



**CLARK COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS  
AND PROFESSIONAL-TECHNICAL EMPLOYEES**

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**CCASAP Presentation to the Advisory Committee Overseeing the Reorganization of the Clark County School District  
Presented by Stephen Augspurger, CCASAP Executive Director  
Monday, August 7, 2017**

**1. CCSD CULTURAL SHIFT - THUS FAR, AN ILLUSION FOR SCHOOLS:**

While a “cultural shift” has been frequently discussed, principals and school organizational teams (SOTs) have not yet seen tangible evidence of a cultural change that would suggest that the Clark County School District is shedding its bureaucratic characteristics and becoming a central service organization.

For example, if a CCSD culture shift was more than just intent, principals and SOTs would no longer see the following:

1. Schools would no longer be viewed as “cash cows” with student-teacher ratios being increased without consultation or agreement with principals. This practice happens with regularity.
2. If there was a culture in the CCSD that viewed schools as the most important places, schools having teacher vacancies would receive the total dollar amount difference between the cost of a substitute teacher (approximately \$23,000) and the cost of the teacher vacancy (\$83,000 for salary and benefits, equaling a \$60,000 differential). Instead, on July 5, 2017, the Board of School Trustees was notified by District leadership, through a document titled Attrition Tutorial, that the figure used to determine the difference between the cost of a substitute and the cost of the vacant teaching position would be based on the average cost of a new teacher, reported at \$62,000. With the average cost of a teacher vacancy at \$83,000, the District will retain \$21,000 for central administration purposes at the expense of the school. **This practice is contrary to Section 17 of the law.**
3. If the culture had really changed, schools would no longer be victimized by poorly-performing employees being assigned to the school by central administration against the wishes of the principal and SOT. This practice was referred to as “passing the trash” in a recent Las Vegas Review-Journal article (by Amelia Pak-Harvey, dated March 24, 2017). It occurs with regularity with employees in all bargaining groups. **This practice is in violation of Section 16(2) of the law.**
4. In a culture that values schools as the most important places, SOTs would have real influence and authority in the selection of a new principal....they would not just be paid lip service by the District, as occurred with a recent elementary school principal selection process. **This authority is vested in the SOT in Section 28 of the law.**
5. If there has been a cultural shift, then why are administrators routinely reassigned to other school locations without the agreement of the principal or SOT. **This practice is in violation of Section 16 (2) of the law.**
6. In a culture that values schools, the District would protect schools and shield them from budget cuts. The District would no longer look at schools as a pot of available money. Rather than looking outward toward schools to save money, central administration would look inward to central services to achieve the savings.
7. If a cultural shift had really occurred, principals would not have received a memorandum from central administration, dated August 1, 2017, that said, “First, some good news: A determination has been made to roll over carryover funds into your 2017-2018 school strategic budgets.” **Section 17 of AB 469** requires that school carryover funds move forward to the new school year and remain with the school. These funds had recently disappeared from the budget screens accessed by principals, with no communication from the District, and were only reinstated after principals raised the concern about the missing money.

8. If a cultural shift had really occurred that said the CCSD will protect schools at all costs, principals would not have received a memorandum from central administration, dated August 1, 2017, that put forth two contradictory POSITIONS with respect to forthcoming budget cuts: (1) They (school associate superintendents) have your best interests at heart, and are trying to keep cuts away from schools; and (2) The reorganization has changed the way we implement our budgets, and therefore we must change the way we implement budget cuts. Although 88 percent of funds are allocated to schools and programs that directly service schools, **approximately 80% of budget cuts WILL BE applied to schools and programs that directly service schools.** There is no evidence of a cultural shift here. Schools have long been viewed as the District's bank account.
9. If a cultural shift had really occurred as part of the District's effort to meet the requirements of the reorganization, broad-based, meaningful participation from principals would have occurred. But, it did not. Only one principal is included on the two large committees that are making all decisions related to the District reorganization (the I-Team and Superintendent's Work Group).
10. If a cultural shift had occurred, the August 1, 2017 memorandum from central administration to all principals would not have contained the following statement: **"Moving forward and WHEN TIME PERMITS, we will work out methods to get more input from principals when we face a budget deficit."** Principals and SOTs do not just want input. They want and need to be part of the decision-making process.
11. If a culture shift had really occurred in the Clark County School District, and schools were the protected, hallowed places that they should be, financial efficiencies would dictate that there would not be 52 administrators above the rank of principal in central administration.
12. And finally, when the cultural shift ultimately happens, there will not be a firm of 11 attorneys in a CCSD Legal Department that doled out hourly compensation to OUTSIDE ATTORNEYS in the 2015-2016 school year in excess of \$3.8 million dollars...an amount more than the entire salary and benefits budget for the CCSD legal staff for that year.

This is the bottom up perspective of principals and SOTs. It is undeniable that a "cultural shift" in the Clark County School District has not yet become a reality at the school site.

## 2. AUTONOMIES MANDATED BY ASSEMBLY BILL 469, BUT NOT YET RECEIVED BY SCHOOLS:

Principals and SOTs are still waiting to receive the autonomies mandated in **Section 15 and Section 16** of Assembly Bill 469. Principals and SOTs are not overly concerned about what future autonomies they might receive, but rather, they want those autonomies mandated by the Nevada Legislature in **Section 15 and Section 16** of the law that will have an immediate impact on their schools. Principals and SOTs are still waiting to receive the basic autonomies that the law provides.

**Section 41 of AB 469** stipulates that the Clark County School District shall comply with the provisions of this act, and any duty which was required to have been completed before the effective date of this act. **Section 41** goes on to state, "ANY FAILURE TO HAVE PERFORMED OR COMPLETED ANY SUCH DUTY OR ACT IS NOT EXCUSED AS A RESULT OF THE ENACTMENT OF THIS ACT, AND THE REQUIREMENT TO PERFORM OR COMPLETE THOSE DUTIES OR ACTS CONTINUES ON AND AFTER THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS ACT."

**Section 15 of Assembly Bill 469** requires each local school precinct to be operated under site-based decision-making and to be provided with the authority to carry out certain responsibilities which have traditionally been carried out by the Clark County School District. Unfortunately, far too many decisions of the principals and SOTs are not being approved and are denied without explanation.

**Section 16 of Assembly Bill 469** requires the CCSD superintendent to transfer to each local school precinct the authority to carry out the following autonomies:

- The authority to select teachers, administrators other than the principal, and other staff who work under the direct supervision of the principal.
  - Principals and teachers are held accountable for student achievement. They must have control over who comes to work at their school site.
  - The practice of transferring poorly-performing employees to schools without the consent of the principal and the SOT must be discontinued.
  - The practice of transferring any employee a school without the consent of the principal and the SOT must be stopped.
  - This autonomy has not been transferred to the school precinct.
- The authority to directly supervise the staff of the school, including the authority to take any necessary disciplinary action which does not involve a violation of law or which does not require an investigation to comply with the law.
  - This autonomy has not been transferred to the school precinct.
- The authority to procure from the CCSD or elsewhere the necessary equipment, services, and supplies to carry out the plan of operation for the school.
  - This autonomy has not yet been provided to schools precinct.

These autonomies **MUST** be transferred to schools. Assembly Bill 469 requires that these autonomies be immediately transferred to the local school precinct. However, this transfer of authority has not occurred and has not yet been addressed through the reorganization process.

### 3. CONCLUDING REMARKS:

**Section 33 of AB 469** requires the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to take such actions as deemed necessary and appropriate to ensure the Clark County School District carries out the reorganization in accordance with the requirements of Assembly Bill 469.

- The provisions of **Section 15 and Section 16 of AB 469** were effective upon adjournment of the 2017 Nevada Legislative Session.
  - It is clear that these sections of the law have not been implemented.
- On October 31, 2017, the Community Implementation Council (CIC) will end its work to assist the District with the implementation of the reorganization. There is now an opportunity, early in this process, to choose how to proceed. I offer the following for your consideration:
  1. That the CIC be directed to immediately begin work with the District on implementation of those sections of the law which to date have largely been ignored. It is these autonomies that will allow principals and SOTs to see tangible evidence of change and to begin to make a greater difference in the lives of children. The CIC's work in these areas should be concluded by October 31, 2017;
  2. That the Advisory Committee give consideration to invoking the provisions of **Section 33 and Section 34 of Assembly Bill 469**. These Sections provide for additional oversight by the Nevada Department of Education, and provide the Nevada Department of Education the authority to adopt additional regulations to ensure that the complete transition to a central service organization is done with absolute fidelity to the law; and
  3. That the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, under authority granted in **Section 33**, request information from the Clark County School District with respect to the costs of the reorganization being a factor in the purported \$45 million dollar General Fund budget deficit recently announced by the District.

This concludes my remarks. I am happy to answer any questions you might have.