

Marquez, Joe

From: Education News Colorado [EdNews@pebc.org]
Sent: Friday, September 04, 2009 12:43 PM
To: Marquez, Joe
Subject: Still newsy next week



*We know some of you may not see this eNewsletter until the middle of next week, like a **hypothetical state employee** who took a personal day Friday, has the three-day holiday weekend to look forward to and is on furlough Tuesday.*

Don't hit the delete button when cleaning your in-box – there are plenty of newsy items no matter when you read this mail.

Plunging endowments cause college cutbacks

With the economy still wreaking havoc on **college endowments**, campuses are struggling to come up with money to keep scholarships and other special programs alive. In some cases, schools are tapping already-depleted general funds, which means something else has to give. [Story](#)

Speaking of budgets ...

If you still had any doubts that state officials will be looking hard next year at interpretation of **Amendment 23**, they should be dispelled by a column this week in Denver's last seven-day-a-week printed newspaper.

In a piece headlined "Girding for state K-12 budget cuts," Gov. **Bill Ritter** and Lt. Gov. **Barbara O'Brien** touted their administration's education achievements, mentioned that the legislature is expected to hold back \$110 million from the current K-12 budget and then noted, "In fiscal 2010-11, more K-12 cuts may also be needed."

Most chilling to A23 strict constructionists were these two sentences: "Some argue that Amendment 23 prohibits K-12 funding from being reduced at all. The governor's office has come to a different legal conclusion."

But the statement should come as no surprise to anyone. It used to be that talk of tinkering with A23 was limited to a few Republicans. In the last several months, though, there's been a growing consensus at the Statehouse that there has to be some tightening of formula-driven K-12 spending to reduce the budget-cutting damage elsewhere in state government.

The most likely target is a pot of money called the "factors," which are used to adjust district aid above the per-pupil base, according to cost of living, number of at-risk students and other formulas.

Given the economy, the inflation driver of A23 increases may be small or non-existent for 2010-11, creating more problems for districts.

A tougher political nut for the legislature and governor to crack may be the amount of state backfilling. Under the current school finance formula, state aid goes up if a district's local revenues go down. That may be an issue for the 2010-11 budget if property tax revenues decline, as they're expected to do.

If the 2010 legislature decides to fiddle with the backfill formula, that could save the state some money – and create serious pain for school districts.

- [Read the column](#)

Pace picks up quickly after holiday

Sunday

The **Bufs** and the **Rams** meet in the Rocky Mountain Showdown at Folsom Field. During a meeting with EdNews staff Friday, CU President **Bruce Benson** and CSU Chancellor **Joe Blake** were asked to predict the score. Ever the diplomats, both demurred, saying the score "doesn't matter." Right.

Tuesday

If you have urgent business with state educrats, it will have to wait. Tuesday is a furlough day.

President Obama's speech to school kids will be shown in some schools, and not in others. For background on this latest silly-season controversy, see coverage from [9News](#), [USA Today](#) and [EdWeek](#).

Members of the **interim school finance committee** will hold a hearing at the Summit County Schools administration building, 150 School Road, Frisco from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The object is to get school district and citizen input on school finance problems and reforms.

Also ... the **fiscal stability interim commission** meets Tuesday and Wednesday at the Capitol ([website](#)).

Wednesday

The **State Board of Education** convenes ([agenda info](#)) ... as does the **Community College System Board** ([agenda](#)).

Thursday

Rounding the week's seat time will be a **Colorado Commission on Higher Education** session at Front Range Community College. No agenda is posted yet for this one, which will be the first meeting since higher ed chief **David Skaggs** announced his resignation, which is effective the next day.

Election updates

- [Falcon recall dead after county clerk rules on signatures](#)
- [Douglas candidates air views at community forum](#)
- [No elections for Aurora, Cherry Creek](#)
- [One Garfield Re-2 board seat will be contested](#)
- [Roaring Fork cancels election](#)
- [No election needed in Telluride](#)

- [Mesa won't try again for bond issue](#)
- [19-year-old a write-in for Craig board](#)

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Otherwise around the state

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- [Aurora, Creek work to keep student fees under control](#)
- [3 Boulder schools face state sanctions](#)
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- [Energy revenue good news for some schools, local government](#)
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Halls of ivy

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- [Metro board approves using stimulus funds for technology projects](#)
- [CU-Boulder gets chief info officer from Harvard](#)

Around the nation

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- [Michigan ed leaders seeking innovation proposals](#)
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Todd Engdahl

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