



Contact



Calendar



Facebook



Twitter



Staff



Partners



Publications



Videos



Awards

[Return to Headlines](#)

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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.

In this issue ...

- School finance update: We still need school board members' help
- Join CASB for some thanks, some nosh and some legislative insight
- TIF fairness bill advances to House floor
- Worth a watch: Colorado Futures Center's video on long-term fiscal sustainability

School finance update

The Senate Appropriations Committee this morning approved this year's school finance package: HB 1292 (Student Success Act) and HB 1298 (School Finance Act). Both bills head to the Senate floor early next week.

Student Success Act

As reported in [Chalkbeat](#), the Senate Finance Committee on Thursday afternoon stripped important amendments to the Student Success Act that scaled back burdensome transparency requirements and added \$10 million to the negative factor. However, on Friday morning, the Senate Appropriations Committee removed all of the transparency requirements from the bill (over **Sen. Johnston's** objections) and an amendment

TIF fairness bill advances to House floor

The House Finance Committee approved the [Urban Development Fairness Act, HB 1375](#), on Thursday morning. The bill would bring greater equity to tax increment financing arrangements used to fund development in Urban Renewal Areas

introduced by **Sens. Grantham and Todd** directs CDE to issue an RFI to determine and compare the costs and benefits of various approaches to transparency reporting.

This amendment will protect districts from the burdensome reporting requirements previously included in the bill, and we need your help to ensure that the transparency provisions are not amended back into the bill on the Senate floor. Please contact your senators and urge them to stick with **Sens. Todd and Grantham** on this important issue.

Sen. Steadman introduced an amendment to eliminate the earmarking of 12.5 percent of the AA dollars for charter school capital construction, but that amendment failed in the face of opposition from **Sens. Johnston and Ulibarri**. We are deeply concerned by the fact that the AA excise tax dollars are coming in far lower than expected and will continue to fight hard to increase the revenues available to support BEST, though we don't expect meaningful change during this legislative session.

Finally, in a rather disheartening display of political gamesmanship, HB 1139, **Rep. Priola's** ADM bill, was revived from the (almost) dead when the House Education and Appropriations committees unexpectedly approved it this week. Last week, the Senate Education Committee stripped the ADM provisions from the Student Success Act and the revival of **Rep. Priola's** bill seems to be in direct response to that action. CASB will work to kill this bill and, again, we need you to urge your representatives to vote against this bill when it hits the House floor next week.

School Finance Act

There were also several amendments to the School Finance Act in Senate Appropriations Friday morning. One amendment advanced by **Sens. Steadman and Kerr** eliminates the requirement that 75 percent of the FY 2014-15 general fund surplus be deposited in the state education fund. When advancing their amendment, the senators explained that the "sweep" was no longer necessary because the balance of the state education is too high.

Sen. Steadman explained that the sweep complicates the budget process and impairs the ability of the general fund to shoulder the responsibility for school finance. Both senators spoke to their commitment to continue to apply the money to school finance and, more specifically, to paying down the negative factor. While we don't think there is any hope of getting additional dollars towards the negative factor this session, we will need your help to hold them accountable for these statements next year.

There were also several "technical" amendments as well as a provision that adds a \$300,000 one-time transfer from the state education fund to support data collection from early childhood education programs and another amendment clarifying that charter schools in floor funded districts receive floor level funding.

Join CASB for a some thanks, some nosh and some legislative insight

CASB members are invited to join us for an informal luncheon as we say thank you for all your hard work this legislative session, give a retrospective of what happened under the gold dome and start laying the groundwork for 2015.

At the beginning of the session, no money was allotted for the negative factor buy down and several legislators told us our resolution to change this fell on deaf ears at the capitol. In just a few short months, however, the negative factor payback went from zero to \$110 million.

Much of this success must be credited to our members – your calls, emails, letters and passionate lobbying helped legislators better understand the impact that deep budget cuts have had on your districts and communities, and the importance of meaningful increases to school funding.

Ken DeLay and Jane Urschel want to personally thank you for your help this session. At these luncheons, they also will give a behind-the-scenes recap of the 2014 legislative session – the victories we enjoyed and the considerable work that still lies ahead. We also hope you'll come with ideas to help us shape our 2015 advocacy agenda, including resolutions for consideration at our Delegate Assembly on Sept. 27.

Meetings will be held in Montrose, Sterling, Denver and Pueblo starting May 12. There is no cost to attend; however, [registration is required](#).

by requiring cities to contribute sales tax revenues at the same rate as local property tax revenues.

Equity in TIF arrangements has long been a legislative priority for CASB members and during a special session called to discuss this bill, CASB's legislative resolutions committee voted to support the bill and seek an amendment giving school board members – in districts impacted by TIFs – a seat at the table on the urban renewal authority.

Special thanks to CASB director **Mary Nichols** of Littleton Public Schools, who spent over five hours waiting to testify on the bill on CASB's behalf. Though the committee approved the bill, the amendment giving school boards a seat at the table did not pass. Rest assured we will continue to advance this issue in future legislative sessions.

Worth a watch: Colorado Futures Center video on Colorado Quality of Life

The Colorado Futures Center at Colorado State University has released a short and well-illustrated video based on its findings from a long-term state fiscal sustainability study released in December. [Watch the video here.](#)

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