Thank you legislators! Your support is greatly appreciated!

We want to give a special shout out to the Republican House Caucus for standing up and fighting to
BEST by the excise tax on retail marijuana sales for kindergarten facilities, technology and charter schools. Despite broad-based opposition to this earmarking, which completely eliminated the BEST board’s control over those dollars, the House sponsors were content to leave the matter for the Senate without any debate or consideration by the House.

CASB was not willing to allow such an important issue to go unaddressed by the House and we worked closely with Rep. Dore and Rep. Murray, as well as other House Republicans, to bring an amendment that eliminated the earmarking and restored the BEST board’s control over those funds. However, without the support of Rep. Hamner and at least six other Democrats, we knew the amendment would fail.

Last Friday, we asked many of you who have built new facilities with BEST funds to reach out to your democratic representatives and urge a ‘yes’ vote on the amendment. We were thrilled by the immediate action taken by board members and superintendents throughout the state and strongly encouraged by the positive response received from key Democrats who recognized the great value the BEST program provides to our schools and students.

While just having the debate on the House floor would have been a victory, we are happy to report that the Dore amendment passed, though, due to strong pressure from the charter school lobby, the bill still requires that $5 million be reserved for charter schools. CASB will explore the Senate’s interest in restoring this $5 million to BEST while, perhaps, drawing charter capital funds from another source.

In light of the progress in the House, CASB (as of press time) is maintaining its “work to amend” position on the Student Success Act, as we still have much work to do to eliminate burdensome transparency provisions, eliminate earmarking and increase current funding levels.

Thank you to all of you who acted on this and other critical issues this session. Your voices are being heard … let’s keep up the fight and bring home more victories (and more money) for our schools!

Read CDE’s latest district-by-district run illustrating impacts on funding.

### Bills at a Glance

**HB 14-1204 FLEXIBILITY FOR RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS**


As amended, the bill allows small rural districts with fewer than 1,000 students that are rated as accredited or accredited with distinction to submit performance plans every two years. The bill also allows such districts to work with BOCES to obtain the services of literacy specialists for implementation of the Read Act.

**CASB position:** Monitor

**Status:** Approved by House on third reading (April 9)

**SB 14-1298 SCHOOL FINANCE**

**Reps. Hamner (D) and Buckner (D); Sens. Kerr (D) and Steadman (D)**

The bill sets the statewide base per pupil funding amount for the 2014-15 budget year at $6,121, which is an inflationary increase of 2.8 percent, does not allow the negative factor to increase in 2015-16 from amount established in HB 1298, increases the amount of Colorado preschool slots by 5,000, increases the limit on bonded indebtedness under certain circumstances and increases annual BOCES appropriation to $2 million.

**CASB position:** Monitor

**Status:** Approved by House on second reading (April 9)

**SB 14-165 K-12 ACADEMIC GROWTH PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

**Sen. Kerr (D) and Johnston (D); Reps. Peniston (D) and Murray (R)**

This bill would give districts flexibility in how much, if any, to base teacher evaluations on student growth during the 2014-15 school year. Teachers would continue to be evaluated on professional practice and low evaluations would count toward possible loss of nonprobationary status.

**CASB position:** Monitor

**Status:** Approved by House Education Committee (April 9)