



BELIEVE **IN**
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COLORADO

**Colorado Association of
School Boards**

**Colorado Association of
School Executives**

**Colorado Education
Association**

Long-Term Fiscal Stability
Commission

July 28, 2009

www.believeinabettercolorado.org



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Believe in a Better Colorado

An unprecedented partnership among the state's three largest education associations representing about 40,000 educators serving more than 818,000 students in nearly 180 school districts.



Goals

- Inform public school employees and citizens about the need to invest in *all* essential public services without unfairly taxing citizens.
- Build broad coalition to work on tax reform.
- Adopt new tax system by 2011.



About

- Initiative began in 2007 to educate public school employees and school board members about conflicting constitutional mandates.
- Training for 200 association leaders included DVD, Web site, tool kit and school newsletter articles to help inform employees.
- School board presidents, superintendents and local CEA presidents teamed up to host conversations with employees, stakeholders and public service managers across Colorado.



Colorado is below average

Essential public services:

- We rank 47th in total state spending per \$1,000 of personal income – and that's when economy was in *better* shape between 2006 and 2008.
- Only three states invest less than us in K–12 and higher education, health care, and transportation.

Source: Colorado Fiscal Policy Institute, 2009



Colorado is below average

K–12 and higher education:

- Only two states invest less in education than us.
- We rank 48th for investing in K–12 *and* higher education per \$1,000 of personal income.

Source: Colorado Fiscal Policy Institute, 2009



Colorado is below average

K–12 education:

- We invest \$1,449 *less* per pupil than national average.
- Our neighbors invest this much *more* per pupil:

| | |
|------------|---------|
| New Mexico | \$1,011 |
| Kansas | \$1,702 |
| Nebraska | \$2,509 |
| Montana | \$3,146 |
| Wyoming | \$5,612 |

Source: *EdWeek*, Quality Counts, 2009



Colorado is below average

K–12 education:

- 38th in elementary school student-teacher ratios.
- This matters because class sizes of 13–17 yield higher performance, especially among low-income students.

Sources: *EdWeek*, Quality Counts, 2008; Colorado School Finance Project/Augenblick, Palich and Associates, 2009



Colorado is below average

Paradox:

- We boast the 3rd highest percentage of college graduates in nation, but rank 24th in sending high school graduates to college.
- We are growing our economy with workers educated outside our state.

Source: Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation, 2008-2009



The challenge

- Colorado doesn't have resources to educate all students to expected proficiency levels.
- We must create a tax structure that supports public education – both K–12 and higher education – and other essential public services.



2011: Critical date

- Amendment 23 funding shrinks.
- Ref C time-out ends.
- Stimulus funding ends.
- TABOR remains.



The complex problem





The reality: Increasing K–12 expectations

- Educate each student to reach proficiency in core subjects – this is more than simply *providing access* to a public education.
- Prepare each student for workforce or college – this is more than simply graduating students from high school.



The reality: Increasing K–12 expectations

- Increase broadband access in rural Colorado to expand Internet access and distance learning.
- Train each student – and each teacher – to use technology and software programs essential for prospering in workforce.



The reality: Increasing K–12 expectations

- Customize instruction to coach students in 21st-century skills:
 - Creativity and innovation
 - Communication and collaboration
 - Research and information fluency
 - Critical thinking, problem-solving and decision-making
 - Digital citizenship – cultural and societal issues related to technology, as well as legal and ethical behavior



The reality: Increasing K–12 expectations

- Provide quality full-day kindergarten – with dollars that currently fund only half-day kindergarten.
- Provide regular, cutting-edge training for educators – with \$0 in direct state funding for professional development, teacher mentoring and induction programs.



The reality: Changing K–12 student population

In the last five years alone:

- 8% increase in number of students – almost 7,000 more
- 35% of students’ families live in poverty – up from 30% in 2003



The reality: Changing K–12 student population

In the last five years alone:

- 5% increase in special education students – almost 4,000 more
- 19% increase in gifted/talented students – almost 9,000 more
- 11% increase in students learning English – almost 10,000 more
 - Over 220 languages are spoken in Colorado's public schools

Source: Colorado Department of Education, 2009



The reality: Changing K–12 student population

Cherry Creek School District:

*“I had no idea Cherry Creek was like this.
I’ve had students from every
continent but Antarctica. I love this.
I love all of the cultures.”*
–Teacher

*“These classrooms are so representative
of our global society.
They represent the world.”*
–Principal



Education: The best economic investment

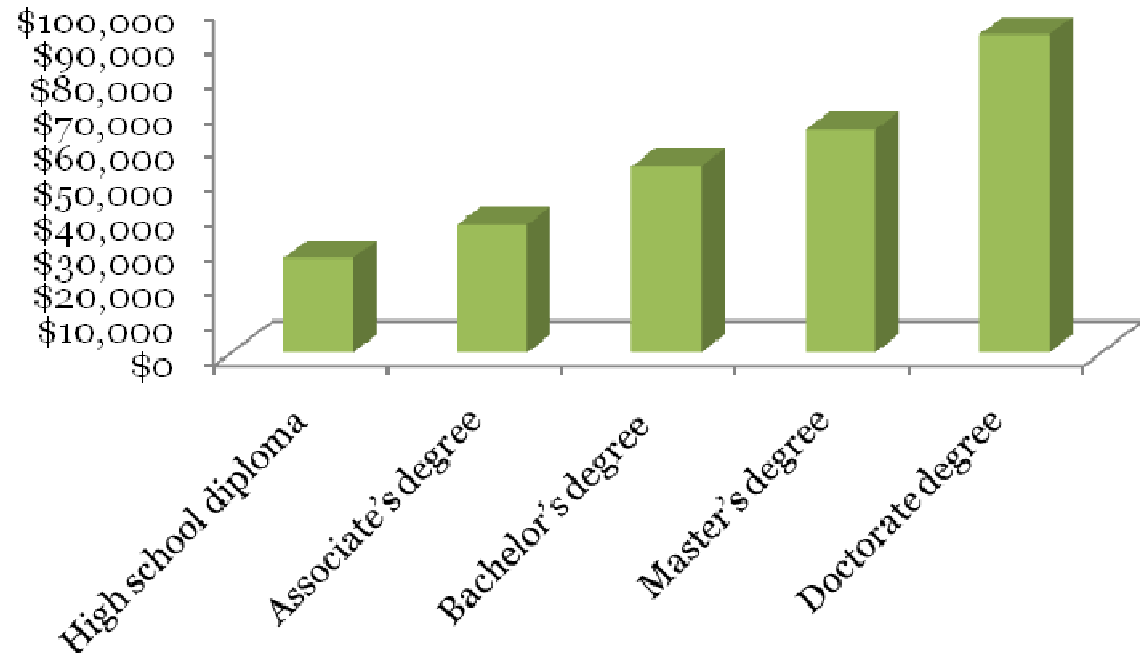
- More jobs require education beyond high school.
- Jobs requiring associate's degrees and above are projected to grow twice as fast as jobs requiring no college experience.
- People with bachelor's degrees earn almost \$1 million more than high school graduates over lifetime.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "The Big Payoff: Educational Attainment and Synthetic Estimates of Work-Life Earnings," 2002



Education: The best economic investment

Average annual salaries:



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2004 (Released 2008)



Education: The best economic investment

- Taxpayer return on investment in public education exceeds returns generated by the stock market – and this was *before* the stock market spiraled downward.
 - Long-term return on common stocks:* 6.3%
 - Public return on investment in education:** 14.3%

*Includes dividends and price changes

**Elementary and secondary; includes additional taxes and reductions in social service outlays

Sources: “Long-term Returns,” by Victor Niederhoffer and Alex Castaldo, 2004; “Returns to Investment in Education: A Further Update,” by George Psacharopoulos and Harry Patrinos, World Bank, 2006



Education: The best economic investment

“The most important factor in a company’s location decision is the availability and skill of the labor force.”

–2005 Colorado Legislative Council Staff



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Next steps: CASB, CASE and CEA will convene public service leaders this fall to discuss fiscal issues and real solutions – to invest in *all* essential public services.

