



*Building Bright Futures*

## *Press Release*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Jeffco Public Schools Headed Towards Asking Voters for Bond and Mill in November**

*GOLDEN, CO, June 17, 2016* – The Board of Education of Jeffco Public Schools pondered three heavy topics during their last meeting of the school year last night; a revised Facilities Master Plan, sending a bond measure to voters, and finally a mill levy override ask.

The Facilities Master Plan (FMP) was amended heavily since the original version was presented to the Board on April 21. Twelve public forums across the district and two telephone town hall forums were conducted to gather input on the plan. With this guidance, the Board decided to transition 6<sup>th</sup> graders from elementary schools to middle schools in much of the district to better utilize facilities. The proposed school closures and consolidations were completely removed from the plan, and several new schools and replacement schools were added.

Every school is included in the FMP at some level with additions, renovations, ancillary facilities, or deferred maintenance. The plan spans the next dozen years, though it is a “living document” that the board may adjust as needed and as funding allows. The Board of Education voted unanimously to confirm the revised plan, which will serve as the guide for future facilities expenditures in the Jeffco Public Schools district. The elements of the plan will not begin to roll out until the 2017-18 school year, and many of the improvements will be dependent on securing additional capital funding.

Next the Board tackled the question of whether to pursue placing a bond on the ballot in November. Several dollar amounts were presented to the Board as options, highlighting what parts of the FMP the different levels could include. After more than an hour of discussion a decision was made. “The board has unanimously acknowledged its intent to ask voters to approve a \$535 million bond in the November 2016 general election. We will discuss the issue more and finalize this proposal in August,” summarized Board President Ron Mitchell.

The last topic of a mill levy override had a number of perspectives from the Board. Indexing a mill levy override with an economic measure, a fixed dollar amount, and a set mill amount were discussed extensively. The board finally settled on a mill levy override amount not to exceed \$33 million at 10:15 p.m. The initial decision proposes that dollars would go towards compensation, mental health, security, and student based budgeting (funds allocated to each school on a per-student basis) if approved by voters. Of course, the amount and focus could change when the issue is finalized at the August meeting. Several board members expressed





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they were looking forward to reaching out to citizens and businesses in the community to hear their thoughts on the proposed ballot items.

Charter schools in the district would receive 10% of any funding approved by voters; this amount equals the proportion of students Charter schools serve in the district.

To summarize, the proposal will likely ask the average Jefferson County homeowner to support Jeffco Public Schools with about \$11-12 more a month in property taxes. If voters support the bond and mill levy override ask, funds will be used to build 7 new schools; make additions/renovations to 23 schools; update, add ancillary facilities, or address equity issues at the remaining 124 schools; address compensation, mental health, and security needs; and increase per student funding to schools.

“If not now, then when?” asked Board Treasurer Brad Rupert. “The timing is never perfect, but interest rates are low and the economy will never be better to ask this question. This is the right thing to do; our schools need support.”

### **About Jeffco Public Schools**

Jeffco Public Schools has been providing educational excellence for more than 60 years. Approximately nine percent of all the K-12 students in Colorado attend a Jeffco school. Our mission is to provide a quality education that prepares all children for a successful future. The district serves over 86,000 students at 154 schools on 168 campuses. Find [Jeffco Public Schools](#) on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#).

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