

Get it Done!

Implementing the Adequacy Studies:

Under the Dome and at the Ballot

Great Education Colorado

Our Vision

Through public education, every Colorado student — regardless of their zip code, learning needs, language, identities, or the color of their skin — graduates prepared to lead their best life.

Our Mission

Great Education Colorado harnesses the power of grassroots activism and diverse, inclusive networks to guarantee that public schools in every Colorado community are welcoming and adequately, equitably, and sustainably funded.



The Context for Action

1. The North Star – Full and Fair Funding
2. Current Funding Realities
3. The Opportunities of 2026
4. Meeting the Moment

The North Star:

Adequate funding and supports for Colorado public schools to meet the needs of every student.



The Science of Full & Fair Funding

An adequacy study is state-specific scientific research to determine what resources are necessary to ensure all students can meet the State's standards for education.

Colorado commissioned two studies in 2023 (by independent research firms APA & AIR) and reports were issued in January 2025.

Get it Done!

Great Education Colorado



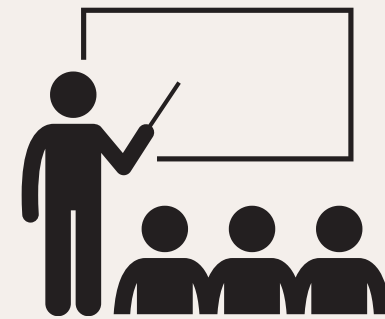


Study Recommendations (APA)

Increased Individual Attention

K-3 Class Size:

15



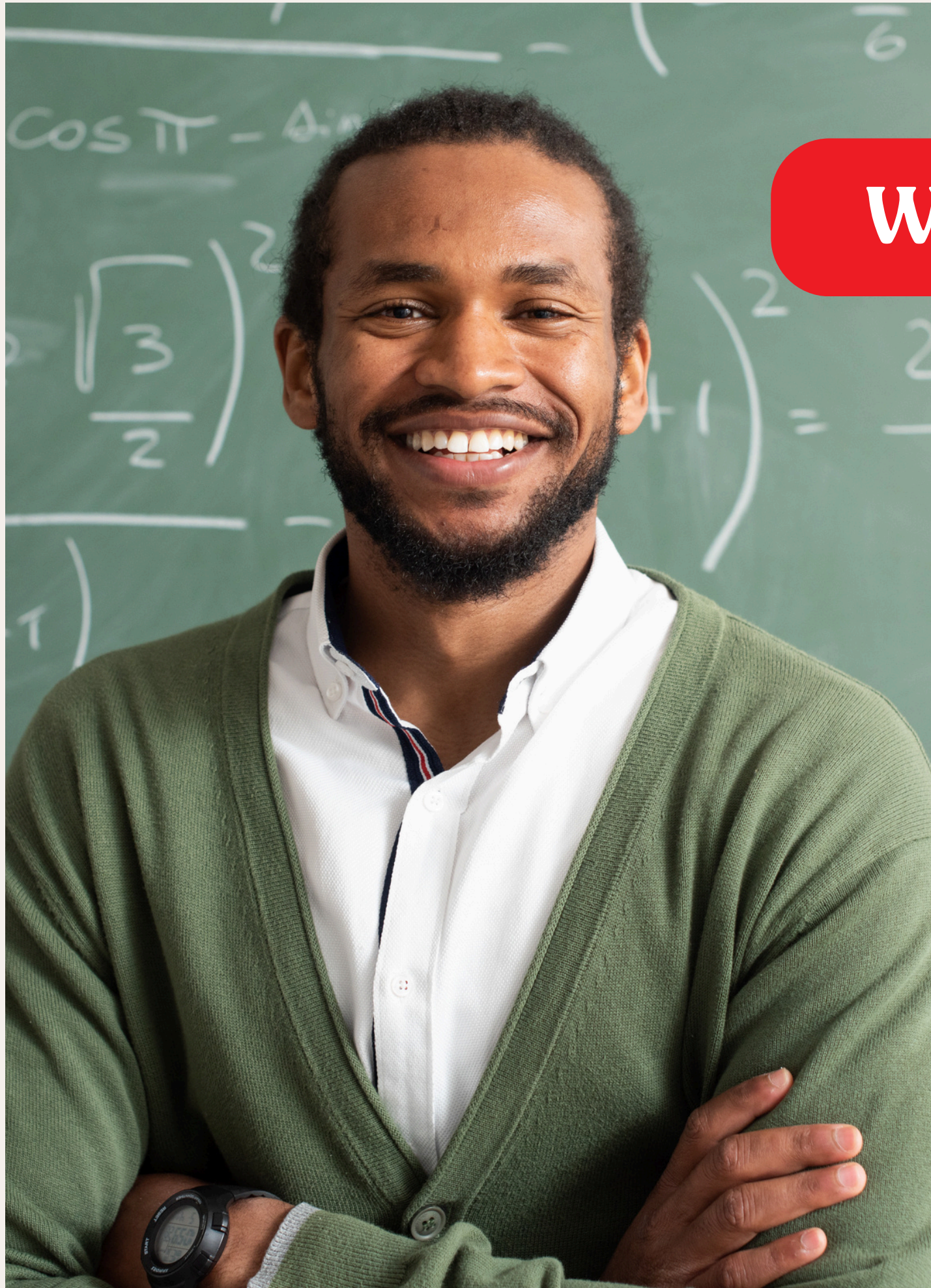
Tutors in Every School

4-12 Class Size:

25



**More Counselors and
Health Professionals**

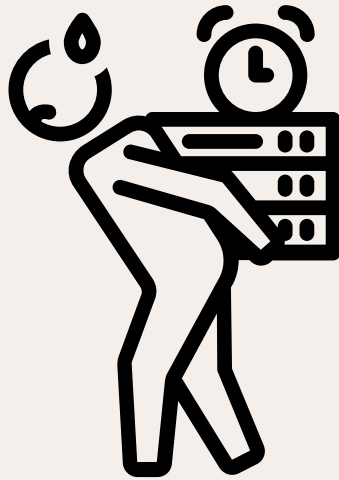


What Students Need to Succeed

Support for Teachers



Increased
Teacher Pay



Reduced
Workload

1 for every **2000**
Instructional Coach Students



Study Recommendations (APA)

Additional Time

- Extended Day and Summer School for students with additional needs

Comprehensive Offerings

- Base Support added for **Technology, Curriculum, Afterschool Programming**
- Minimum staffing for **electives**

Get it Done!

Great Education Colorado



Total: \$3.5 - \$4.1 Billion
When fully implemented

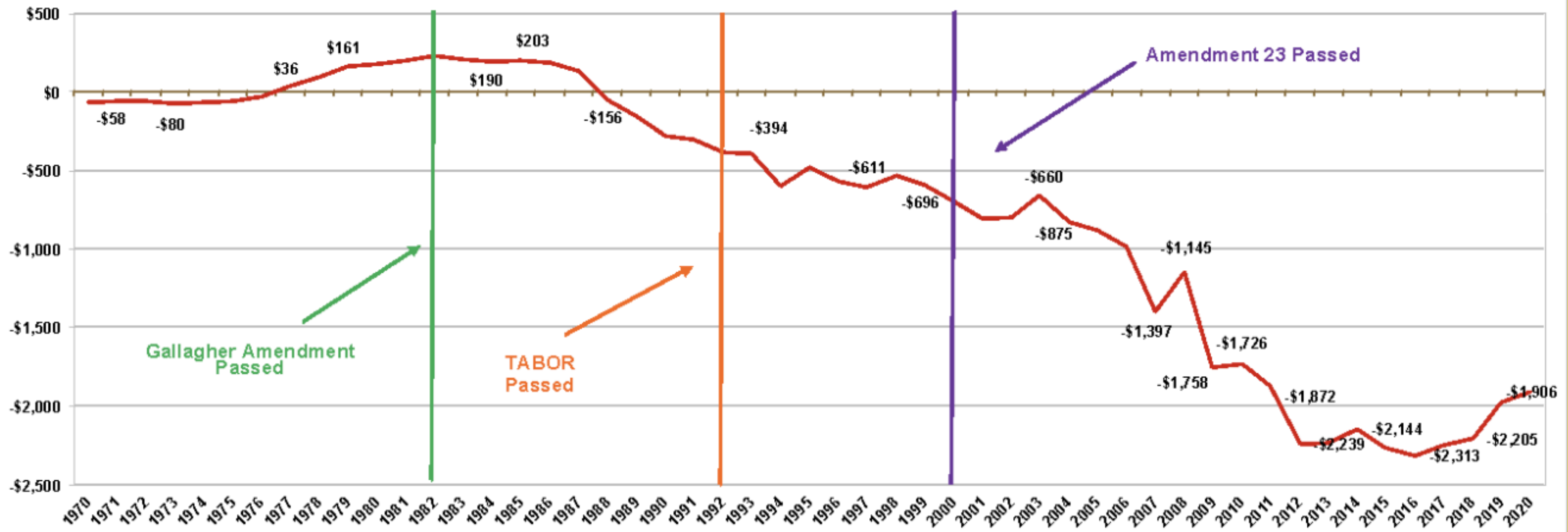
Current School Finance Context

Colorado is far below the national average in per pupil funding

Difference between CO and National Average

K-12 Per-Pupil Funding: Colorado vs. National Average

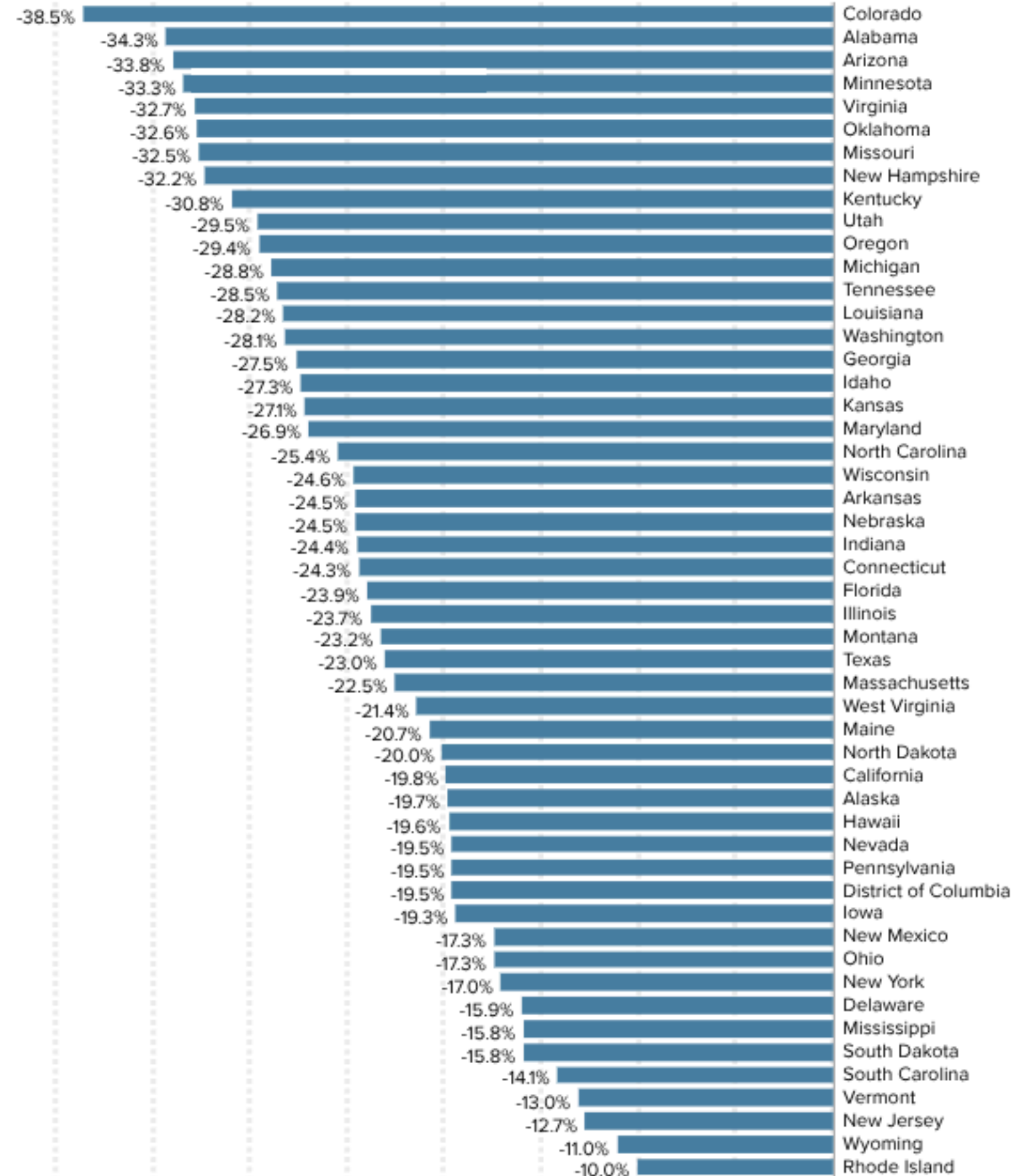
Source: National Center for Education Statistics



In fact, our per pupil funding is at **1989 inflation-adjusted level**
(before 25-26 cuts)

Colorado has the highest teacher wage penalty in the country

Our public school teachers
are compensated
38.5% less
than their non-teaching college
graduate counterparts

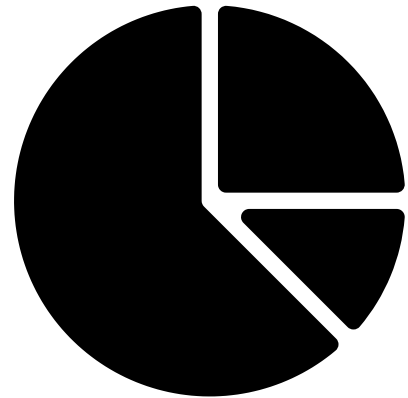


Source: Economic Policy Institute 2025 report

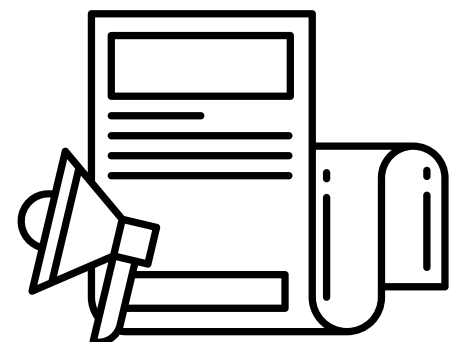
How did we get here?



For years, the state legislature used the **Budget Stabilization Factor** (BS Factor) to reduce school spending to balance the budget

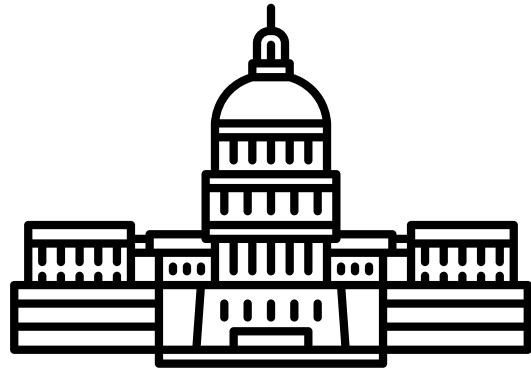


Education's **share of the state General Fund** has been shrinking

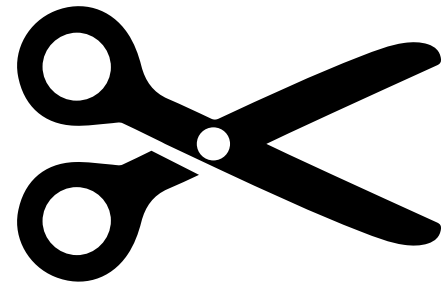


The **Taxpayer's Bill of Rights (TABOR)** limits our ability to invest in schools, even in good economic times

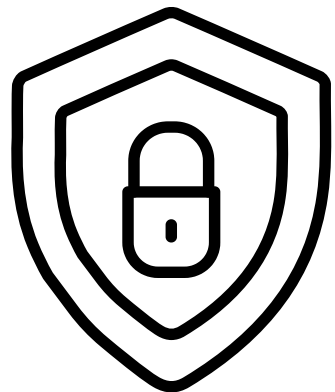
Federal Policy Changes Worsen State Budget Challenges



Federal funding cuts to education, nutrition, and other priorities for children



\$1 billion decrease in state revenue for this fiscal year, due to federal tax cuts for the wealthiest (rolling conformity)



Threats to public education through policies like **privatization** and **dismantling infrastructure**

2026: A Watershed Year

Why 2026 is the Year

Conventional Wisdom

- Voters have not supported state funding measures
- It's very hard and expensive to break through noise
- It will take so much effort
- We need to wait until voters see a real crisis



The Opportunity

- Polling is very positive and the turnout will be favorable
- Grassroots action is “sticky” & the news cycle is a jet stream
- We've been preparing
- It's a crisis! What are we waiting for?

Our Path to Success

In 2026:

Adequacy studies as North Star

- Protect current education funding
- Commit to implementing & funding recommendations of the adequacy studies
- Create a Blueprint for Student Success

Fiscal reform on the ballot

- Increase funding for public education
(information to follow)

In 2026 & beyond:

School boards focused on welcoming schools

Policies that make all students feel welcome

Resources to address all student & community needs



A public school system
where all Colorado
children thrive

Who is Doing What?

Get it Done!



Get it Done!

The “Get It Done” campaign is a collaboration between organizations and individuals urging the legislature to take **bold and concrete action** to implement the recommendations of the school finance adequacy studies.



Who Has Signed On to “Get It Done”?



COLORADO BOCES ASSOCIATION



Joining Forces to Enrich Educational Opportunities for Students



A Union of Professionals
AFT Colorado



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS*
OF COLORADO



GreatEducation
COLORADO

COLORADO RURAL SCHOOLS ALLIANCE



COLORADO STATEWIDE
PARENT COALITION



Education Foundation of Eagle County

Scholars
Unlimited

Get it
Done!

One Victory & Another on the Way!

First Regular Session
Seventy-fifth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. R25-1051.01 Jessica Chapman x4636

SJR25-021

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Kipp and Bridges,

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Hamrick and Bird,

Senate Committees

House Committees

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 25-021

101 **CONCERNING A COMMITMENT TO PURSUING FULL AND FAIR FUNDING**
102 **OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS.**

1 WHEREAS, Public education is the bedrock of our democracy,
2 fundamental to individual opportunity, the underpinning of thriving
3 communities, and the key to Colorado's economic prosperity and future;
4 and

19 *Be It Resolved by the Senate of the Seventy-fifth General Assembly*
20 *of the State of Colorado, the House of Representatives concurring herein:*

21

22

That we, the members of the General Assembly:

23

24

(1) Reaffirm the critical importance of public education and the
fair and full funding thereof; and

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

(2) Declare that it is the intent of the Colorado Senate to honor the
\$2 million investment in the adequacy studies made by the taxpayers of
Colorado by taking concrete steps to gain an understanding of the
findings and recommendations of the studies, choose which study's
methodology and recommendations to follow, and develop a multi-year
implementation plan, including revenue triggers, to phase in the
recommendations.

Protect Colorado's Future: Graduated Income Tax



- Raises \$2+ Billion annually for K-12 Public Education, Early Childhood Education and Care, and Health Care
- Creates a graduated income tax where:
 - 97% of taxpayers will get a tax cut
 - Income over \$500,000 is taxed at a higher rate
 - Income from the sale of a home is excluded
- Signature collection begins this month

Ballot Table (\$2.0B version)

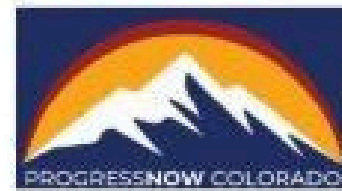
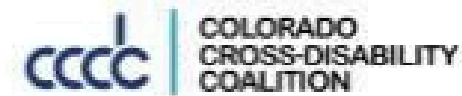
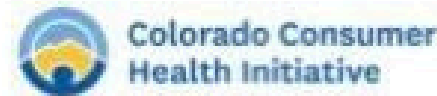
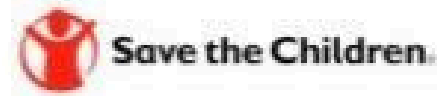
Income Categories	Current Average Income Tax Owed	Proposed Average Income Tax Owed	Proposed Change in Average Income Tax Owed if Passed + or -
\$25,000 or less	\$59	\$50	-\$9
\$25,001 - \$50,000	\$751	\$632	-\$119
\$50,001 - \$100,000	\$1,877	\$1,666	-\$210
\$100,001 - \$200,000	\$4,126	\$3,828	-\$298
\$200,001 - \$500,000	\$9,344	\$9,019	-\$325
\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	\$19,288	\$18,963	-\$325
\$1,000,001 - \$2,000,000	\$29,432	\$34,196	+\$4,764
\$2,000,001 - \$5,000,000	\$41,196	\$55,110	+\$13,914

Income categories use adjusted gross income reported to the federal Internal Revenue Service.



**PROTECT
COLORADO'S
FUTURE**

**PROTECT
COLORADO'S
FUTURE**



CEA: Raise the TABOR Cap



- Increases GF funding for public education by 2%* annually
- Increases the current TABOR revenue cap by the amount of General Fund spent on education
- Seeking a legislative referral
- Great Ed has endorsed

Let's Talk.

What Does All this Mean for YOU?



Discussion

Depending on whether one or both were to pass, it could mean a \$80-800 per student increase, with significant long-term growth.

- What would that mean to your district?
- Would it remove pressure to run MLOs as frequently?
- How would that impact programs and governance?



Discussion

What supports and resources do you need to engage your community in the fight for full and fair public school funding?



Next Steps

Stay Informed



Use this form to sign up for Great Ed's newsletters and action alerts to stay on top of the latest in school funding.

Endorse Initiative 195



Request a presentation



Request presentations tailored for your district and board

Questions?

Connect With Us!

Lisa Weil, Executive Director

lisa@greateducation.org

720-217-6239

www.greateducation.org

[@greatedcolorado](#)

