

ANNUAL 2013-14 REPORT



The Battle for the Negative Factor

Legislative battles over contentious issues are by their nature long and uncertain in their outcome, often to the very last minute. This year's **Battle for the Negative Factor** was as contentious as any fight we have had at the legislature — and not one that is likely to end anytime soon.

Over the past five years, a half dozen new and major education reform bills were implemented in Colorado. Meanwhile, the Colorado legislature has taken more than \$3 billion out of school finance through the negative factor, which is now projected to continue at a rate of nearly \$1 billion a year for the foreseeable future. Everyone at the state capitol touts the importance of a strong public education system, but no one has called for meaningful increases to current school funding levels.

This ongoing education funding crisis made it clearly evident what CASB should focus its efforts on this year: uniting school board voices in the battle to erase the negative factor. An across-the-state campaign launched in December, with CASB's Delegate Assembly and Board of Directors adopting resolutions making restoration of the negative factor our highest priority.

We knew we had our work cut out for us. Not only did the legislative session start with no money allotted for the negative factor buy down, we also learned many legislators didn't know what the negative factor was. Several legislators told us our resolution fell on deaf ears.

It wasn't long, however, before the negative factor became the hottest issue under the gold dome and in the news. Armed with a collection of CASB resources — Individualized Lobbying Plans, talking points, one-pagers and sample resolutions — school board members began educating legislators about how deeply the cuts in school finance have affected their students, families and schools, and the importance of increased funding for schools.

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They shared stories about the sacrifices their districts have made: how many programs have been cut, how many years have passed without raises and the irreplaceable teachers lost. Our members made calls and sent letters and emails to their communities, legislators and local newspapers. More than 50 school districts adopted resolutions calling upon the legislature to eliminate the negative factor and restore education funds.

School board members also showed up in droves for our Days at the Capitol events,

and they were well prepared, fired up and ready to lobby. Last year, many members didn't have relationships with their legislators and were unfamiliar with the goings-on at the capitol, so they cautiously dipped a toe into the legislative pool. This year, however, our members dove head first into the deep end — exploring on their own, knocking on legislators' doors and signing up to testify. The intensified school board presence at the capitol did not go unnoticed. One legislator quipped in a hearing that every day seemed to be CASB's Day at the Capitol.

And, just in case legislators didn't get the message through in-person lobbying, emails and phone calls, CASB demonstrated its conviction through a ditty. The now viral and surprisingly catchy negative factor song made its debut at our **Winter Legislative Conference**. *Chorus: Take that Negative Factor, make it go away! Come on put that billion back, do it with no strings attached. Take that Negative Factor make it go away.*

When the gavel banged down ending this session, the **negative factor payback had gone from zero to \$110 million.** This is well short of our goal even for the first year, but it is real progress. And, much of this success must be credited to our members. Looking ahead, we are committed to more funding, fewer mandates and the hard work it will take to accomplish those goals.

2012-13 AUDITED FUND BALANCE

July 1, 2012 Balance	June 30, 2013 Balance
July 1, 2012 Balance \$(56,619)	June 30, 2013 Balance \$(49,224)
Revenues \$2,385,026	
Expenses \$2,377,631	
MEMBERSHIP DUES	\$1,260,549
CONFERENCES/CONVENTION	\$527,755
POLICY	\$158,778
MEMBER PROJECTS	\$157,210
AFFILIATE/BOCES DUES	\$10,350
OTHER INCOME	\$270,384
TOTAL	\$2,385,026

EXPENSES	AMOUNT
OPERATING – GENERAL	\$943,082
CONFERENCES/CONVENTION	\$476,079
POLICY	\$300,277
LEGAL	\$150,656
COMMUNICATIONS	\$150,779
MEMBER RELATIONS	\$144,552
MEMBER PROJECTS	\$112,412
ADVOCACY	\$99,794
TOTAL	\$2,377,631

INCOME

EXPENSES