

Colorado School Finance Project

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Negative Factor Increases: 12.94% in 2011-12, increases to 16.1% for 2012-13 “Flat Funding?” – Districts Continue to Cut

School Districts face another year of drastic cuts as the Negative Factor increases from 12.94% in 2011-12 to 16.1% for 2012-13. Options to keep cuts away from the classroom are unrealistic. Districts only options become limited after four years of cuts:

- Increase class sizes
- Eliminate programs
- Increase furlough days (staff and students do not come to school, no one is paid)
- 4-day school weeks
- Reduce student contact time
- Charge fees for students to ride the school bus to and from school

Savings through attrition and department reductions have been utilized in past years. Districts have not been able to make compensation improvements for several years, provide appropriate staff development, add capacity or instruction through sustainable technology, or implement or expand proven programs like pre-school and kindergarten.

Districts are attempting to implement and comply with an overhaul of education policy and reforms enacted through legislation. At the same time the state continues to cut K-12 now the 4th consecutive year. Colorado has added 9,000 new K-12 students this past year, and serves over 800,000 students state wide. Students qualifying for Free and Reduced Lunch have increased to an all-time state high of 41% of the K-12 population.