

DENVER & THE WEST

BIGGER RIDERSHIP
FastTracks forecast twice the previous » 45



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MALL HAS MUSCLE

Today marks the 20th anniversary of Cherry Creek mall's opening. Although outdoor shopping centers have become the hot trend in retail development, the Denver mall remains the dominant shopping center in a six-state region. » 78

Wall Street

DOW JONES	↓ 1.14
	10,302.01
NASDAQ	↑ 8.39
	2,113.87
S&P 500	↓ 0.13
	1,079.38
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Districts a study in reform

One makes gains on CSAP; one in "implementation dip"

By Jeremy P. Meyer
The Denver Post

A tale of two north metro school reforms is unfolding in achievement-test results as one district looks to be thriving and another is in the throes of mastering a new educa-

tion system. Mapleton Public Schools began its reform effort five years ago. This year, its Colorado Student Assessment Program test results improved in six of eight grades tested in reading — as much as 7 percentage points in sixth-grade reading — and in five of

eight grades tested in math. Westminister 50, which started its reform last year, saw scores drop in seven of eight grades in reading and math, plummeting up to 13 percentage points in seventh-grade math. "It is exactly what we predicted would happen," said Westminister Superintendent Roberta Selleck. "It is the infamous 'implementation dip.' It will take us three years, maybe four or five." Westminister, also known as Adams

50, began its "standards-based" reform last year, the most radical portion of which placed elementary and middle-school students in classrooms based on their achievement levels, rather than ages. Westminister CSAP declines were logged in nearly every grade, subject and school. Overall, reading scores fell nearly 4 percentage points to 40.2 percent proficiency. Sixteen of 18 schools saw their scores fall. In math, only 27 percent of students

were proficient, overall — a 3 point drop from 2009. Fifteen of 18 schools showed declines. "I don't feel this is failing," Selleck said. "Our teachers are learning a brand-new way of instructing kids. They had to learn the new standards, a new technological system." No district as large as the 10,000-student Westminister 50 has tried such a reform. A few districts in Alaska have tried REFORM » 38

THREAT OVER THE PLAINS



A funnel cloud hovers over Deer Trail, east of Denver, as severe weather pushed through the area Monday afternoon. Storms in metro Denver and on the Eastern Plains dumped several inches of rain in some areas and spawned four tornadoes. There were no immediate reports of damage from the twisters, which touched down briefly near Deer Trail and Agate, and in Morgan County. A metro-area teen suffered minor injuries in a lightning strike. » 28 Joe Amon, The Denver Post

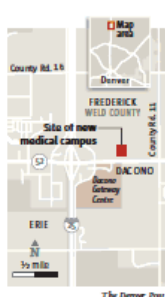


CSU fosters love of print journalism

There's a week before classes start at Colorado State University, and most students are squeezing every last minute out of their summer vacations. Except for the young men and women who packed for five days into a windowless room in a lecture-hall basement. This is the staff of the Rocky Mountain Collegian, one of the oldest college dailies in the West and the only one in print in Colorado that is still run by students. The team of reporters, photographers, designers and editors is carrying on the school's 120-year tradition of independent news-reporting and taking its own gambles in careers as print journalists. "I'd probably make more money GREENE » 38

Hospitals partner on campus in Frederick

FREDERICK Two huge regional hospitals in northern Colorado — Longmont United Hospital and Poudre Valley Health System in Fort Collins — said Monday that they will jointly build a medical campus for underserved southwest Weld County. They 20-acre complex is planned for the northeast corner of Interstate 25 and Colorado 51 in Frederick. "The campus will fill a need for convenient medical services that have been absent in our area," said Mayor Eric Doering. "Our area will also benefit from new job opportunities and economic growth." A site master plan for the campus will be under development until late fall. The campus site and cost have not been determined, said Longmont United spokeswoman Karen Logan. The first building to go up is expected to be an urgent care center, followed by other medical buildings. HOSPITAL » 38



Penalty in Avanza pricing suit called insufficient

By Yesenia Robles
The Denver Post
After Nash Finch Co. — Avanza Supermarket's parent company — admitted to charging customers more than posted prices, six people in the lawsuit were each awarded \$100, but one man said that is not enough. "Nash Finch has to know this is not the end," said Francisco Gamex, one of the first to raise awareness of Avanza's pricing policy through a radio show on 1590 AM. "They can't come to Colorado and do whatever they want with our community," he said. At issue was a practice by Nash Finch used only at its Avanza stores in which customers were charged 10 percent more at the register than what was stated on price tags. The pricing policy was eliminated in April 2009. BROOKERY » 38

MAES CAMPAIGN

Running mate on tap for today

The gubernatorial hopeful has talked to candidates as more GOP leaders offer support.

By Karen E. Crummy
The Denver Post

Buoyed by endorsements from two prominent GOP leaders, Dan Maes' first important decision as the Republican gubernatorial nominee comes today when he is expected to announce his running mate.

Former U.S. Sens. Hank Brown and Wayne Allard threw their support behind Maes on Monday, the campaign said.

"My background is that of a small businessman who was compelled to run for office out of a desire for public service, and Dan Maes is cut from that same die," Allard said. "He's someone who has run his own company, met payroll and will apply private-sector principles to public-sector problems." Maes, required by state law to choose his lieutenant governor by the end of the day, spent the weekend interviewing candidates. "We're looking for the most-qualified person," said Nate Strach, a spokesman for Maes. "Someone who understands the state of Colorado and is an asset to the state, as well as to Dan."

Tom Tancredo, the American Constitution Party's candidate for governor, is running with Doug "Dayhorse" Campbell, who had been tapped for the spot by the person Tancredo recently replaced on the ticket. Tancredo, a former GOP congressman, said he doesn't expect a change but could name a replacement if Campbell chose to drop out.

Campbell, who has run repeatedly for the U.S. Senate, said he would "release information to the press at the appropriate time." Democratic candidate John Hickenlooper announced his pick of Joe Garcia, president of Colorado State Uni-



campbell is on the American Constitution Party ticket with Tancredo.

dp Online. Get updates and reactions from last week's primaries. denverpost.com/section2010

HOSPITAL: First facility to offer urgent care

◀FROM 1B

Mitchell Carson, Longmont United's president and chief executive, said rapid growth in southwest Weld demanded that a high-quality medical facility be developed there.

"We're focusing first on meeting the area's most critical need," Carson said, "and our early assessment indicates that need is urgent care."

The campus will serve Frederick, Firestone, Dacono, Erie and rural areas — a region with about 60,000 residents — as well as commuters along I-25 and tourists.

St. Anthony North Hospital is also making a play for business in that corridor. Spokeswoman Jenny Bertrand said the hospital has plans for a medical office building, free-standing emergency department and outpatient imaging center at 1455 and 144th Avenue in Westminster.

With a population of 8,000 people, Frederick has seen an annual 13-percent growth rate during the past decade. It is also projected to have 60,000 residents by 2030, according to a news release.

Talks between the hospitals about building a campus in southwest Weld started last year, Logan said.

Bruce Stacey, Poudre Valley Health System president and CEO, said the joint venture is a "distinctively bold approach" in an industry where health-care organizations in the same region of a state typically expand on their own rather than partner with competing organizations to build a project.

Poudre Valley Health System entered into a joint venture with Regional West Medical Center in Scottsbluff, Neb., to build and, in 2009, open the Medical Center of the Rockies in Loveland. Officials said that was the first time in the U.S. that two nonprofits hospitals — each in a different state — partnered to build a hospital.

A dozen physician clinics in Fort Collins, Greeley and Loveland have become part of Poudre Valley Health, including Greeley Medical Clinic, the region's largest physician clinic.

Longmont United, meanwhile, has been steadily expanding its projects include a new 18,000-square-foot emergency department, which opened in March 2008, and the installation of a state-of-the-art MRI machine.

To develop the campus, the hospitals created a nonprofit company, Carbon Valley Healthcare Holdings Corp. Each hospital has a 50 percent ownership in the facility.

The nonprofit owns the land and will own the facilities. Carson will be board president, and Longmont United will manage the campus.

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PICKS: Maes gets leaders' backing

◀FROM 1B

versity-Pueblo, on Aug. 5.

Despite repeatedly criticizing Colorado's GOP establishment, Maes welcomed the endorsements.

"It's the character of the individual not their perceived roles in the establishment," Strach said, noting that Maes was "reaching out" to conservatives.

Former state Senate President John Andrews and current Republican national committee member Mark Hillman endorsed Maes last week.

Prior to winning last week's primary, Maes discussed offering the lieutenant governor position to Peggy Littleton, a member of the state board of education. Littleton, who said she was "honored and humbled" by Maes approaching her, is committed to her run for El Paso County commissioner.

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Council backs gay-partner bill

The federal proposal supports residency for international partners.

By Christopher N. Osher
The Denver Post

The Denver City Council went on record Monday as supporting proposed federal legislation that would allow gay people to seek legal residency in the United States for their partners living in other countries.

The council approved a proclamation, at the urging of Councilman Doug Linkhart, that states: "The city of Denver respects the proper legal rights of all immigrant groups and families, including gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender family structures."

The proclamation states the council supports the federal legislation, which is sponsored by U.S. Rep. Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y.; U.S. Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., and U.S. Rep. Diana DeGette, D-Colo.

The council approved the proclamation on an 11-0 vote, with little comment. Councilmen Michael Hancock and Charlie Brown were absent.

In other news, the council approved 10-1, with Councilman Paul Lopez dissenting, a \$22.5 million contract to build a new jail annex. Linkhart had for months tried to block the contract because he thought the annex was unnecessary. Linkhart said he decided to support the annex after the administration of Mayor John Hickenlooper agreed that the first \$600,000 in revenue raised by renting out beds in the jail annex would go toward financing programs to help parolees re-enter society.

The council also agreed to pay \$22,500 to settle a federal lawsuit brought by Chad Fortie, who alleged excessive force by Denver police Officer Kenneth Johnson.

The lawsuit stated that on March 14, 2009, Fortie walked across the 16th Street Mall as he was on his way to let his dog out of his girlfriend's apartment, located downtown.

The lawsuit stated that it is believed a security camera videotaped Fortie being "pumped on from behind, punched and struck" by Johnson.

That videotape would show that Johnson's account of the incident was inaccurate, according to the lawsuit.

The council also agreed to settle, for \$43,000, a lawsuit filed in Denver District Court that alleged Mollie Kwasinski sustained injuries July 20, 2008, after Officer Roni Robertson was negligent in driving a police car.

Kwasinski hit another car from behind while driving on Interstate 70. The report states she suffered injuries after Robertson waved her into traffic traveling eastbound and Robertson's vehicle struck Kwasinski's.

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“I was surprised when I found out only six people get the benefit of the suit ... It's not fair.” Francisco Gamez, on the Avanza lawsuit



Francisco Gamez talks to the media Monday about the outcome of the Avanza lawsuit. Gamez, who has a radio show on 1190 AM, has started looking for new lawyers to represent the hundreds who have called him since Avanza's parent company, Nash Finch, admitted to deceptive pricing practices. Leah Miller, The Denver Post

GROCERY: Class-action suit is possible

◀FROM 1B

Gamez, with support from the Hispanic Coalition Group, has started looking for new lawyers to represent the hundreds who have been calling him.

He gathered more than 100 people for the original lawsuit through his radio show.

"I was surprised when I found out only six people get the benefit of the suit," Gamez said. "That was my surprise. It's not fair."

Craig Silverman, one of the lawyers who worked on the lawsuit, said it was a matter of strategy.

"The six were selected out of more than 100 who wanted to join the lawsuit because they shopped between June and November, had receipts

and were available for the long hours of interrogations, he said.

"Other people may still have good cases against Avanza, and we will look at those cases," Silverman said. "They have not lost their rights."

Silverman said that under Colorado's Consumer Protection Act, customers have three years to file a claim.

The lawsuit was not filed as a class-action suit to cover everyone, he said, in part because the reward is the best and often in the form of gift certificates for the store.

Gamez, who was not one of the plaintiffs, said it is not about the money.

"It's not me, it's the community who's angry, but we're here for the respect," he said.

Silverman has not ruled out a future class-action suit against Nash Finch.

"We decided this was the correct way to approach it at first, and we have proven it correct with this win," Silverman said. "But we have received a tremendous number of calls, and we will make a further decision on how to proceed down the road."

Attorneys for Nash Finch, which acknowledged in court that the 10 percent charge violated the Consumer Protection Act, have not returned calls for comment since Friday.

In the meantime, Gamez said anyone interested in joining future lawsuits can call 720-496-4954.

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State office shells out \$357,487 on lawsuits

By Jessica Fender
The Denver Post

A glut of lawsuits challenging Colorado election rules has forced the secretary of state's office to spend more than ever before to defend itself.

The half-dozen lawsuits — a hodgepodge of challenges to restrictions on fundraising, petitioning and a voter-registration fight leftover from the 2008 election — left the office with a \$37,487 legal tab for the fiscal year ending June 30.

The sum tops the previous year by nearly \$60,000 and is more than tri-

ple the legal bill for fiscal year 2005-06, the last comparable point in the state election calendar.

"The secretary of state's office must defend any challenge to the election laws on the books, said spokesman Rich Coolidge.

"It's been a pretty unique year with candidates," Coolidge said. "Groups are at the Capitol changing the laws as well."

The most expensive item of the fiscal year is an ongoing fight between election-reform group Colorado Common Cause and the state over

voter registrations that were disqualified in 2008. The lawsuit has cost Colorado \$55,000, though not all of that was spent in 2009-10, Coolidge said.

The secretary of state is defended by the Colorado attorney general's office, which bills for its time. Because one state agency is paying another, it is mostly a budgeting and accounting function.

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GREENE: Newspaper legacy still burns bright

◀FROM 1B

flipping burgers. But it's the only thing I'm ever happy doing," said sports editor Matt Stephens, 23, of his newspaper habit.

It is tough to know what to make of these students.

They are, in part, throwbacks — devotees of a medium that most of their schoolmates rarely use other than an occasional Sudoku during a tiresome lecture.

The Collegian's staffers love the look, feel and even the smell of the newspapers for which their laptop-browsing friends mock them for skipping classes to produce.

They're idealists — believers, still, in the power of the press to change the world.

And they're risk-takers — opting out of steadier careers in sciences or finance, say, because they want to report the news in a paper made out of trees and delivered by trucks, even if their readers are mainly old folks like professors and parents. Downstaging be damned, they say about the print newspaper industry. If the ship is going down, they tell me, somebody has to go down with it.

"What are you crazy?" I asked them Monday, the first day of their five-day training.

"Nope," said Alejandra Sitch, 21. "We're just in love with the print process."

Sitch grew up reading the Rocky Mountain News, critiquing its content and noticing the way it was laid out so carefully. Now, as the Collegian's design editor, she is honing a craft that some day may be as impractical as book binding and as anachronistic as learning ancient Greek.

"I feel like there's an expiration date on this skill," she said.

Samantha Baker had planned a bioengineering major when she took her first shot as a Collegian photographer. She was hooked. It wasn't easy coming out of the closet about her journalistic leanings.

"For a while, my family was like, 'Oh, it's just a hobby, you'll get over it and go back to engineering,'" she said.

It's good work, print journalism, if you can get it — and are lucky enough to keep it. For the staff at the Collegian who make so a story, it is a labor of love that's barely enough to sustain them on ramen noodles and Red Bulls.

Madeline Novey had mapped out a career as a chiropractor when she enrolled at CSU three years ago. A chemistry class changed her mind. Now she's editor in chief of the Collegian, running a newsroom of 60 journalists.

"We have the privilege of getting to step into people's lives, learning about what's important to them and how to change a community," she told me.

Like every other print journalist I know, she's worried — even at age 20 — about the future of her craft.

Someday, she knows, the ink will run out.

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