**Colorado Legislative Update**

**Prospect Valley Elementary PTA**

**13 March 2011**

The biggest legislative news since the last update is the proposed $40 million cuts to Jefferson County Schools. Several links below examine the issue in greater detail:

* <http://www.jeffcopublicschools.org/> links to the District website.

The following cover the proposed cuts:

* <http://www.ednewscolorado.org/2011/03/11/15357-jeffco-announces-deep-cuts>
* <http://www.denverpost.com/news/ci_17598200>
* <http://www.9news.com/rss/story.aspx?storyid=186707>
* <http://denver.cbslocal.com/2011/03/11/jeffco-to-close-2-schools-as-part-of-large-spending-cuts/>
* <http://www.thedenverchannel.com/news/27160987/detail.html>
* [http://www.kdvr.com/news/kdvr-school-closures-pay-cuts-announced-as-jeffco-schools-slash-budget-20110311,0,972973.story](http://www.kdvr.com/news/kdvr-school-closures-pay-cuts-announced-as-jeffco-schools-slash-budget-20110311%2C0%2C972973.story)
* <http://www.jbgtv.com/> links to a video of Tuesday's community discussion regarding funding (it's long, but includes some interesting state funding data and insight from key business/civic leaders in Jeffco). Media coverage of the evening is at <http://denver.cbslocal.com/2011/03/09/budget-problems-for-jeffco-schools-worse-than-first-thought/> and <http://www.cpr.org/category/news#load_article|Budget_Breakdown__The_Public_Conversation>

There are currently twenty-seven 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/0/902/2011/> . CO PTA supports thirteen of the bills and opposes four, as follows, and will monitor the remainder before determining a position.

| **Senate Bill #11-** | **Title** | **Summary** | **Senate Committee(s)** | **CO PTA position** | **Status** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 001 | Knowledge Based Economy Fund | Assures that education is considered when extra funds are discovered.  | Education (Ed) | Monitor |  |
| 012 | Student Possession Prescription Drugs | Allows student to self-administer prescription drugs such as anti-allergy drugs, inhalers, etc. Schools that are losing nurses, etc., may find this useful. Applies to devices. | Ed | Monitor |  |
| 029 | State Land Board Annual Reports | Increases the transparency of reporting of trust lands money by requiring a trust report to be published annually on Nov 1 and presents the report to agricultural and education committees. | Senate Ed & House Ed | Pro | 1/20 Passed Senate Ed (35-0); 3/2 passed House Ed (13-0) |
| 034 | Required Reporting for Abuse/Neglect | Adds educators who provide services to WIC users to report child abuse. | Senate Health & Human Svcs (HHS) & House Judiciary | Pro | Passed both committees to Committee of the Whole (COW) |
| 040 | Coach Youth Sports Concussions Education | Each public and private middle school, junior high school, or high school, and each private club or recreation facility is directed to require each coach with primary supervisory responsibility for a youth athletic activity to complete annual concussion recognition education. | Senate HHS, House Health & Environment | Pro | 2/10 Passed Senate HHS (26 – 8) |
| 052 | Goals for Higher Education System | Includes a legislative declaration concerning the areas of focus for the statewide system of higher education and the intent of the general assembly to provide rewards for institutions of higher education that make progress in these areas.  | Ed | Monitor |  |
| 069 | Educational Management Organizations | An educational management organization contracting with a local education provider (e.g., school district, board of cooperative services, charter school) to operate a public school in the state must obtain certification from the department of education by filing an application and paying a certification fee. | Ed, Finance | Monitor | 2/23 passed S Ed, ref. to Senate Finance; 3/3 passed S Finance |
| 070 | Special Ed Students Higher Ed Transitions | Allows colleges to see the Individualized Ed. Program that was used while a special ed student was still in high school; allows parents to be involved in conversations with higher ed related to their special ed child; allows special ed kids to have three additional years to get services; requires colleges to give students IEP accommodation services, which helps kids stay in school; also applies to kids in concurrent enrollment programs. | Ed, Appropriations | Monitor | 2/24 passed S Ed & ref. to Appropriations |
| 080 | School Improvement Plans | A school district board of education (local school board), before adopting a school turnaround plan, shall hold a public meeting for the purpose of allowing members of the public to provide input to the local school board concerning the contents of the school turnaround plan, including but not limited to any proposals for the use of grant funds. | Ed | Monitor |  |
| 126 | Unsubsidized In-State Tuition | Allows undocumented workers to qualify for in-state tuition provided certain conditions are met. | Ed, Finance, Appropriations | Pro | 2/1 passed S Ed (5-2-1); 2/22 passed S Finance; 2/25 passed Appropr.; referred to COW |
| 133 | Discipline in Public Schools | Directs the Colorado Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice to instruct the Juvenile Justice Task Force to create a working group to study and collect data concerning the use of criminal justice sanctions and specified school discipline strategies in the public schools in the state. | Judiciary | Monitor |  |
| 157 | Modification to School Finance Act | The bill makes several changes to the "Public School Finance Act of 1994" (act) and to the funding for the act, including supplemental kindergarten enrollment funding, mid-year adjustments to budget stabilization factor, and effect of refinance with federal moneys or other allocations. | Senate Appropr. & House Appropr. | Con | Passed both Committees, ref. to COW |

| **House Bill #****11-** | **Title** | **Summary** | **House Committee(s)** | **CO PTA position** | **Status** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1014 | Child Care Contribution Income Tax Credit | Gives a child care credit for quality child care. Supports access to early child education. | Finance, Appropr. | Monitor | 2/16 passed Finance (11-2), ref. to Appropriations |
| 1048 | Income Tax Credits For Nonpublic Ed | Reduces funding to general public education by giving tax credits to people who want to send kids to private schools. CO PTA is opposed because it does not meet PTA standards for public financing of schools.  | Ed, Finance | Con | 2/7 passed Ed, ref. to Finance |
| 1053 | Incarceration for Truancy and Contempt | Removes the requirement for incarcerating parents when kids are truant. Also leaves discretion to school districts to decide whether to take the child to court. | Ed | Pro | Passed Ed, ref. to COW |
| 1055 | Facilities for Charter Schools | 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.  | Ed, Judiciary | Con | 2/2 Passed Ed., ref. to Judiciary |
| 1069 | Physical Activity Expectation in Schools | Supports efforts to provide adequate time and opportunity for physical fitness in all schools and recess in all elementary schools. This bill ensures that no school can decrease the current amount of time spent in areas that include physical activity, mandates that schools meet a minimum of 150 minutes active time per week, stipulates that recess cannot replace physical education, and gives parents information on the qualifications of the supervising individual while children are engaged in physical activity. 2/15/11 passed House (39-26), 3/2/11 passed Senate Committee on Education (6-2), hearing before the Senate Committee of the Whole 3/8/11. | Ed | Pro | Passed House |
| 1077 | Education of Gifted Children | Separates gifted children reporting requirements from special education reporting requirements. Passed House and Senate. | House Ed, Senate Ed | Pro | Passed House (64-0)Passed Senate (35-0) |
| 1089 | Charter Schools Grant Applications | Allows charter schools to go directly to the federal government for grants without permission from school boards. The ramifications for special education could be negative.  | House Ed; Senate State, Veterans, & Military Affairs | Con | Passed House (49-16)Passed Senate Committee(3-0-2) |
| 1121 | Bar Felons from School Employment | Enacts the "Felon-Free Schools Act of 2011." A school district, a charter school, or an institute charter school is prohibited from employing as a nonlicensed employee a person who has a conviction for certain enumerated criminal offenses, although it does allow felons convicted of drug abuse to work in positions with no student contact. | Ed, Appropriations | Con | Passed House Ed (12-01) Referred to Appropriations |
| 1126 | Improving Parent Involvement in Schools | The bill requires each school district board of education (district board) to adopt a parent involvement policy that will apply to each of the public schools of the school district. | House Ed, Senate Ed | Monitor | Passed House (48 – 17), assigned to Senate Ed |
| 1145 | Availability Background Check Child Care | Would change the requirements for background checks for any licensed facility, agency, or licensee to include Colorado Bureau of Investigation and FBI checks for all potential employees, regardless of the length of time a potential employee has resided in Colorado.  | Ed, Appropriations | Pro | Passed Committee (13-0), referred to Appropriations |
| 1193 | Family Advocacy Juvenile Mental Health | Would change the status of the integrated system-of-care family advocacy for mental health juvenile justice populations from demonstration programs to permanent programs | Health & Environment | Pro | Passed House (55-10) |
| 1253 | Charter Schools & At-Risk Funding | Currently there are 2 funding formulas for district charter schools. Bill would allow charter school to apply for use of an adjusted formula that accounts for the number of at-risk students it enrolls, not a district-wide value. | Ed | Monitor |  |
| 1254 | Bullying in Schools | Multiple measures to reduce bullying in schools (see text). | Ed | Pro | Interim Committee in 2013 will study and report recommendations to Joint Ed by Jan. 1, 2014 |
| 1270 | Parents Convert Low-Performing School | Parents of students enrolled in a low-performing public school may submit a petition to the school district board of education (local school board) to close the school or convert the school to a charter school or an innovation school. | Ed | Monitor |  |
| 1277 | Statutory Changes to K-12 Education | Sec. 1 no new unfunded mandates Sec. 2 changes the definition of at-risk students Sec's. 3-36 myriad of other changes to make compliance with state mandates easier or unnecessary. | Ed | Pro |  |

***For current information and discussion regarding CO PTAs positions on these bills please visit the following website: :***

**http://www.coloradocapitolwatch.com/bill-tracker/0/902/2011/**

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