

District Uses Gordian Assessment and Planning Solutions to Make School Funding Case to Taxpayers

Challenge: District Must Convince Community to Close School Funding Gap



More than 29,000 students attend the 56 schools in Colorado's Boulder Valley School District (BVSD), a district situated at the base of the Rocky Mountains and spanning a geographic area of 500 square miles. Exemplary school buildings are one pillar of BVSD's commitment to being a leader in academic excellence. This commitment is jeopardized, however, by severe funding constraints.

Like many school districts across the country, BVSD receives no federal funding with which to modify its facilities. School funding from the state is likewise insufficient to keep pace with the needs of the district's physical assets. Thus, BVSD relies on taxpayer bonds to pay for new school construction, capital improvements and educational adequacy initiatives.



Insufficient school funding

Near total reliance on local taxpayers to fund district building initiatives is a monumental challenge in predictable times. But these times are anything but predictable. With inflation high and the costs of everyday necessities like gasoline and groceries soaring, convincing taxpayers to help fund schools requires compelling

information that demonstrates needs clearly. To gather this evidence, BVSD reached out to a trusted industry partner.

Solution: Holistic Facilities Condition Assessment and Capital Planning Solution

BVSD contacted Gordian for a comprehensive, end-to-end facilities condition assessment and facilities capital planning solution. First, Gordian's experienced engineers and architects assessed five million gross square feet of buildings and the associated site infrastructure assets like roofs and boilers. That data was then entered into a best-in-class cloud-based technology to project capital renewal data that is updated annually with RSMears data construction costs to ensure the district would have accurate pricing for years to come, even during times of economic uncertainty.



District leaders felt confident that engaging with Gordian could help them tell a plain, objective and complete facilities story because the partnership had proven successful in the recent past. BVSD used Gordian's self-service assessment solution to capture facilities data before the last bond program in 2014, helping the district illustrate its facilities needs to the community. Voters responded by approving a \$574 million bond. This crucial financial investment paid for five new schools, space, furniture and technology improvements, and energy efficiency upgrades.

Result: Voters Pass Fast-Tracked Bond Measure

Gordian recently provided BVSD with a hybrid capital planning and strategy solution with insights from data analysts to develop a comprehensive funding story backed by defensible data. This facilities funding story informed the Board of Education about short-term and long-term needs and clear targets for school funding. Among the projects identified in the plan are a new building for BVSD's New Vista High School and an entirely new school to ease overcrowding.



\$195 million in five-year maintenance needs



Using Gordian's facilities capital planning expertise, BVSD had a \$300 million bond measure approved by the Board of Education

In all, Gordian documented \$120 million in facilities maintenance needs over the next two years, \$195 million in needs over the next five years, and \$354 million in needs over the next ten years. With this data in hand, the Board moved forward with pursuing a bond on the ballot. On November 8, voters responded by passing a \$350 million bond measure by an overwhelming margin. These much-needed funds will be used to upgrade district facilities and create optimal learning environments for students.

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