



2022-23 Advocacy Agenda

The **Mission** of the Colorado Rural Schools Alliance is to advocate on rural issues and increase awareness of the unique strengths and challenges in Colorado's rural schools and communities.

Guiding Principles

The Rural Alliance Board is committed to ensuring adequate and equitable access to quality education for all students in rural Colorado and has identified the following priorities for the 2022-23 school year:

1. **Full Funding:** Schools should be fully funded and not forced to compete for grants to fund critical programs/positions.
2. **Flexibility:** Many/most state mandates are designed for larger urban and suburban systems. Rural districts should have flexibility to implement state priorities in a manner suited to their specific contexts with guidance and support from CDE.
3. **Accountability:** The State's accountability system should provide an accurate picture of Rural districts and timely and meaningful data for educators and parents.

2023 Legislative Priorities

- The Rural Alliance supports continuation of Rural funding unless or until the school finance formula is revised in a way that ensures equitable and adequate funding for rural schools.
- The Rural Alliance will work to secure additional, sustained revenues for the BEST program and participate in the reconsideration of grant criteria and review processes.
- The Rural Alliance supports universal preschool and will advocate to ensure that rural schools have sufficient time and resources to implement the new systems in a manner that will benefit their communities.
- The Rural Alliance supports increased funding for special education students and programs to support our severe needs students.
- The Rural Alliance supports revisions to the at-risk factor in the school finance funding formula to include monetary and non-monetary measures and ensure consideration of rural specific needs and concerns.

- The Rural Alliance supports legislation creating a task force to consider and recommend changes to the current state-wide accountability system.
- The Rural Alliance opposes any new or revised reporting requirements without due consideration as to the accuracy of the underlying data in light of the intended purpose.
- The Rural Alliance supports legislation to eliminate frivolous claims against school boards for technical violations of Open Meetings Laws.