

Public School Trust Lands Quick Facts

1. Colorado General Assembly has used earnings from the Public School Trust Lands permanent fund to offset general fund contributions towards the school finance act. This is in violation of the constitutional language of “supplement” and “supplant”. These practices have been in place for years.
2. The “BEST” program also utilizes earnings from the Public School Trust Lands permanent fund.
3. There has been minimal to no growth in the corpus of the Public School Trust Lands permanent fund in recent years.
4. Confusion and misinformation on the issues – the current “sweeping of dollars” (current year earnings) versus investments into the permanent fund are to be addressed in 2012 legislation. Potential changes to BEST – would be separate legislation in 2012. Confusion and misinformation arise around:
 - a. “Capping program to \$40 million”
 - b. Questioning state’s obligation
 - c. Interest free bond status
 - d. IRS issues
 - e. Program access too easy for districts
 - f. Has state met obligation regarding capital need?
 - g. State can never meet obligation regarding \$17.9 billion in capital need.