**Legislative Update**

**Prospect Valley Elementary PTA**

**10 February 2011**

**Top News:** Yesterday (2/9/11) the State Senate Appropriations Committee unanimously approved $124,229 to restore the Smart Start Nutrition Program, sponsored by Keith King, R-Colorado Springs. This will fund free & reduced breakfasts through June 2011. Bill will come before the full Senate Monday 2/14.

**Washington:** The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA; current version known as “No Child Left Behind Act of 2001”) will likely be brought forward by the next Congress for reauthorization. Rep. Jared Polis will not remain on the House Education and Labor Committee, leaving Colorado without representation on the committee. However, Senator Michael Bennet is the former Superintendent of DPS and is expected to play a large role in the ESEA reauthorization.

**State bills:** There are currently twenty bills in the State House or Senate of interest to the Colorado PTA. These can be explored in detail at <http://www.coloradocapitolwatch.com/bill-tracker/1/902/2011/> CO PTA supports eight of the bills and opposes two, as follows, and will monitor the remaining ten before determining a position.

**CO PTA is in support of the Senate bills:**

* Knowledge-Based Economy Fund, which assures that education is considered when extra funds are discovered.
* State Land Board Annual Reports, which increases the transparency of reporting of trust lands money by requiring a trust report to be published annually on Nov 1, a deadline before agricultural and education committees.
* Required Reporting for Abuse/Neglect, which adds educators who provide services to WIC users to report child abuse.
* Unsubsidized In-State Tuition, which allows undocumented workers to qualify for in-state tuition provided certain conditions are met.

**CO PTA is in support of the House bills:**

* Incarceration for Truancy and Contempt, which removes the requirement for incarcerating parents when kids are truant. Also leaves discretion to school districts to decide whether to take the kid to court.
* Physical Activity Expectation in Schools, which supports efforts to provide adequate time and opportunity for physical fitness in all schools and recess in all elementary schools. This bill (1) ensures that no school can decrease the current amount of time spent in areas that include physical activity, (2) will mandate schools meet a minimum of 150 minutes active time per week, (3) stipulates that recess cannot replace physical education, and (4) gives parents information on the qualifications of the supervising individual while children are engaged in physical activity.
* Start Smart Nutrition Supplemental, which makes a supplemental appropriation in the amount of $124,229 to pay the costs of the Start Smart nutrition program. See “Top News” above.
* Education of Gifted Children, which separates gifted children reporting requirements from special education reporting requirements.

**CO PTA is opposed to the House bills:**

* Income Tax Credits for Nonpublic Education, which reduces funding to general public education by giving money in the form of tax credits to people who want to send kids to private schools.
* Facilities for Charter Schools, which allows charter schools to request and be granted the use of any otherwise unused district building. The district would get out of using the building and gradually reduce costs, but the district won't be able to sell the building if a charter wants to use it.

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