



COLORADO STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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The Colorado State Board of Education 2008 Legislative Priorities

I. SCHOOL FINANCE

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

A. School Trust Lands –

- Support legislation that has potential to increase the Permanent Fund and other School Trust Lands income.
- Support efforts to increase awareness of School Trust Lands.
- Exempt school trust lands from TABOR.
- Recognize a formal spokesperson for the beneficiary.
- Support efforts to allow the State Treasurer to have flexibility in investment decisions to best maximize the Trust income.
- Support policy decisions or legislation that removes trust revenue from the PPOR formula, therefore changing the practice of supplanting the general fund to supplementing the general fund.
- Support legislation and/or practices that enforce the Federal Government to fulfill the 5% due to the state from sale of federal lands.
- Support legislation and/or practices that enforce the Federal Government to fulfill its obligation of the original grant of in-lieu lands.
- Change the property signage of “State Trust Lands” to “School Trust Lands” throughout the state.

B. Comprehensive Funding for Assessments – Support a uniform approach for full state funding for all state-mandated tests.

C. Contingency Reserve Fund – Restore the Contingency Reserve Fund.

D. Capital Construction –

- Support efforts to fund identified capital construction needs across the state, including but not limited to the Giardino lawsuit settlement.

E. Exceptional Student Services Funding -

- Fund excess costs consistently for special education students served out-of-district either in a charter school or a non-charter school.
- Support mechanisms for funding special education, with an emphasis on high-need students.
- Support efforts to increase funding and coordination of services for eligible facilities, “educational orphans” (i.e., students whose parents cannot be located or whose parents have had their parental rights legally terminated) and children in foster care in order to lessen the financial impact on districts.

F. Categoricals - Support funding that would help districts with the excess expenditures they are experiencing for special education, gifted and talented, English language learners, transportation, and career and technical (vocational) education.

II. ACCOUNTABILITY

A. Closing the Achievement Gap – Support funding to implement proven, evidence-based, and effective programs for Closing the Achievement Gap.

B. School Conversion – Support more flexibility for the State Board and local districts to develop remedies to address underperforming schools.

C. School Accountability Reports –

- Support changes in the statute to allow for the added flexibility this Board needs to manage the quality and productivity of the report regarding format, content, and placement.

D. School Advisory Councils – Provide more flexibility on the makeup and structure of school advisory councils.

E. Truancy Rates – Support authority for the State Board of Education to set statewide, uniform definition of truancy rates.

F. Model Graduation Guidelines – Support the State Board of Education’s development of model graduation guidelines for Colorado.

G. Drop-Out Prevention--Support additional funding and resources for drop-out prevention initiatives.

H. Concurrent Enrollment Programs--

- Support the expansion of concurrent enrollment programs so that advanced students can take advantage of college coursework before the 11th grade, as agreed by school and parent.
- Support legislation to address expanded access to post-secondary education options.
- Align the three forms of educational accountability (SAR, AYP, and Accreditation) by eliminating duplication and simplifying reporting requirements, with the primary focus on longitudinal measures.

III. ONLINE EDUCATION/SCHOOL CHOICE

Continue support for equal access to, and appropriate oversight of, online and other school choice options.

IV. EARLY CHILDHOOD

The SBE supports efforts to improve the funding and access to quality early childhood education and family literacy and to improve the transition from early childhood education and preschool to K-12.

A. Kindergarten – Support efforts to increase opportunities for access to quality full-day kindergarten for students who need it.

B. Early Childhood and Family Literacy – Support legislation that would increase access and funding for at-risk children to quality early childhood education and family literacy programs. Support efforts to improve the quality of early childhood settings.

C. Colorado Preschool & Kindergarten Program – Support efforts to improve the quality of early childhood settings.

- SBE supports legislation that focuses on preparing students transitioning from early childhood education to K-12
- Funding for professional development
- Level the playing field between public and private providers
- Support 3-year implementation to full funding

- Concentrate on serving the most at-risk kids

V. LIBRARIES

Restore funding for libraries to enhance access to educational materials for all citizens.

VI. GENERAL

A. State Board Authority –

- Support the Colorado State Board of Education’s constitutional responsibility for public schools by requiring the Board to implement legislative directives via rules rather than specifying details in state statute.
- Support opportunities to collaborate with the legislative and executive branches and the private sector through active participation in boards, commissions and task forces that further the Board’s policy priorities.

B. Data—Support adequate funding for implementation of the 2007 data audit recommendations and any other upgrades to CDE’s data system technology that would result in reducing duplicative, unnecessary and time-consuming reporting requirements, while providing higher levels of service, support and usefulness to all users of the state’s data system.