

## What's New with School Finance?

### CASE Convention

July 25<sup>th</sup> 2012

Presenters:

Tracie Rainey

Executive Director, Colorado School Finance Project

Justin Silverstein

Vice President, Augenblick, Palaich & Associates

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## Presentation - Goals

- School Districts: goals – challenges – realities
- Policy: Legislative rumblings – fixes
- School Finance Act: discussions – distractions
  - Do these align?
  - How to move forward?
  - Questions to ask?

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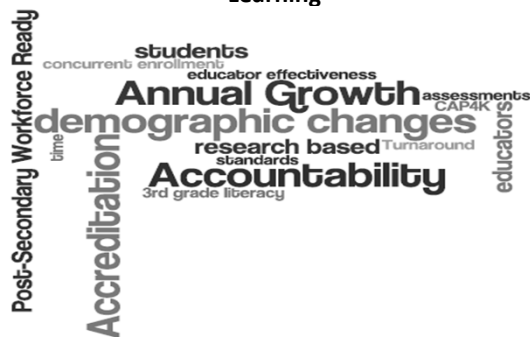
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## Learning



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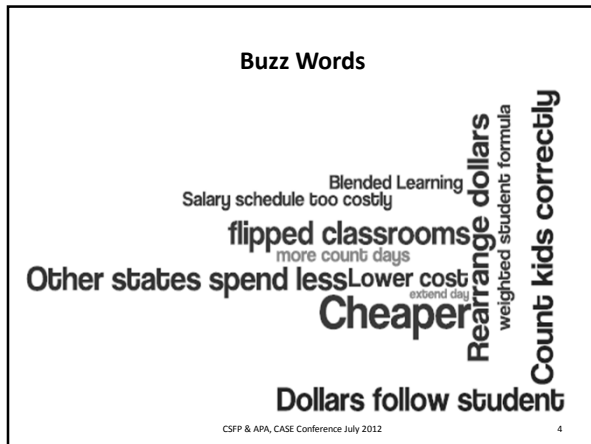
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**Learning**

- Learning for students – primary objective
- How do “Buzz Words” fit into conversation? Are they a help? Hindrance? A tool for all students? Distraction?
- **Is it research based?**
- Is it a requirement?
- Does it improve learning? Or adjust funding?
- Is it truly **school finance**?

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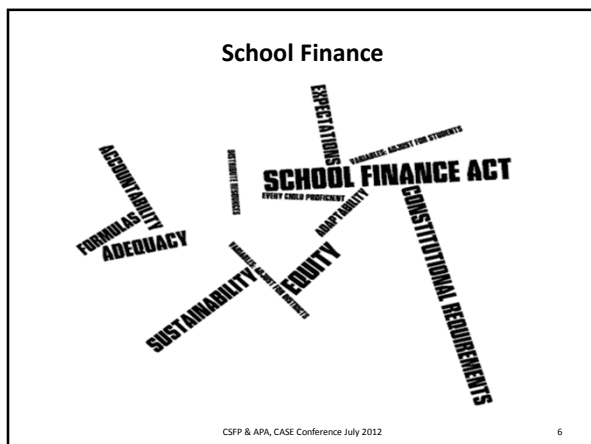
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### School Finance

- Does school finance system support the learning objectives?
- Does school finance system meet the constitutional objectives?
- Does school finance system address student and district variances?
- Does school finance system support accountability and accreditation?

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### Answers

- Simple answer is **NO** to all questions.
- How to move from NO to YES?
- What does a plan look like?
- Have other states been successful?
- What are the “buzz words for School Finance”?

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### School Finance

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### Policy vs. School Finance

- Education Policy determines direction and potential requirements of the education system. Those policies must be supported by resources so all 800,000 plus students in the state can have access, opportunity for success and quality of program. The resources needed must be reflected in the formula.  
**School finance supports policy.**

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### Accountability

- Accountability can have multiple meanings – taxpayer accountability – ensuring dollars are being spent on certain programs or ensuring academic expectations can be met. Both of these become tangled in discussion.
- Definitions of accountability are a critical starting point. School Finance Act supports academic accountability but doesn't act independently of the education system.

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11

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### Statehood - Constitution

- Colorado was granted statehood based on the Educational Clause in the Constitution.
- Constitutional compliance can and should be addressed in the legislative arena – if legislative branch does not address then remedied through the courts.
- Lobato litigation – currently awaiting Supreme Court

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12

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### Questions?

- Does the legislature know how much the education system costs? Reforms implemented – waivers granted. Individual students, schools, districts and educators are being held to expectations.
- Does the 1994 act reflect the education system of 2012?
- Is the legislature accessing all the revenue it is allowed under TABOR?

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13

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### More Questions?

- Is the legislature trying to solve the funding crisis? Are they complying with “thorough and uniform” provision? Are they providing adequate resources to implement the educational reforms? Are they addressing revenue shortfalls?
- What is the 1 year – 5 year and 10 year plan for funding education in Colorado? More cuts or adequate and sustainable funding?

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14

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### Why the urgency?

- We continue to have 9000+ new students
- Free Lunch – over 1/3 of students
- Teacher salaries equate to 2005-06 levels and are \$6,400 below national average today
- We lost 500 teachers in one year as a direct result of \$644 less in per pupil revenue when adjusted for inflation

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15

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### Is there capacity to fix?

- Colorado's personal income continues to increase
- Colorado's effort in K-12 education investment continues to decrease. If Colorado made same effort as it did in 1992 there would be \$1.2 billion more dollars yearly. If made national average investment would have \$2.248 billion more dollars yearly.

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### Contact Information

- Tracie Rainey, Colorado School Finance Project
  - cosfp.org
  - 303-860-9136
- Justin Silverstein, Augenblick, Palaich & Associates, Inc.
  - apaconsulting.net
  - 303-293-2175

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