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**Education Policy Center Newsletter**

**From The Independence Institute**

**April 10, 2012**

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**Room Left for You at Thursday’s “Teachers Matter” Brown Bag Lunch**

Some of you have already told us you plan to come to this Thursday’s Brown Bag Lunch event. UCCS professor Dr. Marcus Winters will discuss the findings related to educator effectiveness research in his new book [*Teachers Matter*](http://www.manhattan-institute.org/teachersmatter/). Doors open at 11:30, and the presentation starts at noon. RSVP with an email to **RSVP@i2i.org**. [More details on the event can be found on our official flyer.](http://education.i2i.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Teachers-Matter-Winters-Event-Flyer.pdf)

More from Ed Is Watching:

[In Denver on April 12? Bring Your Brown Bag Lunch to a “Teachers Matter” Event](http://www.ediswatching.org/2012/03/in-denver-on-april-12-bring-your-brown-bag-lunch-to-a-teachers-matter-event/)

**Center Releases Colorado’s Own Digital Learning Policy Roadmap**

Last month the Education Policy Center released [“The Future of Colorado Digital Learning: Crafting a Policy Roadmap for Reform,”](http://education.i2i.org/2012/03/crafting-colorados-digital-learning-policy-roadmap/) which highlights recommended student-centered changes in K-12 funding, testing and accountability, and access and eligibility. Quite possibly the first state policy roadmap of its kind nationwide, it includes some of the recommendations in [the national *Digital LearningNow!* reform roadmap](http://digitallearningnow.com/roadmap-to-reform/). As Pam Benigno observed about the roadmap’s policy themes in [Ed News Colorado’s coverage](http://www.ednewscolorado.org/2012/03/22/35120-thursday-churn-online-roadmap) of the release: “We have the chance to unleash a lot of learning potential by using technology effectively….”

The Center’s new publication captures the leading policy priorities embraced by 50 Colorado online education leaders at [a January 23 Independence Institute meeting](http://education.i2i.org/2012/01/inacols-susan-patrick-guides-colorado-online-leaders-in-crafting-digital-learning-policy-roadmap/) keynoted and led by iNACOL’s Susan Patrick. Thanks for support, input and technical assistance also go to the Donnell-Kay Foundation’s Matt Samelson and Kristina Tabor, CDE’s Amy Berk Anderson and Amanda Heiney, and former State Board of Education member Randy DeHoff.

For more:

iVoices podcast, [Crafting Colorado’s Digital Learning Policy Roadmap](http://education.i2i.org/2012/03/crafting-colorados-digital-learning-policy-roadmap/)

**Open Union Negotiations Dies in Legislature, Launches in Dougco**

Colorado’s [House Bill 1118](http://www.leg.state.co.us/CLICS/CLICS2012A/csl.nsf/fsbillcont3/7158F0DEEB2A907287257981007F11D7?Open&file=1118_01.pdf), which sought to bring transparency to school district collective bargaining sessions, died in the Senate State Affairs Committee after narrowly passing the House. Ben DeGrow, author of a relevant [2010 issue backgrounder](http://education.i2i.org/2010/04/colorado-education-and-open-negotiations-increasing-public-access-to-school-district-bargaining/), provided informational testimony to two legislative committees. While state policymakers have been reluctant to follow through, Douglas County’s first open union negotiation session is scheduled for tomorrow after the Board of Education voted to adopt the policy last month. Even Douglas County’s teachers union [has endorsed the local call for transparent bargaining](http://education.i2i.org/2012/03/how-serious-is-douglas-county-union-about-open-negotiations/).

More from Ed Is Watching:

[Dougco Board and HB 1118: Tuesday’s Colorado Open Union Negotiations Two-Fer](http://www.ediswatching.org/2012/03/dougco-board-and-hb-1118-tuesdays-colorado-open-union-negotiations-two-fer/)

[PACE Teachers Weigh In on Pensions, Open Negotiations, Funding, and Literacy](http://www.ediswatching.org/2012/03/pace-teachers-weigh-in-on-pensions-open-negotiations-funding-and-literacy/)

**Bill Introduced to Promote Fairness in Teacher Options**

One of the more recent pieces of state legislation to cross the Education Policy Center’s radar screen is [House Bill 1333](http://www.leg.state.co.us/CLICS/CLICS2012A/csl.nsf/fsbillcont3/0D676B30D8AAAD28872579BB0073C8AB?Open&file=1333_01.pdf), which would allow employees in school districts with automatic dues deductions to opt out of (or into) a union or other membership organization at any time. Currently, at least 30 Colorado school districts allow teachers and others to opt out of union membership only during [brief revocation periods](http://www.independentteachers.org/revoking-membership/), commonly as short as two weeks. The issue is one of many covered in Ben DeGrow’s 2011 issue backgrounder, [“Nine Key Changes at the Bargaining Table.”](http://education.i2i.org/2011/09/nine-key-changes-at-the-bargaining-table-a-policy-handbook-for-colorado-school-board-reform-leaders/)

More from Ed Is Watching:

[Is Somebody Ready to Take Care of Colorado Teachers’ “Hotel California” Problem?](http://www.ediswatching.org/2012/03/is-someone-ready-to-take-care-of-colorado-teachers-hotel-california-problem/)

**Blogging Prodigy Eddie Looks Back, Ahead at Education Reform**

This past month our prodigious 5-year-old blogger Eddie once again has kept us all updated on important education issues in Colorado and beyond, with his usual clever insights:

[Dougco School Board Approves Choice Program: Looking Back One Year Later](http://www.ediswatching.org/2012/03/dougco-school-board-approves-choice-program-looking-back-one-year-later/)

[Harrison Teacher Performance Pay: Fordham’s Guide to Serious Reform](http://www.ediswatching.org/2012/03/harrison-teacher-performance-pay-fordhams-guide-to-serious-reform/)

[Let’s Look at the Other Important Part of Colorado’s Early Literacy Problem, Too](http://www.ediswatching.org/2012/03/lets-look-at-the-other-important-part-of-colorados-early-literacy-problem-too/)

[Baseball Season (and the Inevitable Comparisons with Education Reform) is Back](http://www.ediswatching.org/2012/04/baseball-season-and-the-inevitable-comparisons-with-education-reform-is-back/)

[Late-Night Louisiana House Advances School Choice, Tenure Reform Bills](http://www.ediswatching.org/2012/03/late-night-louisiana-house-advances-school-choice-tenure-reform-bills/)

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