



## Lone Cone Library

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Colorado Dept. of Education  
201 East Colfax Ave.  
Denver, CO 80203

Re: Norwood School District – BEST Application

Dear BEST Application Selection Committees,

This letter is written in strong support of the Norwood Public School District and its pursuit of funding through the Colorado Department of Education BEST Program for the construction of a new school in Norwood.

The Lone Cone Library and the Norwood Schools have a long history of collaboration. We are natural partners in our pursuit of literacy and information access.

The school district values excellency and strives to provide the best it can to their students. However, their efforts are oftentimes thwarted due to the time, resources and energy that have to be redirected into managing an aging facility. While some parts of the facility are aging with grace, the oldest portions of the school are verging on being unsafe to house children. They need an entirely new facility.

Across the state, many communities saw an exponential increase in property tax valuations, resulting in increased revenues for districts such as schools and libraries. This is not the case in Norwood. Analyzing County data is oftentimes misleading regarding the resources and demographics of Norwood area districts. For example, even though the Telluride library and the Norwood library districts are both in San Miguel County, I collect substantially higher mills (the highest of any library district in the state), yet, my budget is 1/6th that of the Telluride library district. Despite the state narrative about property values skyrocketing, that is not true here. Before the governor and his team intervened to cut property taxes, our district was anticipating a 7% increase in taxes, now we estimate to only see a 2% increase to our property tax revenues.

Why is this relevant? **Keeping all students housed on one campus is a financial must.** It would place a financial burden on the school district to have to staff and operate two different campuses. Being a small district, there are a number of staff who are shared across schools. The time loss and expense of transporting them back and forth between campuses or hiring additional staff would impact the education of the students. Secondly, the security of the old facility is not adequate to meet the challenges and dangers that face schools in modern times. Thirdly, the energy efficiency of a new facility would cut utility costs substantially freeing up resources that could go directly into the classroom.

Having gone to the ballot in 2016 for a new facility, I have extensive understanding of the voter climate in Norwood and what they will support. It is basically inconceivable that they would pass one bond issue

now and then be willing to pass another in 5 or 10 years when the other buildings at the school need replacing.

The Library District is in absolute support of a new facility for the Norwood Public School District and excited for the opportunities to collaborate once they are located right across the street from our library. The south side of the town is primed for growth and has already seen the new library and the construction of 24 homes. This is where the families live. Building the school on the new lot will increase walkability for children and put the school in the heart of the community situated near homes, the Town Park and the library.

We are grateful for the thoughtful consideration that you will give to this proposal and hope that you will change the educational experience and opportunities for our children exponentially by awarding this grant to the Norwood School District.

Sincerely,



Carrie Andrew

Library Director

Lone Cone Library District

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