

## News Release

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### ***School Finance Partnership is a good start but doesn't focus on kids***

Kathy Gebhardt, lead attorney for the plaintiffs in *Lobato vs. State of Colorado*, today applauded the Colorado School Finance Partnership for its work related to school funding inequities. Gebhardt stated, however, that “their work does not focus on all students in Colorado and if implemented, would still leave many students with an education that does not meet constitutional requirements.”

The partnership is a coalition of education, business and civic groups that today called for an overhaul of Colorado's school finance system.

“The partnership agrees with the vast network of parents, school districts and state organizations that support the *Lobato* case,” she said. “The partnership's analysis and willingness to see the disparities is appreciated. School funding inequities are real and addressing the underlying problems is something that should be done now, not after another year of waiting for the courts. Schools can't wait and the students are suffering.”

Every single day that passes under the current finance system leads to students dropping out, attending classes in overcrowded classrooms in failing buildings with inadequate resources, and not receiving even the most basic education as required under Colorado's constitution, she said.

Taylor Lobato, one of the lead plaintiffs in the suit, renewed her call that the state act quickly in finding a solution to the school finance crisis. “The system was broken when we first became involved over seven years ago, and nothing has changed, except that we have less money now than when we started,” she said. “I have seen first hand the negative effects of the underfunding on the education and future of students. We don't need another study or further discussion. What we need now is action.”

Colorado is already one of the leaders in the country in the area of education reform. Glenn Gustafson, chief financial officer for School District 11 in Colorado Springs, urged that Colorado “lead the country by also funding the reforms the state has enacted.” Mr. Gustafson said he agrees all public dollars must be well managed and spent efficiently but added that “funding these reforms will not come from savings in efficiencies. What we need is a new, systemic overhaul so we can adequately fund public education.”

Added Gustafson: “We filed the suit only after years and years of the state violating children's rights under the Colorado Constitution. Those students' rights continue to be violated every day the State fails to take action.”

***More about the Lobato case:*** [www.lobatocase.org](http://www.lobatocase.org).