

K – 12 Education - Colorado 's Statistics
Estimating the costs associated with educational
reform and academic achievement

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Who We Are

- **APA has been involved in estimating costs in almost 20 states.**
 - APA was founded in 1983.
 - It has evaluated school finance systems in many states and built state aid formulas in several states.
 - APA also evaluates the Denver Preschool Program, is helping Jefferson County implement a new approach to paying teachers, provides assistance to Mississippi in the Delta region, and provides support to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.
- **The Colorado School Finance Project (CSFP) has been interested in costing out state expectations for several years.**
 - CSFP was founded in 1994.
 - CSFP has produced an annual "Profile" of school finance and tracks the provision of district services.
 - CSFP worked with APA in 2002, 2005, and 2007 to estimate costs and educational reform.

Colorado's K-12

- Serving over 800,000 students – this increases by 8,000 to 10,000 per year
- Over 35% of students (280,000) identified as at-risk (free lunch)
- Approximately 100,000 students primary language is not English. Serving over 150 languages
- Approximately 80,000 students being served by special education (lower than national average)

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Goals: 1994 School Finance Act

- District and State contribution to be equal – 50% each
- Each district levy 40 mills
- Recognition of district differences – size and costs
- Some recognition of student differences – at-risk
- Focus on equity of system
- Focus on getting students to school – universal access

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School Finance 2010

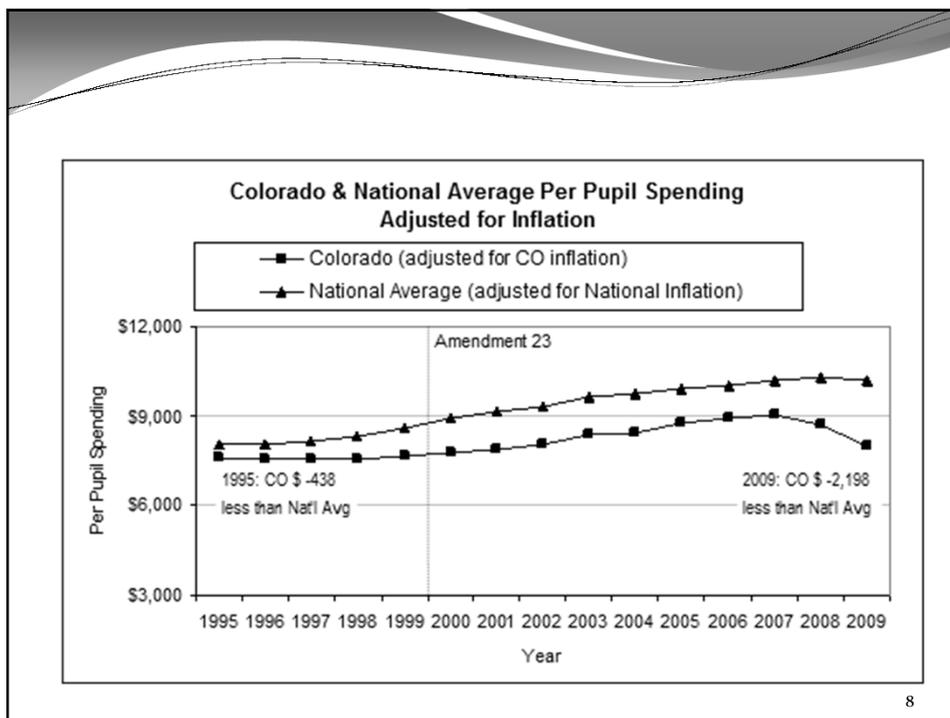
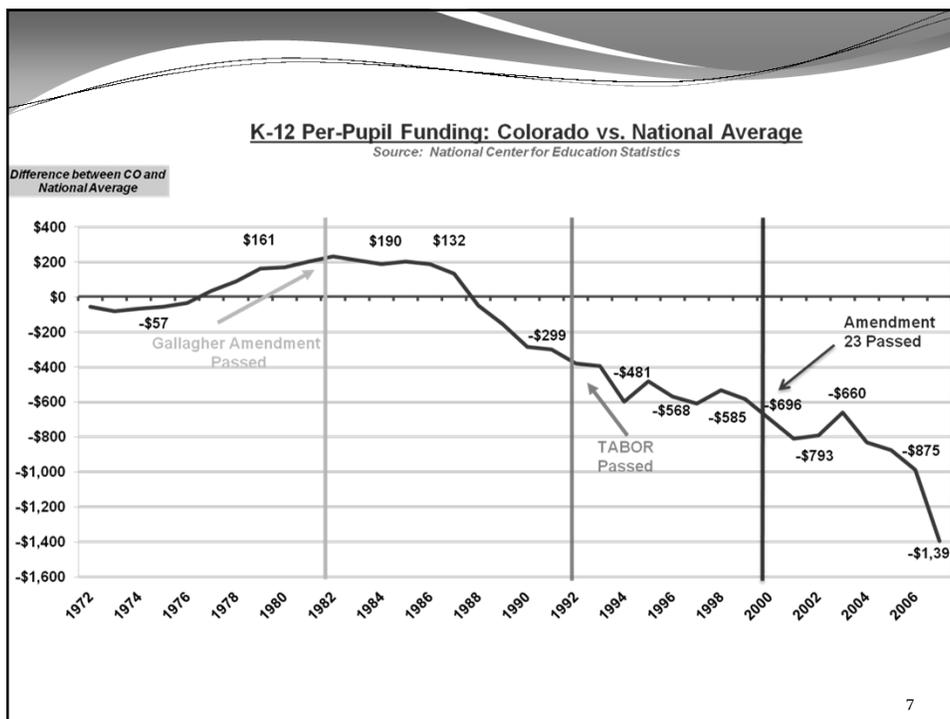
- State support 64% - district 36% (average) – result of Gallagher – Tabor – School Finance Act
- District mills range from less than 2 to 27 – result of Gallagher – Tabor – School Finance Act – Stabilization – this has resulted in over a billion dollars a year loss in K-12 local support for education
- Educational focus is universal proficiency – students have different needs – new educational system (standards – CSAP – accreditation – etc.)

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Amendment 23

- To bring funding levels – adjusted for inflation – to 1988 – 89 levels (next slide)
- To stabilize funding after decade of mid year rescissions (budget cuts)
- Became a “ceiling” on investment for education
- Legislature has made reductions to K-12 in past 2 years totaling almost \$400,000,000
- Indications of more to come this year

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How much to spend on Education?

- As states embraced “Standards-Based Reform” in the 1990s, they changed their role from directing how state aid should be spent to:
 - Setting student performance expectations;
 - Measuring how well students were doing; and
 - Holding teachers, schools, and school districts accountable for student performance.
- No Child Left Behind (NCLB) has reinforced this approach since 2002.

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History of Costing Out

- Initially, states did not ask how much it would cost to meet state education expectations.
- Beginning in the late 1990s, many states have attempted to determine that cost.
- Some states have created new school finance systems driven by those cost figures and designed to differentiate funding based on the uncontrollable and identified needs of students (e.g., special education, “at-risk” or ELL) and districts (size and regional price variation).

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Methodology

- Researchers and consultants began to develop a variety of approaches:
 - Successful School District (SSD)
 - Examine costs of districts that meet standards
 - Professional Judgment (PJ)
 - Determine the costs of resources professionals determine are needed to meet standards
 - Evidence-Based (EB)
 - Use research to determine resource needs
 - Econometric
 - Attempts to infer costs based on statistical relationships between spending and student performance

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Methodology

- APA combined three approaches for CSFP in 2005 (SSD, PJ, and EB)
- The primary approach was the PJ, which brought together several panels of 5-8 educators, focused on various aspects of the delivery system (e.g., school-level, students with special needs, district level), and used EB information as a starting point.
- We also used the SSD, which provided a *base cost* at a particular point in time.

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Findings include:

- More **time and individualization** is needed for students to meet the academic expectations school districts are being held accountable for – inclusive of accreditation
 - Examples are: Full day kindergarten, preschool for 4 year olds, summer school, before and after school programs, ongoing embedded staff development.
 - Smaller class sizes K-3, 1:15 ratio and for grades 3-12, 1:25
 - Technology for students and staff
 - Improved quality and access for career and technical education programs

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Results from Costing - Out

- The PJ approach produces a cost for every school district based on their unique characteristics (student demographics and district size).
- The factors used to calculate cost can also be used by a school finance formula to distribute state aid to each school district.
- Several states have completed the costing-out procedure and implemented new state aid formulas, including Kansas, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Wyoming.

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2007 Results

- 2007 update of costing out work reflected \$2.9 billion additional revenue (for a total of \$9.7 billion)
- This was prior to any budget cuts.
- This work did not reflect new academic expectations of CAP4K, Post secondary workforce readiness, new standards, assessments, accreditation (growth model), accountability or educator effectiveness implementation.

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Questions? Contact us?

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