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Presented to: Nevada Interim Legislative
Committee on Education



African American Education

Identifying Disparities, Achievement & Opportunity Gaps

Agenda Item V A-2 (EDUCATION)
Meeting Date: 06-21-18

Measuring Nevada's Education Equity

Overview

Existing law declares that “the proper objective of state financial aid to public education is to ensure each Nevada child a reasonably equal educational opportunity.” (NRS 387.121)

Nevada cannot achieve this goal unless they close the proficiency gap. We've worked with CCSD on many of these issues addressed in this presentation. In fact, the disparity in Magnet/CTA school enrollment is an initiative we have worked with staff to resolve since 2008 (our first initiative as a new organization advocating on social justice and racial equality). Although we've seen improvements in many areas of concerns, the opportunity gap in Magnet/CTA schools has actually widened, as has the disparity in discipline of Black students. Recently CCSD won a \$14M award from the US Department of Education, Magnet Schools Assistance program to expand magnet schools and reduce racial isolation.

CCR High school Diploma, that includes a college-ready endorsement that reflects students who have completed certain coursework or obtained experience that makes them qualified for and prepared to succeed in college without the need for remediation; and, a career-ready endorsement that reflects students who have completed certain coursework or obtained certain experience that makes them qualified for and prepared to succeed in post-secondary education or job training in high-demand occupations.

The New Nevada Funding Plan adopted last legislative session in SB178 is an effective method to provide equitable distribution of resources based on the individual educational need of a student. The guidelines document provided by NDE for school year 2017-2018 provided the accountability necessary that school districts and schools receiving funds had guidelines to help them successfully implement strategies towards reducing proficiency gaps. CCSD's Academic Unit lead by Dr. Mike Barton was critical to oversight and brought stakeholders together in providing transparency to CCSD's implementation process. We believe these efforts early on helped to ensure school SOT's adhered to the law in SB178 and served the targeted population identified as 25th quartile in proficiencies. Early indications suggest your committee will see tremendous ROI in its first year of roll-out from CCSD. In Alaska, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) have been a frequently discussed subject in the fields of behavioral health and child development over the past 5-10 years and attached is their study with substantial annual cost savings to their state budget.

We will address these and more.

Data Reflection & Challenges

Implicit Bias & Discipline

Magnet Schools: SEC. 5301. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS- Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Magnet schools are a significant part of the Nation's effort to achieve voluntary desegregation in our Nation's schools.

(2) The use of magnet schools has increased dramatically since the inception of the magnet schools assistance program under this Act, with approximately 2,000,000 students nationwide attending such schools, of whom more than 65 percent are non-white.

(3) Magnet schools offer a wide range of distinctive programs that have served as models for school improvement efforts.

(4) It is in the best interests of the United States —

(A) to continue the Federal Government's support of local educational agencies that are implementing court-ordered desegregation plans and local educational agencies that are voluntarily seeking to foster meaningful interaction among students of different racial and ethnic backgrounds, beginning at the earliest stage of such students' education;

(B) to ensure that all students have equitable access to a high quality education that will prepare all students to function well in a technologically oriented and a highly competitive economy comprised of people from many different racial and ethnic backgrounds; and

(C) to continue to desegregate and diversify schools by supporting magnet schools, recognizing that segregation exists between minority and nonminority students as well as among students of different minority groups.

(5) Desegregation efforts through magnet school programs are a significant part of our Nation's effort to achieve voluntary desegregation in schools and help to ensure equal educational opportunities for all students.



CCSD Magnet/CTA 100% Enrollment Schools ONLY
2016-2017 DATA

Overall Average Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity at 8 Schools:

(Rounding up to the nearest percent)

- 40% Hispanic
- 30% White
- 16% Asian
- 06% Black

Eight Schools Include:

School	Hispanic	White	Asian	Black
A-Tech Academy	35%	24%	20%	9%
East CTA	67%	12%	10%	4%
Las Vegas Academy	27%	47%	9%	7%
Northwest CTA	31%	39%	14%	7%
Southeast CTA	56%	24%	8%	6%
Southwest CTA	20%	24%	39%	6%
Veterans Tribute	65%	23%	3%	4%
West CTA	16%	49%	21%	5%

CSN High Schools:

School	Hispanic	White	Asian	Black
EAST	48%	29%	10%	0% (less than 1%)
WEST	29%	40%	16%	0% (less than 1%)
SOUTH	15%	66%	8%	0% (less than 1%)

Implicit Bias & Discipline

Children of color are perceived by society to be more disruptive, louder, and disrespectful of authority than white students and face harsher punishments for identical behavior, including school suspensions, expulsion and being sent to juvenile detention according to many studies nationwide. Yale University of Child Study Center verifies this assertion in their September 28, 2016 report titled “Do Early Educators’ Implicit Biases Regarding Sex and Race Relate to Behavior Expectations and Recommendations of Preschool Expulsions and Suspensions?”

Excerpt:

“This study examined the potential role of preschool educators’ implicit biases as a viable partial explanation behind disparities in preschool expulsions. Participants were recruited at a large conference of early educators and completed two tasks. In Task 1, participants were primed to expect challenging behaviors (although none were present) while watching a video of preschoolers, balanced by sex and race, engaging in typical activities, as the participants’ eye gazes were tracked. In Task 2, participants read a standardized vignette of a preschooler with challenging behavior and were randomized to receive the vignette with the child’s name implying either a Black boy, Black girl, White boy, or White girl, as well as randomized to receive the vignette with or without background information on the child’s family environment. Findings revealed that when expecting challenging behaviors teachers gazed longer at Black children, especially Black boys. Findings also suggested that implicit biases may differ depending on teacher race. Providing family background information resulted in lowered severity ratings when teacher and child race matched, but resulted in increased severity ratings when their race did not match. No differences were found based on recommendations regarding suspension or expulsion, except that Black teachers in general recommended longer periods of disciplinary exclusion regardless of child gender/race. Recommendations for future research and policy regarding teacher training are offered.”

Expulsion/Suspension/Behavior – 4 Years CCSD

Expulsion	Black	Caucasian	Hispanic	Asian	Indian	Pacific Islander	Multi-racial	Total
2013-2014	1278	654	1624	77	24	31	202	3890
2014-2015	893	416	870	52	14	22	164	2431
2015-2016	807	328	674	39	5	28	91	1972
2016-2017	542	178	387	16	6	18	69	1216

Suspension	Black	Caucasian	Hispanic	Asian	Indian	Pacific Islander	Multi-racial	Total
2013-2014	5398	3168	6550	392	96	959	187	16750
2014-2015	4323	2393	4908	242	66	788	165	12885
2015-2016	5236	2553	5445	292	74	203	954	14757
2016-2017	9052	2985	7798	366	73	283	1344	21901

Behavior	Black	Caucasian	Hispanic	Asian	Indian	Pacific Islander	Multi-racial	Total
2013-2014	263	167	299	15	7	8	51	810
2014-2015	386	171	268	18	6	6	56	911
2015-2016	318	107	171	17	2	7	35	657
2016-2017	111	33	61	3	0	2	11	221

Opportunity/Access Gaps

SB178 Funding

Although SB178 weighted funding intended to narrow the proficiency gap for students at or below the 25th quartile, we're still seeing thousands of these students struggling to achieve. We understand that budgetary challenges prevented the legislature from rolling out the full intervention, but we hope this next session will make this formula a funding priority if the process is intended to succeed. Currently, Nevada has funded all one and two star schools. Approximately half of our three star schools have been funded and none of our four or five star schools received funds. This hurt students that demonstrated they could achieve with adequate resources by increasing proficiency and the schools star rating overall. The second year of the funding (2018-2019) many of these schools on their way to success have lost their SB178 funding after the first year. We're concerned about the slippage that will likely occur.

By completing the allocation of funds intended to serve students on free and reduced lunch or ELL that are not designated Victory or ZOOM schools, eliminates this opportunity gap to achieve proficiency. We have students meeting the requirements in schools from one star through five star and these students shouldn't be left behind because of where they live geographically. We'd like to remind this committee that high school students in some parts of our community, such as the historical Westside do not have a neighborhood high school and therefore bused out of the community. Although they qualify in every way for the weighted student funding and may live in one of the most economically challenged neighborhoods in Nevada, they don't have the same opportunity as their peers.

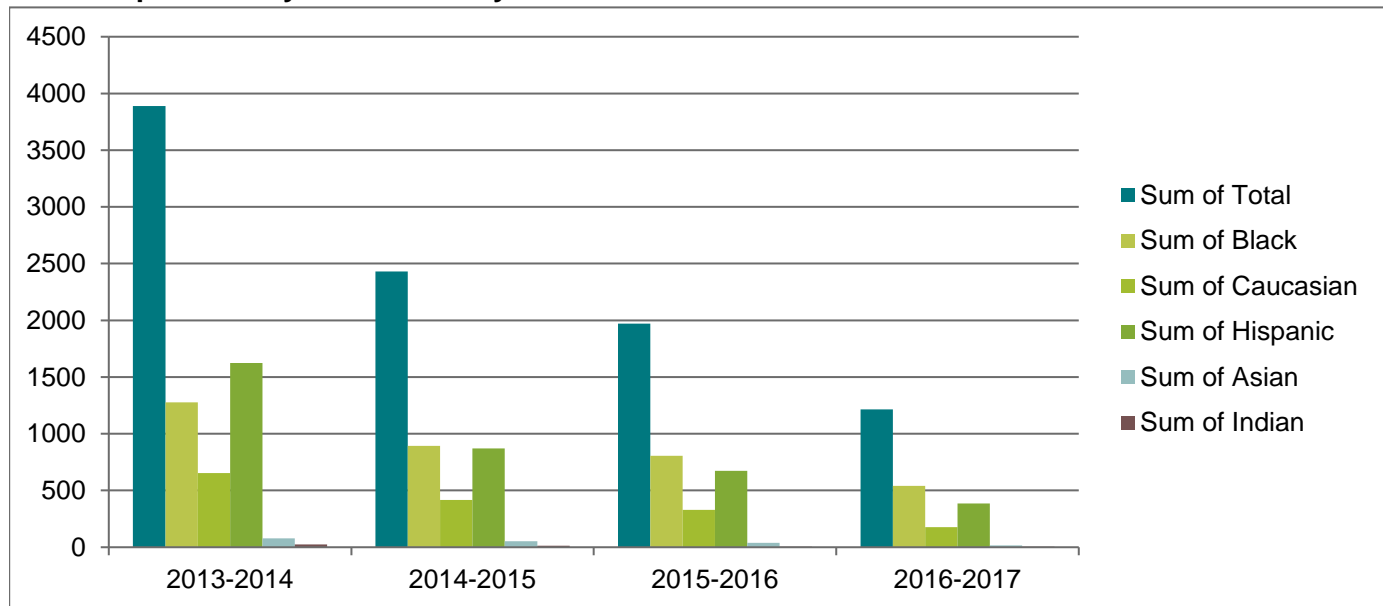
In your wisdom, the law is already established to include ALL students with proficiency rates at or below the 25th quartile regardless of race, zip code, school rating, gender, ethnicity, or language. Therefore, we implore this committee to prioritize FULLY FUNDING the weighted student formula as identified for ANY student regardless of FRL or ELL. Let's truly move to a weighted formula and designate \$1200 to students with the greatest needs as demonstrated by their proficiency rate and ensure all schools have the resources they need to eliminate the widest proficiency gaps. This will also protect school funding as they demonstrate success and improve their star ratings from year to year. This strategy aligns with the Nevada's ESSA State Plan of reducing proficiency gaps by subgroups (and currently 20% of a school's star rating), and complies with US Department of Education's requirement that States/Districts make a priority any subgroup that demonstrates least proficiency in the State.

Disproportionate Discipline

The Yale University report goes on further to reiterate that "Biases are inherent attributes that all humans possess and form naturally through the course of everyday interactions and exposure to media. These biases can become very harmful, however, when beliefs about groups lead to unquestioned assumptions about individuals within those groups, especially when empathic responses do not engage. When these assumptions lead to important decisions regarding how we choose to educate our youngest citizen learners, or deny educational opportunities through preschool expulsions and suspensions, the potential for lasting harm is great.

In the course of teacher-family interactions, early educators may learn more about the struggles, and strengths, of the families they serve. However, it seems likely that teachers may benefit from increased training and ongoing guidance, perhaps through services such as early childhood mental health consultation, to understand how best to use this information, increase their empathic understanding of the child, and avoid feelings of hopelessness, especially when teacher and child race do not match. Given the significance of this issue, serious consideration should be given to a potential role for evidence-based bias-reducing interventions as a core component of preservice and ongoing inservice early childhood teacher training.”

CCSD Expulsions by Race/Ethnicity



Adverse Childhood Experiences

CCBC introduced this committee to INVO Multidisciplinary innovation to address childhood trauma called IMPACT at your April 21st, 2018 committee meeting. We were hoping for the implementation of a pilot program in CCSD that would provide important student outcomes and analysis including return on investment prior to the upcoming legislative session. We are happy to advise that the City of Henderson has sponsored three aligned schools to receive a wide array of proprietary Tier 3 behavioral services for students struggling with adverse childhood experiences, mental illness, and other environmentally related-behavioral disabilities from August 2018 – June 2019. These services will be provided at school, keeping students on campus, and 30% of their time will be spent with students at home and in the community. The project will provide systems, tools, and processes to the schools in collaboration with Clemson University’s Center for Behavior Analysis, and will utilize a proprietary screener to identify students needing these services, provide a proprietary multidisciplinary assessment tool, cultural competency training for staff, conduct classroom behavioral assessments, and coordinate support through a team of services including social workers, behavior analyst and technician, and a mental health counselor.

CCSD Grant Application states “IMPACT will improve student achievement by identifying students in need and providing treatment both at school and at home through contracted clinicians. These services will increase on-task academic learning time, increase time spent in school, reduce suspensions, and improve the academic learning experience of students. This will improve the chronic absenteeism rates, increase high school graduation rates, improve academic achievement in reading and mathematics at all levels, increase and improve cultural competency of staff, students, and reduce income and racial/ethnic achievement gaps at all levels.”

See Attached Pilot Program – City of Henderson “INVO Multidisciplinary Program To Address Childhood Trauma”

Magnet/Career & Technical Schools, AP, STEM, G.A.T.E.

There has been a long history of Black students underrepresented in higher learning opportunities including Advanced Placement classes, STEM classes, Gifted And Talented Education classes, and Magnet/CT Schools. 2017-2018 AP data (see attached). Although, Nevada has outpaced the nation in making gains in the percent of students passing at least one AP exam. Growth for Black students has remained slow. Note the disproportionate number of Black students taking an AP exam vs their peers:

2017 Nevada AP Distributions by Race/Ethnic Groups

Race/Ethnicity	Number of Students Testing	Total Number of Exams Taken
Caucasian	8154	14,711
Hispanic	7722	13,114
Asian	3010	6146
Black	898	1489

See Preliminary Nevada CTE Enrollment Overview attached. See AP Exams by Race & Ethnicity Overview.

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(2) The use of magnet schools has increased dramatically since the inception of the magnet schools assistance program under this Act, with approximately 2,000,000 students nationwide attending such schools, of whom more than 65 percent are non-white.

(3) Magnet schools offer a wide range of distinctive programs that have served as models for school improvement efforts.

(4) It is in the best interests of the United States —

(A) to continue the Federal Government's support of local educational agencies that are implementing court-ordered desegregation plans and local educational agencies that are voluntarily seeking to foster meaningful interaction among students of different racial and ethnic backgrounds, beginning at the earliest stage of such students' education;

(B) to ensure that all students have equitable access to a high quality education that will prepare all students to function well in a technologically oriented and a highly competitive economy comprised of people from many different racial and ethnic backgrounds; and

(C) to continue to desegregate and diversify schools by supporting magnet schools, recognizing that segregation exists between minority and nonminority students as well as among students of different minority groups.

(5) Desegregation efforts through magnet school programs are a significant part of our Nation's effort to achieve voluntary desegregation in schools and help to ensure equal educational opportunities for all students.

Black students are less likely to be accepted in Magnet/CTA High School. Data shows in 2017-2018 that all other racial or ethnic subgroups were accepted at near or above, while Black students were accepted disproportionately lower at almost 50% of their total population in CCSD as follows:

(Rounding up to the nearest percent)

Race/Ethnicity	2017-18 Applications*	2017-2018 Enrolled*
Hispanic	41%	40%
White	24%	30%
Asian	12%	16%
Black	9%	6%

*Note: Enrolled includes all students from grades 9-12 at the 8 exclusive magnet/cta schools (meaning there are no other students attending that are not part of the magnet program, where Applications only account from incoming 9th grade students. Further analysis is required to better assess and address the racial isolation in certain public schools.

Just to reiterate the priority and purpose of Part C — **Magnet Schools Assistance** stipulates in their guidelines for application and funding of magnet schools under this program the following:

SEC. 5301. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

(C) to continue to desegregate and diversify schools by supporting magnet schools, recognizing that segregation exists between minority and nonminority students as well as among students of different minority groups.

(5) Desegregation efforts through magnet school programs are a significant part of our Nation's effort to achieve voluntary desegregation in schools and help to ensure equal educational opportunities for all students.

(b) PURPOSE- The purpose of this part is to assist in the desegregation of schools served by local educational agencies by providing financial assistance to eligible local educational agencies for —

(1) the elimination, reduction, or prevention of minority group isolation in elementary schools and secondary schools with substantial proportions of minority students, which shall include assisting in the efforts of the United States to achieve voluntary desegregation in public schools

AND

SEC. 5306. PRIORITY.

In awarding grants under this part, the Secretary shall give priority to applicants that —

- (1) demonstrate the greatest need for assistance, based on the expense or difficulty of effectively carrying out approved desegregation plans and the magnet school program for which the grant is sought;
- (2) propose to carry out new magnet school programs, or significantly revise existing magnet school programs; and
- (3) propose to select students to attend magnet school programs by methods such as lottery, rather than through academic examination.

Black students are disproportionately kept out of magnet and CTA schools due to advantages their peers have based on the following Qualification Requirements to apply for admission:

- **1st trimester/semester grade point average**
- **Attendance** (particularly of concern as some students may require staying home with a sick sibling for example or perhaps had attendance issues in the past, where now the issue has been resolved)
- **Citizenship** (particularly of concern as some students are egregiously harmed by disproportionate discipline in their record.)
- **Prerequisite classes** (particularly of concern as Black students are disproportionately impacted by a lack of access to higher learning opportunities and STEM courses/resources at their middle school, adversely impacting acceptance)

Additionally, 25% of available seats are reserved for siblings (creating access by entire families while limiting opportunities to entire families). Another 25% of available seats are reserved for qualifying incoming students who attend a Magnet/CTA at the lower level. Another 25% of available seats are reserved for students living in the geographic preference area of a Magnet/CTA. As you can see it really limits the number of seats available unless the student or their sibling is ALREADY attending that school.

Naturally, students being admitted by preferences above favor the majorities already attending (and in fact create a “snowball” effect that edges out minority subgroups over time, and in fact widens the opportunity gap for those already racially isolated). Data above reflects this disparity and inequity.

Although CCSD addressed this racial disparity in their application for the Magnet Schools Assistance grant, three schools were selected outside the geography where the majority of Black students attend school, reducing access to a Magnet/CTA school based on geographic preference. It’s important to note that the only Magnet/CTA program in North Las Vegas is Canyon Springs where Law and Leadership programs are offered. There are no STEM Magnet/CTA schools in this large geographic area, although we’ve had several conversations about Cheyenne High School who are already qualified and prepared to launch a state certified cybersecurity and computer science program along with a teaching program for students interested in pursuing a career in education.

With the many efforts of NDE and Nevada Legislature aim to be the fastest improving state in the nation, unless African American students have equitable access to the same resources made available to their peers, we’ll see a reformed Nevada Education system that continues to leave Black students out. This includes those opportunities to earn an Advanced Honors Diploma or the new College and Career Ready Diploma, thus limiting their opportunity to a college degree or career.

NDE’s website advises that recently approved regulations of the CCR initiative direct schools to strengthen career pathways and increase opportunities for work-based learning experiences so that every student can explore career opportunities, learn real-world skills, earn industry-recognized credentials and early college credits.

“The addition of the (CCR) Diploma is an important component of the workforce development initiatives of our state,” said Frank Woodbeck, Executive Director of Workforce Development at NSHE. “The academic and intellectual competencies indicated through this diploma are important to employers across our state and the nation.”

If African American students continue to be under represented and disproportionately participate in these pathways described, the next generation will see an even greater widening of the opportunity, employment, and wealth gap, currently the widest for Black Nevadans.

Legislative Bill Draft Recommendations

1. Fully fund SB178 funding in the New Nevada Education Funding Plan to include students in 1-5 star schools. Since current law already distributes money in the account to public schools for the support of pupils and only requires funds to be distributed FIRST to the lowest performing schools, there is no need to amend the law. Therefore, we are asking our government to fully fund the New Nevada Education Fund at \$1200 for each pupil scoring at or below the 25th percentile on proficiency assessments.
2. We must address child mental and behavioral health head-on in the upcoming legislative session to be proactive in changing the approach of how our various government agencies responsible for school-aged children screen and document the mental/behavioral health of our children and, when necessary, have strategic, research-based intervention strategies in place to provide proper care for our children. Key to this is utilizing ACE's (Adverse Childhood Experiences) as the driving measure and provide a child screened at a tier 3 status or higher a multidisciplinary intervention. A collaborative funding mechanism under NDE could also include Federal funds such as Title 1 and 4, UNISIG, etc, and various aligned state agencies (ie health and human services, criminal justice, etc). Medicare reimbursement can help to offset costs in providing these clinical services through school districts. At the direction of NDE all districts are to submit a plan consistent with this legislation to screen, identify, and prioritize direct services by a licensed mental health professional as necessary. The legislation should provide the department the authority to request that all districts provide an evaluation of services to the department as to the aggregated results by districts. See City of Henderson pilot program in partnership with CCSD, the Alaska report on economic costs of adverse childhood experiences and cost savings, and current exceptional outcomes other states are experiencing attached. NOTE: We're very concerned that should this behavioral health innovation move forward that students receiving supports do so on their individual campuses where skills learned can be effectively mastered and supported in their classroom, with additional support outside the school, to effectively avoid any appearance of services being punitive in nature. In addition, process should include evidence-based bias-reducing interventions as a core component of preservice and ongoing inservice teacher training as mentioned earlier in this report.
3. Conduct an equity study of Nevada Magnet & CT choice schools and courses required for the new CCR diploma to ensure all students have access, and a funding equity study to establish where distribution of funds are being spent at the District level. We are seeing a huge disparity in where funds are being spent and appear to disproportionately negatively impact schools with high Black and poor populations. We need to determine education funding inequity and consider future legislative remedies.
4. Require school districts to adhere to state law to provide each "Nevada child a reasonably equal educational opportunity" (NRS 387.121) by first providing and funding comparable advanced placement, STEM, career and technical programs that lead to college and career readiness, ensuring access to all four high school diplomas on every high school campus. Any discretionary funds/grants should be prioritized first to schools listed as most in need of comparable programs, as identified by NDE, when awarding funds. This will help to narrow the access/opportunity gaps.
5. CCBC is a member of the MBK Alliance and supports recommendations that address discipline disparity and restorative justice on campus.
6. English proficiency gaps of subgroups least proficient in Nevada requires an ELA Master Plan. We're asking that the English Mastery Council (EMC) be expanded to also improve the quality of education for students who are least proficient in English. This will help reduce the proficiency gap and support districts serving subgroups least proficient. A focus on subgroups least proficient is a requirement of Every Student Succeeds Act and Nevada's plan.

7. Strengthen cultural competency legislation (AB 196) and avoid efforts to dilute current law. Bias and yes even implicit racism is still a huge problem we need to continue addressing, and we encourage lawmakers to seize opportunities that support professional development of educators and administrators in Nevada schools. Additionally, it is our belief that a lack of cultural competency is a major driving factor in the disproportionate discipline crisis of Black students, where discipline being rendered vary depending on the race of the student for the same infraction.

Special thanks to those organizations that provided information for use in this presentation:

Clark County School District, Magnet and Career and Technical Academies Dept, Curriculum and Professional Development Division, Academic Achievement Dept,
College Board www.collegeboard.org/apstudents
Nevada Department of Education, Student Achievement, CRALEO
US Department of Education, Code of Federal Regulations Title 34, Part 280 & Part C, Magnet Schools Assistance Program
Clark County Black Caucus, Legislative Committee

And strategic partner NAACP Las Vegas Chapter for their letter of support

