

## **The Future of School Finance in Colorado**

### **What's the problem?**

Although education funding consumes 37% of the state general fund and a substantial amount of local property taxes, there is great concern over the amount and distribution of funding for education in Colorado, and this concern is increased by the effect of the negative factor.

While Colorado is serving more students with higher needs, and some school districts and charter schools are making steady progress, student academic achievement in Colorado has not significantly improved over the last 10 to 15 years as measured by NAEP and Colorado's own statewide assessments.

All recent statewide efforts to increase the amount of state resources available for public education have been rejected by the voters.

### **How can we solve this problem?**

Re-envision the delivery of public education services to result in better student outcomes.

Design a school finance structure for the future that supports the new vision for public education.

Use the improved student outcomes and improved distribution of public education funding to build public support for increasing the resources for public education in Colorado.

### **How do we craft this solution?**

The new Commissioner of Education is in a unique position to reach out to school districts, charter schools, boards of cooperative services, superintendents, principals, teachers, parents, students, institutions of higher education, and business throughout the state to create a vision and a plan for the system of public education in Colorado to improve student academic achievement and outcomes.

The General Assembly must take the lead in designing a school finance funding structure for the future that will support the public education system in Colorado.

### **Why are we having these joint committee meetings?**

The goals of these meetings are:

1. To increase everyone's understanding of:
  - Colorado's current school finance formula – how it is designed, how it operates, the incentives and disincentives it creates, and the outcomes it produces;
  - The funding sources for school finance in Colorado, including state and local sources for total program funding, additional local resources that school districts may collect, and the effect of Colorado's constitutional provisions on the sources for school finance funding; and
  - What other states are doing regarding school finance and the best practices and best thinking around designing school finance formulas and calculating state and local contributions.
2. To collectively establish a path forward to address the future direction for school finance in Colorado.

**Schedule for Joint Education Committee and Joint Budget Committee  
School Finance Study Meetings**

**Wednesday, February 3, 2016**

Upon Adjournment, Room 271

Speaker: Marguerite Roza, Ph.D.

Topic: Aligning State Resources Toward Student Learning

**Wednesday, February 17, 2016**

7:45 a.m., Room 271

Speaker: Andrew Reschovsky, Ph.D.

Topic: How the Local property Tax Supports and Distorts the Statewide School Finance System

**Wednesday, March 2, 2016**

Upon Adjournment, Room 271

Topic: TBD

**Wednesday, March 16, 2016**

7:45 a.m., Room 271

Topic: TBD

**Wednesday, March 30, 2016**

Upon Adjournment, Room 271

Topic: TBD

**Wednesday, April 13, 2016**

7:45 a.m., Room 271

Topic: TBD