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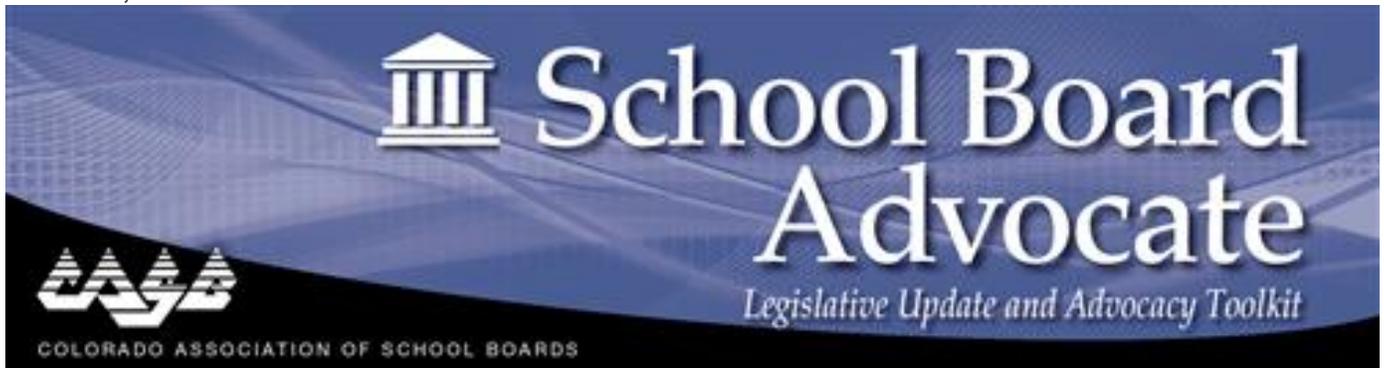


Awards

[Return to Headlines](#)

## School Board Advocate: March 23, 2018

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***In this issue:***

- School Finance Pieces Begin to Fall into Place
- A Debt Owed
- Parental Notification

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## School Finance Pieces Begin to Fall into Place



This week, Colorado lawmakers got a better look at how much money they have to spend in 2018-19, which set in motion a series of high-level decisions that provide better insight to how much funding will go to K-12 education.

The quarterly revenue forecasts issued Monday, by legislative and executive branch economists, detailed how Colorado's booming economy continues to boost state revenues, giving legislators approximately \$1.4 billion more to spend in 2018-19 than they spent on the current budget. The Joint Budget Committee (JBC) receives two forecasts, one from the [Legislative Council Services](#) (LCS) and the other from the [Office of State Budget and Planning](#).

Do not believe that all of the money will be available for pressing needs like reducing the K-12 budget stabilization factor, putting more money toward transportation or used to shore up the Public Employees' Retirement Association (PERA).

A big chunk of the \$1.4 billion will be used toward "normal" budget increases driven by caseload changes, inflation and normal program growth.

After sifting through the numbers in the revenue forecasts, it looks like about \$500 to \$600 million will be available for spending on the three big items.

On Wednesday, the JBC pushed to close the 2018-19 state budget bill so it can be introduced in the House next week. Some crucial decisions were made about how to use that money:

- \$500 million was set aside to help fund transportation projects, with the details to be determined by the full legislature.
- \$225 million was earmarked for helping restore the financial health of the PERA. Again, exactly how that money will be applied to any PERA "rescue" plan is up to the full General Assembly.
- \$150 million was earmarked to reduce the Budget Stabilization (BS) factor – formerly the negative factor. That would set the 2018-19 negative factor at \$722.4 million. (If you've forgotten, the negative factor represents the difference between what full K-12 funding would be under the Amendment 23 formula and what the legislature decides school funding actually will be in a given year.)
- \$30 million was tucked away as extra funding for rural school districts. The details of how that money would be divvied up among rural districts will be determined by the annual school finance bill, which has yet to be introduced.

Any reduction of the negative factor would be good news for school districts. Since 2010, when the negative factor was first imposed, Colorado school districts have received \$6.6 billion less than they would have otherwise.

CASB is pushing for a \$250 million shrinkage of the BS factor. The proposed \$150 million set aside from the JBC is a step in the right direction.

School districts are nervous about the impact on any PERA fix on their budgets.

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## A Debt Owed



The Colorado House is scheduled to begin consideration of the 2018-19 state budget the week of March 26th. The Joint Budget Committee (JBC) builds a budget that is included in what is known as the “Long Bill”. The Long Bill must be approved by both the House and Senate, usually with several divergent funding priorities between the two chambers. This year looks to be a battle between transportation, education and PERA, which means school board members need to step up and demand that Colorado lawmakers fund K-12 education.

The Budget Stabilization factor – formerly the negative factor – remains a nearly \$830 million debt owed to students. Colorado lawmakers have the opportunity to make a down payment on this debt with additional funding in the 2018 budget.

A CASB board member put it well when he said, “We need an adequately resourced and locally lead system of education in Colorado.”

School board members need to contact their legislators today and ask that they support a locally governed and adequately resourced education system in Colorado.

Every week, from now until the final budget is passed, your CASB advocacy team will be sending out a request for local school board members to reach out to their legislators and remind them of the importance of funding public education in Colorado. [Click here](#) to act now or to join the CASB digital advocacy network, text CASB to 52886. These alerts allow you to contact lawmakers with just a few clicks via email, twitter, Facebook and phone.

## Parental Notification



Several high-profile cases involving criminal actions by some Colorado educators have put the focus on when and how a school should notify parents of a personnel issue. HB18-1296, titled “[Parent Notice for Student Safety And Protection](#)”, was recently introduced in order to mandate how school districts respond in these cases. The bill has sponsorship from both sides of the aisle with Representatives Brittany Pettersen (D) and Paul Lundeen (R) as House sponsors and Senators Rhonda Fields (D) and Owen Hill (R) taking the lead in the Senate. The bill summary provides a clear understanding of what the sponsors want to see occur:

**CONCERNING NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS OF CHARGES BROUGHT AGAINST PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEES FOR ALLEGED CRIMINAL CONDUCT THAT COULD RESULT IN THE REVOCATION OF AN EDUCATOR LICENSE PURSUANT TO TITLE 22, COLORADO 105 REVISED STATUTES.**

The bill has several policy implications for school boards. CASB staff is actively involved in providing feedback and suggestions on the bill. If the bill does become law, the CASB legal and policy teams will provide additional information following the 2018 legislative session. You can track this bill, and any other education bills, with the [CASB Bill Tracker](#).

*Thanks to our partners at Colorado Capitol Editorial services for additional reporting for this edition of the School Board Advocate.*

## CASB Advocacy Tools

[CASB Bill Tracker](#) – Track the latest education news from the Capitol.

**CASB Call to Action** – Help CASB ensure our members' voices are heard. To subscribe, text CASB to 52886.

**CASB Legislative Conference Calls** - Use the web link to join the meeting. The next meeting will be Friday, April 27, 2018, at 8:00 am. Meetings are held the 4th Friday of each month during the legislative session.

**CASB Days at the Capitol** – Join CASB, fellow board members and students at the Capitol! Our Days at the Capitol events run March through April and give school board members—from rural districts tucked away in the mountains and plains, to large districts neighboring the state capitol—a chance to experience the legislative process firsthand and help strengthen the voice of

school boards. We had an overwhelming response for student attendance and student registration is now closed.



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