

Innovation Schools: A Blueprint for Success

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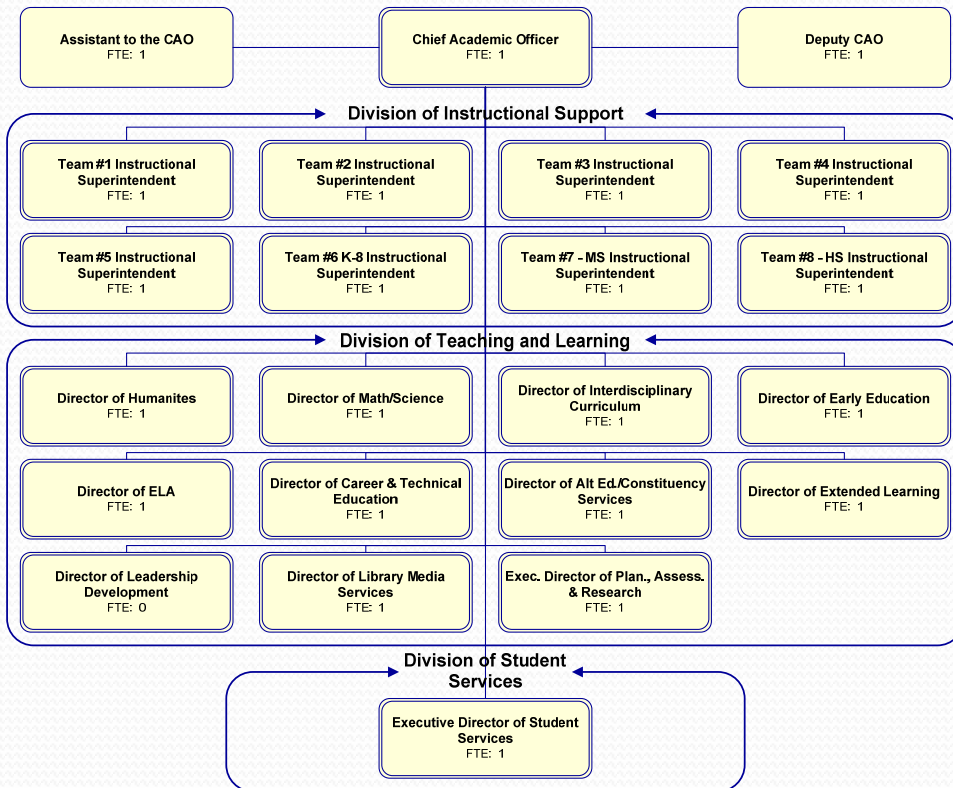
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A bet and three promises

1. **People:** “the flexibility to hire your own staff”
2. **Programs:** “the ability to fully develop the new school’s design, mission, and academic program”
3. **Resources:** “a groundbreaking compensation system,” “resource a core leadership team,” “access to recruits,” “report directly to the superintendent.”

Management environment

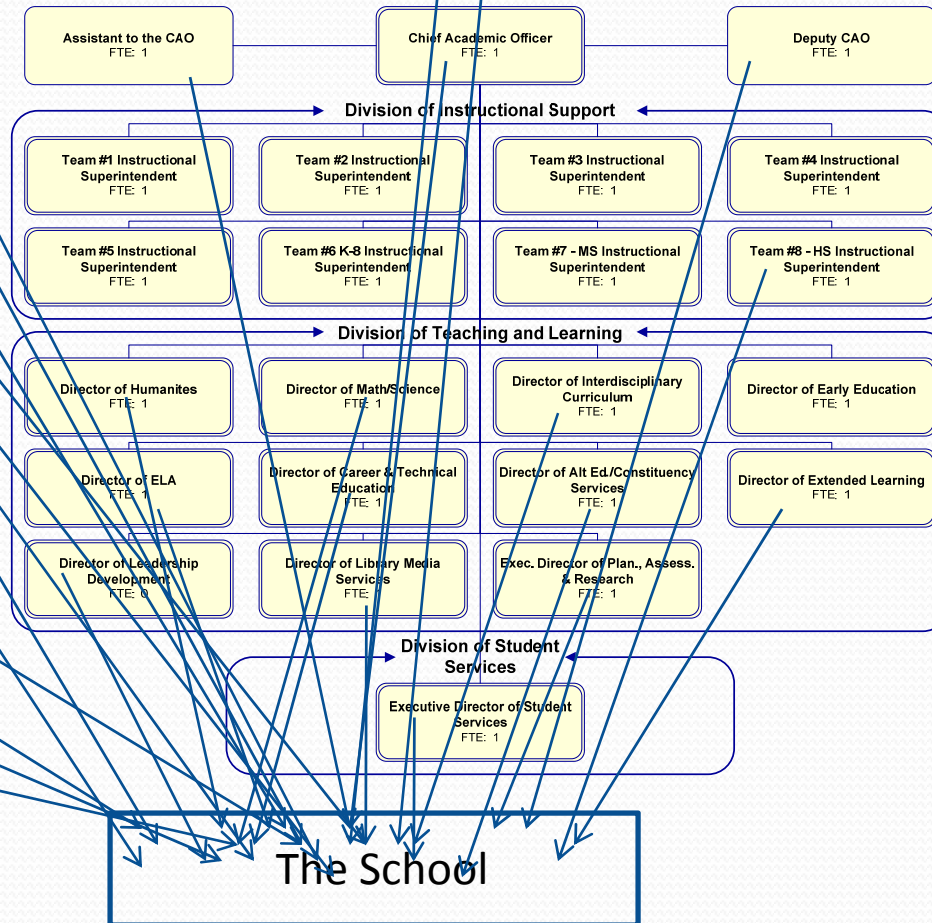
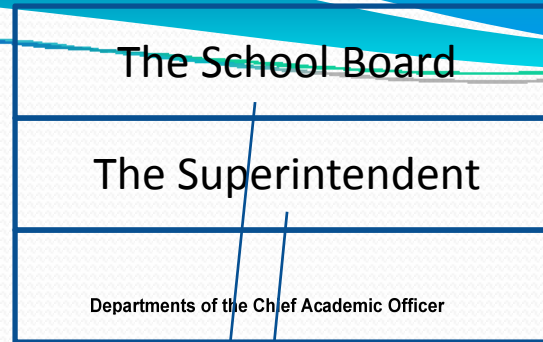
Departments of the Chief Academic Officer



- Centralized school programs budget \$189,454, 127
- Approx. \$2706 per student

Management environment

Operations
Athletics
Budget and Finance
Community Relations
Facilities
Food Services
Human Resources
Maintenance
Payroll
Planning and Enrollment
Security
Technology
Transportation

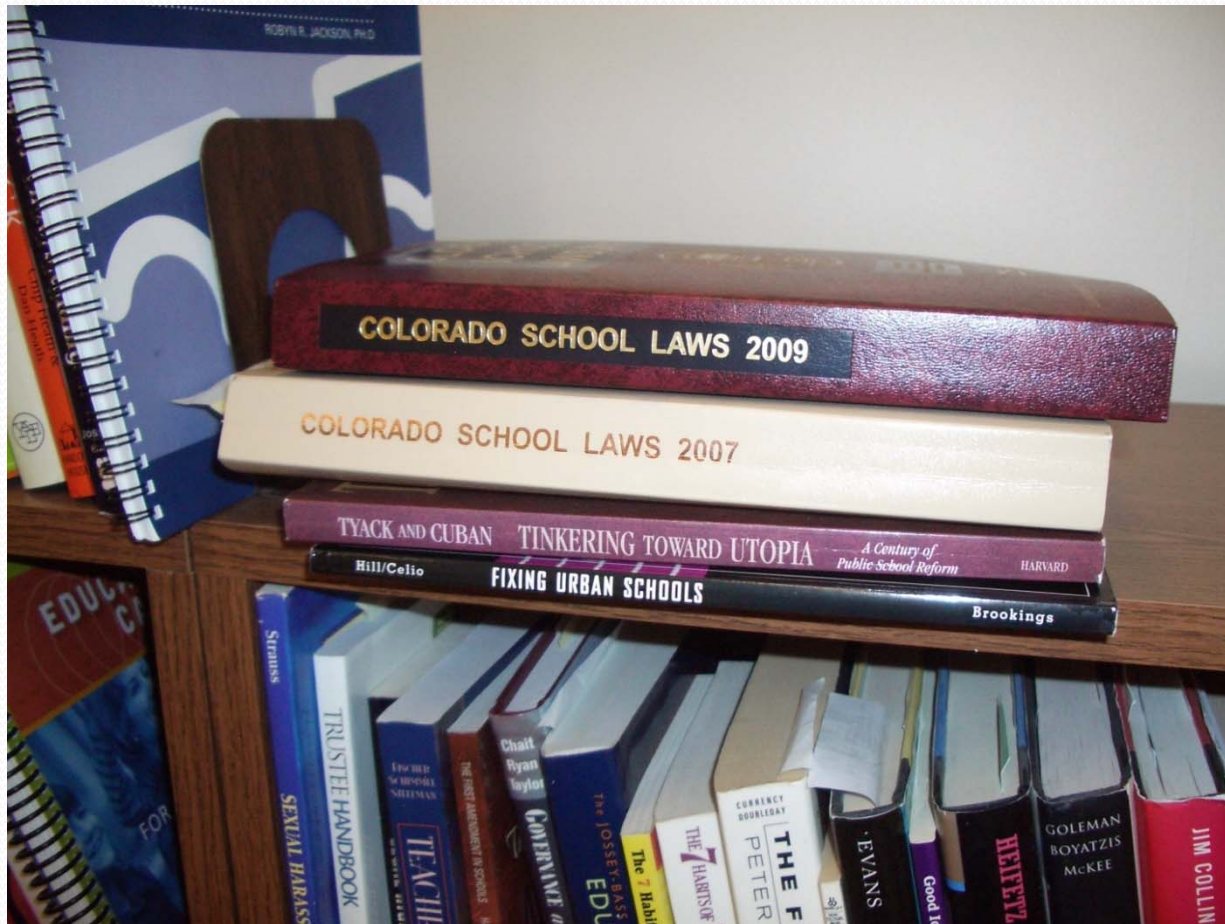


Total central budget \$291,019,054 (\$4157 per student)

Supersize regulatory environment

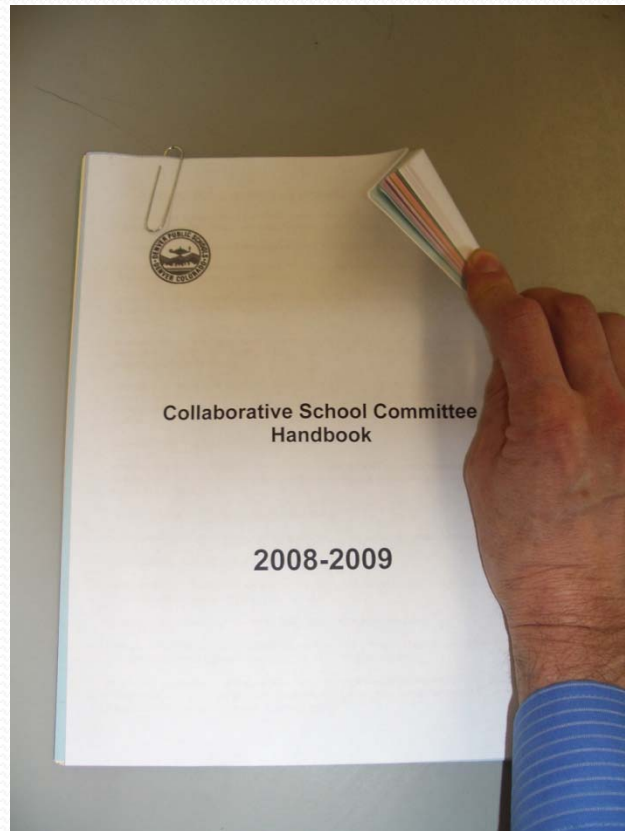


603 pages of *Colorado School Laws*



680 Board of Education policies

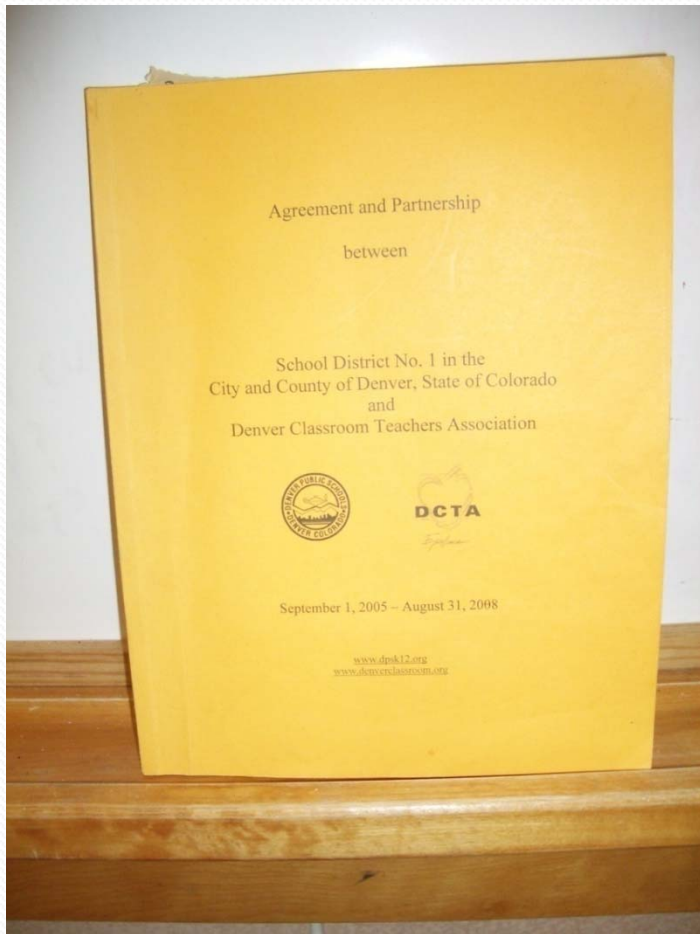
**District Collaborative School
Committee (31 page handbook)**



**School Advisory Council
(1 page in state statutes)**



98 page union agreement



Article 15-1-1

Each school will have a desk and a chair for each teacher, except in unusual circumstances.

Union Agreement Haiku

*A desk and a chair
For each teacher except in
Some circumstances*

Innovation Schools Act of 2008

Innovation Plans

- Request policy, statutory and regulatory waivers from district and state (not federal government).
- Demonstrate how schools will comply with the intent of the waived statutes or rules.
- May be a school or a zone.
- Approved by district and then state board of education.
- May include but not limited to innovations in:
 - personnel administration and decision-making,
 - delivery of educational services ,
 - budgeting.
- Approved by state board unless they will *likely result in lower academic achievement or would be fiscally unfeasible*.
- Require 60% approval within the school.
- District board reviews the performance of each innovation school or zone every 3 years; may revise or revoke the plan.

Innovation schools are not charters

- Governed directly by the board of education
- Staff are district employees
- Principal is hired by the district
- District compensation and benefits
- Innovation plans can be narrow or broad

Manual Innovation School Plan

Personnel

- Recruit and hire teachers:
 - Waive some licensure requirements
 - Staff job descriptions
 - Evaluation
- Waive district employment rights:
 - Grievance procedure
 - Union contract
 - At-will employees; no tenure
- Add performance pay options to district base salary

Manual Innovation School Plan

Programs

- Time: calendar, schedule, school day
- Curriculum
- Assessment
- Instructional model
- Professional development

Manual Innovation School Plan

Budget and operations

- Per pupil funding (approx. \$4500)
- Manual receives real dollars for faculty(not allocated FTE's)
- May purchase administrative services from DPS or from other providers, for example:
 - Student services
 - Transportation
 - Food services
 - Facility management
 - Maintenance



Autonomy in exchange for accountability

“Evaluation will include an **annual formal review** focused on accountability for student achievement, (overall student performance, student achievement growth, graduation and college going rates).”

Innovation in action: programs

- Focus the mission: college admission as a graduation requirement
- Curriculum and instructional model borrowed from TFA and “beat the odds” charter schools
- Trimesters with 6-week teaching and assessment cycles
- Longest school day and school year in DPS
- Two weeks summer professional development
- Advisory program



Innovation in action: people

A job where teachers can succeed:

- 3 core classes every day
- 1 intervention/elective class
- Advisory 4 x per week
- Class size 25 (DPS 35)
- Student load 75 (DPS 175)
- Professional development half day Thursdays
- 75 min planning every day (DPS 40 min)



Innovation in action: budget and operations

- Purchase teachers with real dollars instead of FTE's
 - Average DPS teacher salary \$65,944 + benefits
 - Average Manual salary \$39,500 + benefits
- Flexible spending within categories (e.g., special education centers, mental health)
- Outsource foreign language, electives



- Opt out of student services:
 - Health → partner with Denver Health
 - Psych testing → independent contract
 - Counseling & social work → hire full time on site

Innovation in action: What might be next?

- Security
- Food services
- Facility management and maintenance
- Transportation
- Increase per pupil allocation for instructional services: testing & assessment; curriculum & instruction; professional development
- Purchasing and payroll
- Athletics



Is it working?

1. It's too soon to tell.
2. Yes. Preliminary results:
 - Designated DPS *Top Performing School* and *High Growth School*
 - Third ranking DPS comprehensive high school
 - First ranking Title I school
 - Highest post-secondary readiness rate in DPS
 - Highest CSAP proficiency rates of any Title I high school.
 - Higher CSAP growth than Colorado and DPS
 - Higher attendance than DPS
 - Reasons for withdrawal: 1. geographic; 2. alternative placement; 3. too strict; 4. too hard
 - Number of dropouts: 1
3. No. We're still fighting district constraints.

What you need to make it work

- ✓ Innovation schools statute/policy
- ✓ Systems capacity in the school
- ✓ Human capacity in the school
- Systems capacity in the district
- Human capacity in the district

What's innovative about having the flexibility to focus on your mission?

