

Key Points

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ALLOCATION OF FUNDING,
AMOUNT OF FUNDING AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

Colorado School Finance Project (CSFP) and Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA) Study

- A June 2008, CSFP and APA national research study demonstrates a link between a state's monetary investment in research-based educational practices and K-12 student achievement.
- Compared to states similar in demographic makeup as Colorado, Colorado spends 10.8% below the national average for education—\$5,947. Seven states with comparable demographics (including Massachusetts and Nebraska) spend between \$6,524 to \$9,663 per pupil.
- The role of elementary and secondary education has expanded significantly during the last 40 years. 1) Legal requirements—such as those associated with the provision of special education services—have been created, expanded and enforced. 2) Education services are offered in a variety of forms and venues rather than a “one size fits all” “old-school” approach. 3) The job market has changed, requiring district employees to be knowledgeable and skilled in areas that did not exist 50 years ago.
- The education community is held accountable for preparing students for their future indicating that education is a priority, but funding has been secondary.
- Programs that directly correlate with improved student achievement include multiple year commitments: additional counselors, full-day kindergarten, preschool, professional development, small class size (13 to 17) for low-income students, summer school, technology and teacher pay.
- This information will be useful during the legislative session to inform lawmakers as they make decisions about where to allocate funds.
- Several states have seen academic improvement from putting more money toward education to fund systemic standards-based education programs targeted to particular district needs.
- The movement to standards and universal proficiency has caused 11 states to invest in education significantly above the national average. Expectedly, they are seeing larger gains in academic growth and closing of achievement gaps.
- What this means for Colorado: CAP4K has given Colorado educators a small window of time to gather information from local school districts on what change is necessary at the local level for their students to succeed. Colorado can learn from other states while creating its own educational model.