

Great Schools Thriving Communities – Initiative 63 Ballot Measure - Signature Gathering

Script

“Hello. I am a volunteer for [org name]. I am collecting signatures to put a measure on the November ballot to support public school teachers and students without raising taxes. This measure will

- *Provide significant additional funding for P-12 public schools without raising taxes or tax rates;*
- *Directs a portion of already collected income tax revenue to the constitutionally protected State Education Fund;*
- *Requires that these funds are used to “attract, retain, and compensate teachers and student support professionals”*
- *Removes these funds from the TABOR limit calculation.*

Can I count on you to sign our petition?

Many voters may not understand what the petitioning process is all about. If they show hesitation about signing, don't give up. You may respond by clarifying,

“You're not committing to vote for anything by signing this petition. You're just supporting the democratic process — Coloradans value the ability to vote directly on important issues to our state. Will you sign to give voters a choice this November to expand educational opportunities for our students?”

If the voter still refuses to sign your petition, politely thank the voter for their time and ask the next person.

Talking Points:

- Public schools are a cornerstone for democracy, the pillar of thriving communities, the source of a prepared workforce, and an engine for economic success. We all win when public education is funded adequately and equitably across the whole state.
- We must ensure that every student has access to inspiring teachers, rigorous and inclusive curriculum, individual attention, quality career and technical options, and appropriate mental and physical health resources – especially after the challenges of COVID.
- Great teachers are the foundation of great education; their efforts for Colorado students have been heroic. Unfortunately, because they have been [underpaid](#), overworked and not well-enough supported, morale among teachers and support staff has hit historic lows and many are leaving the state and the profession. **They need to know we see them, we appreciate them, and help is on the way.**
- Colorado has fallen more than \$2,000 in per pupil spending behind the national average and is currently \$500 million behind just keeping up with inflation since before the Great Recession a decade ago.
- Because of the combination of a hot economy and formulas in its constitution, Colorado is collecting \$2 billion more than the legislature is allowed to spend on underfunded services. This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to make a difference for students and teachers, without raising taxes.
- Only voters can unlock those funds so that teachers can afford to live where they teach.

FAQs on the Ballot Measure

How does Initiative 63 work? The measure will divert $\frac{1}{3}$ of 1% of already collected taxable income (about \$900 million) to the State Education Fund (SEF) and remove those dollars permanently from the TABOR surplus calculation. The SEF is already funded using this mechanism; Initiative 63 will double the current annual diversion to the Fund, and require the newly diverted dollars to be used to attract, retain and pay teachers and student support professionals.

Will this affect the \$400 TABOR “surplus” rebate proposed by the governor for this August (or vice versa)? No. That rebate is for the Fiscal Year ending on June 30, 2022. Initiative 63 would not go into effect until January 1, 2023. Putting this on the ballot gives voters an opportunity to allow some future "TABOR surplus" dollars to be used to address Colorado's teacher shortage.

Is this a constitutional or statutory change? Statutory. It only needs 50%+1 vote to pass. We will need about 125,000 valid signatures – from anywhere in the state – to qualify for the ballot.

Checklist for Gathering Signatures & Returning your Completed Petition:

- 1. Review & Sign the Required Volunteer Petition Circulator Training Form:** If you have not already returned the Training Form (pg. 4-5), please ensure that you read, sign and complete all of the information on the Training Form (pg. 5-6). Return the completed form by scanning/taking a photo and emailing it to info@greateducation.org.
- 2. Review the above Do's & Don'ts (pg. 4) prior to heading out to gather signatures.**
- 3. Gather Signatures:** Please review the script (pg. 1), talking points (pg. 1) and the FAQs (pg. 2) about the ballot measure on the other side of this page.
- 4. After you are finished gathering signatures, you must complete & sign the Circulator Affidavit (the last page of the petition) in front of a notary public.** Please ensure all information provided is legible. A notary can often be found at your local bank branch or public library. *This must be completed for your signatures to be accepted.* Use the guidance below (pg. 3) to check your affidavit page.
- 5. Return the completed, notarized Petition Packet.** Ensure no additional documents are stapled or affixed to the Petition and that all pages are in order as provided. You can return your packet as soon as it is completed and notarized, *but we will ask that all packets are returned as soon as they are complete or by the last day of the month.* Signature collection for this measure needs to wrap up by July 31st in order for us to return all notarized documents to the Secretary of State to meet the Aug. 8th qualification deadline.

Checking the Affidavit Page for Petitions

It is **URGENT** that you check for the following things on the Notary Affidavit page or NONE of the signatures will be counted!

- Notary stamp is complete and in the box (if the stamp is only partial, it will not count)
- Date provided by the Circulator and by the Notary match
- If ANYTHING is crossed out with a line, there MUST BE initials next to the crossed out information
- Circulator's name and notary name are provided in the correct areas of the affidavit
- All areas for the circulator's address are filled in and complete

If there are mistakes on the Affidavit Page, please call or text us at (303) 722-5901 for support.

RETURN TO: **Great Schools, Thriving Communities**
1355 S. Colorado Blvd
Building C, Suite 500
Denver, CO 80222

Do's & Don'ts for Petition Signer:

DO...

- **Read the warning** that appears at the top of each page of the petition.
- **Print clearly** in BLACK or BLUE ink.
- **Print your name as it appears on your voter registration** - you must be registered to vote to sign the petition
- **Use the residence address where you are registered to vote.**
- **Complete all portions of the signature line** with the required information.
- **Fix minor mistakes** by crossing out the mistake and initialing
- **Fix major mistakes** by crossing out the entire line and starting over.

DO NOT...

- **Sign for another person.**
- **Sign the petition for this measure more than once.**
- **Use ditto marks (“ “)** to provide information on a signature line.
- **Provide a post office box** for your residence address.

Do's & Don'ts for Petition Circulators:

DO...

- **Watch each person personally sign** and complete the petition
- **Make sure each signer completes every field** -- even one missing piece of information will disqualify the signature
- **Wear your Volunteer Circulator Badge** at all times when gathering signatures
- **Have your petition packet notarized before returning to the campaign**

DO NOT...

- **Make any marks or tallies on the petition**
- **Pay anyone or make any trade** for signing a petition
- **Disassemble or modify the petition** in any way (tear pages, remove staples, affix stickers, etc.)
- **Sign your own petition packet** - if you are gathering signatures, you may NOT sign your own petition packet.

VOLUNTEER PETITIONER REQUIREMENTS

In order to circulate an initiative or referendum petition you must be a citizen of the United States, and at least eighteen (18) years old at the time the petition is circulated, and:

I. Initiative circulators shall:

- A. wear a badge indicating VOLUNTEER CIRCULATOR at all times;
- B. personally circulate all petitions to witness and obtain signatures of Colorado registered electors;
- C. ensure that registered voters place all information on their signature line and sign legibly;
- D. ensure that registered voters read the warning at the top of each page;
- E. ensure that registered voters print clearly in black or blue ink ONLY;
- F. ensure that registered voters complete all portions of the signature line;
- G. have circulator affidavits notarized in person by a person authorized to give an oath;
- H. read and understand the laws relating to petitioning before circulating petitions;
- I. be available for a protest hearing and pre-trial discovery on petition signatures.

II. Initiative circulators shall NOT:

- A. make any marks or tallies on the petition;
- B. use a false address or a false name in completing their affidavits (temporary or permanent residential address);
- C. use a third party to obtain signatures for them;
- D. pay any person, currently or in the future, directly or indirectly, for signing the petition;
- E. disassemble any petition sections for any purpose;
- F. permit anyone to sign for their spouse or another person or to sign the same petition twice;
- G. personally assist anyone in affixing any information to a petition;
- H. sign a circulator affidavit unless each statement in the affidavit is true and all information provided is correct, including that every signature thereon was affixed in his/her presence and that s/he is the person who obtained all such signatures on a petition section;
- I. act as circulator and notary to the same petition section;
- J. allow a notary to sign and notarize the same petition section;
- K. circulate a petition, displaying the name or motto of any organization, that would make signers believe that the measure has been endorsed, approved, or submitted by any organization, association, political party.

III. Initiative Circulators may:

- A. be the subject of an administrative complaint, filed with the Secretary of State, who may refer the matter to the Attorney General for prosecution;
- B. have their petitions invalidated if the Secretary finds they violated the initiative laws or made false or misleading statements relating to a petition section.

IV. No person is authorized to, and is subject to criminal penalties if they do:

- A. suppress, deface, destroy, or otherwise interfere with the submission of petitions;
- B. knowingly complete a signature line with false information, including name of another person;
- C. knowingly, as a non-registered elector, sign a petition;
- D. knowingly sign a petition in support of a ballot issue more than once;
- E. provide any part of a signature line's required information;
- F. Forge a signer's signature

V. No person shall notarize a circulator affidavit unless:

- A. the circulator is in the physical presence of the notary public;
- B. the circulator has dated the affidavit and fully & accurately completed all personal information;
- C. the circulator presents an approved form of ID, which the notary specifies in his/her notarization book;
- D. date the petition form on a date that is different from the date on the circulator's affidavit;
- E. knowingly misdate a notarization.

Volunteer Petition Circulator Training Form

I acknowledge that I have read the above and understand the required policies and procedures to properly circulate an initiative or referendum petition and secure valid signatures. I understand that training sessions held by the Secretary of State are available and are one manner of complying with the requirement of reading and understanding the laws pertaining to petition circulation set forth in the circulator affidavit.

Please ensure your printed information is legible.

SIGNATURE: _____

PRINTED NAME: _____ DATE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, ZIP CODE: _____ PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

**Please return a scanned copy/photo of this form to
info@greateducation.org.**