


Long Term Fiscal Stability Commission

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Colorado School Finance Project


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Colorado School Finance Project

- Created in 1994 – after School Finance Act
- Supported by local school districts and Education Associations
- Non Lobbying
- Provide school finance analysis to state and local policy makers


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Quick History

- Colorado Constitution – local control – instruction and organization district responsibility.
- In 1970's and early 80's Colorado was in top 1/3 of states in education funding. Educational goal of universal access.
- When most of us attended school.

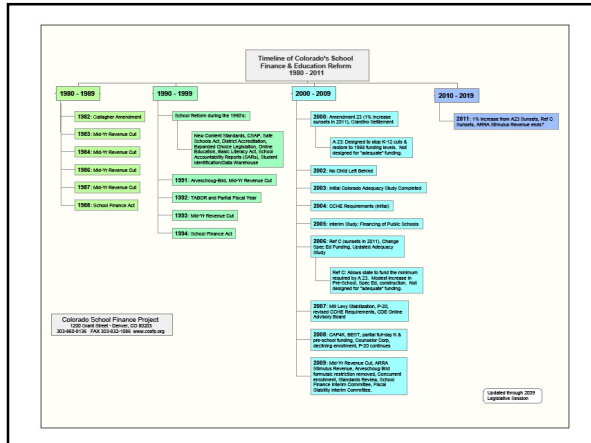
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Changes in Education – 1990's

- Standards – Assessments – Accountability – Choice
- Achievement Goals - Universal Proficiency
- Student Population demographic changes – ELL – Special Ed – At-Risk
- Student population continues to increase (200,000 in 15 years)

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1994 – School Finance Act

- Foundation Formula
- Begins to recognize differences of school districts and students
- Focus on Equity (taxpayer)
- Goal of legislature – 50/50 split state and local and districts at 40 mills


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What if:

- 1994 School Finance Act – met goals of 50/50 split and 40 mills per district
- Must assume: No Gallagher and TABOR amendments – they have created unintended consequences
- Would there be Amendment 23?


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\$1.65 Billion Lost in Local Dollars

- Amount of local property tax relief since 1994
- State paying 63% (2009) versus 43% if implemented 1994 Act
- Average mills 21 (2009) – if implemented per 1994 Act average at 33 mills
- If 50/50 split – have another billion dollars for K-12


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How does Colorado compare?

- Colorado lags almost a decade in implementing systematic and sustainable reforms:
 - Full day Kindergarten, pre-school, summer school, quality before and after school programs, teacher mentor and induction programs, technology (i.e. Wyoming)
- \$1500 per student lower than national average (Quality counts 2009)


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How/Why Relevant ?

- Proven academic results from states making investment
 - Improved state and NAEP scores
 - Closing achievement gaps
- Standards system – requirements are defined – system must have resources to accomplish goals.


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Moving forward

- Bi-partisan commitment for CAP4K
 - Implementation will cost
 - Utilize costing out analysis to implement a finance structure – i.e. Maryland, Pennsylvania
- Address issues of tax payer equity, student equity, adequacy, district size


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Moving forward cont.

- Create framework for implementation
- Create a sustainable and reliable funding source – learn from our past & other states
- When considering wealth of a district acknowledge distinction of property wealth and income earned
- Consider changing demographics and increasing populations – Colorado’s future


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Important for School Districts

- School districts make decisions almost 18 months ahead of state decisions – due to calendar – hiring – staffing – schedules – budget - programs
- School districts enrollment fluctuates based on state economic conditions
- Student need varies across district – many students are new to state

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Questions/Information

- Additional information enclosed also found on our website: www.cosfp.org
- Profile data – demographic charts

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