From "Alexandra (Allie) Broin <alexandra.broin@gmail.com>" <alexandra.broin@gmail.com>
Subject **DAC April Meeting Minutes & Action Items**
To District Accountability Committee <bvs.dac@bvsd.org>
Cc Felicia Yang Gorman <fygorman@gmail.com>
Date April 8, 2026 10:04:51 AM MDT

DAC members,

Thank you for your incredible engagement with the declining enrollment/school consolidations activities last night! Here are the DAC Meeting Minutes (April 7, 2026).

**Action Items**
**- Encourage your SACs and school teams to attend a declining enrollment community engagement session starting next week!**
**- Share the *Daily Camera* commentary from DAC Exec with your school communities: "We are BVSD parents. Here are our ideas on school consolidation and civic engagement." (We are also attaching pdfs.)**

YOU have incredible insights to offer fellow parents and we hope you all see yourselves reflected in the op-ed. In addition, we hope the session last night will embolden you to step even more confidently into your community leadership role in the coming weeks and months.

**Additional To-Dos**
- If you have not already, please submit SAC Questions & Reports (April 7, 2026).
- Please set aside 20-30 minutes for pre-work the week of April 27 and in advance of our final meeting on May.

See you all soon!

Allie and Felicia
2025-26 DAC Co-Chairs

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Attachments:

- 2026-04-08 We are BVSD parents. Here are our ideas on school consolidation and civic engagement. (Opinion).pdf
- 2026-04-08 Parents have a big role to play in BVSD school consolidation dialogue.pdf

OPINION › COMMENTARY

# We are BVSD parents. Here are our ideas on school consolidation and civic engagement. (Opinion)



By **DAILY CAMERA GUEST OPINION** | openforum@dailycamera.com | Boulder Daily Camera

PUBLISHED: April 8, 2026 at 5:00 AM MDT

Getting your **Trinity Audio** player ready...

*By Alexandra Broin, Felicia Yang Gorman, Klaus Nowels and Erin Romano*

This month, Boulder Valley School District (BVSD) parents, like us, have the opportunity to attend a series of meetings on declining enrollment and the financial pressures facing our schools. Most importantly, we'll get to share *our* ideas for what we can do about it.

These won't be run-of-the-mill community input sessions. We'll be asked to review our priorities side-by-side with other parents, discuss the real-life tradeoffs of school consolidation scenarios and generate solutions that are "win-win" for our entire community.

While shutting down schools and redistributing students is one option, other possibilities include new program models, school mergers enabled by modernized facilities, and repurposing district-owned space for community needs like child care, enrichment and teacher housing.

That's *really* different from, say, delivering a two-minute public comment at a BVSD Board of Education meeting. And maybe a little outside of our comfort zones, too!

The district accountability committee (or DAC), which we help organize as volunteers, can help fellow parents wondering how to approach these highly interactive sessions.

The DAC is a group of 50 or so parents and community liaisons representing nearly every BVSD school. We convene each month to learn about and provide input on the district's budget, improvement plan and policies.

Whether we're reviewing the academic calendar, debating school discipline practices or discussing the role of technology in our classrooms, DAC members disagree about *a lot*. Yet we have lively discussions, communicate respectfully and regularly find our way to consensus.

Today, many of us are as committed to the success of fellow DAC members' children and schools as we are to our own.

This doesn't happen by accident.

Here are three tips to help parents come together across our lines of difference to propose school consolidation options that benefit our entire community:

## 1) Do some homework.

DAC members strive to show up to our meetings with a shared understanding of the issue at hand. For declining enrollment, this two-minute video is a great place to start. This handout synthesizes information from the BVSD website, which also features a teacher's perspective. For even more, the January 27 board meeting and presentation slides cover this information in-depth. Finally, this report summarizes lessons from districts that have been through this process before.

Real talk: DAC members can't always get our homework done, and many parents won't be able to review materials before the community engagement sessions. Let's show up anyway! Our voices matter, and we'll learn a lot by listening to one another's questions, concerns and ideas.

## 2) Bring a solutions-orientation (but avoid bringing THE solution).

According to state law, the DAC's role is to *advise* our elected board members — not to push a specific agenda. To shape our approach, we consulted a superb parent advisory council guidebook and the principles of authentic school-family partnership.

Today, DAC members work together to:

• Provide information, data and objective analyses on shared priorities

• Recommend options to inform decision-making

• Focus on systemic issues/needs (district-wide patterns/trends)

• Advance change from within the system

This is different from direct advocacy, where we might:

• Share a particular, often well-defined viewpoint on a specific issue

• Champion a defined outcome or course of action to be taken

• Focus on individual issues/needs (student- or school-specific)

• Demand change from outside of the system

Our cooperative approach to wielding influence — building relationships, discussing data and exploring flexible options rather than a single solution — can feel quite different from the lobbying and activism many of us associate with "good" advocacy. But it has proven effective.

For example, two years ago, the DAC turned parental concerns into actionable ideas connected to the district's improvement priorities. Today, many of our recommendations are reflected in the All Together for All Students strategic plan and public dashboard. These big wins didn't happen overnight, and the pace of change can sometimes feel frustrating. But it's incredibly inspiring to see how parents' partnership with district officials and one another over many years nudged important changes along as larger shifts unfolded.

If parents can come together at the community engagement sessions and provide useful, coordinated input — and avoid rivalrous advocacy campaigns — district leaders will be able to more effectively move our good ideas into action. That's what our kids need from us right now.

## 3) Advocate, but do it for all kids.

Another benefit of the DAC's approach is that it reveals the many ways our needs and priorities overlap with others, and where we can take collaborative action.

As parents, we know what's working (or not) for our families. One of our most important jobs is to use that information to advocate for our children. We should *never* stop doing that!

Our personal insights are invaluable. For district-wide decisions, they are also incomplete — important pieces of a larger puzzle. To place our experiences into a broader context, DAC members listen to one another's stories and regularly encounter narratives that challenge and expand our thinking.

For example, when DAC members discussed homework policies last fall, two parents engaged in a spirited debate. One felt that more homework would help his child develop greater fluency with math facts. Another felt that mandatory worksheets would take time away from household chores that help her children build responsibility.

After reviewing the same information on the pros and cons of homework for younger learners, these parents came to different conclusions. Neither was wrong. Both could have tried to get their preferences codified into policy. But that's not what happened. Instead, they found common ground, supporting recommendations that balanced many differing perspectives. In doing so, these parent leaders helped their own children and a lot of other kids (and families), too.

During the upcoming community conversations, we encourage parents to be curious when disagreements arise and to stay open to new and differing perspectives. That'll help us find those win-win opportunities.

We hope parents will be inspired by the DAC to explore school consolidation options with a focus on our entire community, rather than a single student or school.

Look, we're anxious. Our families cherish the teachers at our neighborhood elementary schools and our diverse, caring learning communities. We don't really want anything to change. But we are mindful that much of what we love about our schools won't be financially feasible in a few years if we don't take coordinated, mutually beneficial action today.

None of us has the answers. But, together, we think *we do*.

Our experience on the DAC has shown time and time again that if we can agree on a single good idea and set it on the right trajectory, it can pick up speed (and other good ideas) and snowball into something even more impactful.

That fills us with hope and resolve. Our kids are counting on us.

And our kids are watching. In the coming weeks, parents will be asked about the learning experiences we want for our children and to share our ideas for what comes next. We'll be invited to participate in *democratic dialogue* and to model *civic engagement* for our children.

We can choose to let our shared values animate these discussions. We can choose to imagine and co-create a future that — if we get things right — could turn out to be pretty spectacular *for all of us*. We can choose to become a stronger community on the other side of this process.

Or we can decide not to. Either way, our kids will be watching.

*Alexandra Broin, Felicia Yang Gorman, Klaus Nowels and Erin Romano serve on the Boulder Valley School District Accountability Committee executive team. Their children attend BVSD elementary and middle schools.*

*To send a letter to the editor about this article, submit online or check out our guidelines for how to submit by email or mail.*

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Guest opinion

# Parents have a big role to play in BVSD school consolidation dialogue

By Alexandra Broin, Felicia Yang Gorman, Klaus Nowels and Erin Romano

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WELD COUNTY GOVERNMENT

# Industrial zoning OK'd for data centers

## Weld Commissioner Chair Scott James is the lone voice of opposition as county approves data center zoning

By Tyler Duncan
*tduncan@prairiemountainmedia.com*

The Weld County commissioners on Monday approved a new zoning code that restricts the development of data centers to industrial zones only.

In a 4-1 vote, the commissioners approved a land use code that establishes regulations for developers of data centers and dictates where they can be constructed. Previously, the county had no regulations specifically for data centers, and with two bills being discussed in the Colorado Legislature that incentivize data centers to locate in Colorado, the county felt it prudent to get ahead of the curve.

"At the end of my first term, we were dealing with solar codes. We went from a code that wasn't very good, in my opinion, to a code that sets the standard in the nation," Weld County Commissioner Scott James said. "The Colorado Energy Office has referred to our code as the standard in the state, which goes to show we can set standards, and I believe we can do that here

"I believe that they (data centers) are absolutely critical infrastructure. They are every bit as critical an infrastructure as the roads that you use to get here, as is the electric and gas that comes to your home, as is the water and sewer that come to your home. They are critical infrastructure, and we need to find a way to coexist with them."

The final draft of the code defines data centers as buildings that house information technology or telecommunications equipment used to process, transfer and store digital information, with a power draw of under 50 megawatts. Any higher would classify the building as a power plant, which has its own regulations. The code also specified that the noise level may not exceed 65 decibels when measured 25 feet from a property line.

Data centers will be allowed only in areas of unincorporated Weld County zoned for industrial use and will need confirmation from utility companies to obtain construction approval. Commissioner Kevin Ross said this will be an important factor in water conservation efforts, as data centers with higher water use would have difficulty obtaining the necessary water from utility companies.

The county had initially considered designating agricultural zoning as an appropriate location for data center construction, following a use-by-special-review process that requires a public hearing before the board approves development. But after public feedback and a push from Commissioner Jason Maxey, who argued that data centers do not fit the definition of agricultural use, the board decided that only industrial zones would be appropriate locations, much to Ross' disappointment.

"I'm disappointed that the board does not want to do them in agriculture. I'm hoping we can figure out a process by which this board will look at the availability to rezone to industrial so that they can still become a reality in areas where they're probably best suited," Ross said. "I hope the board can work through the comprehensive plan and other means in which we can identify areas of opportunity for that, because there is a large demand for these and it's already being asked of this county and communities throughout this county."

The county recently held two public meetings that strongly influenced the final shape of this code, leading it to implement a use-by-special-review process rather than a more rigorous review process that doesn't involve public hearings. Many complaints at those meetings and during public comment about data centers and water usage were deferred to regulations already in place by the state and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Although data center water usage is not controlled by the county, it became the subject of a tense debate between James and Ross. James wanted the code to require that data centers could not use evaporative cooling, which can use up to 5 million gallons a day, whereas Ross would not get on board with the county deciding what equipment private entities could use.

"I can't get on board with regulating the type of system," Ross said. "I would hope that they use water-efficient stuff, but I can't get on board with mandating the technology, especially if that technology changes and they don't need water to cool, which some of these are doing."

Initially, James wanted to specify that data centers could use only closed-loop systems, which have significantly lower water usage. Gabi Bosiacki, a spokeswoman for the proposed Global AI data center between Windsor and Greeley, said an initial fill of a closed-loop system is 65,000 gallons with a yearly top-off of 650 gallons, which is comparable to the typical water use of a coffee shop every two months.

Weld County Deputy Director Maxwell Nader was quick to oppose James' proposal to require a closed-loop system, saying it would lead to a slippery slope. James then sought to restrict the use of evaporative cooling systems, but Ross, Commissioner Perry Buck and Commissioner Lynette Peppler voted against that restriction.

As his one hard line in this process, James cast the lone vote against passing the land use code, as Maxey was largely satisfied with its current state, despite there being no cooling system specifications. James remarked that he is usually opposed to government interference and would side with his colleagues most of the time, but he felt that the potential water usage by a data center was too significant not to be regulated.

"This is an interesting crossing of principles for me," James said. "I hear over and over again about the protection of agriculture, but when I think that we might put Open AI, Meta or Microsoft into direct competition with Farmer Brown for water, that's the free market, but is that truly the protection of agriculture?"

James said the commissioners could revisit data center regulations as the county continues to work on its Comprehensive Plan, which could influence water usage in the county, providing an indirect means of limiting water use by data centers.

Open forum

### Making people pay to vote is disenfranchisement

Yes, it is not an insurmountable challenge to get a passport/birth certificate in our country, provided you have the approximate $150 the letter writer referenced. But three things about the SAVE ACT are apparently out of reach of the writer's understanding:

1. Some seniors, particularly women with their husbands' surnames, have NO access to their birth certificates.

2. $150 is not necessarily available to many, particularly in this current Administration's economy.

3. MOST IMPORTANTLY, voting is a CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT and any attempt to tie it to one's ability to pay ANYTHING to vote is disenfranchisement and is unconstitutional.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

— *Sally Nogg, Longmont*

### 'Trump Accounts' will help those who need it most

A recent editorial claimed that the proposed "Trump Accounts" — $1,000 invested for every newborn — would mainly benefit the wealthy. That argument gets it backward.

The biggest barrier to investing for most Americans isn't access — it's having any money to invest in the first place. Suggesting yet another generic savings account, without new incentives or seed funding, ignores that reality. For many families, especially here in Colorado where costs keep rising, there is no extra cash to set aside.

"Trump Accounts" directly solve that problem by starting every child with a real investment. For a low-income family, $1,000 is not symbolic — it's meaningful. Left untouched for 18 years, it has time to grow through compounding, turning a modest start into something far more significant.

Critics also miss the obvious: This is effectively progressive. A $1,000 head start matters far more to a child born into financial constraint than to one born into wealth. Affluent families already provide early exposure to investing, financial literacy, and long-term planning. This policy extends a version of that opportunity to everyone else.

Just as important, it introduces participation. Too many Americans are shut out — financially and psychologically — from markets that drive wealth creation. Giving every child a stake from day one is a simple way to begin closing that gap.

If the goal is to help those at a disadvantage, this policy does exactly that — by providing not just access, but a starting point.

— *John Ogle, Broomfield*




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Call Matt today at 720-310-0641
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