

Colorado School Finance Project (CSFP) contracted with Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA) to look at historical data for the fifty states and Washington D.C. regarding spending, the relationship of various characteristics and what has changed over a period of time. The historical period is from 1994 through 2007-08. The comparative characteristics by states are:

1. Wealth – based on income
2. Size – average size school of a state
3. Performance – based on NAEP
4. Need – inclusive of special education, English language learners and At-risk students
5. Effort – how much a state contributes towards K-12 education
6. Change in enrollment – are you growing or declining in student population

Colorado Overview:

- Population continues to grow
- Is wealthy based on income
- Is trending upward in students with more specialized services
- Continues to decline in funding education
- Student performance is trending down

None of the other 50 states have all the same trends or statistics as Colorado.

When looking deeper at the data (comparisons to “like” states) – results show:

1. Colorado spends less dollars in classroom
2. Colorado has larger class sizes, more para-professionals and less teachers
3. Colorado has lower salaries – teachers/administrators/support staff
4. Colorado contributes less towards employee benefits
5. Colorado has less district administrators
6. Colorado continues to reduce investment in facilities, maintenance, operation and transportation.

Comparing Colorado to “like” states and translating a few examples to dollars:

1. Based on wealth Colorado’s funding is \$2,000 less per student (prior to 2008, 09, 10, 11 budget reductions).
2. When looking at performance – assuming current performance level – Colorado spends \$10,000 a year less on teacher salaries and 6% less on benefits.