



LEADERSHIP PROFILE REPORT

Estes Park School District R-3
March 10, 2026

SELECTION PROCESS

The Estes Park School District has retained the services of Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates (HYA) to assist the Board with the hiring of the next superintendent. The consultants will screen applications and recommend candidates to the Board for interviews and further consideration. Any questions regarding the application process, selection process, and/or this Leadership Profile Report should be directed to: Mike Richie, HYA Vice President, Brian Ewert, HYA Associate, or David Baugh, HYA Associate:

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PURPOSE

This report presents the findings of the Leadership Profile Assessment conducted by HYA during the months of February and March 2026 for the new superintendent of the Estes Park School District. The data contained herein was obtained from the input the HYA consultants received when they met with individuals and groups in either individual interviews or focus group settings and from the results of the online survey completed by stakeholders.

HYA and the Board intend to meet the challenge of finding an individual who possesses the skills and character traits required to meet the district's needs. The search team will focus its recruitment on candidates who possess leadership qualities congruent with the profile.

The search team would like to thank the Estes Park School District for the opportunity to find your next leader who fits the criteria of your stakeholders. HYA would like to thank all of the participants who attended focus group meetings or completed the online survey, and the District staff who helped coordinate the schedules, invitations, dates, and arrangements which supported the data collection for this report.

Respectfully submitted,
Dr. Mike Richie, HYA Vice President
Brian Ewert, HYA Associate
Dr. David Baugh, HYA Associate

DESCRIPTION OF THE DISTRICT

Estes Park School District R-3 serves approximately 900 students in a close-knit mountain community at the gateway to Rocky Mountain National Park—an extraordinary setting that naturally extends learning beyond the classroom and into the outdoors. With three schools serving PK–12, an early childhood education program, and an options program, EPSD offers the advantages of a small district—strong relationships, individualized support, and deep community connection—paired with ambitious goals for academic achievement, student wellness, and authentic, real-world learning.

Spanning 445 square miles, the district serves families across the Estes Valley, including Estes Park, Glen Haven, Drake, Allenspark, and Pinewood Springs. Located primarily in Larimer County, EPSD is strengthened by longstanding partnerships with families, community organizations, and local supporters who invest in students and schools.

Estes Park appeals to those seeking a quieter, nature-centered lifestyle surrounded by the beauty of the Rocky Mountains. The community is known for small-town safety, welcoming and family-oriented neighborhoods, as well as a slower, healthier pace of life. With a sunny, dry climate and abundant outdoor recreation, Estes Park is a place where children grow up connected to nature, neighbors know one another, and daily life feels intentional, purposeful, and firmly rooted.

Student learning is grounded in the Colorado Academic Standards and shaped by EPSD’s Global Outcomes, which emphasize academic content, creativity, critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, compassion and global awareness, wellness, and perseverance.

EPSD provides a full continuum of programs and services, including innovative technology integration, career and postsecondary readiness pathways, and targeted student supports designed to help every learner thrive. At the high school level, EPSD offers the Colorado Diploma Endorsement and the Seal of Biliteracy, recognizing graduates who demonstrate proficiency in two or more languages.

Guided by a multi-year strategic plan, EPSD is focused on:

- **Academic achievement and growth**
- **Real-world learning and demonstrations of student learning**
- **Wellness and belonging for students and staff**
- **Family and community partnership**

Together, this work reflects the district’s “Innovation at Elevation, Learning at a Higher Level” mindset—preparing students to succeed locally and compete globally in a remarkable mountain setting.

District Vision Statement: Excellent Educational Experiences for Every Student, Every Day.

District Mission: Engage all learners in authentic learning for global application.

District Beliefs:

- Family partnership is critical for student success.
- Rigorous, authentic learning experiences create successful global citizens.

- Meaningful, professional learning opportunities improve educators' practice and impact student learning.
- Physical, social, and emotional wellness in a safe, positive environment is the foundation for learning.
- Effective communication, collaboration, and active engagement with our community is integral to school success.

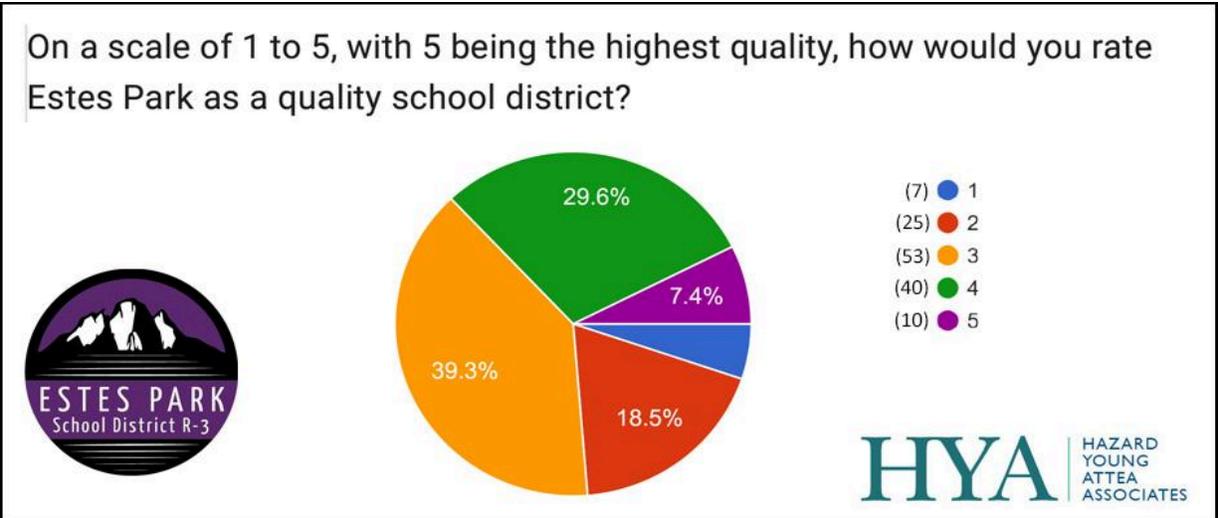
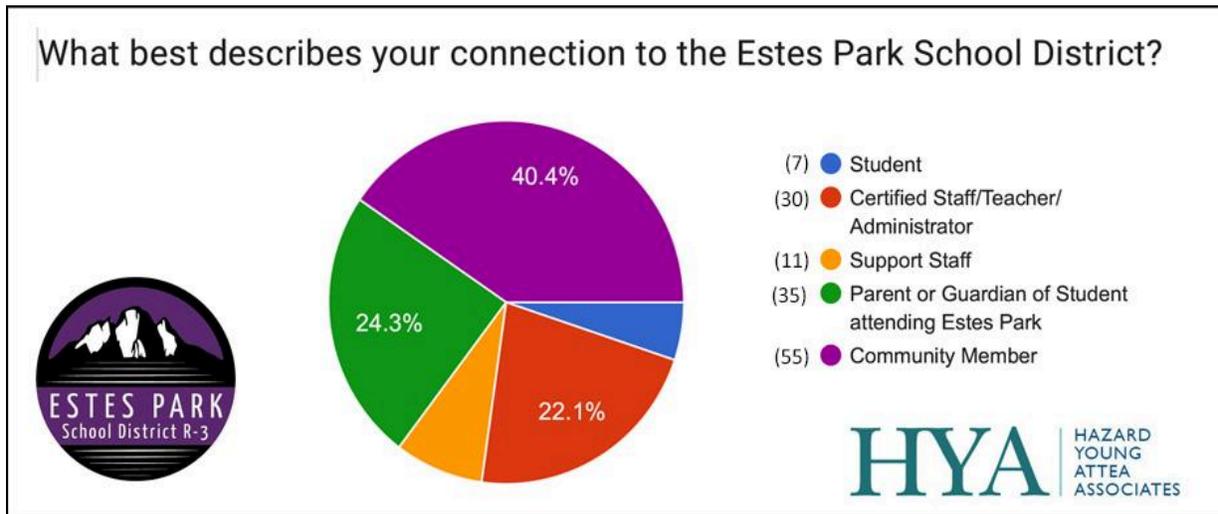
District Highlights and Points of Pride:

- **Colorado Performance Framework:** [Estes Park School District 2025 Colorado Performance Framework](#)
- **Committed to continuous improvement:** EPSD embraces a culture of reflection, learning, and responsiveness—using evidence, feedback, and collaboration to strengthen instruction, operations, and student supports year over year.
- **Demonstrated improvement in accreditation:** Guided by the district's strategic plan, EPSD achieved a **ten-point gain in its accreditation rating over two years**, reflecting intentional goal-setting, aligned action, and accountable progress across the system.
- **Dedicated to student outcomes:** The district maintains a clear focus on measurable student success—academic growth, postsecondary readiness, and whole-child development—so that every learner is supported to achieve at high levels.
- **Passionate, caring educators:** EPSD is proud of teachers who combine high expectations with deep personal investment in students—building strong relationships, meeting learners where they are, and creating classrooms where students feel challenged, supported, and inspired.
- **Clear district identity and shared expectations:** A community-defined vision—anchored by EPSD's Global Outcomes—guides teaching, learning, and graduate readiness across PK-12.
- **Unmatched place-based learning:** Estes Park's setting at the gateway to Rocky Mountain National Park extends learning beyond the classroom through outdoor, experiential, and locally connected opportunities.
- **Strong community partnerships:** Deep, longstanding collaboration with local organizations and supporters expands student opportunities and strengthens school-community ties.
- **Student-centered culture and relationships:** A restorative practices approach emphasizes belonging, accountability, and problem-solving—building a positive, supportive learning environment.
- **High-quality programs in a small-district setting:** Comprehensive PK-12 offerings provide personalized learning, strong relationships, and broad opportunities typically found in larger systems.
- **Multiple pathways to postsecondary success:** Robust college and career readiness options—including concurrent enrollment and career/technical learning—support diverse student goals.

- **Family choice and engagement:** Flexible learning options, including the K–8 Options Program, reflect a commitment to meeting families where they are and strengthening engagement.
- **Whole-child commitment:** EPSD prioritizes student wellness and access to supports that promote safety, mental health, and overall well-being.
- **Positive momentum and accountability:** The district demonstrates continuous improvement and transparency through state performance measures and ongoing progress.
- **A community that invests in students:** Generous local support—through the Estes Park Education Foundation and other partners—enhances classrooms, innovation, and student scholarships.
- **Exceptional graduation outcomes (94.2% graduation rate):** EPSD’s strong graduation rate reflects a community-wide commitment to ensuring students are known, supported, and prepared to successfully complete high school and transition confidently into college, careers, or service.
- **Multilingual achievement and global readiness (Seal of Biliteracy):** Students have the opportunity to earn the Seal of Biliteracy, demonstrating high-level proficiency in English and at least one additional language—an accomplishment that strengthens postsecondary access, career opportunities, and global citizenship.
- **Environmental leadership and stewardship (Seal of Climate Literacy):** Students have the opportunity to earn the Seal of Climate Literacy, demonstrating a strong understanding of climate science, sustainability, and civic responsibility—preparing graduates to think critically, solve real-world problems, and lead in an environmentally connected mountain community.
- **Authentic learning, showcased publicly:** Student learning is made visible through showcases, exhibitions, performances, and presentations that highlight real-world application, creativity, and communication—celebrating student work and strengthening community connection to schools.
- **Strong stakeholder confidence:** District perception survey results show **74% favorable responses from families** and **76% favorable responses from students**, underscoring positive school experiences, strong relationships, and a community that values the direction of its schools.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

As part of the engagement process, stakeholders were invited to participate in an online survey open from February 12–27, 2026; the survey was offered in both English (136 responses), and Spanish (2 responses). A total of 138 responses were received with the majority coming from community members, who accounted for 55 responses (40.4%). A narrative summary of open-ended questions can be found in the Appendix of this report.



To shape the search for a new superintendent, the HYA Associates gathered valuable insights through surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions. These efforts aimed to identify the key qualities desired in the next leader while also highlighting the District's strengths and challenges ahead. Common themes voiced by multiple groups were used to build a well-rounded leadership profile, ensuring the selected candidate aligns with the district's needs and vision. It should be emphasized that the data is not a scientific sampling, nor does it necessarily represent the majority opinion of each respective group.

The HYA Associates conducted individual interviews with all five current School Board members, the current superintendent, and secretary to the Board, along with thirteen (13) focus groups within the Estes Park School District and community ensuring that a broad range of perspectives are considered in the superintendent search.

The following questions were asked during each interview and focus group:

1. What are the strengths of the Estes Park School District that the next superintendent can build upon?
2. What are the challenges facing the Estes Park School District that the next superintendent should be aware of, or that you would like to see addressed?
3. What characteristics or traits are you looking for in your new superintendent?
4. Is there anything else you would like to share with us or that we should know about the Estes Park School District?

Through the information gathered, common themes were generated by the respondents. In this report, we will highlight what those themes were as identified by the following groups:

- School Board
- Parents and Community Members
- Staff
- Administrators
- Students

PROCESS

The structure of the individual meetings and focus groups was open, allowing participants to build upon each other’s comments. All of those involved in providing input were asked to respond to the questions listed above.

PARTICIPATION

Responses were gathered from individual interviews and focus groups. The HYA consultants conducted seven individual interviews and hosted thirteen (13) focus groups. (Note: Focus group participation was extremely limited.)

School District of Estes Park Interviews and Focus Groups
Board of Education Director (5)
Superintendent (1)
Secretary to the Board of Education (1)
Administrators (16)
Staff: Teachers/Classified (4)
Parents and Community Members (8)
Students (2)

PROFILE DEVELOPMENT & QUALITATIVE DATA

Perceived Strengths • Perceived Challenges • Desired Characteristics

Strengths of the Estes Park School District as identified by THE BOARD OF EDUCATION CURRENT SUPERINTENDENT & SECRETARY TO THE BOARD

(Based on interviews and personal statements)

1. Trusted, high-impact leadership that stabilized and improved the district

- **Strong superintendent leadership and credibility:** The current superintendent is widely viewed as a major district asset—bringing stability, strong relationships, and deep institutional knowledge that matters in a small community.
- **Compassion with accountability:** Leadership is described as both kind and firm—holding high expectations while supporting people to meet them.
- **Highly visible and responsive presence:** The superintendent is consistently present in classrooms and community events, and models an “all-hands” approach when help is needed.

2. Clear strategic direction and “turned-the-corner” momentum

- **A simple, powerful strategic plan:** The strategic plan is frequently cited as a key strength—clarifying priorities, narrowing focus, and driving forward movement.
- **Continuous improvement culture:** There is strong belief the district has “turned things around” after a period of decline, with improving perception data and upward academic trends.
- **Strong district coherence:** Expectations and direction are increasingly consistent across schools and roles, strengthening implementation and shared ownership.

3. Instructional clarity, rigor, and evidence-based academic improvement

- **Clear expectations for Tier 1 instruction:** Teachers reportedly have greater clarity about what high-quality instruction looks like day-to-day, with expectations tightening over time.
- **Standards-aligned, evidence-based focus:** Interviewees point to alignment with Colorado Academic Standards, standards-based curriculum implementation, and instructional practices grounded in evidence.
- **Demonstrated academic growth:** Strengths include measurable improvement (including accreditation gains and improved student performance indicators), with an overall sense that achievement is trending upward.

4. Student-centered decision-making and supportive, unified culture

- **“What’s best for students” as a shared north star:** Interviewees repeatedly emphasized student-centered decisions from district leadership through support staff.
- **Improved culture and morale:** Schools are described as more positive, energized, and student-centered; collaboration across schools and roles is increasingly visible (“Better Together”).

- **Inclusive appreciation of all employee groups:** The district culture values everyone who serves students—teachers, bus drivers, maintenance, and support staff—strengthening unity and trust.

5. Deep community engagement, resilience, and strong partnerships

- **A resilient community that “pulls together”:** Estes Park is described as highly supportive in adversity—showing up for students, staff, and families through crises and disruptions.
- **Strong partnerships that expand support for students:** Community organizations (e.g., Rotary, Lions, retired educators, tutoring programs) are engaged and responsive when needs are identified.
- **Schools as a community hub:** Open, welcoming events (performances, athletics, art exhibits) create strong connection and belonging—reinforcing community pride and engagement.

6. Expanded opportunities through activities, real-world learning, and scholarships

- **Broad extracurricular excellence and participation:** Athletics, arts, concerts, and activities are seen as a district strength, supported by active booster organizations.
- **Real-world, community-connected learning:** Authentic learning partnerships with local businesses and community organizations are highlighted as a meaningful strategic focus.
- **Significant scholarship support for students:** Interviewees noted approximately **\$200,000 annually** in scholarships through community partnerships, plus the important role of the Estes Park Education Foundation.

7. Strong governance and responsible financial/facilities planning

- **Effective governance and policy-based leadership:** The board is described as maintaining norms and governance practices even with differing viewpoints—helping keep focus on students.
- **Proven community support for schools:** The district benefits from a history of voter support for long-term needs, reflecting strong community investment in education.
- **Financial stability and long-range facilities planning:** Strong reserves, thoughtful planning for capital needs, and an active facilities/master planning process position the district to address aging buildings responsibly.

Challenges of the Estes Park School District as identified by THE BOARD OF EDUCATION CURRENT SUPERINTENDENT & SECRETARY TO THE BOARD

(Based on interviews and personal statements)

1. Leadership transition and sustaining momentum without comparison

- **Filling big shoes:** Replacing a highly trusted superintendent will be difficult; the community will need to avoid constant “that’s not how the last superintendent did it” comparisons that can undermine the transition.

- **Build trust quickly in a tight-knit community:** The next leader will need strong board support and a deliberate trust-building strategy to establish credibility and relationships.
- **Steady leadership over politics:** Stakeholders want a superintendent who is mission-driven, works hard, and delivers results—more “doer” than politician.

2. Maintain high expectations while bringing people along

- **Compassion and accountability:** The next superintendent must sustain high expectations while supporting staff who are struggling with change—especially long-tenured employees.
- **Maintain accountability systems:** Continue clear performance expectations and follow-through without creating fear or burnout.
- **Avoid tearing things up:** Concern about a new leader arriving with a major overhaul mindset rather than strengthening and extending what is working.

3. Keep academic gains moving forward

- **Sustaining academic progress:** Continue upward academic trends and standards-aligned instruction while ensuring consistency across classrooms and schools.
- **Secondary engagement and climate:** High school engagement post-COVID remains a challenge; discipline and rule enforcement concerns (vaping, alcohol use, cell phones, inconsistent enforcement) require a balanced, relationship-based approach.
- **Attendance and tardiness:** Chronic tardiness/high school attendance concerns need sustained, proactive strategies beyond traditional discipline.

4. Enrollment decline, budget pressure, and fiscal stewardship

- **Declining enrollment = structural budget pressure:** Staffing, programming, and budgets may need to adjust; consolidation could become a possibility and would require significant community engagement.
- **Complex Colorado school finance:** The superintendent must understand school finance deeply and help the board/community grasp tradeoffs and constraints.
- **Funding uncertainty and reserves:** Maintain disciplined financial management amid state/national uncertainty while balancing staff support, student needs, and long-range planning.

5. Facilities and deferred maintenance with high-stakes decisions ahead

- **Aging facilities and infrastructure:** Buildings and core systems (HVAC, plumbing, electrical, underground infrastructure) are reaching end-of-life; deferred maintenance pressures are rising.
- **Master plan timing and early leadership test:** The facilities master plan will be finalized after the new superintendent starts; they’ll need to absorb it quickly and translate it into priorities and an actionable, community-supported path forward.
- **Funding strategy decisions:** Uncertainty remains around BEST grants vs. bond planning, scope (remodel vs. rebuild), cost, and site logistics (traffic/parking)—all likely to be visible, complex decisions.

6. Talent recruitment/retention in a high cost-of-living community

- **Housing/affordability as a major barrier:** Recruiting and retaining leaders and staff is constrained more by housing availability/cost than by salary alone; commuting will remain a reality for many.
- **Competitive compensation pressures:** Continued progress on compensation is important, but it must be balanced with budget constraints and communicated transparently.

7. Leadership pipeline, internal systems, and operational execution

- **Develop leaders and succession:** Build leadership capacity and a bench for future roles (principals, district leaders) to reduce vulnerability during transitions.
- **Strengthen organization and follow-through:** Interviews describe a recurring “hair on fire” operational culture; the next superintendent must improve systems, clarify roles, and increase predictability without overcomplicating processes.

8. Community engagement, communication, and managing differing perspectives

- **Engagement is uneven:** Strong turnout for athletics/performances, but lower participation in academic-focused events (accountability meetings, curriculum nights); deeper relationship-building is needed—especially with Hispanic/Latino families facing practical barriers (time, childcare, transportation).
- **Communication clarity:** Some stakeholders report district explanations can feel unclear at board meetings, leaving confusion about what is happening and why.
- **Multiple community “lenses”:** Long-time residents, newcomers, and retirees may view the district differently; the superintendent must listen broadly without overreacting to a small number of loud voices.
- **Potential flashpoints:** Some interviews flagged polarizing social/cultural issues and the possibility of a charter proposal resurfacing, with concerns about church/state tensions—requiring careful process, clear communication, and steady leadership.

Top Five Desired Characteristics of the next Estes Park Superintendent as identified by SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS, CURRENT SUPERINTENDENT & SECRETARY TO THE BOARD	
Compassionate, Student Centered Leader With High Expectations	Highly Credible Instructional Leader Who Sustains Academic Momentum
Balances empathy with “tough love”; sets clear expectations for adults and students; keeps decisions grounded in what’s best for kids (learning, belonging, safety, growth).	Deep teaching-and-learning expertise; research-informed instructional vision; continues academic progress without “resetting” initiatives; strengthens consistency and rigor across schools.
Strong Board Partner Who Operates Within Policy Governance	Operationally Strong With Finance & Facilities Acumen
Understands policy governance roles and boundaries; communicates clearly and proactively; builds trust and alignment with the Board; maintains accountability systems and follow-through.	Skilled fiscal steward; navigates Colorado school finance and budgets; leads facilities/master planning and long-range priorities; explains tradeoffs transparently and drives execution.

Visible, Relationship Driven “Doer” Who Builds Culture & Leadership Capacity

Highly present in schools/community; listens first and builds trust across diverse groups; improves systems/organization without overcomplicating; develops staff and leadership succession; action-oriented—not political.

Strengths of the Estes Park School District as identified by SCHOOL AND DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS/MANAGERS

(Based on interviews and personal statements)

1. Strong, mission-driven people who step up for students

- **Staff “wear many hats” in a small district:** Administrators and staff routinely stretch beyond job descriptions to meet needs quickly and keep priorities moving.
- **High trust and collaboration across buildings and roles:** There’s a strong sense of shared responsibility, with people working together smoothly across K–12.
- **A culture of ownership and service:** Leaders describe a team that steps in without hesitation—especially when the work is urgent or students need support.

2. Whole-child focus grounded in relationships and belonging

- **Students are known well:** Relationship-building is intentional across all schools, helping adults understand students’ strengths, needs, and circumstances.
- **Holistic growth over narrow metrics:** Pride centers on student well-being and development—not just test scores—while still maintaining academic expectations.
- **Consistent student-centered decision-making:** Administrators describe a culture where “what’s best for kids” is the common filter for priorities and problem-solving.

3. Clear direction and measurable progress through the strategic plan

- **Shared language and alignment K–12:** The strategic plan is widely understood and referenced, creating coherence across schools and teams.
- **Momentum backed by data:** Administrators point to year-over-year improvement indicators and a turnaround from prior “priority improvement” status, with metrics trending up.
- **Systems that outlast individuals:** Structures are in place so core work continues even when leaders change—reducing reliance on any single person.

4. Strong instructional coherence and support systems that drive learning

- **Growing strength in PLC and MTSS:** Leaders describe positive momentum in collaborative practices and multi-tiered supports.
- **Targeted intervention capacity:** Tier 2/3 resources and structured intervention schedules are viewed as real strengths in meeting diverse learning needs.
- **Balanced technology use:** Pride in an approach where technology supports curriculum and instruction rather than replacing it.

5. Exceptional community partnerships and real-world learning opportunities

- **Deep partnerships unique to place:** Rocky Mountain National Park, the Conservancy, local businesses, and civic/community leaders are integrated into learning experiences.
- **Authentic, applied learning examples:** Ranger-led science, snowshoeing experiences, persuasive writing with local businesses, and CTE internships are cited as standout opportunities.
- **Community assets expand what school can offer:** The district leverages its environment and relationships to create meaningful learning beyond the classroom.

6. Unique community expertise that enriches student experiences

- **Retirees and professionals as active contributors:** Advisory boards, guest speakers, and long-range planning involvement are seen as distinctive strengths.
- **Broader exposure for students:** Leaders note students benefit from uncommon access to diverse careers and life experiences (e.g., authors, civic leaders, “NASA/astronaut” connections, former diplomats).
- **A community that invests time and talent:** Pride in a culture where people show up for schools with expertise, mentorship, and leadership.

7. Small-district advantages: nimble decisions and accessible leadership

- **Few layers, faster solutions:** Issues can be addressed quickly because decision-makers are easy to reach and communication is direct.
- **Close-knit relationships support coordination:** People “know everyone,” enabling rapid collaboration and practical problem-solving.
- **Responsiveness as a defining strength:** Administrators describe an organization that can adapt and act without bureaucratic delay.

8. Professional learning culture and internal capacity-building

- **Strong internal expertise:** Many professional learning opportunities are led by talented staff, reinforcing local ownership and sustainability.
- **Consistent PD structures:** Monthly PD days and common training expectations help keep the district “speaking the same language.”
- **A learning organization mindset:** Administrators describe a culture of continuous improvement with openness to external learning when it strengthens the work.

9. Foundational literacy gains as a visible academic bright spot

- **Improved literacy programming is paying off:** Leaders cite meaningful increases in reading outcomes and positive trends in the data.
- **Early signs of sustained improvement:** Literacy gains are framed as evidence the district’s instructional systems and professional learning are working.

10. Facilities master planning as a major point of pride and a pivotal next chapter

- **A historic step forward:** Administrators emphasize pride that a comprehensive facilities master plan is underway—something the district has not had previously.

- **Midstream work with high stakes ahead:** Delivery is expected in the fall, and leaders anticipate major community decisions, including possible bond planning within ~18 months.
- **A clear focus for the future:** Facilities planning is widely seen as the next big chapter that will require strong leadership, communication, and community alignment.

11. A recurring message: continuity matters—keep the momentum and protect the systems

- **Strong alignment around current direction:** Administrators consistently prefer a superintendent who will continue the strategic plan work rather than reset priorities.
- **Progress should not be person-dependent:** Stakeholders want the structures preserved—PD, curriculum adoption processes, onboarding/training, and instructional systems—so improvement remains durable.
- **Stability as a community value:** The clearest “point of pride” theme is that the district has built real momentum—and the community wants to safeguard it.

Challenges of the Estes Park School District as identified by SCHOOL AND DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS/MANAGERS

(Based on interviews and personal statements)

1. Declining enrollment creating structural budget and staffing pressure

- **Enrollment decline drives hard tradeoffs:** Fewer students directly impacts staffing allocations, program offerings, and long-range planning.
- **Budget volatility and uncertain stabilizers:** Administrators noted complex funding realities and concern about losing significant dollars if stabilization mechanisms change.
- **Planning gets harder each year:** Declines make it difficult to build sustainable multi-year plans for staffing, programming, and facilities.

2. Small-district capacity constraints that stretch leadership and systems

- **“Many hats” becomes a vulnerability:** The same small-team strength can become a strain—the central office and administrators cover multiple functions with limited bandwidth.
- **Limited curriculum/assessment capacity:** With fewer dedicated roles, core instructional functions can be difficult to sustain at the level the district wants.
- **Transitions hit harder:** When a key person leaves, institutional knowledge often leaves too—making continuity and onboarding more fragile than in larger systems.

3. Cybersecurity risk rising faster than resources can keep up

- **The threat landscape is escalating:** Increasing cyberattacks on school districts create a growing exposure area.
- **Limited staff and dollars to mitigate risk:** Administrators emphasized the challenge of strengthening systems, training, and response capacity without the personnel larger districts rely on.
- **High impact if something goes wrong:** A single incident could disrupt operations, student data systems, and public trust.

4. Grant-writing and “narrative capacity” gaps that limit funding opportunities

- **Loss of dedicated grant capacity:** Without a focused grant role, the workload shifts heavily to the superintendent and a very small team.
- **Competing priorities crowd out pursuit and management:** The time required to identify, write, manage, and report on grants becomes difficult amid daily operational demands.
- **Risk of leaving money on the table:** Administrators see grants as increasingly important—and harder to secure without consistent infrastructure.

5. Facilities master plan implementation: high-stakes decisions and potential bond complexity

- **The next phase is community-visible and consequential:** Leaders anticipate difficult choices (renovate vs. rebuild, grade-span reconfiguration, potential school closures).
- **A large bond may be necessary:** Administrators flagged the possibility of a significant bond and uncertainty about the community’s appetite to pass it.
- **Demographics complicate support:** With many retirees and fewer households currently connected to the schools, leaders expect heightened scrutiny and persuasion demands.

6. Small-town dynamics that amplify conflict and pressure decision-making

- **High visibility magnifies disagreement:** In a small community, decisions feel personal and conflict can become highly public.
- **Loud factions can drive the narrative:** Leaders described the need to make “best for the district” decisions even when organized groups apply pressure.
- **Contentious issues escalate quickly:** Administrators referenced situations like charter school debates as illustrations of how fast tensions can rise.

7. Alternative schooling dynamics that challenge enrollment and trust

- **Growth in homeschooling and alternatives:** Administrators see expanding non-traditional schooling as an ongoing enrollment headwind.
- **Balancing respect with advocacy:** Leaders want to honor family choice while also strengthening the case for public schools and welcoming families back.
- **Influential critics in a small community:** A small number of strongly critical voices can have outsized impact on perceptions and enrollment.

8. Community engagement as both a strength and a pressure point

- **Civic involvement cuts both ways:** Deep partnerships and pride are real assets, but the same visibility can intensify conflict when decisions are unpopular.
- **Traditions and identity heighten stakes:** School issues can become community identity issues—raising the emotional temperature of change efforts.
- **Leaders must actively manage communication:** Administrators emphasized that transparent, steady engagement will be essential to navigate tough decisions without fracturing trust.

**Top Five Desired Characteristics of the next
Estes Park School District Superintendent as identified by
SCHOOL AND DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS/MANAGERS**

Relationship Driven, Student Centered Leader	Accessible, Open Door Communicator & Listener
Builds trust through genuine relationships and consistently makes decisions based on what best supports students' learning, well-being, and belonging.	Is visible and responsive, listens deeply, invites input from many voices, and communicates clearly and consistently—especially when decisions are hard.
Collaborative, Empowering "Protective" Leader	Instructional Leader Who Sustains K-12 Alignment & Progress
Leads as a team builder who creates psychological safety, backs staff publicly, gives candid feedback privately, and empowers others to lead and improve.	Keeps the district focused on teaching and learning, protects coherence across schools/grade levels, and sustains momentum on the strategic plan and academic gains.
Courageous, Integrity Based Problem Solver With Foresight	
Makes principled, data-informed decisions; addresses tough issues directly; anticipates challenges (enrollment, budget, facilities); and stays steady under pressure.	

**Strengths of the Estes Park School District as identified by
STAFF**

(Based on interviews and personal statements)

1. Deep community support that shows up when schools need it

- **Broad, reliable goodwill:** Local businesses, retirees, parents, and community organizations consistently step up with time, donations, and hands-on help "when you ask."
- **A community that invests in kids:** Stakeholders described a culture of pitching in—especially for school events, student needs, and program support.
- **Partnership mindset is normalized:** Support is not episodic; it's described as part of how the town functions.

2. Strong history of voter support for school funding

- **Bonds and mill levies typically pass:** There is a consistent perception that the community votes "yes" for schools.
- **Willingness to fund near the maximum:** Stakeholders noted a belief that the community is generally supportive of funding schools at or near the highest levels allowed.
- **Financial support as a point of pride:** This history is viewed as a differentiator—showing trust in the district and commitment to student opportunity.

3. Education Foundation and local scholarships that expand opportunity

- **Active fundraising and grants:** The Education Foundation is seen as a meaningful driver of additional resources for students and staff.
- **Strong local scholarship culture:** Stakeholders highlighted substantial scholarship support (noted around \$200K) and increasing student participation.
- **Community generosity becomes student access:** Scholarships and grants are framed as a tangible way the community reduces barriers and opens doors.

4. Student culture rooted in empathy and care

- **Students described as compassionate and supportive:** Stakeholders emphasized students' kindness and empathy as a defining feature of the district.
- **Crisis response and community care:** When the community faces needs or challenges, students are perceived to respond with genuine concern and action.
- **A culture that reinforces belonging:** This relational strength is seen as foundational to a positive school environment.

5. Diversity—especially a strong Spanish-speaking community—viewed as an asset

- **A meaningful part of community identity:** Stakeholders noted a significant Spanish-speaking population (rough estimate around 40%).
- **Positive contribution to school culture:** Diversity was framed as a strength that enriches learning, relationships, and perspective.
- **Opportunity for deeper inclusion:** The tone was not deficit-based; it emphasized value and potential when engagement is done well.

6. Elementary momentum and academic growth as a bright spot

- **Improved performance and trajectory:** The elementary school is described as moving in a strong direction with improved test scores.
- **Strong leadership and positive climate:** Stakeholders cited good leadership and a sense of forward progress.
- **A foundation to build on districtwide:** Elementary success is viewed as an anchor point for sustained K–12 improvement.

7. Wide range of student opportunities, especially strong in PK–8

- **Many ways to belong and succeed:** Stakeholders emphasized broad offerings across athletics, music, theater, art, clubs, CTE, and concurrent enrollment.
- **Small-district access with big-district options:** Students can participate in multiple activities without being limited to one "track."
- **Opportunities as a retention and enrollment asset:** The breadth of programs is seen as a key reason families choose and stay with the district.

8. Unique place-based learning assets that make the district distinctive

- **Rocky Mountain National Park partnership:** Field trips, ranger-led learning, and authentic experiences are seen as a signature strength.
- **Rec Center connection with universal access:** Water safety/swim instruction for all elementary students was highlighted as a great example of community collaboration.
- **Learning tied to place and community:** Stakeholders view these assets as part of what makes Estes Park schools uniquely powerful.

9. Robust low/no-cost after-school opportunities that remove barriers

- **Clubs and activities that are genuinely accessible:** Examples included bee club/beekeeping, garden club, percussion ensemble, choir, Gamers Unplugged, etc.
- **Equity through access:** Low/no fees reduce financial barriers and broaden participation across families.
- **Enrichment as a community norm:** Stakeholders described after-school programming as both plentiful and welcoming.

10. Transportation that supports families and participation

- **Bus service viewed as strong and reliable:** Stakeholders contrasted this positively with larger districts where transportation can be a barrier.
- **Supports family logistics:** Transportation is seen as enabling attendance, access, and participation—especially for working families.
- **A quiet but meaningful equity lever:** Stakeholders framed transportation as a practical strength that helps make opportunities real.

11. High engagement at the elementary level, rebuilding connection post-COVID

- **Family events are well-attended:** Programs like Books & Breakfast reportedly draw 100+ adults regularly.
- **Reading culture and family connection:** Stakeholders highlighted family literacy engagement as a strong signal of community-school partnership.
- **Intentional reconnection efforts:** There's pride in efforts to rebuild relationships and involvement after COVID disruptions.

Challenges of the Estes Park School District as identified by STAFF

(Based on interviews and personal statements)

1. Spread-too-thin staffing and “shotgun” initiatives driving reactive operations

- **More work with fewer people:** Staff described a steady reduction in staffing while expectations, programs, and responsibilities remain the same—or grow.
- **Initiative overload without prioritization:** Too many simultaneous “good ideas” creates a scattered focus, unclear priorities, and inconsistent follow-through.
- **A “hair-on-fire” culture risk:** The operational mode is described as reactive and exhausting, leaving limited time for planning, coaching, and improvement.

2. Course/program inconsistency and equity concerns undermining confidence

- **Perceived uneven decision-making:** Examples cited include cutting AP offerings while running very small sections elsewhere, raising questions about rationale and fairness.
- **Confusion about curriculum and course changes:** Staff described shifts happening without clear explanation, timeline, or consistent communication.
- **Lack of teacher consultation:** A major concern is that course/program decisions feel top-down rather than grounded in teacher expertise and student need.

3. High school extracurricular participation gap limiting student experience

- **Participation drops significantly in grades 9–12:** PK–8 involvement is seen as strong, but high school participation declines.
- **Work and economic realities reduce access:** Students' jobs and family economics limit availability for activities, practices, and travel.
- **Harder to field teams and sustain programs:** Small numbers and competing demands make it difficult to maintain robust extracurricular offerings.

4. Enrollment volatility and small cohort sizes complicating staffing and offerings

- **Fluctuating graduating classes:** Cohorts vary widely year to year (example noted: 76 vs. 48), making forecasting difficult.
- **Staffing becomes unstable:** Small changes in enrollment can force outsized program/staffing adjustments in a small district.
- **Course offerings become fragile:** With small class sizes, it's harder to sustain electives, AP sections, and specialized programs consistently.

5. Competition and choice pressures not fully acknowledged or addressed

- **Families opting out:** Staff expressed concern that homeschooling and "down-valley" options are drawing students away.
- **Narrative/data misalignment:** A recurring theme is that leadership may not be candid enough about the scope, causes, or implications of these choices.
- **Urgency without blame:** Staff want honest analysis that leads to practical strategies to retain and attract families.

6. Program ownership and respect issues eroding trust and culture

- **Teacher-created programs feel vulnerable:** Frustration emerges when clubs or programs built by teachers are reassigned or "taken over."
- **Poor communication amplifies harm:** The issue is often less the change itself and more *how* it happens—without transparency, respect, or collaboration.
- **Trust costs are high:** These experiences signal to staff that initiative and creativity may not be valued or protected, discouraging future leadership.

7. Facilities realities creating secondary isolation and collaboration barriers

- **Separate secondary buildings increase fragmentation:** Physical separation contributes to isolation, weaker coordination, and fewer natural collaboration opportunities.
- **Strategic facilities discussions feel unclear:** While broader facilities conversations are underway, staff report unclear communication and uncertainty about direction and implications.

Top Five Desired Characteristics of the next Estes Park School District Superintendent as identified by ESTES PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT STAFF	
Strategic Focus & Priority Discipline	Radically Honest, Solutions Oriented Trust Builder
<p>The ability to narrow the work to a small set of clear, high-leverage priorities and align time, staffing, and resources to them—reducing initiative overload and “noise.” This leader keeps the district centered on what matters most and protects educators from whiplash.</p>	<p>Leads with transparent candor and a problem-solving mindset—naming what isn't working, inviting hard feedback, and treating concerns as data for improvement rather than as personal attacks. Builds trust by addressing issues directly and constructively.</p>
Systems Builder with Relentless Follow Through	Talent, Voice, & Accountability Leader
<p>Designs and maintains coherent, durable systems (instruction, operations, communication, and improvement planning) and regularly checks whether initiatives are producing results. Ensures consistency across schools/grade levels and follows work through to completion.</p>	<p>Elevates performance by valuing teacher expertise and strengthening leadership quality—creating real channels for staff voice while also holding principals and administrators accountable for consistent expectations, strong evaluations, and effective implementation.</p>
Community Embedded Communicator with Courage & Diplomacy	
<p>A visible, relational leader who understands Estes Park's culture and earns trust over time through clear, timely communication and the ability to make hard calls without alienating the community. Keeps a steady “North Star” vision while grounding decisions in academic outcomes—not optics.</p>	

Strengths of the Estes Park School District as identified by PARENTS & COMMUNITY MEMBERS

(Based on interviews and personal statements)

1. K-12 sense of community and vertical coherence

- **Cross-building connections feel intentional:** Families and staff described meaningful K-12 coherence, including older students supporting elementary students through shared programming.
- **Strong parent community:** Pride centers on a parent community that is engaged, connected, and invested in the schools.
- **A “one district” feel:** Stakeholders emphasized continuity across grade levels that strengthens belonging and shared expectations.

2. Diversity and bilingualism as a defining asset

- **Language development is celebrated:** Stakeholders referenced a large population of English learners (roughly 1/3 per parent) and framed bilingualism as elevating learning for all students.
- **Clear markers of commitment:** The Seal of Biliteracy and Spanish offered as an elementary special were cited as tangible evidence of valuing language and culture.

- **A culturally rich small district:** Pride was expressed in having significant diversity—including a large, culturally varied Hispanic population—within a rural mountain community.

3. Student-focused culture in a divisive landscape

- **Schools are viewed as a stabilizing force:** Stakeholders described the district as filtering out partisan/ideological conflict and keeping the focus on students and learning.
- **Leadership tone-setting matters:** This student-first orientation is attributed to consistent leadership messaging and modeling.
- **Focus stays on “meat and potatoes”:** Parents emphasized core academics, critical thinking, and learning as central—rather than political distractions.

4. Small-district relational closeness that strengthens trust and accountability

- **Educators are visible beyond school walls:** Students and families see principals, teachers, and the resource officer in the community—reinforcing that school is part of town life.
- **“Everybody knows the kids”:** The front office, teachers, and support staff are described as personally connected to students and families, increasing responsiveness and accountability.
- **High accessibility of educators:** Parents value direct communication and timely responses that feel easier than in larger districts.

5. Dedicated, mission-driven staff and a strong relational culture

- **High personal investment in students:** Stakeholders emphasized that staff know students and families well and bring a “whole child” orientation—especially strong at the elementary level.
- **Commitment to community:** Many staff are described as intentionally choosing Estes Park and being mission-driven in serving students here.
- **Strong programming despite small teams:** Pride centers on small staffs delivering rigorous programming and meeting varied student needs.

6. Strong, structured instructional improvement processes

- **Rigorous curriculum adoption process:** Stakeholders highlighted a clear timeline and evaluation process for selecting curriculum, credited to leadership, the board, and educators.
- **Strategic plan and “global outcomes” feel real:** Students reportedly understand and use the district’s global outcomes language, which stakeholders see as especially powerful in a small district.
- **Coherence supports continuity:** These systems are viewed as protecting progress beyond individual leaders.

7. Expanded career pathways and real-world learning opportunities

- **CTE growth is a major strength:** Stakeholders described expanding technical and career programming, including a P-TECH-like pathway allowing students to earn university credit in high school.

- **Grants and partnerships enable innovation:** The P-TECH initiative was credited to successful grant work and higher-ed/community collaborations.
- **Internships and off-campus learning are growing:** Intentional efforts to build real-world experiences through local partnerships were cited as valuable and increasingly available.

8. Robust extracurriculars for a small district—especially arts and activities

- **Inclusive performing arts are a signature:** Theater is described as strong and welcoming (fall musical and spring play), with a culture of participation where “everyone gets a role.”
- **Athletics remain strong despite typical small-school constraints:** Stakeholders noted maintaining offerings like softball, baseball, track, and football.
- **Band, color guard, and cheer build pride:** Marching band and color guard compete at the state level and contribute to school identity and student engagement.

9. Place-based learning and mountain-setting partnerships

- **Unique learning assets tied to location:** Stakeholders highlighted partnership opportunities linked to the National Park and the mountain environment.
- **Community resources enrich instruction:** The setting is seen not just as “nice to have,” but as a powerful driver of authentic learning and identity.

10. Local control and independence as a core point of pride

- **Community-fit decision-making:** Families value being an independent district with a local board and decisions tailored to Estes Park rather than a larger metro system.
- **Stronger sense of ownership:** Local control is framed as enabling responsiveness, alignment with community values, and quicker adjustments when needs arise.

11. Safer, more supervised environment compared with larger districts

- **Less anonymity, faster response:** Stakeholders perceive fewer large-scale behavior issues and believe problems are harder to hide in a small setting.
- **Positive comparisons to larger districts:** Parents contrasted Estes Park with larger neighbors where they observed more severe incidents (bullying, violence, social media-driven disruption).
- **Safety supports learning:** This sense of supervision and visibility is described as contributing to a calmer environment.

12. Evidence of effective support practices when teams are stable

- **Stability improves student support:** Stakeholders noted that when the “right team” is in place, students receive stronger, more consistent supports and show better progress.
- **Practical continuity tools are emerging:** A written home–school communication log and a “handoff binder” (levels, strategies, supports) were cited as meaningful practices that reduce backsliding during staff changes.
- **Electives can be life-giving for students:** With the right teachers, specials—especially band/percussion—were described as major bright spots where students thrive.

13. Visible, responsive leadership as a major asset

- **Presence and follow-through:** The superintendent is described as highly present at student events (e.g., robotics), action-oriented, organized, and strong on follow-through.
- **Willingness to have hard conversations:** Stakeholders emphasized leadership that addresses issues directly while maintaining relationships.
- **Relational capital strengthens the whole system:** Leaders' visibility is seen as reinforcing trust, momentum, and community alignment.

Challenges of Estes Park School District as identified by PARENTS & COMMUNITY MEMBERS

(Based on interviews and personal statements)

1. Leadership transition risk: protecting continuity while diagnosing what must improve

- **"New stamp" anxiety is high:** Stakeholders strongly cautioned against discarding the community-built strategic plan or resetting direction for the sake of change.
- **Audit-first entry is the expectation:** The preferred approach is to study what's working, what to stop, what aligns—and then refine, not reinvent.
- **Continuity is tied to trust:** People want stability in systems, priorities, and tone; abrupt shifts are viewed as destabilizing and demoralizing.

2. Declining enrollment and the need for proactive 3/5/10-year planning

- **Enrollment decline is structural, not episodic:** Stakeholders see shrinking cohorts and "exporting" students through open enrollment, online options, and down-valley commuting patterns.
- **Scope/causes may be under-analyzed:** Concern surfaced that the district may not fully understand the local homeschooling landscape or why families leave.
- **Planning must be long-range and integrated:** Enrollment realities need to drive programming, staffing, facilities, and financial decisions—proactively rather than reactively.

3. Workforce recruitment/retention and housing constraints fueling churn and burnout

- **Cost-of-living mismatch is central:** Expensive housing, limited options, and commuting pressures contribute to turnover and staffing instability.
- **Experience pipeline imbalance:** Veteran retirements and novice-heavy staffing create limited mid-career stability and mentorship capacity.
- **Compensation concerns—especially for paraprofessionals:** Para work is described as highly skilled yet underpaid/undervalued, creating quality and retention risks.
- **Burnout is a real system threat:** Staff are spread thin across instruction and extracurricular roles, increasing fatigue and reducing sustainability.

4. Special education capacity in a small, isolated district: services, staffing, and family burden

- **Full continuum of needs is difficult to provide:** Serving students with significant/severe disabilities at a high level is challenging given scale and isolation.

- **Specialist recruitment is persistent:** Roles like speech-language pathologists are hard to staff; stakeholders noted periods of Zoom delivery even after the pandemic.
- **High advocacy burden for families:** Families report needing to “over-advocate,” turning support navigation into a “second job” and raising equity concerns.
- **Turnover disrupts continuity:** Churn—especially in SPED—forces students and families to “start over,” and slows progress when strategies don’t carry over.
- **Training continuity remains uneven:** While improving in some years, stakeholders describe historic gaps in onboarding and consistent implementation of supports.

5. Facilities use, efficiency, and operational costs aligned to enrollment reality

- **Three-building model creates friction and cost pressure:** Stakeholders cited staffing and operational inefficiencies (e.g., lunch logistics; questions about sustaining multiple kitchens).
- **Facilities planning must match demographics:** There is an ongoing need to align facilities decisions with enrollment decline and program sustainability.
- **A visible, high-stakes community issue:** Facilities decisions are intertwined with identity, politics, and trust—requiring clear communication and long-range framing.

6. Polarization and governance complexity: keeping focus on learning amid “loud voices”

- **Desire to avoid ideological buzzwords:** Stakeholders want a superintendent who keeps the district centered on teaching and learning rather than managing extremes.
- **Protecting church–state separation is a clear priority:** Some fear religion-driven governance conflicts seen elsewhere and want contentious issues kept out of the district.
- **Charter school efforts may resurface:** Even if not active now, stakeholders believe it could re-emerge and should stay on the radar.
- **Board dynamics and process needs:** A board vacancy was mentioned, along with interest in structured community input mechanisms during the finalist process.

7. Community dynamics: engagement gaps, resistance to change, and follow-through concerns

- **Hispanic community: heard but not acted upon:** A recurring concern is that input is received without visible follow-through, reducing trust over time.
- **Large retiree population with limited school connection:** Some stakeholders noted occasional hostility and lower investment in district initiatives.
- **Community rigidity can stall necessary evolution:** Tension exists between “keeping Estes the way it is” and adapting to real enrollment, workforce, and student needs.
- **Complacency risk (“the bubble” mindset):** A belief that “everything’s fine” can reduce urgency to address emerging problems early.

8. Maintaining district identity and independence amid choice and outside influence

- **Choice pressures threaten cohesion:** Students leaving for other options contributes to identity drift and financial/program impacts.
- **Protecting focus and culture:** Stakeholders worry the district could be pulled toward politics/ideology or the preferences of “louder voices,” weakening its student-centered tone.

- **Recruitment realities include lifestyle-fit:** Hiring challenges are tied not only to housing/pay but also to mismatched expectations about Estes Park’s day-to-day lifestyle.

9. Consistency fatigue and communication variability across the system

- **Whiplash undermines confidence:** Stakeholders expressed concern about starting initiatives and abandoning them quickly, creating instability for staff and families.
- **Communication is uneven:** Some noted major improvement with direct superintendent involvement, but inconsistency persists across the broader system.
- **Transparency and “CYA” language erode trust:** Especially for families with high needs, vague language and limited visibility into processes (behavior supports, observation opportunities) increases anxiety and dissatisfaction.

10. Instructional and learning challenges: rigor, identification of needs, and the technology/AI shift

- **Rigor concerns for some families:** Reports surfaced of families leaving because academics were perceived as not rigorous enough, with concern the system serves the “middle” better than students at the ends.
- **Early identification gaps (e.g., dyslexia):** Some families pay out-of-pocket for evaluations, raising equity/privilege issues and concern about missed early supports.
- **Technology balance (iPads) remains a tension:** Parents perceive overuse in elementary and want clearer purpose and healthier balance.
- **AI/ChatGPT is changing learning and assessment:** Stakeholders want a more serious districtwide approach to AI’s impact on assignments, assessment integrity, and instructional practice.

11. Student safety vigilance without fear-based culture

- **“Safe community” doesn’t mean immune:** Stakeholders strongly emphasized preparedness and vigilance without creating anxiety.
- **Avoiding complacency:** The theme echoes broader concerns—don’t assume “it could never happen here”; maintain systems, training, and readiness.

12. Inclusion gaps in extracurriculars and after-school programming

- **After-school access is not consistently inclusive:** Stakeholders noted that students needing 1:1 support often face barriers to participation.
- **Limited unified offerings:** Examples included the absence of unified sports options (e.g., unified basketball/track) and limited aftercare supports for students with higher needs.
- **Equity extends beyond academics:** Families want inclusion to be real in the full student experience—clubs, sports, and enrichment, not just classroom placement.

Top Five Desired Characteristics of the next Estes Park Superintendent as identified by ESTES PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT PARENTS & COMMUNITY MEMBERS	
Actionable, Accountable Follow Through	Trust Building Communicator & Relationship Builder
A leader who turns concerns into clear next steps—sets timelines, assigns ownership, tracks progress, and communicates “you said / we did” so the community sees results (not just listening).	Communicates early, often, and plainly with families, staff, and the community—especially when issues are hard—while building durable relationships through accessibility, responsiveness, and transparency.
Strategic Systems Builder for Coherence & Sustainability	Talent, Retention, & Capacity Optimizer
Aligns the district around a shared plan (strategic plan/global outcomes), reduces initiative “whiplash,” strengthens consistent practices across K–12, and matches priorities to capacity so quality is sustainable in a small district.	Prioritizes recruiting and keeping great people by addressing compensation realities, housing/commute barriers, training/induction, and role clarity—especially for hard-to-staff areas like Special Education and paraprofessionals.
Student Centered, Inclusive, Steady Tone Setter	
Keeps the district focused on students and learning amid polarization; champions belonging and inclusion (ELL, Special Education, all learners), sets clear expectations for culture and behavior supports, and leads with calm, fairness, and empathy.	

**Strengths of the Estes Park School District as identified by
 HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**

(Based on interviews and personal statements)

1. Close-knit, safe, and supportive community culture

- **Strong sense of belonging:** Students repeatedly described a community where they know “everyone in my grade,” creating tight peer connections and social support.
- **Safety and comfort at school:** The small setting contributes to students feeling secure, seen, and less anonymous than they would in a larger school.
- **A culture of looking out for one another:** Students emphasized a shared responsibility and friendliness that strengthens daily school life.

2. Strong community partnerships that expand student opportunities

- **Local partners actively support students:** Students noted positive relationships with organizations like the Rec Center, Rotary, and local venues/restaurants that create enrichment and engagement.
- **After-school access and connection:** Partnerships help students find activities, community involvement, and meaningful ways to spend time outside the school day.
- **Community feels invested in students:** Students experience adults and organizations in town as allies who contribute time, resources, and opportunities.

3. Robust concurrent enrollment options that accelerate college and career readiness

- **Flexible access through higher-ed partnerships:** Students highlighted opportunities with community college partners that include online and in-person options.
- **Support structures remove barriers:** School-supported transportation and scheduling flexibility make participation more feasible.
- **Real credit and credential benefits:** Students value earning certificates and college credits before graduation as a tangible head start.

4. High-impact CTE program as a major point of pride

- **Hands-on, practical learning is “blooming”:** Students described CTE growth and energy, emphasizing relevance and real-world application.
- **Multiple pathways that match interests:** Automotive, welding, woodworking, greenhouse work, and home/life-skills courses were cited as meaningful and engaging.
- **Clear connection to future plans:** Students see CTE as building employable skills, confidence, and direction—especially for those seeking applied learning.

5. Exceptional arts programs as a signature strength

- **Arts described as “glorious”:** Students spoke with pride about music, visual arts, and performing arts as standout parts of the school experience.
- **Tradition and excellence:** Marching band legacy, choir trips, and all-state participation reflect sustained quality and student opportunity.
- **High visibility and community pride:** Performances and arts events are seen as a point of community connection and recognition.

6. Small-school extracurricular access that lets students be “more than one thing”

- **Multiple roles are possible:** Students value being able to do sports *and* theater *and* band—rather than being pushed into a single track.
- **Broader participation and inclusion:** The smaller environment makes it easier for more students to contribute, try new activities, and belong.
- **Identity-building through involvement:** Students emphasized that this flexibility helps them explore interests and feel connected.

7. Strong athletics, especially endurance sports—with consistent competitiveness

- **Track and cross country are standout programs:** Students noted these teams as consistently strong and regularly competitive at the state level.
- **A culture of commitment and pride:** Endurance sports in particular were framed as a source of school spirit, tradition, and accomplishment.
- **Opportunities to excel in a small setting:** Students see athletics as accessible and meaningful, not limited to only a select few.

8. Accessible administration and authentic student voice

- **Leaders are known and approachable:** Students appreciate that district and school leaders are visible and feel personally accessible.
- **Students feel heard:** Administrators are described as communicating directly with students and seeking student input.
- **Inclusion builds trust:** Students framed this access as a key part of why the school feels supportive and responsive.

Challenges of Estes Park School District as identified by HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

(Based on interviews and personal statements)

1. Student behavior and discipline as the most persistent day-to-day challenge

- **Frequent classroom disruption:** Students described ongoing issues with disrespect, interrupting instruction, and behavior that derails learning.
- **Instructional time is lost:** The impact is felt not just by teachers, but by peers who want a calmer, more focused environment.
- **Affects school climate:** Students framed this as a top concern because it shapes whether classrooms feel productive, fair, and safe.

2. Restorative practices seen as inconsistent and sometimes ineffective

- **Gap between intent and impact:** Students generally understand the purpose of restorative approaches, but often experience them as “just a conversation.”
- **Perceived lack of follow-through:** When harm occurs, students said they don't always see meaningful repair, accountability, or changed behavior afterward.
- **Trust erodes when outcomes feel minimal:** Students suggested inconsistency makes it harder to believe the system is fair or protective of learning.

3. Lack of clarity and shared expectations across staff and classrooms

- **Different interpretations of “restorative”:** Students experience varied responses depending on the teacher or setting.
- **Uneven enforcement creates confusion:** What's acceptable in one classroom may have consequences in another, leading to frustration and mixed signals.
- **Need for a common standard:** Students want clearer norms for behavior, language, and consequences so expectations feel predictable and consistent.

4. Need for layered discipline options with logical, proportional consequences

- **Restore *and* hold accountable:** Students emphasized they want restorative responses paired with consequences that match the seriousness of incidents.
- **Structured accountability options:** Ideas students raised included restitution, community service, and other tangible ways to “make it right.”
- **Consistent escalation pathways:** Students want a clear progression for repeated or serious behavior so consequences aren't arbitrary or dependent on who responds.

5. Harmful language as a serious climate concern

- **Offensive language normalized as “jokes”:** Students reported racism, discrimination occurring with troubling frequency.
- **Consequences viewed as too light:** Responses were often described as minimal (e.g., “an email home”), which students felt did not match the harm.
- **Impact on belonging and safety:** Students framed this as more than discipline—it affects whether students feel respected, included, and protected.

6. Staff turnover and retention creating instability and a “rebuild” cycle

- **Frequent year-to-year change:** Students noted turnover among staff and administration, which disrupts consistency and relationships.
- **Loss of continuity:** Each transition resets routines, expectations, and trust—contributing to the feeling of repeatedly starting over.
- **Harder to sustain improvements:** Students implied that stability matters for culture, instruction, and follow-through on schoolwide practices.

7. Housing and cost-of-living as major barriers to recruitment and retention

- **Affordability limits who can stay:** High housing costs and limited availability make it difficult to attract and keep staff.
- **Commuting fuels churn:** Long commutes add stress and reduce long-term retention, reinforcing turnover patterns.
- **A structural issue with school impacts:** Students recognize this isn’t just an HR challenge—it affects classroom stability and school culture.

8. Need for more consistent staff support and training

- **New teachers placed in “survival mode”:** Students perceive that some new staff lack the onboarding and day-to-day support needed to be successful quickly.
- **Veteran teachers need support for updated practices:** Students suggested not everyone receives consistent coaching to adopt new tools or approaches.
- **Training consistency affects student experience:** When adults aren’t aligned in classroom management, students experience frustration.

Top Five Desired Characteristics of the next Estes Park Superintendent as identified by ESTES PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT STUDENTS	
Visible, Engaged, & Present in Student Life	Approachable, Student Centered, & Elevates Student Voice
Regularly shows up in schools and at student events (performances, games, activities), is known by students, and leads in a way that feels connected, not distant or “above the system.”	Creates easy, respectful access for students; listens without judgment; and actively includes student perspectives in decisions that shape school experience and culture.
Calm, Level Headed Conflict Manager Who Sets the Right Urgency	Positive, Uplifting Culture Builder Who Genuinely Enjoys the Work
De-escalates tense situations, reads context well, stays composed, and responds with an appropriate pace, fast when safety and learning demand it, thoughtful when complexity requires it.	Brings constructive energy, models optimism and respect, and helps people feel motivated and proud, creating a tone where students and adults want to contribute.
Steady, Collaborative Communicator Who Builds Consistent Systems	
Communicates clearly across diverse groups (students, staff, families, partners, board/community), stays resilient under pressure, and drives coherence, especially around discipline/restorative practices and staff training, so expectations aren’t fragmented.	

FINDINGS / THEMES

Many of the discussions pertaining to strengths and challenges for the Estes Park School District flow into the expectations for the next superintendent. Several of the characteristics that are present in the profile for the next superintendent build on the current strengths of the organization in addition to addressing the challenges ahead. The search team will seek a new superintendent who will understand issues facing the district.

When the data from interviews and focus groups were combined, themes emerged. It should be noted that there was more similarity across groups than there were differences. In general, strengths and challenging issues were almost unanimous across groups. Additionally, the characteristics desired in the next superintendent were also closely aligned across groups. This congruence is viewed as a positive characteristic of this search and will bring clarity in focus for the Board and the new superintendent.

The following themes are supported by the combined data of all stakeholder groups responding to the [Online Community Survey](#)

STRENGTHS

1. **Strong sense of community and shared identity**

Repeated emphasis on a close-knit town, strong school-community connection, and community loyalty that shows up to support students and schools.

2. **Dedicated, caring, high-quality staff**

Consistent recognition of excellent teachers, support staff, coaches, and paraprofessionals who are invested in students' wellbeing and growth—often despite being stretched thin.

3. **Momentum from the current strategic plan and improvement work**

Multiple mentions of a **clear mission/vision**, a **5-year strategic plan**, a **solid improvement plan**, and a strong desire to **keep continuity** rather than “start over.”

4. **Academic gains and a culture of higher expectations**

Stakeholders noted improving achievement, attendance, targeted interventions, and a push for rigor and results (with a recurring desire to keep academics central).

5. **Small district advantages: relationships, nimbleness, and individualized attention**

Small class sizes, students being “known,” easier coordination across schools, and the ability to adapt faster than larger systems.

6. **Strong communication, transparency, and trust-building practices**

Many comments praised open communication and community connection—especially leadership that keeps stakeholders informed and builds confidence.

7. **Inclusive culture and support systems for diverse learners**

Repeated references to inclusion, support for special education and paraprofessionals, MTSS work (especially at the middle school), and a general “kids first” approach.

8. **Outdoor setting and place-based learning assets (RMNP connection)**

Frequent mention of the national park proximity, outdoor education, field trips, recess/outside time, and the natural environment as a signature learning advantage.

9. **Breadth of student opportunities: arts, activities, athletics, electives, and internships**

Strong support for music/performing arts, extracurriculars, clubs/sports, internships, and enrichment that increases engagement and pride.

10. **College and career pathways (Options program, CTE, dual credit, workforce routes)**

Stakeholders highlighted Options program success, dual/college credit, career pathways, and the value of “trade track” options—along with interest in expanding and clarifying access/resources.

CHALLENGES

1. **Declining enrollment**

Ongoing drops in enrollment, competition from homeschooling/online learning and potential charter interest, plus concerns that many in-district students open-enroll elsewhere—driving funding instability and community anxiety.

2. **Staff recruitment, retention, and affordability**

High cost of living and limited housing/salaries make it hard to attract and keep quality staff; turnover (especially elementary) disrupts continuity and strains teams.

3. **Inconsistent student behavior systems, bullying, and safety concerns**

Repeated reports of disruptive behavior, bullying/harassment, uneven discipline, and worries about threats/weapon talk—creating fear and eroding learning time and trust.

4. **Secondary leadership structure and administrative effectiveness**

Strong concern that **one principal split across MS/HS** is not working: lack of visible admin presence, weak follow-through, unorganized systems, unclear “who’s in charge,” and inadequate staff support.

5. **Academic rigor, expectations, and “back-to-basics” pressure**

Many want stronger literacy/math fundamentals, higher expectations, better study skills, less “passing along,” and more challenge for high-achievers—paired with criticism of overreliance on apps/standardized testing.

6. **Special education services and compliance with accommodations**

Families and staff cited unmet service minutes, inconsistent implementation of IEP accommodations, need for stronger SPED/para structures, and better push-in/pull-out coordination.

7. **Supports for multilingual learners and integration across language groups**
Calls for stronger ELD/ESL supports and effective mainstream inclusion; concerns about students segregating by home language and the instructional strain on teachers without enough staffing.
8. **Communication, trust, and follow-through with staff and families**
Concerns about poor or inconsistent communication across buildings/activities, lack of transparency, Meet & Confer not taken seriously, and a perception that leadership sometimes prioritizes optics over listening and action.
9. **Coherence of priorities and consistency of instructional quality**
Stakeholders described “too many goals” without clear prioritization, uneven teaching effectiveness from classroom to classroom, outdated practices in places, and a desire for stronger curriculum leadership (e.g., Director of Curriculum).
10. **Operational strain: schedules, staffing coverage, facilities, and funding tradeoffs**
Small-district scale issues: people stretched thin, hard-to-staff calendars (e.g., Monday schedule/childcare), aging buildings/maintenance needs, technology upgrades, and difficult budget decisions to sustain electives/CTE/arts alongside core needs.

THE ESTES PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT DESIRED CANDIDATE PROFILE

The Estes Park School District seeks a superintendent who in collaboration with the Board, staff, students, parents and community, will focus the district on shared goals and vision. After seeking input from stakeholders through individual and group interviews, focus groups, and a survey, the Estes Park School District seeks an engaged, visionary superintendent who possesses the following characteristics:

1. **Honest, transparent, high-integrity leadership**
Communicates candidly about realities (data, challenges, decisions), avoids spin, uses fair processes, and builds trust through consistency and ethical behavior.
2. **Visible, present, and genuinely invested in students and staff**
“Manager by walking around”: shows up in classrooms and events, knows people by name, listens onsite, and demonstrates servant-minded, hands-on leadership.
3. **Strong communicator and active listener**
Listens to understand (staff, students, families, community), communicates clearly and calmly across groups, and closes the loop with timely updates and next steps.
4. **Student-centered, mission-driven focus on learning**
Keeps decisions anchored to what’s best for students and classrooms; prioritizes literacy/math and strong instruction while supporting the whole child.

- 5. Decisive, courageous problem-solver who addresses issues directly**
Willing to make hard calls, have hard conversations, tackle “stuck” issues, and act with urgency when safety, culture, staffing, or learning outcomes are at stake.
- 6. High expectations and accountability for adults and students**
Sets clear standards, follows through, holds leadership and staff accountable, and creates a culture where effort, professionalism, and results matter.
- 7. Instructional leadership and proven track record improving outcomes**
Deep knowledge of effective pedagogy, curriculum/instruction systems, data-informed improvement, and experience leading measurable gains (especially in a small/rural context).
- 8. Calm, steady, emotionally mature leadership**
Level-headed under pressure, de-escalates conflict, maintains boundaries, and balances firmness with respect—especially in a polarized environment.
- 9. Community connector who can unify diverse viewpoints**
Builds partnerships, navigates strong opinions without being captured by the loudest voices, and strengthens trust between schools and the broader Estes Park community.
- 10. Fair, apolitical, and inclusive in approach**
Avoids partisan/ideological decision-making, ensures all students and families feel valued, and supports equitable access to services and opportunities (including SPED and multilingual learners) while keeping learning at the center.

BULLETED NOTES FROM ALL GROUPS

The interviews and focus groups of stakeholders generated the following responses. Careful attention has been made to accurately convey the message. The comments listed below emerged from statements made by stakeholders and they are to be considered personal opinions of the individual making the comments regarding the Estes Park School District.

Board Members, Current Superintendent, and Secretary to the Board

What are the strengths of the Estes Park School District?

- The current superintendent is a major district strength; long tenure and deep institutional knowledge matter in a small community
- Turnaround success: moved from improvement status to major gains (elementary improved 10+ points in 2 years)
- Clear, consistent expectations for staff—especially strong Tier 1 classroom instruction
- Compassion + accountability leadership style; holds people to high standards
- Academic growth is strong and trending upward
- Instruction is evidence-based and standards-aligned
- Strategic plan provides clear focus, shared priorities, and long-range direction
- District has positive momentum and a “turned things around” narrative after prior decline/instability
- Student-centered decision-making is a core norm (“what’s best for students” first)
- Superintendent is highly visible and engaged (classrooms, events, Rotary, fundraisers, performances, athletics)
- “All-hands” small-district leadership: jumps in to help when needed
- Strong listening and relationship-building from leadership
- Supportive culture across all employee groups (teachers, support staff, transportation, maintenance)
- Improved morale and positive school climate; more energized and unified culture
- “Better Together” collaboration across schools and roles; shared ownership for results
- Strong community partnerships (Rotary, Lions, tutoring programs, retired teachers, local businesses)
- Real-world learning tied to community partners and local businesses
- Schools function as a welcoming community hub (plays, band, sports, art exhibits, open events)
- Significant scholarship support through partnerships (about \$200K annually)
- Strong booster support (sports and band)
- Highly effective School Resource Officer (SRO) partnership
- Board follows policy governance; effective governance even with differing viewpoints
- Restorative practices strengthening relationships, communication, and problem-solving
- Community is resilient and “pulls together” during adversity (loss, floods, wildfire evacuations)
- Community history of supporting schools financially (bond 2007; mill levy override 2018)
- Strong financial position and responsible long-range facilities planning; reserves built to support capital needs

- Facilities/master planning is underway; aging buildings and long-term bond timing (around 2030) being addressed
- Trust-building leadership helped stabilize the district through COVID and board transition
- Next superintendent inherits momentum and a clear strategic plan timeline (entering near the end of a five-year cycle)

What are the challenges of the Estes Park School District?

- Experience matters less than willingness and ability to do the work (not “seasoned,” but effective)
- Need a doer, not a politician
- Sustain academic progress while bringing along staff who struggle with change (especially long-tenured staff)
- Transition challenge: the current superintendent’s trust and relationships are deep; new leader must build credibility with strong board support
- Avoid constant comparisons to the current superintendent.
- Declining enrollment creates budget pressure; staffing and spending must align with reality
- Colorado school finance is complex; strong partnership with finance leadership is essential
- Maintain disciplined fiscal stewardship amid state/national funding uncertainty
- Balance student needs, staff support, compensation goals, and long-range reserves
- Facilities are aging (50–65+ years); deferred maintenance is significant (HVAC, plumbing, electrical, pipes, bathrooms/locker rooms)
- Facilities master plan is in progress; new superintendent must quickly absorb results and set priorities
- Rising maintenance costs compete with salary increases
- Funding strategy is uncertain (BEST grant vs. bond); bond discussion likely later, after master plan
- If consolidation becomes necessary, expect strong community resistance; requires major communication/engagement effort
- Site/operations issues to solve (parking, traffic flow)
- Student engagement challenge post-COVID, especially in high school (attendance, chronic tardiness, participation drops with age)
- Secondary discipline/climate concerns: vaping, alcohol, phone distractions, inconsistent enforcement—need stronger consistency while maintaining relationships
- Family engagement is uneven: strong turnout for athletics/performances, weaker for academic meetings/nights
- Priority to deepen engagement with Hispanic/Latino families; barriers include work schedules, childcare, transportation, and time
- Communication needs to be clearer so parents understand what’s happening and why (including Spanish translation)
- Engagement is a two-way street; some groups (notably retirees) may opt out, creating perception gaps
- Maintain strong safety/security partnerships with law enforcement (experience with serious threats; relationship is vital)

- Public perception may lag behind actual improvement due to old ratings and prior negative experiences
- Community dynamics: long-time residents, newcomers, and retirees often view schools differently; can fuel criticism
- Risk of early missteps in a tight-knit, outspoken community; don't move too fast or take a hard stance too soon
- Need balanced responsiveness: don't overreact to a few loud voices, but still listen and adapt appropriately
- Housing affordability is a major recruitment/retention barrier for leaders and staff; many commute "up the hill"
- Potential charter proposal could resurface; could strain enrollment and become a church/state flashpoint
- Polarizing social/cultural issues can surface (e.g., gender identity/LGBTQ topics) and create conflict
- Concern about student walkouts/protests as a potential local flashpoint
- Organizational systems need strengthening: reduce "hair on fire" urgency by improving processes, roles, follow-through, and execution without reinventing everything
- Compensation strategy remains challenging in a high cost-of-living area; pay has improved but still tight vs. housing costs and competitiveness

Parents and Community Members

What are the strengths of the Estes Park School District?

- Strong "one-district" feel with cross-building supports (older students mentoring elementary) and engaged parents.
- ~1/3 ELL (per parent); Seal of Biliteracy; Spanish as an elementary special; bilingualism valued for all learners.
- Schools keep the focus on students and learning despite a polarized environment, reinforced by leadership tone-setting.
- Educators/principals/SRO are visible in the community; school is woven into daily community life.
- Strong offerings and responsiveness to diverse student needs despite limited capacity.
- Large, culturally varied Hispanic community and broader diversity that strengthens the district.
- Staff know students/families well and show deep commitment.
- Dedicated staff intentionally committed to the community and its kids.
- Clear emphasis on belonging, support, and student development.
- Unique opportunities tied to the mountain setting and National Park resources.
- Broad activities relative to peer rural districts.
- Clear timeline and rigorous evaluation process credited to the current superintendent, the board, and educators.
- Growth in technical/career programming, including a P-TECH-like pathway with university credit.
- P-TECH launched through grant work (credit noted to Rachel Graham) and higher-ed/community partners.

- Increasing off-campus, community-based learning opportunities.
- Students understand and use the global outcomes language; plan seen as visible and meaningful.
- Inclusive performing arts (musical/play); sustained athletics (softball/baseball/track/football); strong band/color guard/cheer with state-level competition and pride.
- Local control and independence: Strong value placed on an independent district with a local board and decisions tailored to the community—not metro-driven.
- Small-district “everybody knows the kids” culture: Front office, staff, and teachers know students personally, strengthening relationships and accountability.
- High educator accessibility: Parents report direct communication and timely responses that feel easier than in larger districts.
- Community continuity: Multi-generational ties and long-term staff relationships reinforce tradition, pride, and stability.
- Core academics first: Perception the district stays focused on “meat and potatoes” education—strong teaching, learning, and critical thinking—rather than ideological conflict.
- Safer, more supervised environment: Less anonymity and fewer large-scale behavior issues; concerns are noticed and addressed earlier.
- Favorable comparisons to larger districts: Viewed as having fewer serious incidents (e.g., bullying/violence/social-media disruptions) than nearby larger systems.
- Place-based quality of life: Estes Park’s outdoor access and small mountain-town identity strengthen community attachment.
- Close-knit informal support: Families feel known; students are recognized by name and experience a strong sense of belonging.
- Caring, committed staff: Many staff described as invested, student-centered, and trying to do right by kids.
- Team stability matters: When the “right team” is in place, student supports are stronger and progress improves.
- Effective home–school communication tool: A back-and-forth written log is a consistent positive, especially for a less-verbal student.
- Bright spots in specials/electives: Band (percussion) stands out as a major success; art noted as supportive with a teacher open to collaboration.
- Improving continuity systems: “Handoff binder” (levels/strategies/supports) helps reduce backsliding during staff transitions.
- Visible, responsive leadership (the current superintendent): Described as present, organized, action-oriented, willing to have hard conversations, and strong on follow-through.

What are the challenges of the Estes Park School District?

- Transition continuity risk: Strong caution against a “new stamp”; protect the community-built strategic plan and start with an audit-first entry (what’s working/stop/align).
- Enrollment decline + long-range planning gap: Need proactive 3/5/10-year planning for enrollment, programming, staffing, and operations (not reactive).

- Recruitment/retention + housing pressure: High cost of living, retirements, novice-heavy pipeline, limited mid-career stability; pursue housing stipends/partnerships and make the district the draw.
- Polarization management load: Desire for a superintendent who avoids ideological framing and keeps the focus on teaching and learning.
- Governance complexity: Board vacancy noted; interest in structured, transparent community input during finalist selection.
- Follow-through gap with Hispanic community: Concerns are heard but not acted on; need visible responsiveness and closure loops.
- Retiree/community disconnect: Large retiree population with limited school connection; occasional hostility and low investment in district initiatives.
- Burnout and thin staffing: Teachers/admin stretched across instruction and extracurriculars; sustainability concerns.
- Fragmented secondary extracurricular participation: Students spread thin; limited cohesive "gathering structures," especially at secondary.
- Unclear "mountain identity" as a district: Need a sharper identity to leverage local assets and attract/retain families.
- Special education capacity constraints: Hard to provide the full continuum of services in a small/isolated district, especially for significant/severe needs.
- Specialist staffing instability: Chronic difficulty recruiting/retaining specialists (e.g., SLP), including periods of Zoom-delivered services post-pandemic.
- Student outflow ("exporting"): Open enrollment/online options/commuting patterns pull students out; homeschooling scope may be underestimated.
- Facilities efficiency and cost pressure: Three buildings strain operations; food service/kitchen duplication concerns; facilities planning must match enrollment reality.
- Technology balance concerns: Perception of iPad overuse (especially elementary); desire for clearer purpose and better balance.
- AI instructional implications: Need districtwide approach to AI/ChatGPT impacts on learning, assessment integrity, and instruction.
- Maintain church-state separation: Strong desire to avoid religion-driven governance conflicts; keep contentious issues out of district decisions.
- Charter effort watch: Belief charter proposals could resurface; keep on the superintendent's radar.
- Protect district independence: Concern about drift toward outside influence, politics, or "louder voices" that dilute current culture.
- Complacency ("bubble") risk: "Everything's fine" mindset can reduce urgency and proactive problem-solving.
- Shrinking class sizes: Smaller graduating cohorts may pressure programs, staffing, and resources.
- Safety vigilance needed: Don't assume "it can't happen here"; stay prepared without fear-based culture.
- Resistance to change: Some stakeholders (often retirees/longtime residents) may oppose needed evolution.
- Initiative whiplash fatigue: Start/stop programs create instability and cynicism; need consistent follow-through.

- High family advocacy burden (SPED): Parents feel they must over-advocate to secure services—advocacy becomes a second job.
- SPED turnover disrupts continuity: Churn forces families to restart and increases learning curves for new staff.
- Compensation vs. cost-of-living mismatch: Pay—especially for paraprofessionals—seen as insufficient for living near Estes, driving commuting burnout and turnover.
- Paraprofessional role undervalued: Para work requires high skill but is compensated/treated as unskilled, risking quality and retention.
- Training and carryover inconsistency: Training improving in some years, but historically uneven—especially during staff transitions.
- Extracurricular inclusion gaps: After-school programs often not inclusive; limited unified sports/aftercare options for students needing 1:1 support.
- Academic rigor concerns for some families: Perception district serves the “middle” better than high-need and high-achieving students; some families leave for rigor.
- Communication variability: Communication improves with superintendent involvement but is inconsistent across the system.
- Behavior supports transparency concerns: Parents unclear on behavior handling (especially for less-verbal students); discomfort with vague “CYA” language and limited observation opportunities.
- Recruitment expectation mismatch: Challenges tied to pay/housing *and* outsiders misunderstanding Estes’ year-round lifestyle/community vibe.
- Past staffing missteps had high cost: Example of misassignment in SPED not corrected quickly led to a “lost year” and renewed out-of-district planning.
- Learning needs identification gaps: Concerns about early identification (e.g., dyslexia); families sometimes pay out-of-pocket, raising equity issues.

School District Administrators

What are the strengths of the Estes Park School District?

- Strong, committed staff who “wear many hats” in a small district
- High trust and strong collaboration across roles and buildings
- Whole-child focus: student well-being and relationships prioritized, not just test scores
- Intentional relationship-building with students across all schools
- Strategic plan provides clear K–12 direction and shared language
- Evidence of improvement: performance indicators trending up; prior “priority improvement” turned around
- Strong K–12 vertical alignment and instructional coherence (elem → middle → high)
- Systems/structures in place so progress continues even with leadership changes
- Exceptional community partnerships and real-world learning (RMNP, Conservancy, local businesses)
- Authentic learning examples: ranger-led science, snowshoeing, business-linked writing projects, CTE internships
- Community assets: retirees and local experts support advisory work, guest speaking, and long-range planning
- Students exposed to diverse careers/experiences (e.g., NASA/astronaut links, authors, civic leaders, former diplomats)

- Small-district advantages: accessible leaders, fewer layers, quick problem-solving, nimble decision-making
- Strong professional learning culture: internal PD led by staff, plus external learning opportunities
- Monthly PD days and consistent training keep staff aligned
- Strong instructional support systems: momentum in PLC and MTSS work
- Balanced technology use—supports curriculum without replacing instruction
- Robust Tier 2/3 interventions with structured schedules
- Literacy improvements showing in data; meaningful gains in reading outcomes
- Facilities master plan is underway (a major point of pride; first comprehensive plan in a long time)
- Strong desire to stay aligned with current leadership direction and continue the strategic plan
- Facilities planning is a pivotal next chapter: plan expected in the fall
- Major community decisions ahead, including possible bond planning within ~18 months
- Continuity is a recurring message: preserve key systems (PD, curriculum adoption, onboarding/training) so progress isn't dependent on one person

What are the challenges of the Estes Park School District?

- Declining enrollment affects staffing, budgets, and long-range planning
- Complex funding realities; risk of losing major dollars if state “stabilizing” mechanisms change
- Small-district capacity limits: leaders and central staff “wear many hats,” stretching key functions (curriculum/assessment, etc.)
- Loss of key staff can mean loss of institutional knowledge; transitions are harder than in larger districts
- Cybersecurity threats are rising, but resources and expertise to prevent/respond are limited
- Grant-writing gap: loss of dedicated grant staff increases reliance on the superintendent and a small team to win/manage grants
- Facilities master plan implementation will require high-stakes, public decisions (renovate vs. rebuild, grade-span changes, possible closures)
- Large bond may be needed; passage could be difficult with many retirees and fewer families directly connected to schools
- Small-town dynamics: high visibility and strong opinions can amplify conflict; leaders must stay focused on district-wide best interests
- Loud factions can pressure decision-making (e.g., contentious charter school discussions)
- “Town-gown” dynamics: growth in homeschooling/alternative choices pressures enrollment while needing respectful engagement
- Some influential voices are strongly critical of public education
- Community engagement is both a strength and a stressor: deep pride and partnership alongside potential for intensified conflict

School District Staff

What are the strengths of the Estes Park School District?

- Strong community support: businesses, retirees, parents, and organizations step up with time, donations, and help when asked
- Strong history of voter funding support: bonds/mill levies typically pass; community willing to fund near the maximum allowed
- Active Education Foundation and strong local scholarships (about ~\$200K and growing participation)
- Student culture strengths: students are empathetic, compassionate, and caring—especially during crises
- Diverse community is viewed as an asset, including a large Spanish-speaking population (~40% estimate mentioned)
- Elementary school momentum: improving scores, strong leadership, positive trajectory
- Many student opportunities (especially PK–8): athletics, music, theater, art, clubs, CTE, concurrent enrollment
- Strong place-based learning: Rocky Mountain National Park partnership (rangers, field trips) and Rec Center connection (water safety/swim for all elementary students)
- Robust low/no-cost after-school options that reduce financial barriers (clubs like beekeeping, garden, percussion, choir, Gamers Unplugged, etc.)
- Strong transportation access: bus service supports families and logistics
- High elementary family engagement: reading programs and events like Books & Breakfast drawing 100+ adults; rebuilding connections post-COVID

What are the challenges of the Estes Park School District?

- Secondary coordination across buildings isn't working; concerns that leadership isn't being candid about the problems
- Culture of denial / low psychological safety: staff feel concerns are dismissed instead of examined
- Weak communication and alignment at secondary: inconsistent info, unclear expectations, last-minute decisions dropped in meetings
- Confusion about key logistics and plans (e.g., conferences, programs, schedules)
- Limited authentic teacher voice: input feels "checkbox," with little follow-through or real dialogue
- Staff morale and retention risk: fear of losing key staff; people feel unheard/unsupported
- Newer teachers lack consistent mentoring/support that used to exist
- Staffing is spread too thin; too many initiatives at once ("shotgun" approach)
- Reactive "hair-on-fire" operations; priorities feel unclear
- Course/program inconsistency and equity concerns (e.g., AP cuts while tiny sections run elsewhere)
- Curriculum/course changes happening without meaningful teacher consultation
- High school extracurricular participation is low; work/economic pressures limit involvement and make it hard to field teams

- Enrollment is volatile and class sizes vary widely, complicating staffing and course offerings
- Competition pressures: more families choosing homeschool or down-valley schools; concern this isn't fully acknowledged
- Program ownership/respect issues: teacher-created programs/clubs reassigned with poor communication, hurting trust
- Facilities barriers: separate secondary buildings create isolation and limit collaboration
- Facilities strategy is being discussed, but communication about it feels unclear

High School Students

What are the strengths of the Estes Park School District?

- Close-knit, safe, supportive community where students feel known and connected
- Strong sense of belonging—students know “everyone in my grade”
- Strong community partnerships that expand after-school options and enrichment (Rec Center, Rotary, local businesses)
- Robust concurrent enrollment with community college (e.g., FRCC), with flexible online/in-person options and transportation support
- Strong CTE program with hands-on pathways (auto, welding, woodworking, greenhouse, life skills)
- Exceptional arts programs with long-standing success and high community visibility (band, choir, visual/performing arts, all-state, trips)
- Small-school advantage: students can participate in multiple activities (sports + theater + band)
- Strong athletics, especially track/cross country, with consistent state-level competitiveness
- Accessible, communicative administration that seeks and values student voice

What are the challenges of the Estes Park School District?

- Student behavior and discipline are the most persistent concern (disruptiveness, disrespect, interruptions)
- Restorative practices are applied inconsistently; often seen as “just a conversation” without follow-through
- Lack of shared expectations: staff interpret restorative practices differently, so consequences vary by classroom.
- Need a clearer, consistent discipline system with multiple tiers
- Students want restorative approaches **plus** logical, proportional consequences for serious issues (e.g., restitution/community service, clear escalation steps)
- Hate speech and harmful language reported as frequent (racism/discrimination), often dismissed as “jokes” with minimal consequences
- Staff turnover is high, creating instability and repeated “rebuild” cycles
- Housing and cost-of-living issues make recruiting/retaining staff difficult; commuting increases churn
- Need stronger, consistent training and support for both new and veteran teachers (so new staff aren't in “survival mode” and veterans can adopt updated practices/tools)

APPENDIX

The APPENDIX pages of this proposal include the following documents:

1. Estes Park School District Online Survey Response Summary
2. Estes Park School District Data Brief–CDE

Stakeholder Survey Summary

An online survey was offered from February 12–27, 2026; a total of 138 responses were received. A narrative summary of the open-ended questions and responses follows.

1. What are the Estes Park School District’s strengths that the next superintendent can build upon?

Response Summary:

- **Community and Support:** Strong sense of community, community engagement, and passionate support from parents and the broader community, including local nonprofits and business owners, are key strengths. The district's small size allows for tighter-knit relationships and easier maneuverability.
- **Strategic Direction and Improvement:** The current 5-year strategic plan, which is showing good results and academic growth, is a significant asset to build upon, along with a focus on specific academic and attendance improvements.
- **Dedicated Staff:** Excellent, dedicated, caring, and invested teachers and staff who are committed to improving their practice and students' well-being are consistently highlighted.
- **Programs and Opportunities:** Strengths include multilingual programming, support for the arts, extracurricular activities, outdoor and place-based learning opportunities (especially with proximity to RMNP), CTE, and college-credit options.
- **Leadership Qualities:** The previous superintendent's transparency, open communication, strong community connection, and servant-hearted leadership are seen as positive foundations for the next leader.

2. What are the challenges facing the Estes Park School District that the next superintendent should be aware of, or you would like to see addressed?

Response Summary:

- **Declining Enrollment and Retention:** A major concern is the declining student enrollment, with families leaving for home-schooling, charter schools, or schools in

other districts (like Lyons), which impacts funding and requires the superintendent to understand and address the reasons for the exodus and focus on retention.

- **Academic Standards and Rigor:** Many respondents desire a shift back to focusing on traditional academics, raising expectations, increasing accountability for students and staff, and providing more challenging courses for high achievers, with concerns that the current focus is too reliant on technology and has limited preparation for college.
- **Staff and Administrative Issues:** The district faces challenges with teacher and staff retention due to high cost of living and uncompetitive salaries, alongside concerns about poor administrative leadership, lack of support for teachers, low morale, and a perceived lack of transparency and favoritism in hiring and decision-making.
- **Student Behavior and Safety:** Significant issues with student discipline, disruptive behavior, bullying, and a perceived lack of consistent follow-through on consequences are creating an unsafe and chaotic learning environment.
- **Specific Program Needs:** There is a need for improved support for special education, English Language Development (ELD) students, and a balance between academic focus and vocational/creative arts programs.

3. What are the characteristics or traits that you think an effective Superintendent should possess in order to best lead the Estes Park School?

Response Summary:

- **Strong Leadership and Vision:** The superintendent needs to be a strong, decisive, and courageous leader with a clear vision, high expectations, and the ability to make hard decisions. They should be able to set goals, establish paths to achieve them, and demand accountability from both staff and students.
- **Communication, Listening, and Transparency:** Excellent communication skills are essential, encompassing active listening, clear and direct messaging, and a commitment to honesty, integrity, and transparency with the staff, students, parents, and the broader community.
- **Focus on Academics and Student-Centered Decisions:** A key characteristic is prioritizing education, focusing on academic improvement, the basics (reading, writing, math), and ensuring all decisions are student-centered and made with the best interests of the children in mind.
- **Community Involvement and Understanding:** The ideal candidate is approachable, involved in school events, willing to listen to the community, and understands the unique challenges and nuances of a small, rural, and tourist-based seasonal economy like Estes Park.
- **Support and Accountability for Staff:** The superintendent should support and value teachers and staff, hold building-level administrators and staff accountable for performance and cultural change, and possess previous classroom teaching or administrative experience.

4. Is there anything about the search or superintendent position that you would like to share with us?

Response Summary:

- **Need for an External Hire:** A strong theme is the desire for a candidate from outside the district, with several responses expressing hope for a thorough search process, worry about internal promotion, and the belief that an outsider is needed to bring fresh perspectives and avoid existing "baggage" or biases.
- **Focus on Staff and Morale:** Many responses advocate for a superintendent who supports staff, listens to teachers, improves teacher morale and voice, and addresses compensation issues, noting that administrative raises have previously outpaced teacher raises.
- **Emphasis on Academics and Student Accountability:** Respondents stress the need for a primary focus on student learning, improving standardized test scores, holding students accountable for their behavior, and addressing facility issues that negatively impact learning. Concerns were raised about "teaching to the test" versus comprehension.
- **Importance of Community Connection and Residency:** Several people want the new superintendent to live in Estes Park or be familiar with the community's unique dynamics and challenges.
- **Support for Predecessor:** Multiple responses praise the current/outgoing Superintendent, for her work, visibility, focus on safety, and commitment to growing leaders, suggesting she should be used as a model.

1570: Estes Park R-3

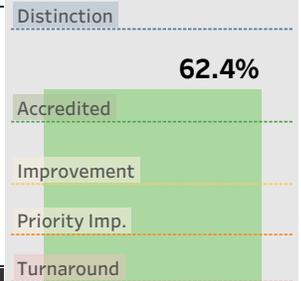
Grade Levels: EMH - (1 Year)

Accreditation Rating
Official Rating based on SINGLE-YEAR DPF Report

Accredited

62.4/100 Points Earned

The performance framework evaluates district and school performance on Academic Achievement, Academic Growth, and Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness indicators. The percentage of points earned across all indicators determines the final accreditation rating for a district or the final plan type for a school, which is displayed above. The cut points for final ratings established by the State Board of Education are shown at the right of this page. Failure to meet finance, assessment, and safety assurances may result in a lowered rating. Refer to the scoring guide near the end of this report for more details on how ratings are determined.



Accreditation categories are based on the total percentage of points earned.

Accredited with Distinction:
74.0% - 100%

Accredited:
56.0% - 73.9%

Accredited with Improvement Plan:
44.0% - 55.9%

Accredited with Priority Improvement Plan:
34.0% - 43.9%

Accredited with Turnaround Plan:
0.0% - 33.9%

Insufficient State Data:
No reportable achievement and growth data.

Indicator Rating Totals

Performance Indicator	Percent of Points Earned	Points Earned/Eligible	Rating
Academic Achievement	46.0%	13.8/30	Approaching
Academic Growth	63.4%	25.4/40	Meets
Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness	77.4%	23.2/30	Meets

Assurances

	Rating
Participation	Meets 95% Participation
Finance	Meets Requirements
Safety	Meets Requirements

Test Participation Rates and Total Participation Rate Descriptor*

Subject	Total Records	Valid Scores	Total Participation		Accountability Participation Rate	Rating
			Rate	Parent Excusals		
English Language Arts	580	542	93.4%	33	99.5%	Meets 95% Participation
Math	580	546	94.1%	32	99.6%	Meets 95% Participation

Total Participation Rate Descriptor for Planning Purposes:

**Does Not Meet 95%
Total Participation**

Summary of Ratings by EMH Level

EMH Level	Performance Indicator	Percent of Points Earned	Points Earned/Eligible	Rating	Points by Level	Overall Rating by Level
Elementary	Academic Achievement	49.3%	19.7/40	Approaching	52.6%	Improvement
	Academic Growth	54.8%	32.9/60	Approaching		
Middle	Academic Achievement	43.2%	17.3/40	Approaching	59.6%	Accredited
	Academic Growth	70.5%	42.3/60	Meets		
High	Academic Achievement	45.2%	13.6/30	Approaching	63.2%	Accredited
	Academic Growth	66.0%	26.4/40	Meets		
	Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness	77.4%	23.2/30	Meets		

(-) No Reportable Data

*State accountability policy requires 95% student participation in state assessments. Students excused from testing by a parent or guardian do not impact the Accountability Participation Rate that determines whether the overall rating is reduced by one level. Districts or schools with less than 95% total participation in ELA and Math receive a "Does Not Meet 95% Total Participation" descriptor that is informational and does not impact framework calculations. The descriptor does not impact framework calculations. First-year in the U.S. Multilingual Learners eligible to take the ELP assessment count as participants for ELA.

1570: Estes Park R-3

Elementary School - (1 Year)

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Subject	Student Group	Count	Participation Rate	Mean Scale Score	Percentile Rank	Pts Earned/ Eligible	Rating
CMAS - English Language Arts	All Students	187	95.2%	728.2	24	4.00/8	Approaching
	Previously Identified for READ Plan	43	91.7%	692.6	-	0.00/0	-
	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	78	96.4%	709.9	1	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
	Minority Students	68	94.6%	707.8	1	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
	Multilingual Learners	52	94.7%	698.8	1	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
	Students with Disabilities	20	95.2%	701.4	1	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
CMAS - Math	All Students	189	96.6%	730.3	39	4.00/8	Approaching
	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	80	98.8%	712.8	7	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
	Minority Students	70	98.6%	712.2	6	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
	Multilingual Learners	53	98.2%	705.1	1	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
	Students with Disabilities	21	100.0%	715.8	10	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
CMAS - Science	All Students	71	96.2%	743.0	64	6.00/8	Meets
	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	26	100.0%	729.5	36	0.50/1	Approaching
	Minority Students	24	100.0%	717.9	15	0.50/1	Approaching
	Multilingual Learners	17	100.0%	712.9	8	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
	Students with Disabilities	n < 16	-	-	-	0.00/0	-
TOTAL		*	*	*	*	17.25/35	Approaching

ACADEMIC GROWTH

Subject	Student Group	Count	Median Growth Percentile/Rate	Pts Earned/ Eligible	Rating
CMAS - English Language Arts	All Students	112	46.0	4.00/8	Approaching
	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	50	45.5	0.50/1	Approaching
	Minority Students	45	39.0	0.50/1	Approaching
	Multilingual Learners	30	33.0	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
	Students with Disabilities	n < 20	-	0.00/0	-
CMAS - Math	All Students	114	62.0	6.00/8	Meets
	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	52	45.5	0.50/1	Approaching
	Minority Students	47	47.0	0.50/1	Approaching
	Multilingual Learners	31	42.0	0.50/1	Approaching
	Students with Disabilities	n < 20	-	0.00/0	-
English Language Proficiency	English Language Proficiency	81	46.0	1.00/2	Approaching
	On Track to EL Proficiency	81	51.9%	0.50/2	Does Not Meet
TOTAL		*	*	14.25/26	Approaching

This page displays the performance indicator data for the elementary school level. For the 1-year report, calculations are based on 2025 state assessment results. Multi-year reports include 2023 through 2025 results.

Academic Achievement: mean scale scores represent outcomes for designated subjects and student groups; participation rates included on this page count parent excusals as non-participants.

Academic Growth: median student growth percentiles and percentages of students on track to meet targets represent outcomes for designated subjects and student groups.

For additional information regarding Academic Achievement and Academic Growth points, cut-points, and ratings, refer to the scoring guide at the end of this document.

Multilingual Learners describes students that are Non-English Proficient (NEP), Limited English Proficient (LEP), and Fluent English Proficient (FEP) - Monitor Year 1, Monitor Year 2, Exited Year 1, & Exited Year 2.

(*) Not Applicable; (-) No Reportable Data

1570: Estes Park R-3

Middle School - (1 Year)

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Subject	Student Group	Count	Participation Rate	Mean Scale Score	Percentile Rank	Pts Earned/ Eligible	Rating
CMAS - English Language Arts	All Students	135	91.6%	739.1	47	4.00/8	Approaching
	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	38	95.3%	722.1	12	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
	Minority Students	55	98.2%	716.7	5	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
	Multilingual Learners	34	97.1%	707.1	1	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
	Students with Disabilities	17	75.0%	709.2	1	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
CMAS - Math	All Students	136	92.3%	728.3	42	4.00/8	Approaching
	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	38	95.3%	712.4	8	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
	Minority Students	56	100.0%	708.8	4	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
	Multilingual Learners	35	100.0%	700.4	1	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
	Students with Disabilities	17	75.0%	699.1	1	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
CMAS - Science	All Students	43	89.8%	732.0	48	4.00/8	Approaching
	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	n < 16	-	-	-	0.00/0	-
	Minority Students	19	100.0%	713.1	14	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
	Multilingual Learners	n < 16	-	-	-	0.00/0	-
	Students with Disabilities	n < 16	-	-	-	0.00/0	-
TOTAL		*	*	*	*	14.25/33	Approaching

ACADEMIC GROWTH

Subject	Student Group	Count	Median Growth Percentile/Rate	Pts Earned/ Eligible	Rating
CMAS - English Language Arts	All Students	120	53.0	6.00/8	Meets
	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	34	50.0	0.75/1	Meets
	Minority Students	48	47.0	0.50/1	Approaching
	Multilingual Learners	30	44.5	0.50/1	Approaching
	Students with Disabilities	n < 20	-	0.00/0	-
CMAS - Math	All Students	120	52.5	6.00/8	Meets
	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	36	51.5	0.75/1	Meets
	Minority Students	48	42.5	0.50/1	Approaching
	Multilingual Learners	31	38.0	0.50/1	Approaching
	Students with Disabilities	n < 20	-	0.00/0	-
English Language Proficiency	English Language Proficiency	n < 20	-	0.00/0	-
	On Track to EL Proficiency	n < 20	-	0.00/0	-
TOTAL		*	*	15.50/22	Meets

This page displays the performance indicator data for the middle school level. For the 1-year report, calculations are based on 2025 state assessment results. Multi-year reports include 2023 through 2025 results.

Academic Achievement: mean scale scores represent outcomes for designated subjects and student groups; participation rates included on this page count parent excusals as non-participants.

Academic Growth: median student growth percentiles and percentages of students on track to meet targets represent outcomes for designated subjects and student groups.

For additional information regarding Academic Achievement and Academic Growth points, cut-points, and ratings, refer to the scoring guide at the end of this document.

Multilingual Learners describes students that are Non-English Proficient (NEP), Limited English Proficient (LEP), and Fluent English Proficient (FEP) - Monitor Year 1, Monitor Year 2, Exited Year 1, & Exited Year 2.

(*) Not Applicable; (-) No Reportable Data

1570: Estes Park R-3

High School - (1 Year)

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Subject	Student Group	Count	Participation Rate	Mean Scale Score	Percentile Rank	Pts Earned/ Eligible	Rating
CO PSAT - Reading & Writing	All Students	129	93.9%	424.6	23	4.00/8	Approaching
	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	36	93.0%	385.1	3	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
	Minority Students	57	98.4%	375.8	1	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
	Multilingual Learners	28	97.0%	327.6	1	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
	Students with Disabilities	n < 16	-	-	-	0.00/0	-
CO PSAT - Math	All Students	132	93.9%	403.5	25	4.00/8	Approaching
	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	36	93.0%	369.5	4	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
	Minority Students	60	98.4%	371.4	5	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
	Multilingual Learners	31	97.0%	340.7	1	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
	Students with Disabilities	n < 16	-	-	-	0.00/0	-
CMAS - Science	All Students	63	88.7%	732.5	42	4.00/8	Approaching
	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	n < 16	-	-	-	0.00/0	-
	Minority Students	24	100.0%	722.4	15	0.50/1	Approaching
	Multilingual Learners	n < 16	-	-	-	0.00/0	-
	Students with Disabilities	n < 16	-	-	-	0.00/0	-
TOTAL		*	*	*	*	14.00/31	Approaching

ACADEMIC GROWTH

Subject	Student Group	Count	Median Growth Percentile/Rate	Pts Earned/ Eligible	Rating
CO PSAT/SAT - Reading & Writing	All Students	106	51.5	6.00/8	Meets
	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	21	37.0	0.50/1	Approaching
	Minority Students	39	48.0	0.50/1	Approaching
	Multilingual Learners	n < 20	-	0.00/0	-
	Students with Disabilities	n < 20	-	0.00/0	-
CO PSAT/SAT - Math	All Students	165	41.0	4.00/8	Approaching
	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	42	35.5	0.50/1	Approaching
	Minority Students	68	37.5	0.50/1	Approaching
	Multilingual Learners	27	47.0	0.50/1	Approaching
	Students with Disabilities	n < 20	-	0.00/0	-
English Language Proficiency	English Language Proficiency	32	67.0	2.00/2	Exceeds
	On Track to EL Proficiency	33	39.4%	2.00/2	Exceeds
TOTAL		*	*	16.50/25	Meets

This page displays the performance indicator data for the high school level. For the 1-year report, calculations are based on 2025 state assessment results. Multi-year reports include 2023 through 2025 results. PSAT/SAT cut scores for the multi-year reports were renormed based on 2025 results.

Academic Achievement: mean scale scores represent outcomes for designated subjects and student groups; participation rates included on this page count parent excusals as non-participants. .

Academic Growth: median student growth percentiles and percentages of students on track to meet targets represent outcomes for designated subjects and student groups.

For additional information regarding Academic Achievement and Academic Growth points, cut-points, and ratings, refer to the scoring guide at the end of this document.

Multilingual Learners describes students that are Non-English Proficient (NEP), Limited English Proficient (LEP), and Fluent English Proficient (FEP) - Monitor Year 1, Monitor Year 2, Exited Year 1, & Exited Year 2.

(*) Not Applicable; (-) No Reportable Data

1570: Estes Park R-3

High School - (1 Year)

POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS

Subject	Student Group	Count	Best Rate	Rate/Score	Participation Rate	Pts Earned/Eligible	Rating
CO SAT - Reading & Writing	All Students	64	*	496.9	91.5%	3.00/4	Meets
	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	n < 16	*	-	-	0.00/0	-
	Minority Students	23	*	425.1	95.8%	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
	Multilingual Learners	n < 16	*	-	-	0.00/0	-
	Students with Disabilities	n < 16	*	-	-	0.00/0	-
CO SAT - Math	All Students	65	*	463.9	91.5%	2.00/4	Approaching
	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	n < 16	*	-	-	0.00/0	-
	Minority Students	23	*	414.7	95.8%	0.25/1	Does Not Meet
	Multilingual Learners	n < 16	*	-	-	0.00/0	-
	Students with Disabilities	n < 16	*	-	-	0.00/0	-
Dropout Rate	All Students	524	*	0.2%	*	8.00/8	Exceeds
	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	214	*	0.0%	*	2.00/2	Exceeds
	Minority Students	194	*	0.0%	*	2.00/2	Exceeds
	Multilingual Learners	73	*	0.0%	*	2.00/2	Exceeds
	Students with Disabilities	53	*	0.0%	*	2.00/2	Exceeds
Matriculation Rate	All Students	93	*	52.7%	*	2.00/4	Approaching
	2 Year	*	*	5.4%	*	0.00/0	-
	4 Year	*	*	40.9%	*	0.00/0	-
	CTE	*	*	0.0%	*	0.00/0	-
	Military	*	*	1.1%	*	0.00/0	-
	Postsecondary Program	*	*	5.4%	*	0.00/0	-
Graduation Rate	All Students	86	4yr	94.2%	*	6.00/8	Meets
	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	39	7yr	92.3%	*	1.50/2	Meets
	Minority Students	34	4yr	91.2%	*	1.50/2	Meets
	Multilingual Learners	n < 16	-	-	*	0.00/0	-
	Students with Disabilities	n < 16	-	-	*	0.00/0	-
TOTAL		*	*	*	*	32.50/42	Meets

REFERENCE TABLE: DISAGGREGATED GRADUATION RATES

Student Group	4-Year Rate	5-Year Rate	6-Year Rate	7-Year Rate	Best Rate
All Students	94.2%	88.2%	84.8%	90.8%	4yr
Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	87.2%	77.5%	77.1%	92.3%	7yr
Minority Students	91.2%	87.1%	90.3%	87.0%	4yr
Multilingual Learners	-	-	-	-	-
Students with Disabilities	-	-	-	-	-

CO SAT: represent outcomes for designated subjects and student groups; participation rates count parent excusals as non-participants. For the 1-year report, calculations are based on 2025 state assessment results. Multi-year reports include 2023-2025 results. Cut-scores for the multi-year reports were re-normed based on 2025 results.

Dropout Rates: represent percentages of students enrolled in grades 7-12 for districts and 9-12 for schools at any time during the year who left and did not subsequently enroll in another Colorado school. 1-Year calculations are based on the 2024 End of Year (EOY) data submission. Multi-year reports include 2022 through 2024 records.

Matriculation Rates: represent percentages of high school graduates with a qualifying credential, enrollment, or enlistment status in a Career & Technical Education (CTE) program, a 2- or 4-year institute of higher education, a branch of the military, or a postsecondary program. Beginning in 2024, high school graduates who were enrolled in ASCENT, P-TECH, or TREP programs (i.e., Postsecondary Program) during their 5th year of high school count as successes. 1-Year calculations are based on the 2024 graduation cohort. Multi-year reports include 2022 through 2024 records.

Graduation Rates: represent percentages of students graduating high school within designated timeframes. Ratings are based on the best of the 4-, 5-, 6-, and 7-year graduation rates. AYGs designate Anticipated Years of Graduation, which are defined as four years after the year that students initially enroll in 9th grade. Calculations for 1-Year and Multi-Year reports are based on data for students with AYGs between 2021 and 2024.

For additional information about ratings, refer to the scoring guide on the last page of this report.

Multilingual Learners describes students that are Non-English Proficient (NEP), Limited English Proficient (LEP), and Fluent English Proficient (FEP) - Monitor Year 1, Monitor Year 2, Exited Year 1, & Exited Year 2.

(*) Not Applicable; (-) No Reportable Data

Scoring Guide for 2025 District/School Performance Frameworks

Performance Indicator	Measure/Metric	Rating	Point Value			
Academic Achievement & ELP On Track Growth	Mean Scale Score was:		All Students	Each Disaggregated Group	ELP On Track Growth	
	• at or above the 85th percentile	Exceeds	8	1.00	2.0	
	• at or above the 50th percentile but below the 85th percentile	Meets	6	0.75	1.5	
	• at or above the 15th percentile but below the 50th percentile	Approaching	4	0.50	1.0	
	• below the 15th percentile	Does Not Meet	2	0.25	0.5	
	Students Previously Identified for a READ Plan (bonus point)		1 bonus point			
	• CMAS ELA Mean scale score at or above 725 (Approaching Expectations cut-score)					
Academic Growth	Median Growth Percentile was:		All Students	Each Disaggregated Group	ELP	
	• at or above 65	Exceeds	8	1.00	2.0	
	• at or above 50 but below 65	Meets	6	0.75	1.5	
	• at or above 35 but below 50	Approaching	4	0.50	1.0	
	• below 35	Does Not Meet	2	0.25	0.5	
Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness	Mean CO SAT Reading and Writing (EBRW) scale score was**:		All Students	Each Disaggregated Group		
		1-Year	3-Year			
	• at or above	553.1	553.6	4	1.00	
	• below previous cut but at or above	494.6	496.4	3	0.75	
	• below previous cut but at or above	448.1	455.8	2	0.50	
	• below	448.1	455.8	1	0.25	
	Mean CO SAT Math scale score was**:	1-Year	3-Year	All Students	Each Disaggregated Group	
	• at or above	527.0	523.3	4	1.00	
	• below previous cut but at or above	465.8	466.0	3	0.75	
	• below previous cut but at or above	423.3	426.4	2	0.50	
	• below	423.3	426.4	1	0.25	
	Dropout Rate: The district or school dropout rate was (of all schools in 2017):			All Students	Each Disaggregated Group	
	• at or below 0.5%		Exceeds	8	2.0	
	• at or below 2.0% but above 0.5%		Meets	6	1.5	
	• at or below 5.0% but above 2.0%		Approaching	4	1.0	
	• above 5.0%		Does Not Meet	2	0.5	
	Matriculation Rate (of all schools in 2018):			All Students		
	• at or above the 75.8%		Exceeds	4		
	• at or above 61.1% but below 75.8%		Meets	3		
	• at or above 46.8% but below 61.1%		Approaching	2		
	• below 46.8%		Does Not Meet	1		
	Graduation Rate and Disaggregated Graduation Rate (Best of 4-, 5-, 6-, or 7-year):			All Students	Each Disaggregated Group	
	• at or above 95.0%		Exceeds	8	2.0	
• at or above 85.0% but below 95.0%		Meets	6	1.5		
• at or above 75.0% but below 85.0%		Approaching	4	1.0		
• below 75.0%		Does Not Meet	2	0.5		

Academic Achievement: Mean Scale Score by Percentile Cut-Points

The Academic Achievement Indicator reflects achievement as measured by the mean scale score on Colorado's standardized assessments. The presented targets for the Achievement Indicators have been established utilizing baseline year data.*

Percentile	English Language Arts & Reading & Writing for CO PSAT				Mathematics				Science		
	Elementary	Middle	CO PSAT 1-Year	CO PSAT 3-Year	Elementary	Middle	CO PSAT 1-Year	CO PSAT 3-Year	Elem	Middle	High
15th percentile	722.3	724.1	415.1	416.8	719.1	716.5	387.4	393.4	717.9	714.2	721.4
50th percentile	739.5	740.1	458.9	456.7	734.3	731.2	430.2	431.4	736.9	732.8	734.6
85th percentile	755.9	757.3	505.0	508.0	751.9	746.2	480.4	480.5	753.2	749.3	746.4

Percent of Students On Track for ELP Growth Targets

Percentile	ELP On Track Growth		
	Elem	Middle	High
15th percentile	52.1%	13.8%	14.1%
50th percentile	64.4%	24.2%	22.7%
85th percentile	76.7%	37.3%	35.1%

Total Possible Points by Performance Indicator

Indicator	Total Possible Points	Elementary/Middle	High/District
Achievement	36 points (8 per subject for all students, 4 per subject by disaggregated group)	40%	30%
Growth	28 total points (8 per subject for all students, 4 per subject by disaggregated group, 2 for ELP growth, 2 for ELP On Track Growth)	60%	40%
Postsecondary Readiness	52 total points (16 for graduation, 4 for matriculation, 16 for dropout, 8 per CO SAT subject)	not applicable	30%

Cut-Points for Each Performance Indicator

Achievement; Growth; Postsecondary Readiness	Cut-Point: The district or school earned...of points eligible	Rating
Achievement; Growth; Postsecondary Readiness	• at or above 87.5%	Exceeds
	• at or above 62.5% but below 87.5%	Meets
	• at or above 37.5% but below 62.5%	Approaching
	• below 37.5%	Does Not Meet

Cut-Points for Plan/Category Type Assignment

Total Framework Points	District	School	Accreditation Category/Plan Type
	74.0%	not applicable	Accredited w/Distinction (District only)
	56.0%	53.0%	Accredited (District) or Performance Plan (School)
	44.0%	42.0%	Accredited w/Improvement Plan (District) or Improvement Plan (School)
	34.0%	34.0%	Accredited w/Priority Improvement Plan (District) or Priority Improvement (School)
	25.0%	25.0%	Accredited w/Turnaround Plan(District) or Turnaround Plan (School)

* School data used as baseline: 2016 for CMAS & CoAlt ELA & Math (g3-8). 2024 for 1yr and 2025 for 3yr CO PSAT & CoAlt EBRW/ELA & Math (g9-10). 2024 for CMAS and CoAlt Science (g5, 8, 11). 2024 for ELP On Track to Proficiency Growth as planned prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

** 2024 school data used as baseline for 1 yr CO SAT & CoAlt EBRW/ELA & Math (g11) and 2025 data for 3yr.