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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.

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Battle to erase the negative factor gains momentum: Sample local board resolution now available

As the battle to erase the negative factor begins to gain some traction, CASB offers a [sample board resolution](#) that local school boards can adopt to call upon the Colorado Legislature to eliminate the negative factor.

Additionally, the Colorado School Finance Project has developed a spreadsheet identifying [how reducing the negative factor by \\$200 million would impact each district's budget](#) for the 2014-15 school year. We encourage you to share your story and tell us how the negative factor has impacted your students, families and schools, and what your district would do if funding was restored.

Highlights from National School Boards Association's Advocacy Institute

Common Core, reaffirming the role of local boards and local control, and tackling perception gaps were the most buzz-worthy issues at the 2014 NSBA Advocacy Institute, Feb. 2-4 in Washington, DC.

Eight members of CASB's FRN committee, along with **Jane Urschel**, headed to our nation's capitol to meet with and present local school district priorities to Colorado's congressional representatives.

"It was a Colorado delegation of locally elected school board members sharing with legislators our concerns about local control, federal mandates and lack of funding to support those mandates," said **Jim O'Brien**, CASB president-elect and FRN committee chairman.

Attendees agreed the "new" NSBA Advocacy Institute (formerly the Federal Relations Network Conference) is impressive and they like the direction it's taking.

"NSBA as an organization has turned the ship so that its members feel like we are on board, as opposed to flailing in the water yelling for a life preserver," Jane said.

Added Jim, "The major focus was advocacy and my biggest takeaway was we need to be strong advocates. We need to tell our stories. We really need to work hard within our communities and we really need to advocate at both the state and federal levels."

Jan Tanner, CASB board president, said one highlight was being able to spend time with Colorado's congressional leaders. "We had conversations with them; it wasn't just them taking notes. I think we showed that CASB is a force to be listened to and they really understood the gravity of the issues we're facing," she said.

Local control was a hot topic, Jane said, from the conference sessions to the halls of the Capitol. "Once we got to meet with our delegates on the hill, we were reminded that there are different definitions of local control. But, Colorado school board members are used to that."

It helped, Jan added, to talk with those who don't share CASB's message. "It's always good to hear from folks on the other side so we're not just talking to the choir. We can hear other opinions so we can parlay them into what we say."

Common Core and perception gaps also initiated some lively conversations. An NPR reporter and panel facilitator said that No Child Left Behind has "morphed into Common Core and a federal takeover of the nation's public education system."

Meanwhile, attendees also heard statistics on Gallup studies conducted on the public's attitude toward education. "There's a perception gap between community members and how they view their own school districts and boards, and how they view schools and school boards in general," Jim said. "We need to close that gap by doing a better job of telling our stories."

In addition to Jan and Jim, we also want to thank the other FRN Committee members who attended the Advocacy Institute: **Lyndon Burnett**, Agate 300; **Jill Fellman**, Jefferson Public Schools; **Sean Ash**, Weld RE-4; **Shelly Benford**, Boulder Valley Schools, **Pat Richardson**, Academy 20; and **Linda VanMatre**, Academy 20.

CASB questions proposed changes to gifted and talented laws

CASB's advocacy team has received clear marching orders from our board and members: lobby hard to eliminate the negative factor and oppose legislation that earmarks dollars and/or imposes mandates that will not directly benefit students. As a result, our Legislative Resolutions Committee voted to oppose a number of well-intended, but expensive, new bills.

One such bill, [HB 14-1102](#), is designed to enhance and expand services for gifted and talented (GT) students. During her tenure in the legislature, Rep. Peniston has been an effective advocate for our GT students and CASB has supported many of her prior efforts to improve services for this population.

However, the bill would draw approximately \$6 million per year from the State Education Fund and CASB believes it's an unnecessary expansion of existing GT laws. Additionally, it would create an unreasonable administrative burden for administrative units (AU) as they seek to understand and implement the proposed technical changes.

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](#).



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](#).

Rally the Rurals!

Colorado Legislative Rural Caucus announces its second meeting, noon-1 p.m. Feb. 21, in House Committee Room 0107 at the Colorado State Capitol. The group will meet with members of the Rural Schools Caucus to discuss the unique challenges of education in rural Colorado.

The proposed bill includes numerous mandates requiring, among other things, universal GT screenings for all second-graders, additional assessments for middle school students and highly qualified GT personnel in each AU. Most parents and educators agree that additional assessments aren't needed and few, if any, rural AUs will be able to recruit and retain a highly qualified GT teacher.

Moreover, the administrative changes imposed by HB 14-1102 are unnecessary in light of the requirements in current law. Since 2007, the legislature amended the GT laws to require every AU to adopt and implement a plan for identifying and serving GT students and to develop an

individualized Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) for each identified GT student. Comprehensive state board rules impose stringent requirements around the details of the GT plan, which are submitted to CDE and funded on a per-pupil basis. Thanks to the effective advocacy of several education leaders, AUs are no longer required to match the state funds they receive with local dollars.

While CASB fully supports the concept of improved services for GT students, we cannot support the technical and administrative changes required by this bill. If we truly want to better serve our students, we must eliminate the negative factor and provide districts the resources they need to effectively meet the needs of all students.

HB 14-1102 will be heard by the House Education Committee on Monday, Feb. 10. Please contact [Michelle Murphy](#) or [Jane Urschel](#) if you are interested in attending and/or testifying at the hearing.

Bills at a Glance: Summary and status of bills that affect school boards

HB 14-1110 SCHOOL BOARDS & EXECUTIVE SESSION

Rep. Peniston (D) and Sen. Hodge (D)

Current law requires minutes of executive sessions held by local government boards to reflect the topics of the discussion. This bill would require that school board executive session minutes also include the amount of time spent on each topic. The measure also would require that recordings of school board executive sessions include attorney-client discussions. Boards would have to keep a log of such legal discussions, including general descriptions, so that "other parties are enabled to assess the applicability of the privilege or right to protection."

Status: Approved by House Education Committee (Feb. 3)

CASB position: Oppose

HB 14-1118 ADVANCED PLACEMENT INCENTIVES PILOT PROGRAM

Rep. Wilson (R)

The measure would establish a four-year Advanced Placement incentives pilot program in the Department of Education under which small rural districts would be eligible to receive bonuses for the number of students who successfully complete AP classes and for students who take AP exams. The pilot program would be repealed after four years.

Status: Approved by House Education Committee (Feb. 5)

CASB position: Monitor

Killed Bills

SB 14-033 TAX CREDITS FOR NONPUBLIC EDUCATION

Sen. Lundberg (R)

The bill would establish a private school tuition income tax credit that allows any taxpayer to claim a credit when he or she enrolls a child in a private school or provides a scholarship to a child enrolled in a private school and the private school. The amount of the credit for a full-time student is the amount of tuition, or half of the previous year's state average per pupil revenue, whichever is less. There would be prorated credit for halftime students and a \$1,000 credit for a child who is home schooled full time.

Status: Senate Committee on State, Veterans & Military Affairs postponed indefinitely (Jan. 22)

CASB position: Monitor

SB 14-070 APPLICATION OF THE COLORADO OPEN RECORDS ACT (CORA) TO PRIVATE ASSOCIATIONS OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

Sen. Lundberg (R)

Modifies the definition of "public records" under the CORA to include all writings made, maintained or kept by a private association whose membership consists primarily of elected officials of one or more political subdivisions of the state or individuals holding a covered state office, as applicable, and that receives at least 10 percent of its revenues on an annual basis from public moneys.

Status: Senate Judiciary Committee postpone indefinitely (Jan. 27)

CASB position: Oppose

HB 14-1116 COMPENSATION OFFICERS LOCAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION

Rep. Rosenthal (D)

The proposal would allow local school boards to provide compensation to board presidents and vice presidents. (Current law allows compensation for board secretaries, assistant secretaries, treasurers and assistant treasurers, but bars pay for presidents and vice presidents.)

Status: Senate Local Government Committee postponed indefinitely (Feb. 6)

CASB position: Support

UPDATED: Must-have tools and resources for school board members

1. **Download and adopt** a [sample board resolution](#) for school boards to call upon the Colorado Legislature to eliminate the negative factor in K-12 education funding.
2. **Start** the negative factor conversation with your board with an [Individualized Lobbying Plan \(ILP\)](#) and sample meeting agenda item.
3. **Share** your story! **Tell us** how the negative factor has impacted your students, families and schools.
4. **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.
5. **Find** your senator and representative on the Colorado state [legislator map](#).
6. **Track** bills and learn about CASB's position on education-related legislation through [Colorado Capitol Watch](#).
7. **Stay** apprised of education-related legislative news by [signing up for a daily newsletter](#) from Chalkbeat Colorado (formerly EdNews Colorado).
8. **Know** the [Senate Education Committee](#) and [House Education Committee](#) members, schedules and calendars.
9. **Watch and listen** to floor sessions and committee meetings on the [Colorado Channel webpage](#).

Want to help support BillBoard?

Sponsorship information is available at the [CASB Underwriting Opportunities webpage](#).

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