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*BillBoard is a
semimonthly*

newsletter on the latest developments at the state capitol that impact K–12 education. It is distributed during the legislative session to school board members, superintendents, legislators, governor's office, various statewide organizations, BOCES executive directors and the Colorado Council of School Board Attorneys.

Uniting school board voices, erasing the negative factor focus of CASB legislative efforts

We have work to do

The second session of the 69th General Assembly convened Jan. 8 and, as is the custom, the session started with pomp, ceremony and [speeches from Gov. Hickenlooper](#) and party leaders. While all of the speakers highlighted the importance of a strong public education system, none of them called for meaningful increases to current school funding levels.

Our legislators do not understand how deeply the cuts in school finance have affected school districts. In fact, the conventional wisdom in the legislature today is that schools are doing just fine. Sure, districts have had to make some tough cuts, but those cuts have been absorbed and school districts will continue to soldier on.

This conventional wisdom is exactly what is contemplated by the governor's proposed budget, which projects a negative factor of \$1 billion a year for as far into the future as the eye can see. Even more alarming is the fact that both parties broadly support this approach.

CASB cannot fight or change conventional wisdom without a lot of help from school boards and their school districts. You must educate your legislators about the role of factors in the school finance formula, how the negative factor works and the purpose of Amendment 23. (Read: [Understanding Colorado School Finance and Categorical Program Funding](#))

CASB events to help you put your advocacy efforts into action!

**Every Wednesday,
Jan 22-April 16**

Join us for breakfast and a briefing, followed by a visit to the Colorado Legislature to see the House and Senate in action. Gain more visibility for local school boards and connect with education leaders to help ensure they are kept informed about the issues that matter to your district! To register, visit the [Day at the Capitol webpage](#).

More importantly, you must explain how the negative factor has impacted your students, families and schools in concrete, measurable ways. How many positions have been cut in your school district, how many programs and what has been the affect of those cuts on your community and your students? You must explain how many years have passed without raises. You must talk about the teacher you cannot replace who left your district for work in Kansas at a salary you cannot match. You must enlist the support of other leaders in the community, such as county commissioners or business leaders, and work together to help your representatives understand the local impact of these cuts.

We have work to do and CASB's advocacy team is ready. We hope you'll join us in this campaign to help unite school board voices and erase the negative factor, and offer some legislative tools below to get us started.



Feb. 20-21, Denver

Join state education experts and leaders to hear their insights on education legislation and Colorado's political landscape and learn how to advocate effectively on behalf of your students. To learn more or register, visit the [Winter Legislative Conference webpage](#).

Must-have tools and resources for school board members

1. **Start** the negative factor conversation with your board with an [Individualized Lobbying Plan \(ILP\)](#) and sample meeting agenda item.
2. **Educate** yourself about the [financial impact the negative factor has on your district](#). Note: These numbers are subject to change. Pay special attention to columns E and N.
3. **Find** your senator and representative on the Colorado state [legislator map](#).
4. **Stay** apprised of education-related legislative news by [signing up for a daily newsletter](#) from Chalkbeat Colorado (formerly EdNews Colorado).
5. **Know** the [Senate Education Committee](#) and [House Education Committee](#) members, schedules and calendars.
6. **Watch and listen** to floor sessions and committee meetings on the [Colorado Channel webpage](#).
7. **Read** the Advocacy chapter of CASB's [2013 School Board Member Leadership Workbook](#).

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