



## Colorado Charter Schools Annual Conference

February 25-27, 2026  
Denver Marriott Tech Center



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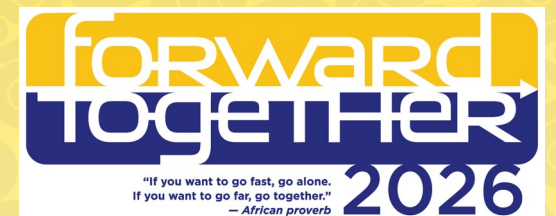
# (60) What It Takes: An Inside Look at Running for Your School Board or the State Legislature

**Kyle DeBeer, Executive Director**  
CLCS Action

Aspen  
February 27, 2026 | 1:30 – 2:30 PM  
Advocacy & Policy



Colorado League of  
Charter Schools



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**Colorado League of  
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We make it our priority to **advocate** for high-quality public charter schools across Colorado.



**Be a part of the action.**



Have you considered running for your **school board**  
or the **state legislature**?

Those charter schools are “like private schools at public expense.”

Colorado State Representative

# What does a candidate actually do?

1. Raise money.
2. Talk to voters.
3. Recruit people to help with #1 and #2.

## How to become a candidate:

- Get an EIN from the IRS.**
- Open a bank account.**
- Register a candidate committee with the Secretary of State.**
- File a candidate affidavit with the Secretary of State.**

## Two ways to qualify for the ballot:

### 1. Collect signatures.

- School board and state legislature
- Need 50 valid signatures for most school boards and 1,000 valid signatures for most state legislative districts

### 2. Participate in major party caucuses and assemblies.

- State legislature
- Need support from at least 30% of delegates

# 1. Raise money.

# How much do you need to raise as a candidate? *It depends...*

## School District 27J - 2025

- Winning candidates raised an average of **\$5,409**.
- Outside groups also spent \$8,120 supporting the winning candidates.

## Academy D20 - 2025

- Winning candidates raised an average of **\$11,921**.
- Outside groups also spent \$45,101 supporting the winning candidates.

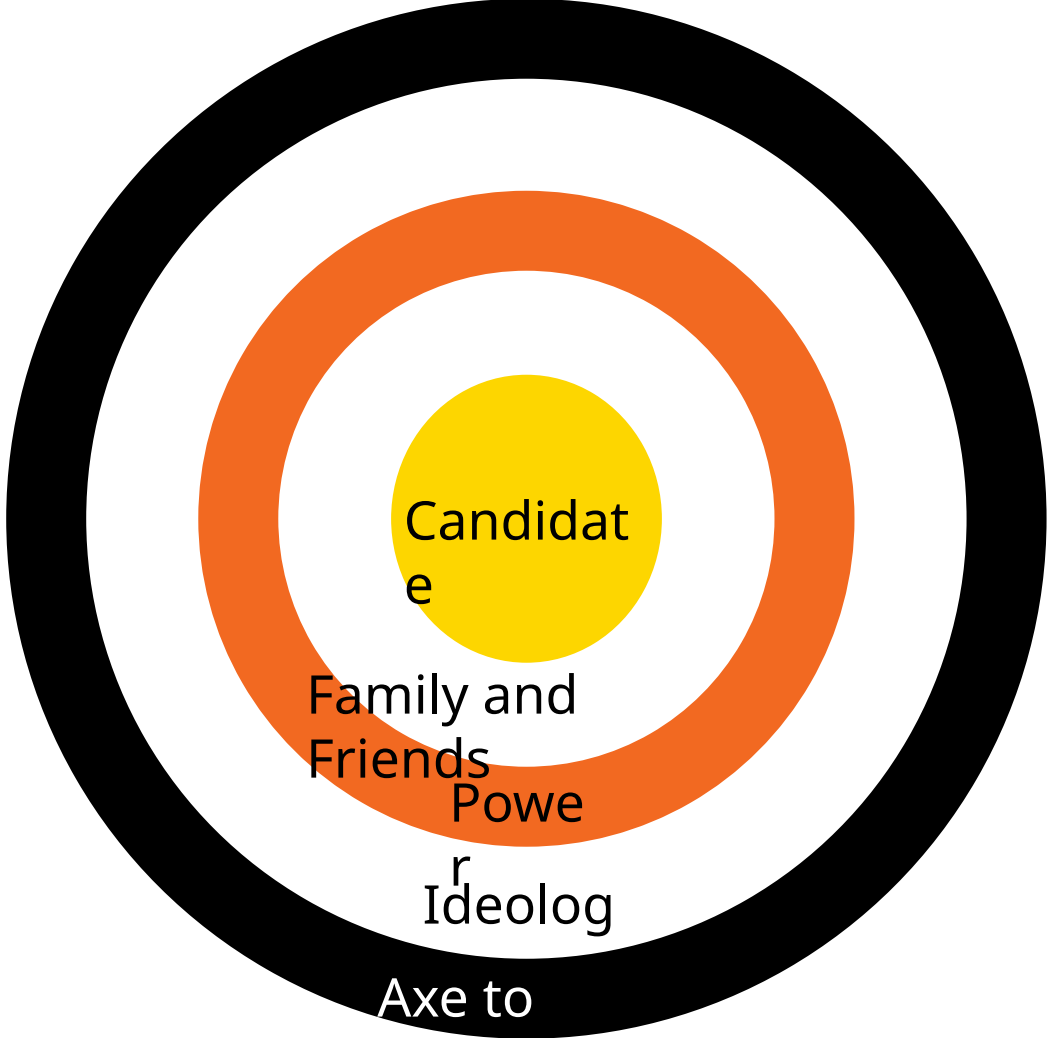
# How much do you need to raise as a candidate? *It depends...*

## State House District 19 - 2024

- Winning candidate raised **\$117,060**.
- Outside groups also spent \$404,003 supporting the winning candidate.

## State Senate District 21 - 2024

- Winning candidate raised **\$117,234** (but only spent \$64,954).
- Outside groups also spent \$648 supporting the winning candidate.



## 2. Talk to voters.

“...face-to-face canvassing raised turnout rates from approximately 44% in the control group to 53% among those canvassed.”

*Donald P. Green, Alan S. Gerber & David W. Nickerson (2003)*

**Personalized** methods and messages work **better**.

## Six Steps to a Failsafe Stump Speech:

1. Why are you running? Because...

## Want to run for office? There are resources to help you.

- **A built-in statewide network**
- **Access to experts**
- **Supportive allies with resources**

## **Want to run for office in 2027 or 2028? Get started in 2026.**

- **Party caucuses take place March 3-7, 2026.**
- **Get involved with campaigns on the ballot this year.**
- **Start attending relevant events.**

**Kyle DeBeer, Executive Director**

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feedback  
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move forward  
together**



**Colorado League of  
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