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**Education Policy Center Newsletter**

**From The Independence Institute**

**August 28, 2013**

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**As Debate Grows, New Report Breaks Down Amendment 66**

As a major statewide initiative to increase K-12 funding gets ready to make the November ballot, the conversation about education and taxes has picked up. Our senior education policy analyst Ben DeGrow’s insights into the issue have been published in the new issue brief [“Amendment 66: Unfair and Overpriced.”](http://education.i2i.org/2013/08/amendment-66-unfair-and-overpriced/) Also, you can listen to Democratic former legislator Bob Hagedorn [explain his opposition to the initiative](http://education.i2i.org/2013/08/amy-oliver-show-democrat-ex-legislator-rejects-education-tax-proposal/) in a recorded interview. And check out our new [“Amendment 66 and SB 213”](http://education.i2i.org/k-12-issues/finance/amendment-66-and-sb-213/) web page to find all the resources you’ll need.

More from Ed Is Watching:

[Time to Bust Amendment 66 Myths](http://www.ediswatching.org/2013/08/time-to-bust-amendment-66-myths/)

[For Aspen, Jeffco, and Others, Billion-Dollar Tax Initiative Also Happens to be Unfair](http://www.ediswatching.org/2013/08/for-aspen-jeffco-and-others-billion-dollar-tax-initiative-also-happens-to-be-unfair/)

[Report Begs Question: Why did Colo. SB 213 Neglect Performance-Based Funding?](http://www.ediswatching.org/2013/07/report-begs-question-why-did-colo-sb-213-neglect-performance-based-funding/)

**DeGrow Looks at State of Reform in Dougco, Greeley, and Beyond**

Amendment 66 is not the only item on Colorado ballots this year, as voters in many districts will weigh decisions about local school board candidates that will impact the future of innovation. [Ben wrote an op-ed for the *Colorado Observer*](http://thecoloradoobserver.com/2013/08/guest-commentary-reform-the-rule-in-dougco-schools/) refuting some mythology about reform in Douglas County, while also being interviewed on a nationally syndicated report about the district’s resolution [to exceed Common Core standards](http://education.i2i.org/2013/08/degrow-lauds-dougcos-push-for-higher-academic-standards/). He also authored an issue backgrounder titled [“Greeley Public Schools: Learning Reimagined.”](http://education.i2i.org/2013/07/greeley-public-schools-learning-reimagined/)

More from Ed Is Watching:

[Think Outside the Box, Young Man: Greeley Takes Interest in K-12 Innovation](http://www.ediswatching.org/2013/07/think-outside-the-box-young-man-greeley-takes-interest-in-k-12-innovation/)

[Charter Competition Has Some Healthy Benefits for Denver, Still Room for More](http://www.ediswatching.org/2013/08/charter-competition-has-some-healthy-benefits-for-denver-still-room-for-more/)

[Adams 12 Doesn’t Need to Remain the Misreported Media Punching Bag](http://www.ediswatching.org/2013/07/adams-12-doesnt-need-to-remain-the-misreported-media-punching-bag/)

**Benigno Begins to Educate Colorado about Tax Credits**

One real education reform Colorado ought to consider instead is K-12 scholarship tax credits, as explained on our [**Colorado Kids Win** website](http://coloradokidswin.org). Twelve other states currently have a permanent tax credit program to expand school choice and opportunity. In case you missed the original airing, you can go back and [watch the video of the *Devil’s Advocate* episode](http://education.i2i.org/2013/07/devils-advocate-a-closer-look-at-school-choice-in-colorado/) in which Pam Benigno and Jon Caldara explore what tax credits might mean for Colorado. If you know of a Colorado group that we could educate about this issue, please contact Pam at [pam@i2i.org](mailto:pam@i2i.org).

More from Ed Is Watching:

[Heads Up, Colorado: Demand for Florida Scholarship Tax Credits Growing Fast](http://www.ediswatching.org/2013/07/heads-up-colorado-demand-for-florida-scholarship-tax-credits-growing-fast/)

[School Choice Enhances Results, Expands Understanding of “Public Education”](http://www.ediswatching.org/2013/07/school-choice-enhances-results-expands-understanding-of-public-education/)

**Kafer’s Blended Learning Report Attracting Interest**

The other end of the recent *Devil’s Advocate* education doubleheader [featured senior fellow Krista Kafer](http://education.i2i.org/2013/07/devils-advocate-blended-learning-rises-in-colorado/) talking about [the rise of K-12 blended learning in Colorado](http://education.i2i.org/2013/07/the-rise-of-k-12-blended-learning-in-colorado/). Her informative publication already has attracted attention from school leaders in various parts of the state. Don’t forget to [listen to Krista and Ben DeGrow](http://education.i2i.org/2013/07/amy-oliver-show-blended-learning-takes-off-in-colorado/) go over the basics of [blended learning](http://vimeopro.com/edelements/blendedlearning) and some of Colorado’s leading examples of innovation.

More from Ed Is Watching:

[Two More California Blended Learning Charters Give Colorado Some Inspiration](http://www.ediswatching.org/2013/08/two-more-california-blended-learning-charters-give-colorado-some-inspiration/)

[Can Colorado Reach Forefront of Student-Centered Digital Learning Policy?](http://www.ediswatching.org/2013/08/can-colorado-reach-forefront-of-student-centered-digital-learning-policy/)

**Reform Issues Hit Raaki Garcia Show, Little Eddie’s Blog**

We would be remiss not to mention two of the recent broadcasts of the now twice-weekly, Spanish-language Raaki Garcia Show—in which she talks [school choice and education reform issues with Tom Intorcio](http://raakigarcia.com/2013/07/7-30-2013/) and [Colorado’s PERA retirement system with Joshua Sharf](http://raakigarcia.com/2013/08/08-06-13-raaki-garcia-show/).

And of course, last but not least, little Eddie had a few more things to say about education reform happenings in Colorado and abroad before back-to-school time arrived this year:

[Details Will Dictate District Success with Colorado’s New Educator Evaluations](http://www.ediswatching.org/2013/08/details-will-dictate-district-success-with-colorados-new-educator-evaluations/)

[Big North Carolina School Choice Win Leads to Celebration, Vigilance](http://www.ediswatching.org/2013/07/big-north-carolina-school-choice-win-leads-to-celebration-vigilance/)

[Teacher Engagement Research Adds to Case for Compensation, Tenure Reforms](http://www.ediswatching.org/2013/08/teacher-engagement-research-adds-to-case-for-compensation-tenure-reforms/)

[Indiana is Inspirational, But Let’s Not Just Dream about More Colorado School Choice](http://www.ediswatching.org/2013/07/indiana-is-inspirational-but-lets-not-just-dream-about-more-colorado-school-choice/)

[Heads Up, K-12 Leaders: Open Negotiations Doesn’t Necessarily Mean “Open”](http://www.ediswatching.org/2013/08/heads-up-k-12-leaders-open-negotiations-doesnt-necessarily-mean-open/)

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