HB17-1375: Mill Levy Equalization in Colorado

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Colorado Context

- Third charter school law in the country passed in 1993
- Currently 255 charter schools serving 125,000 students, or about 14% of the state’s PreK-12 enrollment
- Primarily district-level authorizing governed by “exclusive chartering authority”
- Typical charter school student receiving 80 cents on the dollar relative to his/her traditional public school peer
Colorado House Bill 17-1375: Overview

- Requires districts to equitably share local tax revenue raised for school operational needs (mill levy overrides, or MLOs) with their charter schools
- Opened up access to over $30 million in new revenue each year for charter schools across Colorado beginning with the 2019-20 school year
- Established an equalization fund for Charter School Institute (state-level authorizer) schools to which money could be added in future years
HB17-1375: How We Got There

- Strong partnerships and teamwork
- Focus on kids, focus on equity
- Committed bipartisan sponsors
- Data and detail
- Patience and flexibility
  - Willingness to take partial victories and work over multiple years
  - Acknowledgment that some kids are more expensive to educate than others
HB17-1375: Where We Are Today

• Entering first full year of implementation (2019-20 school year)
• Nearly all impacted districts in the state have chosen to go the 95% route
• CSI equalization fund now up to $7 million (full equalization estimated at $32 million)
• Attempted rollback of CSI funding in 2018 resoundingly defeated
Questions or Follow-Ups?

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