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**Press Release**

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## **Douglas County School District Board of Education Responds to County Commissioners**

The Douglas County School District (DCSD) Board of Education responded today to [recent discussions](#) regarding funding for school safety enhancements. The Board appreciates the financial offer from the Douglas County Commissioners to support safety for DCSD students. The Board is also grateful to community members who supported the passage of the Mill Levy Override (5A) and Bond (5B) in November 2018. These measures enable the school district to move forward with planned physical security improvements at DCSD schools and add 80 counselors to DCSD schools beginning in the 2019-2020 school year. The improvements and additional staff members made possible by the passage of the MLO and Bond further enhance DCSD's well-established comprehensive plan for physical and psychological school safety.

"In September 2018, DCSD Superintendent Thomas S. Tucker and two Board of Education members met with the Douglas County Commissioners asking for a position of support for the MLO and Bond, which largely focused on safety, security and mental health. Although the Commissioners chose not to support our efforts, we hope they will do so if we ever find it necessary to request additional Mill Levy Overrides or Bonds in the future.

"Acknowledgement by the Commissioners last week that DCSD has subject matter experts in the areas of school safety and security, social-emotional learning, and mental health is appreciated. However, it is concerning that the Commissioners have proposed committees that provide for very minimal representation from DCSD. The DCSD experts acknowledged by the Commissioners should be considered essential members of any committee they form.

"We are also concerned that the Commissioners intend to allocate public funds to private schools. This complicates the process, as publicly elected officials do not govern private schools and there is no public accountability measures for these schools. Further, the nine private schools in Douglas County with approximately 3,000 students, will have the same representation on the two committees formed by the Commissioners, if not more than DCSD, with 91 public schools and 68,000 students.

"Our public schools will only be able to take advantage of the one-time funds offered by the Commissioners if the funds are utilized in accordance with the Commissioners desired purposes, regardless of whether or not these goals are recommended by security experts or the DCSD Board of Education. The Commissioners also shared that ongoing funds can only

be accessed if matched, which we have expressed to the Commissioners is virtually impossible at this point in the budget of our schools.

“With respect, the Commissioners were not elected to make decisions for our students, staff and schools in DCSD. We would be grateful for monetary support, as well as support of any ballot initiatives (Mill Levy Override or Bond) in the future. It would be irresponsible, however, for our seven elected, volunteer board members to abdicate decision making responsibility for DCSD to the Douglas County Commissioners or any committees they may form.”

- Douglas County School District Board of Education

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#### *About DCSD*

Douglas County School District is Colorado’s third largest school district and serves 68,000 students. Learn more at [www.dcsdk12.org](http://www.dcsdk12.org).