered/Parent Reg%</td>
<td>17,134</td>
<td>17,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voted(ing)/Turnout of All Parents</td>
<td>10,946</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Parents</td>
<td>39,378</td>
<td>40,515</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal Setting</th>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registration Goal</td>
<td></td>
<td>28,361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New/Updated Registrants</td>
<td></td>
<td>~11,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnout Goal</td>
<td></td>
<td>24,390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projected Share of the Electorate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Voter data from district precincts in 2014 used to compare with projected voter data in 2016. Later used to set voter registration goals.
Live Phone Survey Data:

Executive Summary: Bond

Though support for the bond is broad, it is very shallow. On its own, 60% say they are inclined to support a $298 million bond. However, only 29% of voters say that they would “definitely” support the bond measure with nearly as many (21%) saying they would definitely oppose. This weak intensity extends to young voters and parents.

When sharing a ballot with the mill levy, support for the bond drops. When paired with the $5m mill levy, voters abandon the bond in favor of the mill levy; only 50% say they would vote for the bond while 58% say they would vote for the mill levy. When paired with the $15m option, bond support slips to 57%.

A majority express confidence in the school district, including 61% of parents.

While a majority are inclined to believe their schools need additional funding, only 33% see a “definite” need.

Messages in support of the mill levy and bond are broadly appealing.

Data from a formal survey of a random sample of district voters revealing positive views of the district and support, though shallow, for a bond. Since support for a bond dropped if an override was also placed on the ballot, the decision was made to ONLY go for a bond.
The Long Range Planning Advisory Committee (LRPAC), made up of parents and community members, developed three “drivers of need” to help prioritize the facility and maintenance needs throughout the district.
# Long Range Planning Advisory Committee Needs Prioritization | 2015-16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Cost Estimate*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Facilities/Maintenance: Priority List #1</td>
<td>Fixing priority maintenance needs that keep our children safe, comfortable and dry</td>
<td>$57,173,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Safety &amp; Security: Priority List #1</td>
<td>Replace obsolete security cameras, DVRs; Provide consistent card access, lockout, lockdown in all schools</td>
<td>$4,400,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>New School: Anthem P-8</td>
<td>A new P-8 school to help address overcrowding in north part of district</td>
<td>$47,760,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>IT: Priority List #1</td>
<td>Replace old phone system across district, Technology refresh (computers, smart boards, etc.)</td>
<td>$14,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Pay off 2015 Certificate of Participation</td>
<td>Pay off existing COP w/ Bond money to free up around $1.8M/yr of operating funds</td>
<td>$28,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Expansion: Career &amp; Tech Ed (CTE)</td>
<td>New facility to offer expanded programming for students</td>
<td>$18,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Safety &amp; Security: Priority List #2</td>
<td>Classroom-level panic buttons in 3,000 classrooms</td>
<td>$4,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Innovation/Instructional Upgrades</td>
<td>$200-600K for each school to upgrade instructional environment at their discretion</td>
<td>$13,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Additions: Cotton Creek &amp; Arapahoe Ridge</td>
<td>Replace 14 oldest mobiles classrooms (32yrs, 18yrs) and address overcrowding</td>
<td>$6,368,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>IT: Priority List #2</td>
<td>New Dark Fiber network, replace control systems for facility management, Technology refresh</td>
<td>$38,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Expansion: Early Childhood Education Center</td>
<td>New facility to serve over 200 students</td>
<td>$6,800,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Facilities/Maintenance: Priority List #3</td>
<td>Building renovations at 21 schools including specials renovations &amp; interior maintenance</td>
<td>$73,164,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Facilities/Maintenance: Priority List #4</td>
<td>Building exterior maintenance, Five Star Stadium &amp; Studio School renovations</td>
<td>$36,784,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>IT: Priority List #3</td>
<td>Upgrading districtwide wireless network</td>
<td>$2,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>New School: Lewis Pointe P-8</td>
<td>New school to address growth in district</td>
<td>$47,760,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Facilities/Maintenance: Priority List #5</td>
<td>Playgrounds, High School turf fields, aesthetics, future maintenance needs</td>
<td>$66,176,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Land Purchases</td>
<td>Early Childhood Edu. Center, Potential future school in NorthPark, Future Elementary School</td>
<td>$7,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Expansion: Studio School</td>
<td>Auditorium, new art/music/dance space (if not achieved through #13)</td>
<td>$7,500,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Costs are estimates and are subject to change

This list is a summary of the Long Range Planning Advisory Committee’s recommendation to the Adams 12 Five Star Schools Board of Education. Using this recommendation and other data and feedback, the Board of Education will make a final decision on ballot initiatives in August 2016.

After meeting for a year, the Long Range Planning Advisory Committee made a final recommendation to the board of education prioritizing the needs in the district and recommending a bond to address them.
In order to achieve community buy-in, clarifying state and local funding challenges was needed. The Funding 101 website walked through how public education is funded and debunked myths around funding concerns such as marijuana taxes.
“Building Awareness of Five Star Needs”:

**TALKING POINTS: Building Awareness**

**Key Dates and Talking Points**

**“Building Awareness of Five Star Needs” - Key Districtwide Dates for Spring 2016**

Spring 2016 is a time of building awareness of the needs in our district, both from state funding decreases and facility improvements. The fall will be more of a campaign season advocating for a ballot measure the Board of Education decides on in August.

- **March 25:** Community Q&A with Chris Gdowski on Twitter using #AskSuptGdowski. Friday, noon to 1 p.m.
- **April:** Chris Gdowski letter to parents/community about state and budget concerns (including video intro)
- **April 11 – April 22:** Community online survey about critical operational and facility needs: [www.adams12.org/FiveStarNeeds](http://www.adams12.org/FiveStarNeeds)
- **April 13:** Long Range Planning Advisory Committee (LRPAC) presents recommendation of priority needs to Board of Education and Superintendent
- **April 26:** Community Telephone Town-Hall on Critical Needs: [www.adams12.org/FiveStarNeeds](http://www.adams12.org/FiveStarNeeds)
- **May:** Every district parent receives in the mail a facility scorecard sheet for their school that identifies areas of critical need. What schools would specifically receive if a measure passes will be communicated in the fall.
- **Late August/Early September:** Board of Education takes action on recommendation to place an issue(s) on the November 2016 ballot.

**Five Star Needs Talking Points**

**State Funding:**
- Even though the economy is growing, limited state funding is putting pressure on all Colorado schools, increasing the need for additional funding resources.
  - State cuts to education through the “negative factor” mean we will receive $959 less per student than we should, which results in a $39.9 million cut to Adams 12 Five Star Schools.
  - Since the state’s “negative factor” was created in Fiscal Year 2009-2010, our schools have lost $251.2 million in funding.
  - See the “State and District Funding 101” flyer for detailed information on TABOR, School Finance Act, Negative Factor, our state budget and district general fund, etc.
- On top of these funding limitations, the state does not provide funding for building schools. Capital for building new schools or repairing old ones only come through Bonds.
- See the “Funding Mythbusters” flyer for myths about the marijuana tax and housing market increases.

**District Funding:**
- Current budget projections only show a one percent increase to education funding for 2016-17 school year, resulting in a $10-15 million cut affecting operations costs for this year alone.
- Even though the state is not “cutting” K-12 funding, a 1 percent increase does not cover the cost of inflation or rising costs for health care and PERA, competitive salaries and increased expenses for nearly everything but gas.
- Another concern for our school budgets is a decline in enrollment from previous years. Even though school districts are facing enrollment declines of 50-100 students for next year, resulting in the loss of $250,000 in state funding, the real concern is the result of declining birth rates and kindergarten enrollment; some families out of our community; and the aging of some of our older families. As a system, we’re projecting a net decline of 75-100 students, which would require additional funds from enrollment growth to soften the pain of the negative factor.
- Overcrowding: Several schools are overcrowded, leading to a lack of space to most effectively teach students.
- Over inflation: Other school districts are seeing inflation or rising costs for health care and PERA, competitive salaries and increased expenses for nearly everything but gas. See the “Funding FAQ” flyer about information on district reserves and cutting administration costs.
- Operational Costs:
  - Innovative Programming: Lack of funding has prevented technology upgrades to keep our learning current and our teachers effective.
  - Schools need education resources like presentation walls and furniture specifically tailored to promote collaborative learning. Lack of funding has prevented technology upgrades to keep our learning current.
- Innovations: Adams 12 Five Star Schools has more than $90 million in deferred maintenance, beams, drafty buildings, mold issues, etc.
- Aging Buildings: Adams 12 Five Star Schools has more than $90 million in deferred maintenance, beams, drafty buildings, mold issues, etc.
- Bond/Override History:
  - Our last Bond was in 2004 – more than a decade ago. The last time we passed a Bond was in 2008 and both in 2014.
  - See the “Bond/Override History” flyer for detailed information on where the money was spent
- Voter registration:
  - According to voter records, only 43% of the parents in our district are registered voters.
  - To reach our goal, we need to increase our voters at each school by 25%.
  - See the “Voter Registration” flyer to learn how to do this at your school.
- Other ways to encourage parent/community participation:
  - Talk with your neighbors at soccer games, BBQs or community events.
  - Talk with your principal about having a community or PTSA conversation on funding concerns with your school.
  - Write the Adams 12 Five Star Board of Education or your state senator or representative.


**Detailed funding information:** [www.adams12.org/Funding101](http://www.adams12.org/Funding101)

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This informational handout was given to principals and staff members detailing the high-level overview of the Five Star Needs messaging, talking points and timelines.
This communications plan was shared with key staff and volunteers to ensure key dates and opportunities were realized, from principal emails to back-to-school nights.
In order to receive community input, a mailer was sent to all district families, in English and Spanish, inviting them to participate in an online survey and/or telephone town hall.

Facility Scorecards:

Find the specific scores for each school here:

FACILITY SCORECARD
Stukey Elementary School
11850 Grant Dr., Northglenn, CO 80233
Telephone: 303-726-6890
ADAMS 12 FIVE STAR SCHOOLS

OVERALL CONDITION RATING

BUILDING STRUCTURE
Includes structural supports both in the basement and above ground, which could fail and cause major damage or collapse. Also includes non-structural items such as windows, doors, and partitions.

BUILDING INTERIORS
Includes non-structural items inside the building including doors, floors, walls, stairs, ceilings, etc.

BUILDING SYSTEMS
Includes heating and cooling systems, while others are overcrowded.

EQUIPMENT & FURNISHINGS
Includes items that have a life span which is ending and have low functionality, which may be classified as outdated.

VALUE INDEX

SAFETY & SECURITY
Includes all aspects of school safety, from security cameras to safety drills.

SCHOOL GROUNDS
Includes playgrounds, sidewalks, and parking lots.

432 CAPACITY

411 2015 ENROLLMENT

$0.6 MILLION

$1.1 MILLION

$2.0 MILLION

Last known major repairs over $250,000: 2005
Addition: 1981
Established in 1967  |  43,461 sq. ft.

In English and Spanish
Quick five-minute survey about your values and priorities when addressing district needs.

Take the survey and sign up for the town hall: www.adams12.org/FiveStarNeeds

In the spring, before a bond was placed on the November ballot, a mailer was sent to all families to outline the needs at their particular school. Each school got an overall rating, categorical ratings and an estimated cost of repair. Included with the scorecard was a personal message from the school principal.
Funding 101 Pullout Section:

Aligned to the Funding 101 website, the quarterly district newspaper featured a center pullout section devoted to explaining funding challenges.

Social Media Campaign:

Focused around the Five Star Needs of the district, various social media campaigns throughout the spring and summer provided information and narratives on our funding and facility concerns using hashtags such as: #FiveStarNeeds, #FiveStarFact and #FacilityFriday.
Road to the Bond Mailer:

Five Star Needs

The Road to the 2016 Bond Proposal

Fiscally Responsible:

1500 E. 128th Ave.
Thornton, CO 80241

The Plan

Investing in Every Student, Every School, Every Community

Considering the work of the Long Range Planning Advisory Committee (LRPAC), and a telephone town hall.

In Spring 2016, the LRPAC engaged with parents and community members through a number of avenues such as community-based meetings, an online survey, social media - through a variety of media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. The Plan reflects the community’s priorities.

The Long Range Planning Advisory Committee (LRPAC) met 11 times from Fall 2015 through June 2016. A bond is a voter-approved funding tool that receives approval by a majority vote of voters.

The bond proposal would result in NO TAX RATE INCREASE because the district has paid down and refinanced existing debt.

Road to the Bond Mailer:

TECHNOLOGY
EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
AGING BUILDINGS

We spent the year engaging with parents and community members to discuss our immediate and longer-term needs. In Spring 2016, the LRPAC engaged with parents and community members through a number of avenues such as community-based meetings, an online survey, social media - through a variety of media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. The Plan reflects the community’s priorities.

The Long Range Planning Advisory Committee (LRPAC) met 11 times from Fall 2015 through June 2016. A bond is a voter-approved funding tool that receives approval by a majority vote of voters.

The bond proposal would result in NO TAX RATE INCREASE because the district has paid down and refinanced existing debt.

What’s Next?

VISIT WWW.ADAMS12.ORG/BOND

Five Star Proud

We’re 1 of 73 districts nationwide who’ve moved to a bond plan that reflects the community’s priorities.

What You Told Us

Parents, teachers, students and community members participated in the Five Star Needs Survey. Additional statistics from the survey:

32% Extremely Important
26% Important
95.32%

The need reflects the community’s priorities.

In 2004, the voters approved a $180M bond and saved $25.6 million (when the last bond was passed).

2016 GRADUATES

$100M

In 2010, the voters approved a $200M bond and earned over $18 million in scholarships.

OVER THE PAST DECADE

HISPANIC GRADUATION RATES

SAFETY & SECURITY

Founded in 1954, Adams 12 Five Star Schools is one of the oldest and largest school districts in Colorado. With over 30,000 students and a deep commitment to student success, Adams 12 Five Star Schools is dedicated to providing high-quality education for all.

Sixty years later, Adams 12 Five Star Schools is proud to serve Broomfield, Federal Heights, Northglenn, Thornton and Westminster.

Five Star Needs

ADAMS 12 FIVE STAR SCHOOLS

Voter Registration Data

As of August 3, 2016

School Name

Parents

Registered

Arapahoe Ridge Elementary

50%

Centennial Elementary

36%

Century Middle School

55%

Cherry Drive Elementary

38%

Coronado Hills Elementary

18%

Cotton Creek Elementary

54%

Coyote Ridge Elementary School

77%

Crossroads Alternative School

45%

District Preschool

36%

Eagleview Elementary

59%

Federal Heights Elementary

08%

Gateway to College

39%

Glacier Peak Elementary

45%

Global Village Academy

28%

Hillcrest Elementary

21%

Horizon High School

56%

Hulstrom K-8

67%

Hunters Glen Elementary

54%

Independence Academy Program

43%

Legacy High School

64%

Leroy Elementary

27%

Malley Drive Elementary

35%

McWane Elementary

16%

Meridian Elementary

71%

Mountain Range High

54%

Mountain View Elementary

57%

North Mor Elementary

26%

North Star Elementary

12%

Northglenn High School

33%

Northglenn Middle School

26%

Outside Placement

52%

Pathways

34%

Pathways Extensions

34%

Prairie Hills Elementary

57%

Prospect Ridge Academy

66%

Riverdale Elementary

33%

Rocky Mountain Elementary

19%

Rocky Top Middle School

68%

Total percentage of parents who are registered to vote in the Five Star District: 46%

School Name

Parents

Registered

Shadow Ridge Middle School

45%

Silver Creek Elementary

67%

Silver Hills Middle School

42%

Skyview Elementary

38%

Stargate Charter School

64%

Stellar Elementary

38%

STEMLaunch

25%

Stukey Elementary

24%

Tarver Elementary

54%

The International School at TM

18%

The Studio School

51%

Thornton Elementary

19%

Thornton High School

29%

Vantage Point High School

39%

Vista View

25%

Westgate Charter School

52%

Westlake Middle School

63%

Westview Elementary

32%

Woodglen Elementary

41%

Five Star Needs

ADAMS 12 FIVE STAR SCHOOLS

Voter Registration Data

As of August 3, 2016

Total percentage of parents who are registered to vote in the Five Star District: 46%

Road to the Bond Mailer:

Mailed to every household with registered voters who reside in district boundaries, this mailer walked the voter through The Need, What You Told Us, The Plan and What’s Next.

Voter Registration Data for Principals:

Voter registration data was given to every principal revealing the percentage of parents registered to vote at each school. The goal was to increase by 25% at each school.
Back to School Night Checklist:

Each school hosts a back-to-school night so school staff and parent volunteers were enlisted to help spread the word on the bond plan for their school, and have parents check their voter registration online.

Road to the Bond Center Spread:

Aligned to the Road to the Bond Center Spread, this centerspread was featured in our quarterly newspaper and distributed to all parents in the district and placed in high-traffic public buildings.
Adams 12 CAN for Kids developed campaign mailers based on the key messaging developed through the research and analysis stages, including Career and Technical Education programming, safety and security, and overcrowding.
Voter Precinct Results Map:

Bond Issue 3D earned 62% voter approval. It was record-level support for any funding question in the history of the district and exceeded the district's pre-election survey prediction.
Bond Issue 3D earned 62% voter approval. It was a record-level of support for any funding question in the history of the district and exceeded the district’s pre-election survey prediction.

Moving forward, parents and community members are encouraged to sign up for monthly newsletters featuring bond updates.

Branding used for the implementation of the 2016 bond program.