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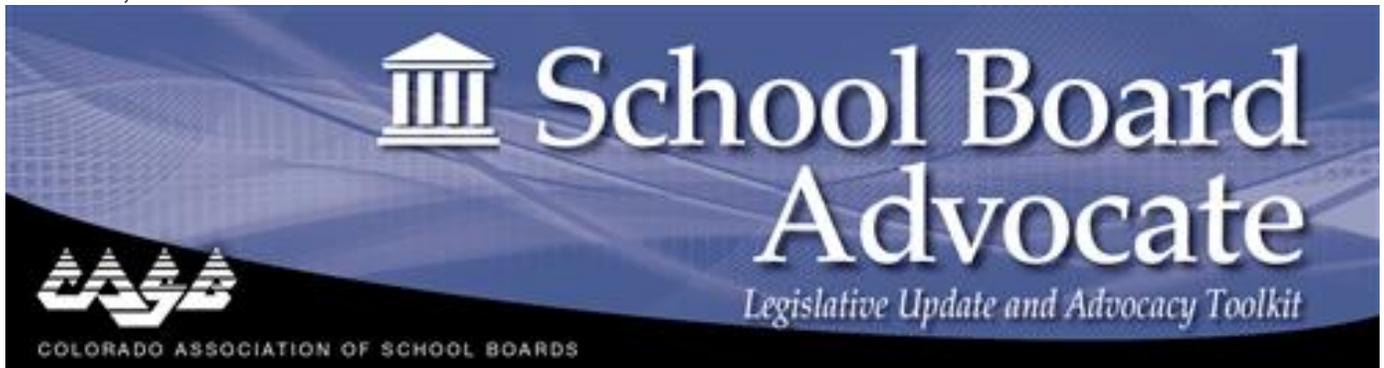


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Concilium Novissimo Die



As many of you will remember, CASB lobbyist emeritus, Dr. Jane Urschel, was a teacher and lover of the Latin language. Words somehow sound more important in Latin, and especially when uttered by the always eloquent Dr. Urschel. That leads us to the headline above – “Concilium Novissimo Die.” In English it reads “The Last Day of the Legislature.” We could have said something like “End of Legislative Days” or “Legislators Ride Off into the Election Season” but that would not have been as cool.

Indeed, the Legislature has completed their 120-day mission. And, like any mission, there were great accomplishments and more than enough failures. The General Assembly heard bills on everything from recycled water use for the cultivation of marijuana to the annual resolution to return the USS Pueblo to Colorado. In fact, the Legislature set a record this session by hearing 721 bills. All 721 did not become law, and for that, the entire state of Colorado thanks the elected 100. So, what was actually accomplished? For this story, you must read on.

The Quiet and Loud of K-12 Education



Colorado educators made their presence known at the Capitol with several respectful, but very loud, rallies in support of education funding and increased salaries for educators. The other side of the coin was the surprisingly few number of education related bills. Of that number, even fewer were controversial. To review more of the legislation, visit the [CASB Bill Tracker](#).

With that in mind, 2018 will be recognized as one of the best years for K-12 education funding in more than a decade. The Colorado General Assembly made a \$150 million down payment on the debt owed to Colorado students via the Budget Stabilization Factor. Lawmakers made an additional \$30 million available for rural school districts. The Colorado educator shortage drew the attention of legislators with approximately \$8 million directed to fund programs for educator recruitment and retention. Added to these funds are the annual increases for student growth and inflation. In total, more than \$650 million is bound for Colorado classrooms.

While this a great step towards funding education, it is important to remember the Budget Stabilization Factor remains at more than \$650 million. Further, the Budget Stabilization Factor has removed more than \$7.5 billion from Colorado schools. The work is not over and we suspect you will hear more in regard to the Budget Stabilization Factor as we head into the legislative interim.

As board and superintendent leadership teams begin to plan for the 2018-19 school year, there are a couple of laws worthy of their attention.

[HB18-1070](#) – Additional Public-School Capital Construction Funding – The bill helps to ensure that excise taxes on recreational marijuana are used to build Colorado schools as voters intended via the Building Excellent Schools Today (BEST) program. While the bill did not go quite as far as many BEST supporters would have liked, it is a solid step to secure the only source of statewide funds for school construction.

[HB18-1128](#) - Concerning Strengthening Protections for Consumer Data Privacy – This bill is an attempt to add additional protections to guard against personally identifiable information being illegally disclosed by notifying the community when a data breach has occurred. Specifically, the law requires notices to the public, which have the potential to include school districts.

[HB18-1269](#) – Parent Notice for Student Safety and Protection – This bill establishes new requirements for school districts to notify parents and guardians when a district employee has been arrested and charged from a list of specific crimes.

[HB18-1355](#) – Public Education Accountability System – The bill clarifies several aspects of the state accountability system. It also provides additional guidance on when the accountability clock stops and starts.

[SB18-158](#) – School Access to Interoperable Communication Technology – This bill enables school districts to purchase radio communication that can be linked to the communication systems of first responders. It also creates a grant program to allocate funds for these technologies.

[SB18-225](#) - Definition of Early College High Schools – This bill clarifies the requirements for an early college designation under the Concurrent Enrollment Act.

[SB18-269](#) – School Security Disbursement Program – This bill creates a grant program to provide funding for improved school safety and security measures.

Running Out the Clock?



While not strictly an education bill, SB18-200 titled “Modifications To PERA Public Employees' Retirement Association To Eliminate Unfunded Liability,” was important for locally elected Boards of Education to be aware of due to the more than 560,000 PERA members, many of whom are educators.

The House and Senate passed their own versions of the bill but the differences in their bills were too great for the chambers to concur on the various amendments so, that job was handed off to a conference committee.

Originally, the conference committee was scheduled to meet at 9:00 a.m. on legislative day 120 – the final day of the session. Twelve plus hours later, around 9:17 pm, the committee met and quickly passed a compromise between the House and Senate version of SB18-200. This compromise includes:

- A 2 percent increase in employee contributions phased in over a number of years
 - July 1, 2019 - .75 percent increase
 - July 1, 2020 - .75 percent increase
 - July 1, 2021 - .5 percent increase
- A .25 percent increase in employer contributions
 - July 1, 2019 - .25 percent employer increase
- Employees hired after 2020 must work until age 64 to receive full benefits
- The Cost of Living Adjustment will be set at 1.5 percent
- \$225 million will be contributed from the General Fund to pay PERA costs

With less than 90 minutes left in the session, the House returned to the floor and adopted the committee report. They then voted to repass the bill on a narrow 35 to 28 vote. Once SB18-200 made it to the Senate, action was pretty quick with senators voting in the affirmative to repass the bill.

SB18-200 was a microcosm of the legislative process – plenty of give and take, more than enough compromises and in the end, both Republicans and Democrats didn't get everything they wanted.

It will be important for CASB members to work with superintendents and leadership teams so they can fully understand the changes mandated in the bill and possible impacts to district budgets.

West to East and North to South



In the immortal words of those country music troubadours Big and Rich, CASB is “Comin' to Your City.” Now that the Colorado General Assembly is in the rear-view mirror, CASB is hitting the road to unpack the session. Join the CASB Advocacy team for a wrap-up of the legislation and to hear important information about [Initiative 93](#), or Great Schools-Thriving Communities, to improve Colorado school funding.

The meetings are informal and free to CASB members. Heck, we will even provide the meal. [Connect with CASB](#) for more information and to register.

Can't make it to any of the meetings in person? No worries. The meeting on June 7, 2018 is at CASB world headquarters and will be available online via the Zoom conference application. Follow this link to join the meeting from anywhere - <https://zoom.us/j/462616571>

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

CASB Advocacy Tools

[CASB Legislator Vote Tracker](#)

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CASB publishes the School Board Advocate once a month when the Colorado General Assembly is not in session, except for July and December. During session, it is published twice a month. If you have suggestions or feedback about the School Board Advocate, please contact Matt Cook, director of public policy and advocacy. Matt can be reached at 303-832-1000.

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