



COLORADO STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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The Colorado State Board of Education 2010 Legislative Priorities

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1. School Finance

Support efforts to improve the long-term financial stability of education funding and develop a comprehensive school finance solution.

- a. Encourage allocation of school finance resources to be prioritized. First, ensure that all students have access to the resources necessary to meet their basic educational needs. Second, ensure that students with persistently low performance receive resources (financial or other) to improve their outcomes. And third, ensure that students who have shown significant improvement despite having significant needs continue to receive the resources (financial or otherwise) they need to maintain such outcomes.
- b. Encourage school finance incentives for those schools that achieve high academic growth for all students, including high achieving students, while reducing the achievement gap.
- c. Support a school finance formula that includes the use of multiple count dates to ensure that financing is equitable and incentivizes increased rates of graduation and student attendance.
- d. Support the use of resources to advance the goals and objectives of the Colorado Achievement Plan for Kids (CAP4K), including fully funding the implementation of standards and the redesign of assessments.
- e. Support replacing the current system of funding based on seat time with one based on student performance and content mastery.
- f. Support financial incentives to promote administrative efficiencies among small districts.

2. Great Teachers and Leaders

Support legislation that will align state policies and practices to support educator effectiveness.

- a. Support efforts to identify, attract and recruit promising individuals to the teaching profession.
- b. Support rigorous, transparent and equitable evaluation processes for assessing the effectiveness of educators and educator preparation programs
- c. Support educator evaluations that use four (4) or more rating categories and include, at a minimum, student performance, peer reviews and demonstration of instructional strategies that address the needs of all students.
- d. Recognize, reward and compensate effective educators.
- e. Support changes to educator preparation and licensure that ensure educators receive training that appropriately prepares them to be effective in their professional careers.
- f. Support systems to ensure appropriate and effective educator induction and ongoing professional development.

- g. Enable districts to transition teachers from probationary to non-probationary status when teachers demonstrate they are ready, rather than within a specific number of years.
- h. Support both (1) a fair and efficient dismissal process that is appropriate for teachers who fail, after ample support, to demonstrate effectiveness and (2) a distinctive, fair and efficient dismissal process for teachers who must be discharged for inappropriate conduct.

3. Statewide System of Accountability and Support

Continue to develop a consistent and comprehensive statewide system of support that helps schools and districts build the capacity needed to achieve ambitious student outcomes.

- a. Support federal legislation reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in a manner that allows Colorado to implement SB 09-163 as its single accountability system. This would permit states to establish ambitious but attainable performance targets for districts and schools, rather than the federal government establishing uniform AYP targets applicable to all districts and schools.
- b. Encourage legislation that enables the state to better support schools through the use of diverse education service providers (also known as a portfolio management approach), including supplemental service providers.

4. Closing the Achievement Gap

Continue efforts and funding to implement proven, evidence-based programs and strategies for closing the achievement gap.

- a. Support efforts to expand the school day and year for students in chronically low-performing schools.
- b. Encourage differentiated allocation of resources in order to ensure that adequate resources are applied to raise chronic low performance and close achievement gaps.

5. Standards and Assessments

Continue statewide transition to and implementation of internationally benchmarked standards and aligned assessments that provide a clear path to postsecondary and workforce readiness.

- a. Support changes in legislation related to CAP4K that promote the idea that competency matters more than seat time.
- b. Support legislation that aligns the standards-based system so that students are postsecondary and workforce ready (including, but not limited to, development of formative assessment tools, model curricula, high-quality professional development, etc.).
- c. Support legislation to change the date for State Board adoption of graduation guidelines to follow State Board adoption of academic standards and assessments.

6. Innovation and Choice

Support legislation enabling the state to assure a high-quality public school choice for every student in Colorado.

- a. Support legislation allowing all students educational choices which include at least one form of public school that is high-performing.

- b. Support continued development and oversight of high-quality online programs, charter schools, innovation schools, schools of choice, and other innovative educational options to ensure strong student results.
- c. Support legislation that provides more flexibility to schools, school districts and the Colorado Department of Education to deliver high quality education services.
- d. Continuously examine how rules, regulations and statutes might prevent innovative approaches in public education. Examine requests for waivers from rules, regulations and statutes and determine where changes in the law could provide more flexibility to schools state-wide.

7. Early Childhood Education

Support efforts to increase access to family literacy and high-quality, voluntary, early-childhood education.

- a. Encourage interagency collaboration in the development and improvement of early-childhood education.
- b. Recognize the value of investing in early intervention and prevention strategies through high-quality, voluntary, early-childhood, preschool and kindergarten programs.
- c. Include voluntary early-childhood education as a vital component in the development of a seamless P-20 system.

8. Data Collection and Access

Support approaches to measuring postsecondary and workforce readiness beyond student scores on state assessments.

- a. Support efforts to appraise the extent to which students are on track based on standards-based measures that include intermediate or interim assessments to gauge student progress toward accomplishing state standards, and also gauge how well students perform when compared to students internationally.
- b. Support efforts to monitor and collect at the state level the postsecondary plans of students, including Individual Career and Academic Plans, which provide important leading indicators and early warning signs related to postsecondary and workforce readiness, while adhering to all applicable privacy requirements.

9. CDE Fiscal Management

Support legislation that will increase the department's ability to deliver operational excellence, and research and development, while decreasing the constraints associated with federal resources.

- a. Support legislation that allows the department to use gifts, grants and donations to support fixed-term FTE staff rather than only contractors.
- b. Support provisions in all education legislation that requires research and evaluation focused on the return on investment of state resources in terms of student outcomes.

10. State Board Authority

Support the Colorado State Board of Education's constitutional responsibility for public schools through collaboration opportunities with the legislative and executive branches and with the private sector and through designation of the rulemaking authority rather than prescriptive statute.