Mill Levy Overrides between 2009-2013
Mid-Year Rescissions and Negative Factor Years

Between 2009 and 2013, Colorado experienced the Great Recession and the beginning of an economic recovery. During this time, the Colorado State Legislature first instituted Mid-Year rescissions, and then created the Negative Factor to balance the state’s budget. The Negative Factor grew to over $1,000,000,000 and for 2014-15 is $894,300,000.

Colorado has 178 schools districts serving 772,306 PK-12 students. 40 districts passed a MLO between 2009 and 2013, while 138 did not.

Mill Levy Overrides (MLO) between 2009-2013

- The capacity to pass a Mill Levy Override (MLO)
  - 40 school districts passed a MLO.
    - Districts that have the capacity to pass a MLO generate additional local dollars for their budget.
    - 419,643 students are served by the 40 districts – 54.3%
  - 138 districts did not pass a MLO.
    - 352,663 students are served by the 138 districts – 45.7%
  - From 2010-2013, 38 MLOs passed, while 34 failed; a 53% pass rate.

- The dollars generated from 1 mill varies widely from one school district to another. Of the 40 MLOs passed between 2009 and 2013 the range of dollars generated per mill is:
  - A low of $11,214 per mill in one district.
  - To a high of $10,454,481 per mill in another district.
  - The average dollar generated from 1 mill is $1,218,047, the median $231,000.
  - The buying power of one mill varies significantly between districts.
    - A mill that raises $11,214 does not cover the annual salary and benefits for one teacher.
    - A mill that raises over $10,000,000 could pay the annual salary and benefits for many teachers.

- The relationship between MLOs - Negative Factor and district budgets
  - Districts that had the capacity to pass a MLO between 2009 and 2013 had the option to make fewer cuts to their budgets and/or used less of their reserves.
  - Many of the districts without a MLO between 2009 and 2013 made and continue to make more cuts to their budgets and use their reserves to balance their budgets.
  - CSFP information on past years of district budget cuts is available here.

Data Sources: Colorado Department of Education, Colorado School Finance Project (CSFP)