



Roger's Action Plan

Sustainable Educational Excellence Plan

The Denver Public Schools are at a crossroads. Implementation of the Denver Plan has yielded successes and we've learned lessons about how our mission may be better achieved. All good plans must change and adapt as we move forward. Now is a critical time to reinforce the positive and retool the strategies that are not producing the desired results. We must begin to think differently about our Denver public schools.

Our school district is overly focused on new schools. It is missing the opportunity to apply the lessons learned in recent years to all of our public schools. There is also too much conflict in our city's school system: between the district and its teachers, within the communities the district serves, and between factions on the board. Sustainable success depends on a collaborative environment. I will work hard to achieve the trust and respect needed for effective collaboration. I will listen to, and work with, all stakeholders, not simply those who already hold my views.

My Sustainable Educational Excellence Plan represents a fresh look at the way we deliver public education. It is based on four strategies:

- Subordinate the current test-taking culture to teaching the whole child. Current accountability and reporting practices focus only on what is easily and quantitatively measured. This data-driven approach warps our education by leading us to neglect critical thinking skills, the arts, music, physical education, history, civics, and the sciences. When we address the whole child, we are more likely to provide the “hook” to life long learning that is invaluable to staying in school, graduating high school, and continued personal growth after high school. We also need to cultivate the critical thinking skills necessary for a healthy society.
- Strengthen the schools in each of our neighborhoods and end the often haphazard introduction of new schools. A good school is an essential part of a thriving community. Charter, magnet, innovation, and traditional schools have the potential to provide models for educating diverse populations of students. It is essential to identify what is successful and sustainable in these schools and work to apply those models throughout DPS for all our students.
- Provide autonomy and authority for teachers and the principal, commensurate with their responsibility to provide a good education for our students. In the current DPS structure teachers and principals are held accountable for results, but are given very



little latitude to implement changes at the school level. To hold someone accountable, without providing autonomy, is an unreasonable and unsustainable policy.

- Transform the organization of the DPS administration from a top down decision making model to a school-centered decision making model where parents, teachers, principals, and community members work together to identify the constraints on success and develop approaches for improvement. The DPS administration supports the schools by providing resources, professional development and support, standards, curriculum guidance, and master planning. This will enable every school in every neighborhood to be more responsive to the needs of its students and community, with the support of the administration.

Guiding Principles

Improvements to all our schools must be both universal and sustainable. Short-term strategies that cannot be sustained only disappoint and foster cynicism. Universal and sustainable improvement in our schools must embody several guiding principles.

Great Schools in Every Neighborhood

- Every neighborhood should have great schools so that neighborhood schools are the schools of choice.
- A quality curriculum, competent teachers, and ready learners are the core of a successful education system.
- Students, families, teachers, principals, community members, and staff all contribute to the success of our schools and students.
- All DPS schools must be safe environments.

Data-informed Accountability

- Accountability and performance measurement should be *data-informed*, not *data-driven*. Teaching is an art as well as a science. Recognizing the limits of quantifying performance, data should inform, not dictate, teacher and school performance evaluation.
- Testing methods that inform improvements in teaching, curricula, and administration should be developed and applied in a collaborative and positive context. Using test results punitively leads to “teaching to the test” and deemphasizes critical thinking and those subjects not tested.



Culture of Excellence, Trust, Respect, and Collaboration

- The culture throughout the DPS system should be one that models and teaches trust and respect for all students, families, teachers, principals, and staff and that values excellence and diversity.
- Teachers and principals must be viewed as respected professionals and empowered even as they are held accountable for results.
- Collaboration is more successful than conflict and must be encouraged. The arts of teaching and learning will thrive when all viewpoints are considered and community, parent, and teacher buy-in is achieved. A school system, at its core, is its people, both adults and students. Everyone must be actively engaged in achieving the mission of the district.

Why Roger Kilgore is the right person at the right time for school board:

Independent, thoughtful, and collaborative representation is needed on the school board to bring needed improvements to Denver's public schools. Roger Kilgore has the right skills and experience.

- **Passion for public education.** Roger understands that public education is essential to the success of our young people, the vibrancy of our diverse community, and the strength of Denver's economy.
- **Excellent collaborator.** Roger understands that good ideas can come from a variety of sources and that all stakeholders must be at the table to make progress effectively and sustainably. He listens to all perspectives and integrates the best ideas.
- **Skilled problem solver.** As an engineer, Roger is trained and experienced in problem solving and the use of data to develop successful strategies and implement a vision.
- **Experience in teaching and learning.** Roger has taught at the college level for 5 years and has taught adults professionally for over 20 years.
- **Business experience.** Roger has over 30 years' experience in business, consulting, and managing organizations. He has run his own consulting business since 2000.