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School Board Advocate: March 9, 2015

Volume 26, Number 4



School Board Advocate (formerly *BillBoard*), CASB's semimonthly newsletter on our advocacy efforts and the latest developments at the state capitol that impact K–12 education. During the legislative session, we share this newsletter with school board members, superintendents, legislators, the governor's office, various statewide organizations, BOCES executive directors and the Colorado Council of School Board Attorneys.

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Woman's Work: Q&A with Speaker Dickie Lee Hullinghorst

It has been said, "a lot of yesterday's solutions are today's problems." This is true in Colorado, but thankfully Speaker of the House of Representatives Dickie Lee Hullinghorst understands this—and is willing to take leadership to address today's problems.

Speaker Hullinghorst has served in the Colorado House of Representatives since 2009 and in 2015 became Speaker of the House—a historic achievement, as she is only the second woman in the history of our state to hold the title. She graciously agreed to answer CASB's questions on her top priorities, best advocacy advice for our members and more. (CASB is currently seeking an interview with Senate President Bill Cadman.)



Q: What are your top priorities for this current 2015 legislative session?

We're fighting to create a stronger and more secure middle class, where families can pay the bills and save enough to help put the kids through college and have a comfortable retirement. We'll be promoting policies that move us toward an economy that works for regular people, not just the wealthy and the big corporations. A middle-class-first strategy also includes providing an excellent education for Colorado's children.

Q: For several years we've been inviting school board members and superintendents to the capitol every Wed. for our Days at the Capitol program to educate our members and encourage them to advocate for their priorities. What advice would you give to our members as they engage in this session?

Every one of your members is an important leader in his or her community. I encourage them not only to tell us what's on their mind, but also to take what they learn here back to their constituents, and to improve the flow of communication between our state government and our school communities across the state.

Q: Last year, CASB's number one legislative priority was to erase the negative factor. This year it is again on the top of our list. What is your best advice to CASB about successfully pursuing this priority?

I share your goal. But as you know, the state constitution places strict limits on state spending, and legislators' hands are tied fairly tightly. I don't have a problem with the people of Colorado exercising their sovereignty over taxing and spending decisions. But if the negative factor is to be erased anytime soon, the constitution must be adjusted. Either that, or CASB will have to start printing money.



Mandates are terrible masters

Some think that requiring more physical education in the schools is a no brainer. Not so fast, says Dr. Jane Urschel. [Read more in the Colorado Health magazine.](#)

Q: As you know, there are many bills on the topic of assessments this session. What are your thoughts about what, if anything, needs to be done on the topic of assessment?

I welcome the recent Standards and Assessments Task Force report and look forward to bills that take its recommendations into account. We need to reduce the overall testing burden on students, but we must not compromise on performance goals. Our objective is and must be to create an education system that gives every student—regardless of circumstance—the best chance to succeed.

Q: In Governor Hickenlooper's inaugural address he referenced constitutional reform when he said, "Nothing can grow and shrink at the same time." Our members are very interested in revising our tax system. From your perspective, do you think the time is ripe for pursuing such reform?

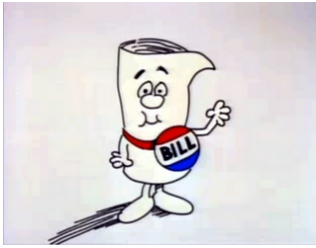
I hope I'm wrong, but I think the time may yet not be ripe. When jobs are lost and our economy starts to tank because our schools and our roads and our public safety services are failing, I'm confident that the people of Colorado will clamor to clear what the governor described as the "fiscal thicket" of some of our constitutionally mandated tax policies. But until the unintended consequences of our tax structure are painfully apparent, the impetus for change won't be strong enough. We may be able to bend the curve with a strong informational campaign. Otherwise, the problem may well take care of itself by the end of the decade. But it won't be pretty.

Q: As Speaker of the House, how could school board members be of the most help to you? What kind of information could they share that would be useful to you?

I would respectfully ask them to bear in mind that, just as they must balance competing interests to achieve the greatest good for the greatest number of their students, so must we in the state legislature balance competing interests to achieve the greatest good for the

greatest number of Coloradans. And if they want to help with that informational campaign I mentioned in the previous answer, I urge them to grab an oar and start rowing.

Bills to Watch



SB 15-173 SCHOOL DISTRICT DATA PROTECTION AND TRANSPARENCY – Sen. Holbert (R) and Rep. Pabon (D). Prohibits vendors such as software companies from doing targeted advertising based on student information, creating student profiles, selling student information or disclosing student information in most circumstances. Requires school districts to adopt technology safety plans providing for student and staff training around appropriate use of the internet and notice to parents as to the type of data collected and stored using cloud computing services. **Approved by Senate Education Committee 3/5/15**

HB 15-1201 BOCES & CENTRALIZED OPERATING SERVICES GRANTS - Reps. Buckner (D) and Rankin (R) and Sen. Todd (D). Creates a \$500,000-a-year grant program for boards of cooperative educational services to provide centralized administrative services to small districts and charter schools. **Hearing in House Education Committee 3/9/15 [Listen Live](#)**

HB 15-1240 REDUCE STUDENT CONTACTS WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT – Rep. Fields (D). Each school district is encouraged to negotiate and enter into a memorandum of understanding with each municipal law enforcement agency and each sheriff's department with jurisdiction over at least one school of the school district to minimize students' contacts with law enforcement agencies and courts as disciplinary responses to school incidents. **Hearing in House Education 3/9/15 [Listen Live](#)**

SB 15-184 NO DETENTION FOR FAILURE TO ATTEND SCHOOL – Rep. Fields (D) and Sen. Holbert (R). The bill removes the juvenile court's jurisdiction over truancy petitions, except on appeal, and removes a school district's ability to enforce compulsory education requirements in the juvenile court. **Hearing in Senate Education Committee 3/12/15 [Listen Live](#)**

Thanks to everyone who came to CASB's 2015 Winter Legislative Conference

Despite the blizzard conditions, the Winter Legislative Conference was a huge success! Speakers included NSBA's Michael Zola on ESEA reauthorization, Colorado's veteran statesman David Skaggs on the Kerr v. Hickenlooper lawsuit, Distinguished Professor Lorrie Shepard on assessments, and Sen. Owen Hill on K-12 school finance. Breakout sessions included an animated discussion with the State Board of Education to a presentation from impressive Bethune high school students. You can find all of this useful information on our [Winter Conference Recap page](#).



State Board Update

The State Board will meet Wednesday and Thursday, March 11 and 12. We expect lively discussion and debates on a number of important issues, including:

The State's ESEA Flexibility Renewal Waiver, which includes a request to implement a state accountability pilot, relief from the 95 percent participation requirement for state assessments and other adjustments based on the transition to new state assessments.

Gifted and Talented Rule revisions required by HB 14-1102. CASB worked closely with the Special Education Consortium, CASE and CBA to limit the burden of these new rules on the field.

Graduation Guidelines Statutory requirements in HB 07-1118 and SB 08-212 so that the State Board will understand legislative intent and be prepared to take action on the menu of college and career-ready competencies by May 2015.

Colorado's Minimum Standards Governing School Transportation Vehicles, which will allow districts and BOCES flexibility to purchase used motor coaches to transport students.

You can access the full [meeting agenda](#) and [can listen live](#).

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