



# Should Colorado Pass the ASSET Bill?

## Activity 1: Introducing the ASSET Bill

### Materials Needed:

- ⇒ Copies of the Factors Influencing Views on Controversial Issues handout for all students.
- ⇒ Equipment for projecting the completed sample of the above handout.

### Procedure:

1. Tell students that they are going to be starting their study of the proposal to allow unauthorized immigrant students who graduate from Colorado high schools to pay in-state tuition at Colorado’s public colleges and universities. If students have been on the Colorado Youth Summit wiki, they know that this is a highly controversial issue. To help ensure that the discussion of the issue—both within your class and with students from other schools—remains civil, you are going to start by looking at the factors that shape a person’s views on issues like this one.
2. Distribute the handout listing Factors Influencing Views on Controversial Issues, and go over each influence, encouraging students to comment on the factors as you discuss them. Here are some notes on these factors as they relate to the ASSET (Advancing Students for a Stronger Economy Tomorrow) bill:
  - ⇒ **Perception of the Problem.** If you perceive something as an important problem that the government can help solve, you are likely to think the issue is important. On the other hand, if you think a problem is not important (or doesn’t exist) or the government should not have any role in solving it, you are not likely to think the issue is important. For example, the problem the ASSET bill is designed to address is that unauthorized immigrant students who graduate from Colorado high schools are unable to attend college because they cannot afford the high out-of-state tuition. People disagree about whether this is an important problem and whether the government should step in to solve it. Some people see the responsibility for the problem as lying with the unauthorized immigrants themselves, since they came to the United States illegally. Others disagree because the students were brought to the United States by their parents, not of their own choosing.
  - ⇒ **Understanding of the Facts.** Many facts are likely to be relevant to any particular problem. Often, people with strong positions on an issue focus on the facts that support their viewpoint; sometimes, they may have the facts wrong. For a productive solution-based discussion to occur, participants need to understand as much about the facts as possible. For example, in discussing the ASSET bill on the Colorado Youth Summit wiki, some arguments based on misunderstanding or partial understanding of the facts have been made. One example is “If they want to get in-state tuition, they should just become citizens”; this argument is based on the erroneous assumption that there is an avenue for unauthorized students to gain legal status, when for many students there is no possibility that they can gain legal status and the process for others is extremely long and difficult.

Another example is “If unauthorized students get a college education, they will be able to get better jobs”; this may not be the case either, as hiring unauthorized immigrants is illegal, so getting a good job may still be difficult or impossible for undocumented college graduates.

- ⇒ **Assessment of the Effects of the Proposed Solution.** Even if people agree on the importance of a problem, they may disagree about what the best solution would be. They may think that a proposed solution would be too expensive, would simply not work, or would have unintended negative consequences. For example, some opponents of the ASSET bill predict that, if passed, it would draw more unauthorized immigrants to Colorado, an unintended negative outcome. Supporters and opponents disagree about what the financial effects would be for Colorado colleges and universities.
- ⇒ **Personal Values.** Many conflicts arise out of disagreements about which values are most important—the conflict is not between good and evil but between two goods. For example, young people and parents may have conflicts over family policies because young people are concerned about their freedom and autonomy, while parents are worried about their children’s health and safety. In the case of the ASSET bill, the conflicting values are equal opportunity (supporters) and rule of law (opponents). Both of these are important values in our society; how they should be achieved or balanced when in conflict is the issue.
- ⇒ **Self-Interest.** How a policy would affect a specific person can also be a factor in that person’s position on an issue. For example, whether a tax hike would result in your paying more taxes may shape how you feel about that tax hike. If the ASSET bill might help you go to college, you may feel differently about the bill than if you think it might make it more difficult for you to get into the college of your choice. Of course, people may choose to put other factors above their own interests, but that is not always the case.
- ⇒ **Views of Friends, Family, and Respected Others.** As social beings, people are also influenced by the views of their friends, family, and groups to which they belong, as well as public figures they admire or respect. While these influences may not be decisive, they can play a role in shaping views. This may be more true in cases where you do not know too much about an issue; you may opt to adopt the position of a respected friend or public figure who does know a lot about the issue.

3. Ask students to think about their own initial positions on the issue of whether unauthorized immigrant students should be eligible for in-state tuition at Colorado’s public colleges and universities. Tell them to draw a picture representing themselves in the middle of the Factors Influencing Views on Controversial Issues handout and then to create a web showing the influence of these factors on their views. They should put the largest squares or circles around the factors that have the biggest influence on their views, smaller circles or squares around those that are less influential. They should also draw lines to show the connections among the various influences. A completed example is provided to illustrate what students’ work might look like. You may want to project this example for students to examine.
4. Point out that the sample completed handout has a rather small oval around the “Understanding of the Facts” factor. Hopefully, that reflects an honest assessment of how much the person knows about the facts rather than a disregard for them. In the next phase of this unit, students are going to be increasing their understanding of the facts around the ASSET bill so their discussion of the issue can have a solid grounding.

## **Factors Influencing Views on Controversial Issues**

Perception of the Problem

Understanding of the Facts

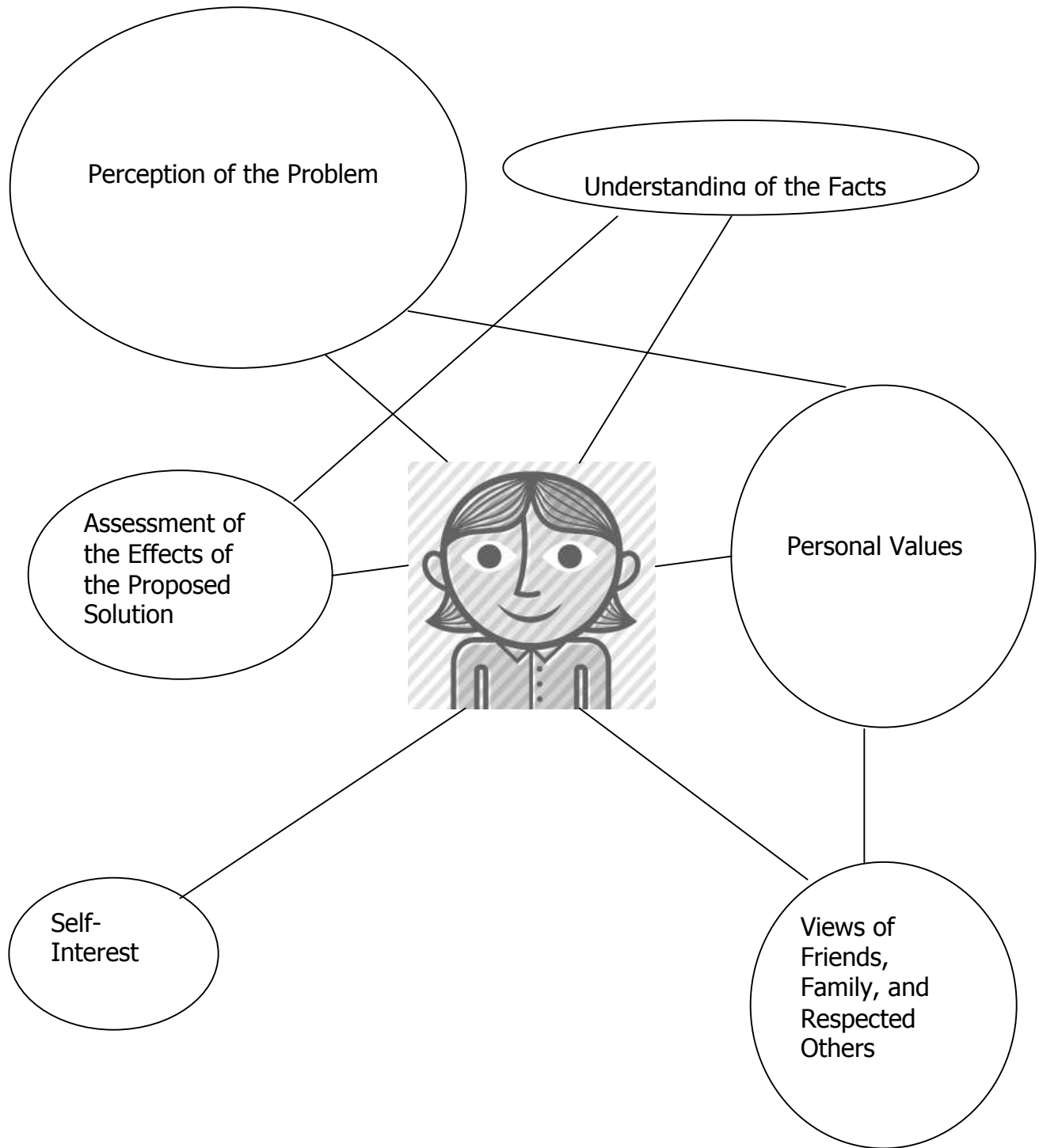
Assessment of the Effects  
of the Proposed Solution

Personal Values

Self-Interest

Views of Friends, Family,  
and Respected Others

## Factors Influencing Views on Controversial Issues



## **Activity 2: Gathering Data on the ASSET Bill**

### **Materials Needed:**

- ⇒ Copies of Senate Bill 11-126 (ASSET) Summary handout for all students.
- ⇒ Copies of GRADE handout for all students.
- ⇒ One or two copies of the data packet for each group of three or four students; cut apart the data cards that appear two to a page so that each data card is separate.
- ⇒ Access to the Internet (optional).

### **Procedure:**

1. Distribute the summary of SB 11-126 and explain that the bill has recently been introduced in the Colorado Senate. As a class, read through and discuss the provisions of the bill. Ask students if there is anything in the bill that is different from their previous understanding. You may want to point out that there is also a federal version of the bill, called the DREAM Act, which has some different provisions students may have heard about. For the Summit, the focus will be on the bill currently being considered in Colorado.
2. Tell students that they are going to be using a special tool for analyzing policy. Distribute the GRADE handout and go over the “tests” used in this analysis model. Make sure students understand each of the sections of the model.
3. Organize the students into groups of three or four, explaining that the groups are going to be using a packet of data that you will provide, as well as their own research, to complete the GRADE analysis. Distribute the data packets, explaining that students should divide up the material, read it, and share the most germane points with their colleagues (that is, each student does not need to read the entire data packet).
4. Allow time for students to read through the data packet and share information within their groups. When the reading/sharing has been completed, students can move on to using the information they have gained to complete the GRADE analysis. If time allows, you may want to have students do additional research to expand their knowledge base.
5. Conduct a class discussion of students’ work, focusing particularly on how students used the data packet to inform their analysis.
6. Tell students that everything they learned today will be useful as they take part in a simulated legislative hearing on the ASSET bill.

## Senate Bill 11-126 (ASSET) Summary

The bill allows a student, other than certain foreign students or trainees defined in federal law, to be classified as an unsubsidized in-state student for tuition purposes so long as the student:

- ⇒ Attended a public or private high school in Colorado for 3 or more years immediately preceding the date the student graduated from a Colorado high school or earned a general educational development certificate (certificate) in Colorado; and
- ⇒ Is admitted to an institution of higher education in Colorado within 12 months after graduating from high school or earning a certificate.

The bill provides a one-year exception to the eligibility requirements for a student who meets all of the eligibility requirements but was not admitted into an institution of higher education within 12 months after graduating from high school or earning a certificate. The exception is repealed on July 1, 2012.

A student applying for the tuition classification who does not have documentation of lawful immigration or nationality status shall submit an affidavit to the institution of higher education, stating that he or she is requesting documentation of, has applied for, or will be applying for lawful status as soon as he or she is eligible. The information contained in the affidavit is confidential and is a protected education record of the student.

A student classified as an unsubsidized in-state student is not eligible for a college opportunity fund stipend or for any state-funded, need-based financial aid.

Eligibility for the tuition classification is not based upon residency. A student who qualifies for unsubsidized in-state student tuition classification shall not be counted as a resident, and the tuition classification shall not be deemed to establish residency or domicile for any purpose.

Verification of lawful presence in the United States is not required for persons applying for unsubsidized tuition classification.

Source: S.B. 11-126, State of Colorado,  
[http://www.leg.state.co.us/CLICS/CLICS2011A/csl.nsf/fsbillcont3/EAC3AE96A6EA0BDC87257808008012A6?Open&file=126\\_01.pdf](http://www.leg.state.co.us/CLICS/CLICS2011A/csl.nsf/fsbillcont3/EAC3AE96A6EA0BDC87257808008012A6?Open&file=126_01.pdf)

## GRADE

As a citizen in a democracy, you'll be confronted with policy questions. Is a tax proposal a good idea? Should you vote for a particular ballot initiative? Government policies can profoundly affect our nation and your life. In a democracy, you have a say on government policies and proposed policies. It's important that you take a critical look at them. Use the following GRADE tests to evaluate a policy:

**G** **oal.** What is the goal of the policy? If you don't know what it's supposed to do, you can't measure its success or failure. Policies are designed to address problems. What problem or problems is this policy supposed to address?

**R** **ivals.** Who might (or does) support the policy? Who might (or does) oppose it? Knowing the rivals can help you understand who the policy might affect and whether the policy favors special interests. Also, rivals are terrific sources for information, but you must check their facts.

**A** **dvantages.** What are the policy's benefits? What is good about the policy? Does the policy address the causes or effects of the problem? Will it achieve (or has it achieved) its goal? Will it achieve the goal efficiently? Is it inexpensive? Does it protect people from harm? Does it ensure people's liberties?

**D** **isadvantages.** What are the policy's costs? What is bad about the policy? Does the policy fail to address the causes or effects of the problem? Is it inefficient? Is it expensive? Does it cause harm? Does it intrude on people's liberties? Are there any potential consequences that may cause damage?

**E** **valuate.** Weigh the advantages versus the disadvantages. Are there alternative policies? One alternative is to do nothing. Most serious problems have various policy proposals. Evaluate them. Look at their goals, advantages, and disadvantages.

Source: Constitutional Rights Foundation, *Civic Action Project* (Los Angeles: CRF, 2009).

**Proposed Policy:**

**Problem or Issue the policy is attempting to address:**

**G**

**Goal/s**

**R**

**Rivals**

**A**

**Advantages**

**D**

**Disadvantages**

**E**

**Evaluate**



## Data Card 1: Tuition in Colorado's Public Colleges and Universities

Tuition varies from school to school. It also varies from program to program within individual schools. Here are a couple of examples of tuition rates (students must also pay required fees):

### *University of Colorado College of Engineering (15 credit hours)*

In-state tuition: \$5,803 per semester

In-state tuition with College Opportunity Fund: \$4,873 per semester (this rate will not be available to unauthorized immigrant students)

Out-of-state tuition: \$15,200 per semester

Source: University of Colorado, <http://www.colorado.edu/bursar/now/tuitfeebill.html>.

### *Community College of Aurora (15 credit hours)*

In-state tuition: \$2,373.75 per semester

In-state tuition with College Opportunity Fund: \$1,443.75 per semester (this rate will not be available to unauthorized immigrant students)

Out-of-state tuition: \$6,204 per semester

Source: Community College of Aurora, <http://www.ccaurora.edu/students/paying-college/tuition-fees/tuition-tables>.

*Note:* The law does not apply to private universities, such as Colorado College, Regis University, or the University of Denver.

## Data Card 2: Number of Unauthorized Immigrants in Colorado

It is difficult to identify exactly how many unauthorized immigrants live in the United States or any specific state. Here are the most recent estimates from the Pew Research Center:

Unauthorized immigrants in the United States as of March 2010: 11.2 million (down from 12 million in 2007)

Unauthorized immigrants in Colorado as of March 2010: 180,000 (down from 240,000 in 2007)

No one is sure of the reasons for the recent declines. Some say they are due to the problems in the economy. Others think the declines are due to tougher laws passed in recent years.

Source: Jeffrey S. Passel and D'Vera Cohn, *Unauthorized Immigrant Population: National and State Trends* (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, 2011), <http://pewhispanic.org/files/reports/133.pdf>.

### **Data Card 3: Fiscal Impact**

The Colorado Legislative Council prepares a fiscal note on any legislation that may involve costs to the state. With respect to SB 11-126, the Legislative Council estimates that approximately 737 students would be eligible for in-state tuition under the bill. However, it is difficult to estimate how many students would take advantage of the program, as not every student wants to go to college or qualifies for admission.

Based on an estimate of 50 to 100 undocumented students actually taking advantage of the opportunity to pay in-state tuition at a Colorado public college or university, the Legislative Council projects that the state will take in between \$215,625 and \$431,250 in tuition. The equivalent amount will be spent in providing education to the students who pay this tuition. A small number of unauthorized immigrants who are currently enrolled but paying out-of-state tuition may now qualify for in-state tuition, creating a slight offset to the additional tuition received.

Overall, the Legislative Council has assessed the bill as fiscally neutral.

Source: Josh Abram, “Fiscal Impact Note SB11-126” (Denver, CO: Colorado Legislative Council, 2011),

[http://www.leg.state.co.us/CLICS/CLICS2011A/csl.nsf/fsbillcont3/EAC3AE96A6EA0BDC87257808008012A6?Open&file=126\\_01.pdf](http://www.leg.state.co.us/CLICS/CLICS2011A/csl.nsf/fsbillcont3/EAC3AE96A6EA0BDC87257808008012A6?Open&file=126_01.pdf).

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### **Data Card 4: Some Supporters and Opponents of the ASSET Bill and/or DREAM Act**

#### *Supporters*

Higher Education Access Alliance  
(<http://www.heaacolorado.org/>)

American Association of State Colleges and Universities (<http://www.aacu.org/>)

Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition  
(<http://coloradoimmigrant.org/>)

The College Board (<http://collegeboard.com/>)

#### *Opponents*

Federation for American Immigration Reform  
(<http://www.fairus.org/site/PageServer>)

NumbersUSA  
(<http://www.numbersusa.com/content>)

The Heritage Foundation  
(<http://www.heritage.org>)

Tea Party (<http://www.teaparty.org>)

## **Data Card 5: Other Laws and Proposed Laws Related to Tuition**

In 1996, Congress passed and President Bill Clinton signed the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act. One goal of the law was to stop states from giving the benefit of a college education to unauthorized immigrants. The Congressional Research Service has said some aspects of the law are unclear. The law did clearly bar unauthorized immigrant students from receiving state loans or scholarships to public colleges and universities. These students were already ineligible for federal financial aid.

After this federal law was passed, several states enacted laws allowing unauthorized immigrant students who have been in the United States for an extended period to pay in-state tuition. These states are: California, Illinois, Kansas, New Mexico, Nebraska, New York, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wisconsin. These states do not appear to have had a large influx of unauthorized immigrants as a result of the tuition laws. Estimates of the financial impact vary wildly, however. For example, a group that challenged California's law, the Immigration Reform Law Institute, claims the law costs California more than \$200 million every year. On the other hand, in announcing his sponsorship of the ASSET bill, Colorado Senator Michael Johnston (D-Denver) claimed that the law in Texas generated increased revenues on the order of \$29 million.

In 2004, a bipartisan group of U.S. Senators introduced the "Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act." The group included conservative Senator Orrin Hatch (R) of Utah and liberal Senator Richard Durbin (D) of Illinois. The DREAM Act would provide undocumented high school students a legal opportunity to pursue and get financial help to attend college or serve in the armed forces. To qualify, students could not have a criminal record. In addition, they must have entered the United States before they were 16 and lived in the country for at least five years. They must have graduated from high school or its equivalent. The DREAM Act would also provide an avenue for students who complete college or military service to gain legal status. Although the DREAM Act has not been enacted to date, President Barack Obama did speak of its importance in his 2011 State of the Union Address.

## Data Card 6: A Brief Summary of U.S. Immigration Policy

### Who Can Immigrate to the United States?

About 900,000 people legally immigrate to the United States each year. They enter under one of the following categories. The limits in each category result in long waiting lists.

- ⇒ **Employment-based preference.** Most of these immigrants have high-level skills in demand in the economy and not available among U.S. citizens. In recent years, this group has been dominated by engineers and people with skills related to computers. Up to 140,000 visas per year can be issued in this category; 10,000 of those visas are made available for low-skilled workers.
- ⇒ **Family-sponsored immigrants.** This category actually includes two subcategories: (1) a limited number of relatives who can be sponsored by an individual, which includes adult children of U.S. citizens, spouses and children of legal resident aliens, and siblings of citizens and (2) an unlimited number of minor children, spouses, and parents who can be sponsored by U.S. citizens. Up to 480,000 visas can be issued in this category annually.
- ⇒ **Diversity.** This category allows individuals to come to the United States based on the fact that their home country was underrepresented among immigrants in the recent past. Up to 55,000 people can get these visas, which are decided by a lottery.
- ⇒ **Refugees/Asylees.** This category includes people fleeing their home countries because of persecution “on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.” Refugees are chosen from applicants outside the United States; asylees are people who reach the United States and then apply for entry. The President decides how many refugees can enter the country. The number of asylees is not limited.

### Naturalization

Legal immigrants have most, but not all, of the rights of citizens. They cannot vote or hold political office. They are ineligible for food stamps and Supplemental Security Income, a program for older and disabled people, until they have lived in the United States for five years. The law provides a process for legal immigrants to become citizens: they must live in the United States for five years, be of good moral character, demonstrate proficiency in English, and pass a test on U.S. history and government. The percentage of immigrants becoming naturalized citizens has increased sharply in the past few years.

### Controlling Illegal Immigration

The United States has policies designed to control illegal entry into the United States. First, the Border Patrol, which has nearly tripled in size since 1990, works to stop illegal border crossings. In addition, fences have been built along some of the most popular crossing points on the U.S.-Mexico border. Second, employers must check the documents of all workers they hire; they can be subject to sanctions if they employ unauthorized immigrants. However, employers need only check to see that documents appear to be genuine. Checking more closely or asking for more documents might constitute unlawful discrimination.

## Data Card 7: Arguments for and Against In-State Tuition for Unauthorized Immigrants

### *Arguments for the ASSET Bill*

1. Education should be a human right. Support for higher education for everyone meets a basic need of every person in our democracy. In the twenty-first century, many jobs require a college education.
2. Democracy depends on everyone being educated. Realistically, all unauthorized immigrants cannot be deported. Thus, many undocumented high school graduates will remain in the United States. Allowing them to receive a better education will allow them to become more productive. While getting a job will be difficult under current law, immigration reform could provide an avenue for these young people to apply for citizenship. If they have college educations, they will be better prepared for that role—and for the good jobs available to them when they attain legal status.
3. Most children did not decide to enter the country illegally. Their parents made that decision for them. Making higher education inaccessible to them punishes children for what their parents did.
4. Offering support for college education to law-abiding, unauthorized immigrants is fair and in the best interests of the country. The best way to learn about being a citizen is to go to school. Providing unauthorized immigrant students with publicly funded education will encourage them to become full participants in our democracy.
5. Providing publicly funded higher education does not give unauthorized alien students any special privileges. It merely removes barriers that currently prevent them from reaching their full potential.

### *Arguments against the ASSET Bill*

1. Providing government support for college education for unauthorized immigrant students is misguided. A central purpose of public education is to prepare young people for citizenship. It is foolish to spend public dollars educating people who are not citizens and who have no chance of becoming citizens under current U.S. law. They cannot legally get a job; to use their degrees, they may have to leave the United States. That is not a good investment!
2. Every country gives citizens privileges that non-citizens do not have. In a democracy, citizens participate in the decisions of government and therefore receive special benefits such as the right to vote, to travel in and out of the country freely, and to receive public support for higher education.
3. Government support for higher education is an allocation by citizens of limited public resources. Providing unauthorized alien students with a college education means less money for other programs that benefit legal immigrants and citizens.
4. While children are not responsible for the decisions of their parents, our democracy is responsible for meeting only their basic human needs. Our democracy does not owe unauthorized immigrant children a college education. Many citizens cannot afford a college education either. Their needs should be met before we help immigrants who came here illegally.
5. People should not be rewarded for illegal behavior. Providing government support for college education to unauthorized alien students will only encourage more families to enter our country illegally so that their children can benefit.

Source: Adapted from “Educating Non-Citizens,” *Deliberating in a Democracy* (Chicago: Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago, 2010), <http://www.deliberating.org>.

## Data Card 8: Related Court Cases

***Plyler v. Doe (1982)***. In this case, the Supreme Court ruled that unauthorized immigrant students can attend K-12 public schools. A Texas law did not provide state funds to local school districts for children who were not “legally admitted” to the country. Under this law, local schools could refuse to enroll students who had entered the country illegally. By a vote of 5 to 4, the Court struck down the law, saying it violated the Fourteenth Amendment. The Court said that banning these students from public schools would impose a lifetime hardship on children who were not responsible for their status. Under *Plyler*, every child in the United States, regardless of legal status, is entitled to a free public education through high school.

***Toll v. Moreno (1976)***. Maryland had a state policy that denied in-state tuition to non-immigrants holding G-4 visas. G-4 visas are issued to foreign officers or employees of international organizations and members of their families. The Maryland policy applied to G-4 visa-holders who lived in Maryland and would otherwise have qualified for in-state tuition. The Supreme Court held the policy violated the Supremacy Clause of the Constitution. The Supremacy Clause says that the Constitution and laws of the United States are “the supreme Law of the Land.” State laws or policies that conflict with federal law are preempted. Federal law allowed G-4 visa-holders to establish residency in the United States. Thus, the Maryland policy was preempted by that law.

***Equal Access Education v. Merten (2004)***. This case involved unauthorized immigrants in the state of Virginia. Virginia was denying unauthorized immigrants admission to its public colleges and universities. A group of these young people sued, claiming that Virginia’s actions violated the Supremacy Clause, the Commerce Clause, and the Due Process Clause. The federal district court dismissed the Commerce Clause and Due Process Clause claims. While it eventually dismissed the Supremacy Clause claim on procedural grounds, the court did state there is “no Supremacy Clause bar to these institutions’ offering or denying admission to illegal aliens, provided, with respect to the latter, that they use only federal standards in doing so and do not systematically or consistently misapply those standards.”

***Martinez v. Regents of the University of California (2010)***. Out-of-state students at California colleges and universities brought this lawsuit. They claimed that California’s law allowing unauthorized immigrants (and some other “nonresidents”) to pay in-state tuition discriminated against them. The California Supreme Court unanimously upheld the law, saying that because the benefit of in-state tuition is based on attendance at a California high school for three or more years, it is not based on residence and thus does not violate the 1996 federal law. That law bans states from providing a postsecondary benefit to illegal immigrants, based on their state residency, if the same benefit is not available to legal residents.

## Activity 3: Simulated Legislative Hearing on the ASSET Bill

### Materials Needed:

- ⇒ Enough copies of each Role Card for members of that group.
- ⇒ Data Packets and Copies of Senate Bill 11-126 (ASSET) Summary and completed GRADE handout from previous activity.

### Procedure:

1. Remind students that as legislators consider SB 11-126, they will be seeking information that will help them make a good decision. One way they do that is by holding hearings at which citizens can provide testimony. Hearings are held in committees, smaller groups of legislators who consider whether bills related to particular topics should be considered by the full House or Senate. Explain that, in the next part of this lesson, students are going to act as members of the Colorado Senate Education Committee and people testifying before the committee on the issue of allowing unauthorized immigrants to pay in-state tuition. Students will be drawing on everything they learned in the previous activity; some of them may be representing a position that is not aligned with their own position, so their knowledge of data and arguments will be critical.
2. Organize the class into five groups—the committee and four groups that are going to testify before the committee. Give each group their **Role Card**. (**Note:** Members of the actual Senate Education Committee are listed at <http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite?c=Page&childpagename=CGA-LegislativeCouncil/CLCLayout&cid=1251568870876&pagename=CLCWrapper>. If you wish to have students take the parts of actual Senators, you can use the list to make assignments, and students can then link to the websites of the Senators they are playing; all but one have websites.) Tell the groups to read the directions and ask for any questions on which they need clarification before they begin their preparation. Allow time for students to prepare for the hearing.
3. Conduct the simulated hearing. At the conclusion of the hearing, if time permits, have members of the committee discuss and vote on the bill. If time is limited, you may simply want to poll members of the committee to learn their positions on the bill:
  - ⇒ What were the strongest arguments supporting the ASSET bill?
  - ⇒ What were the strongest arguments opposing the ASSET bill?
  - ⇒ For students who were representing a position different from their own personal beliefs: How difficult was it to make the argument for the position you disagreed with? What did you learn from doing so?
  - ⇒ What did you learn from the discussion and testimony at the hearing? What purpose does such testimony and discussion serve?
  - ⇒ If you were a Senator and you knew your constituents were split on these issues, what would you do?
  - ⇒ If you were a Senator and a majority of your constituents disagreed with your position, would you vote your own beliefs or your constituents'?

⇒ If your party told its members to vote in one way but you disagreed with that position, what would you do?

⇒ Is a compromise possible on this issue? Why or why not?

4. Ask students to reflect on everything they learned in studying this issue and write an elevator speech presenting their personal position on the issue, with the strongest supporting arguments and evidence they can muster. An elevator speech is a brief speech that they might deliver riding between floors at the state Capitol with their state representative or Senator.
5. Have delegates to the Colorado Youth Summit prepare a summary of your class's position on the issue to post on the project wiki.



## Role Card

### Committee Directions

You are the **Colorado Senate Education Committee**. The committee has eight members, five from the majority party and three from the minority party. The chair of the committee, who runs the hearing, is a member of the majority party. (Currently, that is the Democrats.)

Your committee is holding hearings on Senate Bill 11-126, the ASSET bill (Advancing Students for A Stronger Economy Tomorrow). Today, you will hear testimony from four citizens or citizen groups. Two support the bill, and two oppose it.

To prepare for the hearing, do the following:

1. Decide which members of your group will be Republicans and which Democrats. The majority party should elect the chair (or head) of the committee. The chair will run the hearing. Note that the issue of immigration does not necessarily split along party lines. Alliances on both sides of the issue can include members of both parties.
2. Create a list of arguments for and against the proposed bill. If time permits, conduct additional research on the bill.
3. Develop questions you want to ask the people testifying at the hearing.
4. Go over the committee procedures so you will know what to do during the hearing.

### Committee Procedures

1. The chair (head) calls the committee to order and announces the bill on which testimony will be taken. One at a time, the chair then calls the groups in the following order:
  - ⇒ Equity in Higher Education (supporting the ASSET bill)
  - ⇒ Professor Gail Miller (supporting the ASSET bill)
  - ⇒ Protect Our Borders (opposing the ASSET bill)
  - ⇒ Robin Lopez (opposing the ASSET bill)
2. Following the statement from each citizen or citizen group, committee members should have an opportunity to ask questions. Questions start with the chair and then alternate between the parties.
3. When all the citizens have been heard, the committee can discuss and vote on the bill.
4. The chair adjourns the hearing.

## **Role Card**

### **Directions for “Equity in Higher Education”**

Your organization represents students, educators, and others who support the ASSET bill. The United States is based on such values as equality of opportunity and diversity. The ASSET bill supports those values by giving hard-working young people a chance to attend college.

To prepare for the hearing:

1. Identify the most persuasive arguments in favor of your position. If time allows, do some additional research to strengthen your arguments.
2. Write a two-minute speech outlining your position. In your speech, state your position at the beginning. Then give the most persuasive arguments in favor of your position. Back up your arguments with evidence. End by asking the committee to take the action you support.
3. Think about the questions you might be asked and how you could answer those questions. It may help to think about the arguments for the other side.
4. Pick a member of your group to deliver the testimony. Other members of the group can help answer questions.

Remember to thank the members of the committee and to be extremely polite during your testimony.

## Role Card

### Directions for Professor Gail Miller

You are a professor at one of Colorado's top law schools. You support the ASSET bill and believe it is constitutional. However, you are concerned that unauthorized immigrant students who do graduate from college will have difficulty finding a good job. Thus, you also support passage of a federal DREAM Act providing a pathway to citizenship for these young people.

To prepare for the hearing:

1. Identify the most persuasive arguments in favor of your position. If time allows, do some additional research to strengthen your arguments.
2. Write a two-minute speech outlining your position. In your speech, state your position at the beginning. Then give the most persuasive arguments in favor of your position. Back up your arguments with evidence. End by asking the committee to take the action you support.
3. Think about the questions you might be asked and how you could answer those questions. It may help to think about the arguments for the other side.
4. Pick a member of your group to deliver the testimony. Other members of the group can help answer questions.

Remember to thank the members of the committee and to be extremely polite during your testimony.

## Role Card

### Directions for “Protect Our Borders”

Your organization opposes the ASSET bill as well as the federal DREAM Act. You do not believe the United States should continue to offer benefits to people who entered the country illegally.

To prepare for the hearing:

1. Identify the most persuasive arguments in favor of your position. If time allows, do some additional research to strengthen your arguments.
2. Write a two-minute speech outlining your position. In your speech, state your position at the beginning. Then give the most persuasive arguments in favor of your position. Back up your arguments with evidence. End by asking the committee to take the action you support.
3. Think about the questions you might be asked and how you could answer those questions. It may help to think about the arguments for the other side.
4. Pick a member of your group to deliver the testimony. Other members of the group can help answer questions.

Remember to thank the members of the committee and to be extremely polite during your testimony.

## Role Card

### Directions for Robin Lopez

You are a small business owner in Colorado. You are not against immigrants—your parents were immigrants. But you do not think that the ASSET bill is a good idea. You know plenty of citizens who cannot afford to send their children to the University of Colorado. You would prefer that the state devote its resources to helping its citizens.

To prepare for the hearing:

1. Identify the most persuasive arguments in favor of your position. If time allows, do some additional research to strengthen your arguments.
2. Write a two-minute speech outlining your position. In your speech, state your position at the beginning. Then give the most persuasive arguments in favor of your position. Back up your arguments with evidence. End by asking the committee to take the action you support.
3. Think about the questions you might be asked and how you could answer those questions. It may help to think about the arguments for the other side.
4. Pick a member of your group to deliver the testimony. Other members of the group can help answer questions.

Remember to thank the members of the committee and to be extremely polite during your testimony.

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## For More Information:

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