

## **Mill Levy Stabilization Common Questions**

### **1. What does “stabilizing the mills” mean?**

Stabilizing the mills means that the local portion of dollars supporting K-12 will not continue to drop in 175 of 178 school districts. This re-honors ballot measures already passed by voters in the 175 districts.

### **2. Why did some school district mills drop?**

Past state tax laws created great disparities among local tax rates. Specifically, mill levies in Colorado ranged from under 2 to more than 38. An amendment to SB 07-199 capped all mills at 27, helping to decrease the disparity.

### **3. How much of an increase is this for K-12 funding?**

SB 07-199 has a neutral fiscal effect on K-12 allocations. However, it stopped the erosion of local support and deflected potential cuts to K-12 and other parts of the state budget.

### **4. Who benefits from stabilizing the mills?**

- . • Local school districts: Honors their votes supporting K-12 funding.
- . • The State: Reduces State liability for K-12 funding.
- . • Citizens of Colorado: Creates a mechanism to provide long-term solvency to the State Education Fund and other parts of the state budget.

### **5. May my school district ask voters for a funding override by way of a local election?**

The mill levy stabilization amendment does not prevent local school districts from petitioning for an override election. The override provision in the state’s constitution is separate from the School Finance Act.

### **6. Will my taxes increase because of this policy?**

Taxes are based on property valuations, which are calculated once every two years. As property values increase, tax dollars—but not necessarily tax rates—rise. The stabilization plan will become a component of each county’s tax formula, so increases are subject to local recalibrations.

# NEA - Resolution Statement on School Accountability

## A-13. School Accountability

The National Education Association supports effective and fair school accountability systems. The Association believes that these systems must promote high levels of student achievement and ensure that the best teaching practices are supported and utilized. The Association also believes that the focus of the accountability system must be on the school, not on individual stakeholders, as the unit for evaluation and improvement of student learning. Development and implementation of the accountability system must ensure that the stakeholders at the school, district, state, and national levels share the responsibility for establishing clear goals, adopting high standards for student achievement, establishing multiple measures of student success, and providing adequate and equitable funding and support systems.

The Association further believes that a school accountability system must—

- a. Promote educational excellence
- b. Ensure the alignment of standards, assessments, and curricula
- c. Balance its focus on school context, process, and student performance
- d. Set high standards for student learning, levels of support by each stakeholder, and clearly defined goals for the school as a unit
- e. Provide for the development and implementation of a valid methodology for use as an assessment tool to determine the required funding necessary to enable all students to achieve educational excellence
- f. Provide professional development for all education employees prior to implementation of the system
- g. Use multiple assessment tools and sources of data that are meaningful, relevant, valid, and reliable
- h. Include necessary accommodations and modifications to maximize the success of all students
- i. Include measures to improve school accountability
- j. Identify how the school as a unit achieves its goals
- k. Identify the quality, quantity, and impact of support provided by each stakeholder
- l. Identify and address the internal and external factors that impact student learning and development
- m. Provide for the timely dissemination of assessment results to all stakeholders
- n. Be applied in a fair and equitable manner
- o. Include periodic evaluation and modification of the system
- p. Provide for the development of a school improvement plan.

The Association believes that the school improvement process must, as a minimum—

- a. Involve all school staff as active partners in the development of the plan
- b. Provide the additional funding, resources, and assistance necessary to accomplish the plan
- c. Identify the responsibilities of each stakeholder—students, education employees, parents/guardians, community members, government, policymakers, social agencies, and taxpayers—in the implementation of the plan
- d. Provide time for planning, implementation, and reassessment
- e. Be consistent with education employees' rights and responsibilities as set forth in laws, contracts, policies, and/or local agreement processes. (1971, 2004)

## **Americans Believe NCLB Narrows Curriculum - *Poll Shows Public Increasingly Views NCLB Unfavorably*...By Brad Ritter**

**August 28, 2007** -More Americans are more familiar with the federal No Child Left Behind Act than they were last year -- and like it even less.

That was among the findings of the 39th Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Annual Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools. This year's poll results also show that 52 percent of Americans believe that No Child Left Behind is limiting what children are taught -- at the expense of subjects such as art, science, health and social studies -- and a significant majority believe that more must be done to prepare students to compete in a global economy.

"Narrowing the curriculum and teaching to the test are only two of the unintended consequences of No Child Left Behind, and educators were the first to sound the alarm on this trend," said NEA President Reg Weaver. "The law's single-minded focus on test preparation is robbing students of the opportunity to think critically and solve problems. We need to prepare them for the real world, for success in the new industries of tomorrow like alternative energy, medical research and technology.

"The good news is that the American public is wise and understands that a good education is more than a standardized test and a student is more than a test score. I hope that Congress is paying attention to the public's sentiments regarding No Child Left Behind as it moves to reauthorize the law."

Phi Delta Kappa pointed out that annual standardized testing is a cornerstone of NCLB, and there is solid evidence that Americans are increasingly rejecting the use of standardized tests.

When asked about the amount of testing in the schools, 43% of the public believe that there is too much, which is a 12 percentage point increase since 2002. Parents are even more concerned, with 52% saying there is too much testing, a 20 percentage point increase since 2002.

Those and other findings show that the public's attitude toward NCLB is increasingly unfavorable. It was the first time since 2003 when the PDK/Gallup Poll started asking the question that a majority of respondents said they know "a great deal" or "fair amount" about NCLB.

The biggest shift was among parents of school age children. Public school parents who claim to know about the law rose to 65% of the parents polled, up from 49% last year. The share of parents who say they know "little or nothing" about NCLB dropped from 50% last year to 35% this year.

"Although 67% of parents give the school their oldest child attends an A or a B, a very high percentage, both parents and the public have sent a clear message that we need to make sure students are ready to compete," said William J. Bushaw, executive director of PDK International, a worldwide association of education professionals.

"The reauthorization of NCLB provides an opportunity for our nation's policy makers to improve how we measure learning and how we support our most vulnerable students. There couldn't be a more critical time to do this than now."

Bushaw added, "The public's concern over standardized testing is justified. Holding schools accountable based on how students perform on a single test given on a single day is wrong. It's pushing important subjects out of the curriculum, and Americans are concerned."

## American Education Week 2007 November 11–17

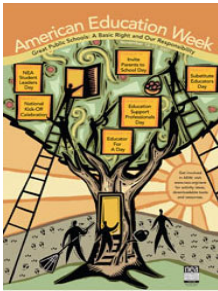
### ***Great Public Schools: A Basic Right and Our Responsibility***

NEA's 86th annual American Education Week (AEW) spotlights the importance of providing every child in America with a quality public education, and the need for everyone to do his or her part in making public schools great.

***Great Public Schools: A Basic Right and Our Responsibility*** reflects the Association's calling upon America to provide students with quality public schools so that they can grow, prosper, and achieve in the 21st century.

### Calendar of Events

- **Monday, November 12:** [American Education Week Kicks Off](#).
- **Tuesday, November 13:** [Invite Parents to School Day](#).
- **Wednesday, November 14:** [Education Support Professionals Day](#).
- **Thursday, November 15:** [Educator for a Day](#).
- **Friday, November 16:** [Substitute Educators Day](#).



To obtain a copy of the American Education Week poster pictured here go to <http://www.nea.org/aew/index.html> and click on [online tools](#) at the bottom of the page. You can also find it by going to the links page of our website and clicking on the NEA – [www.nea.org](http://www.nea.org) link.



