



# Addressing Growth & Decline

*January 24, 2023*

*Learn Today, Lead Tomorrow*

# About Douglas County School District



**89  
Schools**

48 Elementary Schools  
9 Middle Schools  
9 High Schools  
5 Alternative Schools  
18 Charter Schools

\*DCSD also has preschool programs



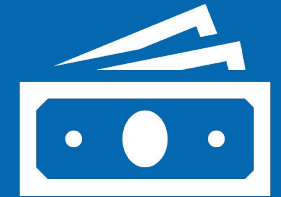
**64,000  
Students**

75% Neighborhood  
25% Charter  
Enrollment has declined but  
GROWTH is coming!



**8,600  
Employees**

4,400 Licensed  
Largest Employer in  
Douglas County



**\$116 M  
Scholarships  
\$3.7 M  
Tuition Saved**

Class of 2022

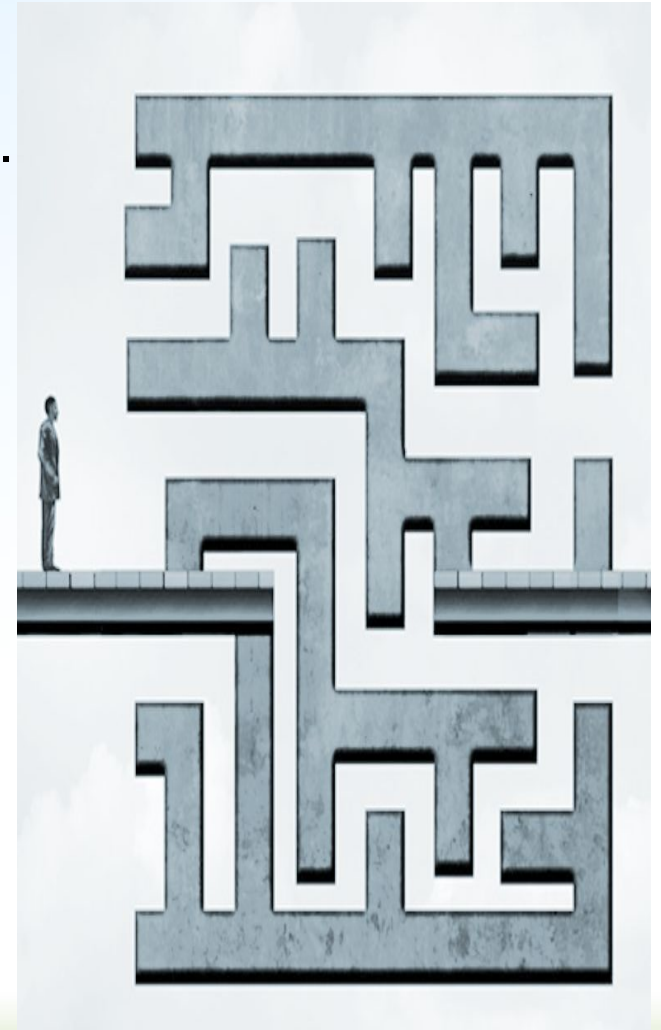
# What Do We Want for Our Students

- **Destination District:** An amazing place to work and go to school.
- **College, Career, and Service Pathways:** Creating a pipeline for local industry.
- **Excellent Schools:** Each school a point of pride in our community in which all students have the opportunity to explore their passions and develop their academic and essential skills, abilities, agency, and capacity.



# Addressing Growth and Decline

- Douglas County School District is distributed over 844 sq miles.
- The district is experiencing simultaneous pockets of growth and decline.
- “Stay-in-place” communities are aging out and have evolving needs.
- Newer communities have many young families.
- We have been busing students from our new communities into our established communities, however, this introduces challenges for all and the challenges are increasing.
- We have been mitigating with boundary changes, however, it will be increasingly difficult.
- **Growth & Decline is about opportunities for students.**
- Buildings, capacity, and finances are all factors, however, kids and communities are the primary concern.

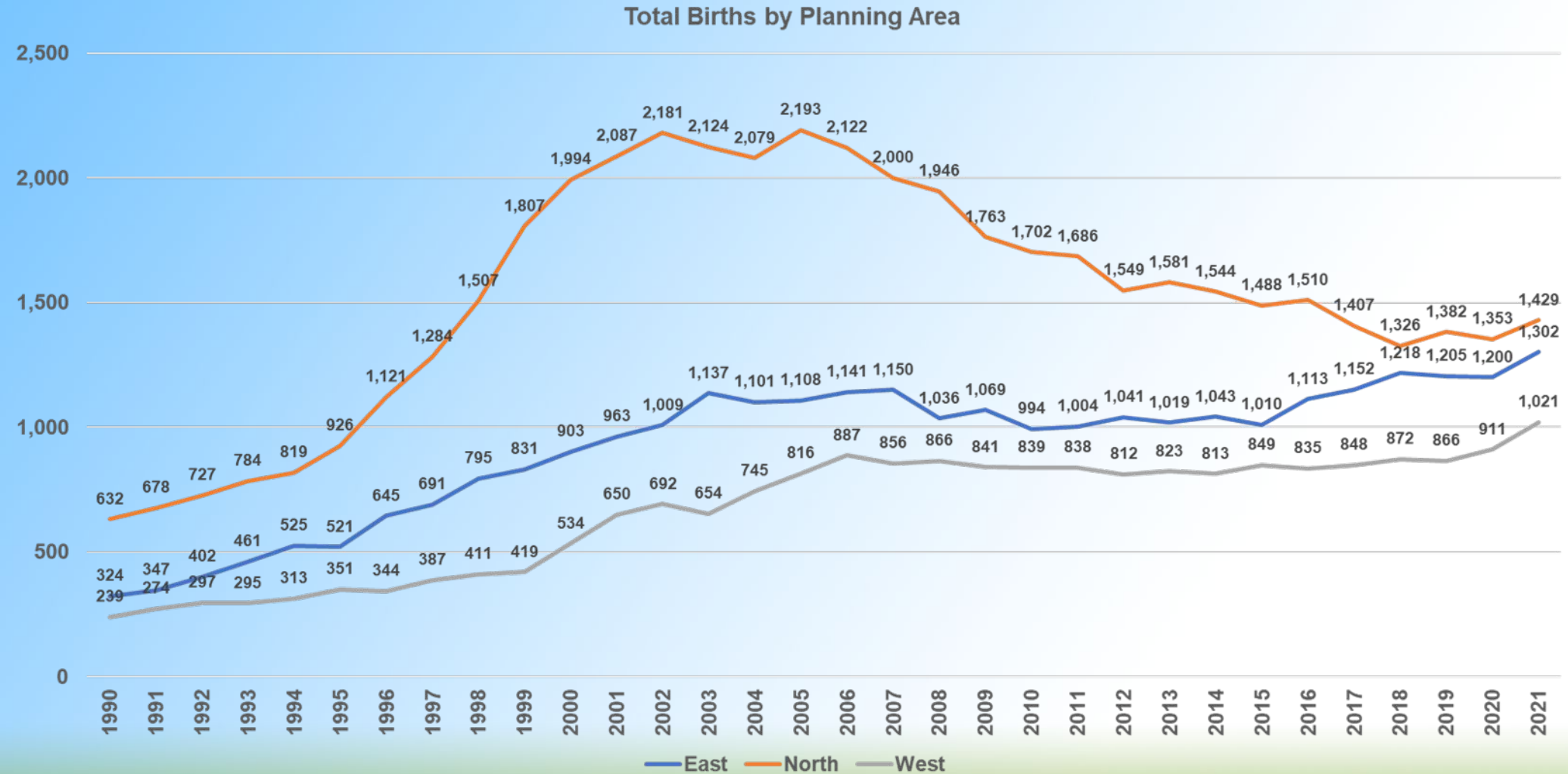


# North Planning Area: A Plan for the Future

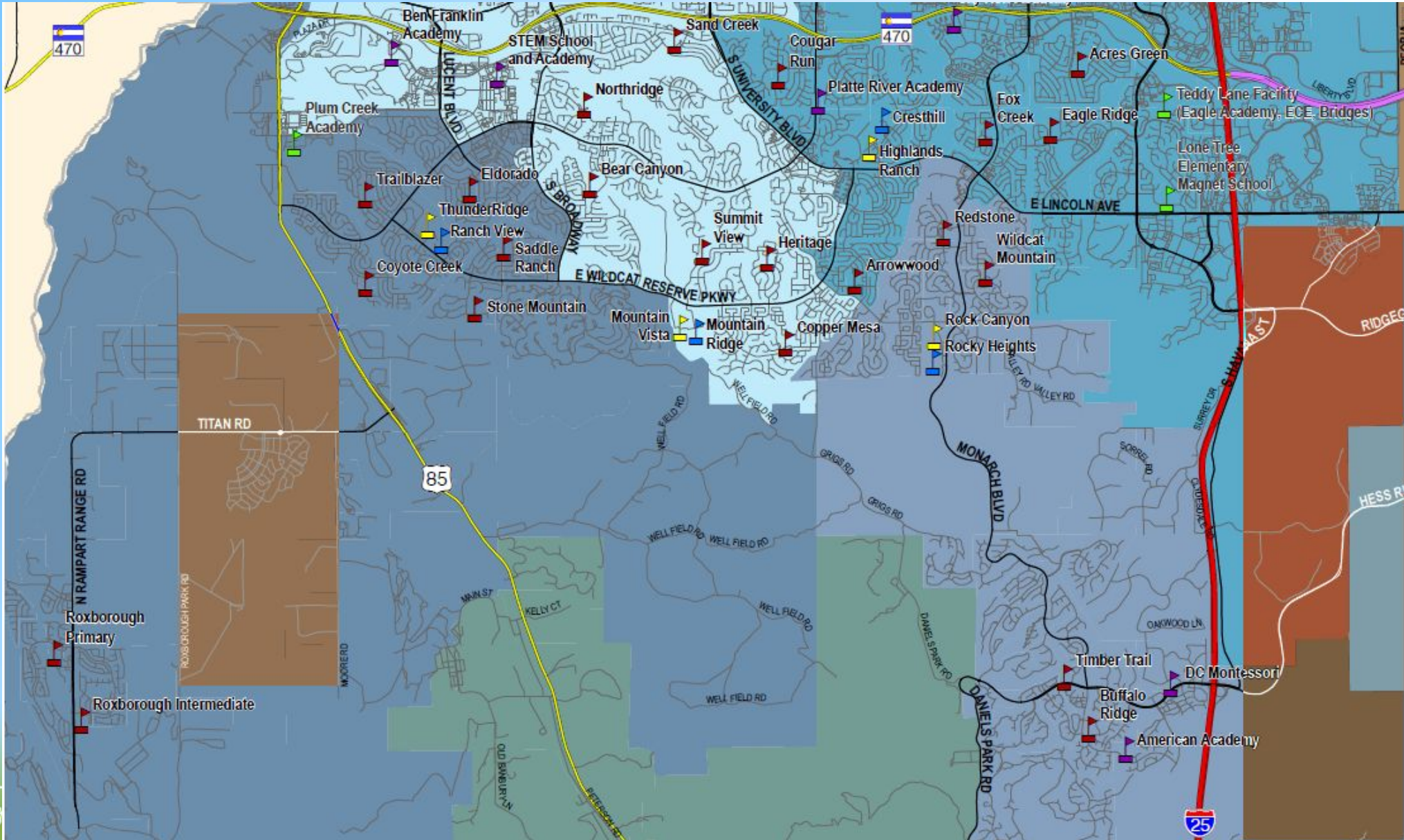


*Learn Today, Lead Tomorrow*

# Birth Rates in Douglas County, Colorado



# North Planning Area: Existing and Upcoming



# North Planning Area

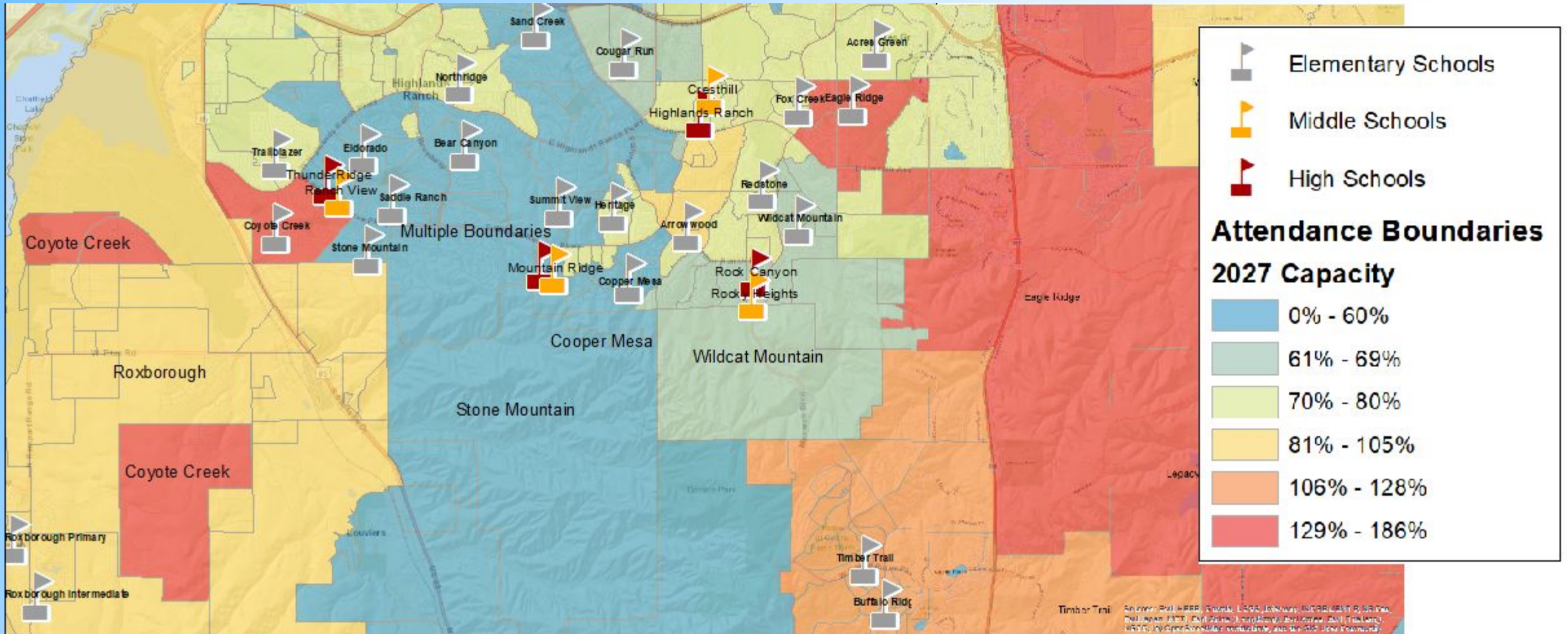
## Distinct Geographic Communities

- Highlands Ranch – 36,000 homes, 18 elementary schools [*decline*]
- Sedalia\* – 400 homes, 1 elementary school [*decline*]
- Sterling Ranch/Solstice – 13,000 homes (2K/16% built), no elementary schools [*growth*]
- Roxborough Park – 3,000 homes, 2 elementary schools [*growth & decline*]
- Castle Pines\*\* – 5,700 homes, 4 elementary schools [*growth & decline*]
- The Canyons – 5,000 homes (1K/18% built), no elementary schools [*growth*]
- Ridgegate East – 8,000 homes (0% built), no elementary schools [*growth*]

\*Sedalia and surrounding area; \*\*Total includes Castle Pines Village



# North Planning Area: Decline Bookended by Growth



# Impacts of School Size

## **Overcrowding**

- Large class sizes and multiple mobile classrooms
- Limited special education programming
- No to limited pre-K programming
- Staffing challenges due to lack of space

## **Undersized**

- Limited academic opportunities, specials programming, and extra-curricular programming
- Combined classrooms (multiple grade levels)
- Staffing challenges due to low FTE and limited funds
- Small school factor limits funds across the district

***These disparities are particularly acute at the elementary level.***

# Planning for the Future: Conclusions

- Having as many “right-sized” schools as possible ensures more opportunities for students across the district, helps level the playing field for schools, and optimizes district resources.
- Elementary schools are community schools; right-sizing existing schools by busing young children to other geographic regions for elementary school is challenging and we have not historically not done so in Douglas County.
- Middle and high schools cover large areas by design (in terms of population and geography); students can reasonably be bused to another geographic area and we have historically done so.

***We must create a plan for the North Planning Area to place new elementary schools in growing geographic regions while consolidating elementary schools in areas of decline.***

# Planning for the Future: Assumptions

- Desire is to be PROACTIVE rather than reactive, so everyone can plan ahead.
- Creating a plan requires significant family, staff, and community engagement – we have to do this with our community, not to our community.
- The earliest we can open a new elementary school is August 2026. Potential consolidations would target the same timeline.
- Due to experiencing both growth and decline, the district is in a position to guarantee that future elementary school consolidations *will not result* in the loss of staff member jobs.
- The district has many uses for buildings, such as pre-K, special education programming (e.g. Bridge, Child Find), career and technical education, office and professional development space, etc., that will further optimize district resources.
- Determining future middle school grade levels is an important part of this conversation with our community.

# Initial Planning Timeline

W22

Get feedback from LRPC, FOC and North Planning Leaders to help identify the challenges.

- Capacity Impact (LRPC)
- Budget Impact (FOC)
- Leaders: Student, Staff, and Systems Impact

W22

Frame the challenge of the north planning area with the DCSD BoE.

- Board of Education input will drive next steps.

W22/  
SG23

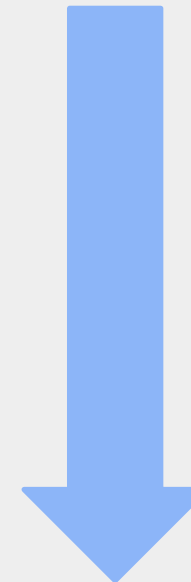
*Create North Area Enrollment Engagement Team.*

SG23

*Develop engagement plan*

SG23

*Begin Community Engagement*



# Recommendation

- That the Board of Education direct staff to develop a timeline and a community engagement plan to address Growth and Decline in the North Planning Area\*.

## Questions?

*\*Note that we will need to have these discussions in other planning areas in the future, but for the next 5 years, the North Planning Area is the most urgent.*