NEVADA LEGISLATURE
JOINT INTERIM STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

(Section 6 of Assembly Bill 443, Chapter 392, *Statutes of Nevada 2021,* at page 2505)

MINUTES

May 3, 2022

The fifth meeting of the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education for the 2021–2022 Interim was held on Tuesday, May 3, 2022, at 8:30 a.m. in Room 4412, Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada.

The agenda, minutes, meeting materials, and audio or video recording of the meeting are available on the Joint Interim Standing Committee's meeting page. The audio or video recording may also be found at https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Video/. Copies of the audio or video record can be obtained through the Publications Office of the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) (publications@lcb.state.nv.us or 775/684-6835).

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT IN LAS VEGAS:

Senator Moises (Mo) Denis, Chair
Assemblywoman Shannon Bilbray-Axelrod, Vice Chair
Senator Carrie Buck
Senator Marilyn Dondero Loop
Assemblywoman Brittney Miller
Assemblywoman Clara (Claire) Thomas

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Assemblywoman Alexis Hansen
Assemblywoman Melissa Hardy

GUEST LEGISLATOR PRESENT IN LAS VEGAS:

Assemblywoman Natha Anderson

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU STAFF PRESENT:

Jen Sturm, Senior Policy Analyst, Research Division
Jennifer Ruedy, Chief Principal Policy Analyst, Research Division
Alex Drozdoff, Senior Policy Analyst, Research Division
Christina Harper, Manager of Research Policy Assistants, Research Division
Asher A. Killian, Chief Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal Division
Adam Drost, Principal Program Analyst, Fiscal Division

Items taken out of sequence during the meeting have been placed in agenda order.
[Indicate a summary of comments.]

AGENDA ITEM I—OPENING REMARKS

Chair Denis:

[Chair Denis called the meeting to order. He welcomed members, presenters, and the public to the fifth meeting of the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education.]

Ms. Sturm, can you please call the roll?

[Roll call reflected in Committee Members Present.]

In addition, we do have Assemblywoman Anderson with us today; she is one of our alternates. And when I brought this issue up in the meetings, I asked anybody that wanted to participate to let staff know and that is how many of you are here because of that. I offered the same thing to the legislators; anyone that wanted to participate. She is joining us today—we welcome you.

What I would like to say today, this is a posted meeting of the Committee. I want to do this a little different today because I want to get input from you and from the members about this important topic. It is something that we have also been required to do from legislation—that would require us to do a study. This is part of that process. We appreciate you coming today. It is going to be a little different when we get to public comment—it is going to be more interactive than we normally do. In fact, I am probably going to come out there with a microphone and allow you to give comment from your seat. And then we are going to have dialogue and can respond. So, it is going to be a little different as we go through this.

In looking at the agenda, one thing I will tell you is after each presentation, I am going to take a break—probably a five- or ten-minute break between each one and we have got three to four presentations that we are going to do. So, that we can have this good dialogue. The only other thing is we need to make sure that when you talk, you say your name every time, because with as many people as we have and the dialogue we are going to have, it will be hard to keep the record straight; because it is being recorded. I will say as the chair, I wanted us to be in the same room together to be able to have this discussion, so we will not have anybody joining us remotely except for one of our presenters. Anybody that wants to participate had to be here in the room today, which is not the way we normally do it, but I thought it was important enough to have this discussion. It is hard with the technology to be able to have discussion and be able to talk with each other as we do this.

AGENDA ITEM II—PRESENTATION ON THE COMPOSITION OF THE BOARDS OF TRUSTEES OF COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN NEVADA

Chair Denis:

The purpose of today's meeting will be hearing a presentation on the composition of the board of trustees of county school districts in Nevada. This presentation includes an overview from our staff Jen Sturm from the LCB and includes a presentation from Ben Erwin and Lauren Bloomquist from the Education Commission of the States (ECS). It includes a presentation from Debb Oliver, the Nevada Association of School Boards (NASB) and various stakeholders interested in participating in these discussions.

If we do not cover an item that you think we should have talked about in the discussion part, we will have an opportunity to have that discussion. And if an item comes up that we need to address that we cannot address at that moment, we are going to write it on this board and then we will come back to it when we get to that fourth item. So, if there is an issue that you thought we should have talked about, that we did not, we want to make sure we bring that up and have some discussion during that period. I am going to allow questions throughout. I want the presenters to be able to give their presentation. If there is some issue that you do not understand while there presenting—maybe they use an acronym, you do not understand—raise your hand and we will fix it then. But if we can wait until the end of the presentation and then we will have full discussion so that we would get through the presentation.

This is a special brainstorming meeting, and the intent is to study the composition of school boards. Hopefully, we will get an overview of not just local but also nationally what is happening, and then we are going to have an open discussion later on. I would like to remind everyone that we are not here to criticize anyone or criticize how whatever is going on; we want to study this issue and see if there are things that we need to do differently here in Nevada, and what we could do better.

I would first begin by introducing our facilitator, Mark Quiner. Mark is from the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), and he is going to help us—we do not normally do this in a regular meeting—but he is going to help walk us through, and make sure we stay on track. Mark, we turn it over to you.

Mark Quiner, Director, Center for Ethics in Government, NCSL:

Good morning. I do not know education very well—my life is ethics and civility. So, I am here as a disinterested third party, so do not shoot the facilitator. I wanted to help keep the ball rolling and get some good ideas from you all et. cetera. First up is my friend, Jen Sturm from LCB.

Chair Denis:

One thing I will mention also that Mark will be getting up and down and writing things on the board as we go through and making notes—he is going to follow up as we get going.

Jen Sturm, Senior Policy Analyst, Research Division, LCB:

I first want to thank my colleague Alex Drozdoff, who helped me put together this presentation—she is not here today, but she assisted in getting all of this together. We prepared a brief presentation on the background and other relevant information for the meeting today. That has been uploaded to NELIS and provided here in hard copy form. (Agenda Item II A-1) (Agenda Item II A-2)

First, I would like to remind everyone here of Assembly Bill 495 which passed during the 2021 Session. Section 60.5 of that bill directed the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education (COE) to conduct a study during this interim concerning the composition of the board of trustees of county school districts in Nevada, including without limitation the manner in which members of the boards are selected. Ultimately, the COE must report its findings and recommendations for legislation from this study to the LCB Director before the start of the next regular session.

Nationally you will see local school boards with these types of structures—trustees or members who are elected, those who are appointed or a hybrid of those. In Nevada, local school district trustees are elected. According to the Guinn Center, governance structure does not have a significant impact on student achievement. And I believe ECS, when they present next, will be going over these governance types in greater detail.

To provide additional historical background, the territorial legislature first enacted a bill creating a common school system in 1861 (Chapter 72, *Laws of the Territory of Nevada 1861*). Article 2 of the measure provided for an elected county superintendent serving a term of two years. The county superintendent was given the responsibility to divide the "inhabited" portions of the county into school districts, adding or deleting districts in accordance with the public good. Under the authority granted to it by the *Nevada Constitution*, the Legislature established a system of school districts to provide for a mechanism of local control. An 1865 law (Chapter 145, *Statutes of Nevada* 1865) reaffirmed the formation of local school districts throughout Nevada, with oversight by an elected county superintendent of schools. The superintendent's duties required that he, among other things, apportion funds to the districts within the county and appoint trustees in districts that have not elected trustees.

Since then, the structure of Nevada's school districts has changed considerably. The first school districts were local in nature, clustered around populated areas of the state. By the mid-1950s, a comprehensive study of Nevada's system of public education recommended the current system of school district boundaries. In a Special Session held in 1956, the Nevada Legislature made extensive changes to the structure of Nevada's public school system. Prior to that passage, Clark County had 19 school districts serving approximately 11,000 students and each district with their own board of trustees (Assembly Bill 1). Among other changes, the Legislature eliminated the 208 legally active local school districts—again, each with their own boards of trustees—which had existed in Nevada and replaced them with 17 districts, each of which is co-terminus with county boundaries.

That brings us to what we see today. The boards of trustees of county school districts are composed of either five or seven members. Districts with more than 1,000 pupils have seven member boards. Members serve for four years. Members of Nevada's local school boards are elected at-large in each school district; larger counties elect them by district. In terms of policy roles, Nevada school district boards of trustees carry out a number of policy roles which include approving curriculum, enforcing courses of study prescribed by statute, administering the state system of public instruction, establishing district policies and procedures, and providing oversight of the school districts funds and budget. Trustees are paid a monthly salary and the amount depends on the county in which they serve. In addition to salaries, trustees are also provided certain travel expenses. Finally, trustees are required to complete professional development training in various areas, such as in Nevada's K–12 public education system, as well as in financial management. I believe Dr. Oliver of the NASB will discuss these and other requirements in greater detail during her presentation.

I hope that gives you a general overview of the background in history of local school boards to help put today's meeting in more context.

Recent legislation in Nevada related to local school boards. Since the 2013 Session, legislation related to local school boards can be organized into four broad categories and those are: 1) governance and composition; 2) policy; 3) fiscal; and 4) a miscellaneous category.

Today, I will focus more on the governance and composition of school boards, although for those who are interested, there is a separate handout that includes bills from recent sessions for all four of the broad categories and a brief description of those. Please keep in mind that the lists provided in that handout may not be all inclusive but gives a pretty good idea.

Generally, bills relating to changing the governance or composition of school boards were put forth in 2015, 2017, and 2019. Each of these bills proposed a change to a hybrid model by requiring the appointment of certain members. In Assembly Bill 339 from 2015, the State Board of Education would appoint two members to the board who would either replace or serve together with existing elected members. Senate Bill 243 (2017), SB 105 (2019), and AB 57 (2019) offered provisions for electing three members of certain school boards at-large and offered provisions for appointing the remaining members. These bills failed to pass. Finally, in 2021 we saw the passage of AB 495 which required this study of the composition of school boards.

Mr. Chair, I am happy to answer questions.

Chair Denis:

We are going to start first with members. Are there any questions from the members?

The other thing I am going to ask—and those here in the audience also—if you have additional historical information that maybe she did not cover or that maybe we missed. You might want to share that. I want this to be interactive. So, any questions from members?

Assemblywoman Miller:

I know you were discussing specifically Nevada, but I have read where other school boards, in other states, based on the size of the district, which we know when we talk about size of the Clark County School District (CCSD) would—and Washoe County School District (WCSD)—people forget how extremely large WCSD is too. I read something the other day, and someone was like, well Washoe is smaller. I am like, no, that is still an extremely large school district, but where they actually have increased the size of trustees on their board. I know you talked about our state law that says, when we have 7 or more, but there is some nationally that have up to 15 members. I was wondering, and again not knowing what other presentations are coming today, if you have that information or someone else about how many states have—like New York—that have increased the size based on the student population numbers.

Chair Denis:

We are going to write that down because we do not what may come up with one of the other presenters. Any of those questions as we go, bring them up. Anybody else, members? Yes, Assemblywoman Anderson.

Assemblywoman Anderson:

When it comes to the composition of the boards and policy roles, is it establishing those district policies, or is there also the enforcement of them?

Ms. Sturm:

Can you rephrase that?

Assemblywoman Anderson:

No problem. It is the county school boards, composition of the boards, and their roles. It says establishing the district policies and procedures. Is that also the enforcement issue or is it only the enforcing the courses of study that is under the school boards responsibilities?

Ms. Sturm:

I might defer to our Counsel on that one, Mr. Killian. And I can get back to you as well, if not. Mr. Killian do you want to chime in?

Asher A. Killian, Chief Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal Division:

Yes, the districts in addition to establishing their own policies and procedures, do have the power to enforce those policies and procedures as to the employees and pupils within their own district. It does not grant any sort of statewide authority or authority outside of their own organization, but within the organization and then the pupils and institutions within the organization. The districts have the power to enforce the policies and procedures that they establish.

Chair Denis:

Thank you and I forgot to mention, we have Mr. Killian here with us. If there are legal questions that we want to ask, he can chime in for us. That would be helpful as we talk about things. Any other questions from the members? Assemblywoman Miller.

Assemblywoman Miller:

That question actually spurred on another question. When we are talking about enforcement and whose role is what. Do we have the number of how many school boards nationally have the same type of balanced governance formula that CCSD is using? I know that is a parking lot, so putting it up there.

Chair Denis:

Vice Chair Bilbray-Axelrod.

Vice Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

You had mentioned a Guinn study that it does not matter if it is elected, appointed, or hybrid when it comes to student achievement. Is that what you said? And can you reference that so I can look at that.

Ms. Sturm:

Yes, that policy report was from October 2015. I believe the beginning of that title was, *Breaking Up Is Hard To Do.*

Chair Denis:

Other questions from members? I will come back, after we hear comments from the public, if there are other questions.

Let us go to public comment. I am going to come down there and anybody, I said this earlier but if you came in late sit up as close as you can, we want you to participate.

You have heard the presentation—an overview—if there are any of you here that have additional historical significance and any of those things speak up; we want everybody to participate today. I know we referenced something that you may know about.

Magdalena Martinez, UNLV:

I just want to make a real quick clarification on the Guinn report; *Breaking Up Is Hard To* Do. The focus there was on breaking up the school district and not necessarily, obviously it is related to governance, but it was the precinct model—as we may all recall—so it is not necessarily, it is applicable but in the context of breaking up a school district into smaller school districts. Just a clarification.

Chair Denis:

Thank you. That is helpful.

Chris Daly, Nevada State Education Association (NSEA):

More recent history from last session. I think it is important to keep in mind that Speaker Frierson introduced AB 255—which was one of the bills referenced. It was one of the only bills that Speaker Frierson introduced that did not pass into law. This is a pretty controversial subject—Speaker's bills tend to pass and become law. I believe it was the mining tax deal—AB 495 which got us to where we are right now. That item was not the main component of the mining tax deal—the mining tax was the main component of the mining tax deal. There were all sorts of other bells and whistles in there; some charter school stuff, opportunity scholarships, and this. But in terms of the conversation at the legislative session, there was not a significant conversation about this process in that bill that created this process—not saying that this is a bad process. I am happy that we are having this conversation and NSEA believe that when we talk about this and think about all of the issues that there are some reforms that likely the state should pursue. But moving away from democratically elected school boards is probably not the best approach.

Chair Denis:

Thank you. I think Senator Kieckhefer also had a bill last time that was similar.

John Vellardita, Clark County Education Association:

I want the record to show that the last component to AB 495 was this issue. Had this issue not been a part of that piece of legislation—that piece of legislation probably would not have passed as it passed. That was a key proponent. We had advocated for it. The Speaker agreed to it, and it passed with bipartisan support.

Mark Newburn, Nevada State Board of Education:

Yes, this is some tangential history. In 2011, the Legislature changed to the Nevada State Board of Education from a 10-member all elected board to a hybrid board that has elected, appointed, voting, and non-appointed voting members.

Chair Denis:

Who else? Yes.

Maureen Schafer, Council for a Better Nevada:

Thank you for raising that bill from last session. We were very proud of that committee hearing, in which Speaker Frierson brought that bill forward, although it did not go forward. We have been involved in a lot of bills over many sessions in the state, and if I recall, we had so much support from so many community organizations and individuals who oftentimes do not see eye-to-eye on many bills and many pieces of the legislation across many issues. I think there was maybe one or two groups, maybe one who was on the other side of that issue. So, it was up to all of you for whatever reason, why it did not move forward. From the community standpoint there was a super-duper majority in terms of supporting this bill, which was at least one form of a hybrid model, but more importantly, when we look at the performance of our schools today, we are not getting what all of you invest in it from a budget perspective, and from a performance perspective. It is incumbent on all of us to look at a different way to do something. And from our group's perspective, we have come over 18 years to the conclusion that governance matters, whether it is a public, private, nonprofit, or government organization, and you look first at governance—who is running it and how are they running themselves? We came to this conclusion last session. The boards who set strategy and set direction, need to be doing a better job. With all due respect to my colleague who started out the comments here. We thought this was one piece of public education, not the magic bullet that needed a look again and many groups in this community came together to say that this was a good solution for all of you to consider. I thank again, my colleague Speaker Frierson for bringing it forward for all of your consideration, and we hope you consider it again.

Paul Moradkhan, Vegas Chamber:

To add to the comments, the Chamber was involved with the bill brought over by Senator Kieckhefer several sessions ago and supported the bill last session. I think since the 2021 Session we have seen a lot of activities from our local school boards that validate the reason to have this conversation. I appreciate the fact that we are having this discussion today, because there is a lot that has occurred regarding board governance, the impact to our students and our teachers, and what is happening with our local school board, not just here in Clark County but in Washoe and throughout our rural communities. I appreciate the dialogue today.

Chair Denis:

Thank you, anyone else? Do we have any other of our members wishing any additional comments? Vice Chair Bilbray-Axelrod.

Vice Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

I feel like I should put on the record as the chair of the Assembly, that it was in fact the Speaker who wanted to not hear the bill to move forward. I do not know the reasons, but I wanted to put that on the record that I would not have not heard the Speaker’s bill.

Chair Denis:

I will make a comment only because we have seen this several times. I think a lot of times what I heard was that we needed something like this to have the discussion. Because as you all know when we get up to the legislative session if we have not had an opportunity to have all the discussions, sometimes it makes it difficult to pass the bill because we do not

have enough time. I think that this is part of that process. I think we are finally to a point where we are going to have some real discussions and be able to talk about what the best solution is.

Assemblywoman Thomas:

My question has to do with how the county school boards today are made up. We went over salaries—and we dusted over that—I would like to know how the salaries are for our school board—are they paid weekly, monthly? I know it said monthly but how is it broken up, because when I looked at other states, in some states their school boards do not receive a salary. I want to know how that impacts Nevada.

Chair Denis:

One of the things I was going to say, I know that we are going to talk about that when we get to the third discussion.

Ms. Sturm:

I believe Dr. Oliver might be getting into this a little bit later. But *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) 386.320 reads that if a trustee is serving in a county whose population is less than 20,000, the trustee receives a $250 monthly salary. Those trustees receive a salary of $400 per month if they serve in counties with 20,000 to 100,000 people. And finally, trustees receive a salary of $750 per month that serve in counties with over 100,000 people.

Chair Denis:

Thank you. We will be able to have more discussion when we get to the other one. Any other questions from the public or from the members on this presentation?

We are going to take a break because we need to do some switching. We will be on a pause for five minutes.

We have our next presenters; we have been able to connect them. I am going to turn it over to Mr. Quiner.

Mr. Quiner:

The last discussion was great.

Next up, we have Ben Erwin and Lauren Bloomquist of ECS. Welcome.

Chair Denis:

When you switch between each other, say your name, for the record—it will make it cleaner if you could tell us every time you switch.

Ben Erwin, Policy Analyst, ECS:

Good morning, Chair Denis and to the members of the Committee. Thanks so much for having us today to discuss state policy governing local school boards. I am joined by my colleague Lauren Bloomquist, who is also a policy analyst.

Before diving into the content of the presentation. We wanted to provide a brief introduction on who we are and what we do at ECS. Education Commission of the States is a national education policy organization that has been serving state policymakers in all 50 states, and in the District of Columbia for nearly 60 years. We are nonpartisan, unbiased, and cover the full spectrum of education issues from early learning through postsecondary and the workforce. We believe in the power of learning from experience using what we know about state trends and approaches from across the country. We aim to help policymakers make informed decisions about what might work in their state. We do this in a variety of ways through research, publishing reports, convening meetings, and providing counsel. We research and report on trending education topics and are often invited to talk to groups, like this one, to share how states are approaching specific education issues and offer ideas for states to consider.

We have a lot of information to cover today. We wanted to provide a quick overview of the agenda for the rest of the presentation. (Agenda Item II B-1) (Agenda Item II B-2)

We will start with a focus on school board selection policies before providing a high-level overview of school board compensation policies and training requirements. We will close with the summary of relevant research on school board governance before opening it up for question and answers. I also wanted to note that we shared a memo on state policies addressing school board governance that follows the same format of this presentation and provides additional details on the examples we discuss and other relevant resources. Without further ado, I will pass it to Lauren to start with the discussion of trends in school board selection.

Lauren Bloomquist, Policy Analyst, ECS:

Good morning, Chair Denis, and Committee members. Education Commission of the States has a 50-state comparison on K–12 governance. This resource provides 25 key data points on school board governance. One of those data points is specific to local school board composition and selection. At the state level what policies exist directing school board selection? Is local school board selection by election, by appointment, or some combination? We found that the vast majority of states elect local school board members. Within that broad category of elections, there are states like Arizona that specify school board member elections take place at the same time as the general election, and states like Oregon where elections are held apart from national elections in off-cycle races. There are also state policies that specified nonpartisan elections as is in the case of Florida, Indiana, and Ohio. There are at least nine states where policies provide a combination of election and appointment; states include Maryland, Ohio, and Virginia. Now, Ben will provide in-depth examples of the policies states have for local school boards selection.

Mr. Erwin:

Now that we have a solid foundation on school board selection policies, we will get into the weeds using a few state examples to help illustrate the different approaches states take to governing school board elections and selection. First school board size may vary based on district size. It may be set in policy or states may create minimum or maximum number of school board members, which typically ranges from 3 to 11, but could get as large as 15 or 21—specifically in some larger cities. In Colorado, districts are required to have a 7-member board with 5 members elected by voting district and 2 elected at-large. Utah recently updated the student population ranges for school board size. Their smallest districts have five members, while their largest have nine with some nuance in the middle.

Representation is also addressed by some states and policy. For example, California specifies that all school board members be elected at-large. While New Mexico requires all school board members to be elected from individual voting districts that are updated each census. While, as Lauren mentioned, elections are the most common method of board selection nationwide, some states have established selection methods that combine appointments and elections or move to establish an entirely appointed board. Overwhelmingly, these approaches target specific districts by name rather than being blanket policies. Maryland provides for elected, appointed, and hybrid boards in-state policy, depending on the district. Baltimore County provides an example of a hybrid board. The Baltimore County School Board is made up of 11 members, 7 of which are elected and 4 of which are appointed by the governor with the assistance from a local nominating commission. Three other school boards in Maryland are both elected and appointed; providing that hybrid option. Ohio does provide a mechanism for the establishment of a hybrid school board, which is district-initiated. School boards may adopt a resolution to add appointed members, but the number of appointed members must be less than the number of elected members on the board. Fully appointed boards, on the other hand, are usually concentrated in urban centers in a followed state takeover in some cases, but not all. For example, Ohio policy only allows for mayoral control following a period of state control with the Cleveland Metropolitan School District providing an example of that.

High-profile examples of mayoral control following state policy action include New York City and Baltimore. In New York City, the mayor and borough presidents appoint board members, the mayor appoints nine, while the borough presidents appoint one per borough. While Baltimore requires a citizen-nominating panel to provide mayors with a list of perspective candidates for the mayor to choose from. The New York Legislature is actually currently debating whether or not to continue mayoral control in New York City, this control is usually extended for a period of four years, and it is included in their state budget bill. But this year the legislature has removed the topic from the budget discussion and will address it in June according to local reporting on the issue.

School boards have continued to garner attention in state houses throughout the country in a number of ways. The most significant change was made in Illinois, who after many years of debate established a schedule to phase the Chicago Board from an appointed board to a fully elected 21-member board by 2027. The procedure allows for elected and mayor-appointed members during the transition while limiting the power of the current board to make decisions on school closures or consolidation. Other important changes include election provisions, partisanship, and term limits. Colorado recently kept campaign contributions to school board elections, while both Tennessee and Georgia have addressed partisanship in board elections, with the former allowing partisan elections and the latter requiring nonpartisan elections in a specific district. In 2018, Idaho addressed election procedures by moving the election day to the same day as city elections in November, rather than a standalone election that was previously held in May. Finally, Florida moved to establish a term limit of 12 consecutive years for their school board members, which would be three terms.

A number of states have also enacted legislation impacting school board compensation and training requirements. Lauren will provide more information on compensation.

Ms. Bloomquist:

As in the school board selection, state policies vary in how they approach school board member compensation. When it comes to school board compensation, the majority of school board members are volunteers. Based on a survey from the National School Board

Association (NSBA) over 60 percent of members report receiving no annual salary. Of those who do report receiving compensation, over 25 percent earn less than $5,000 per year. State policies regarding member compensation vary widely. States like Florida mandate a base salary with incremental increases based on the population where the member serves. In contrast, states like Texas require members to serve as volunteers. There are also states that permit school boards to receive compensation without mandating or prohibiting it.

Several states established limits on compensation. For example, Indiana limits compensation to $2,000 per year. Other states allow compensation on a per meeting basis, like Louisiana which authorizes $50 per meeting. Mississippi allows members the flexibility to choose $65 per meeting or $2,400 annually. There are also states like Minnesota that allow school boards to set their own compensation.

Next, Ben will talk about state policies that address school board training.

Mr. Erwin:

School board training has also been a topic of conversation in state capitals. I know it was in Nevada during the 2016 Legislative Session when the legislature enacted training requirements for boards in the state. Policymakers have established minimum hour requirements for board training ranging from 4 to 16 hours over the course of a single year or a full school board member term. Often, training requirements address issues including ethics, curriculum and instruction, personnel policies, finance, school law, community engagement, and operations.

I wanted to highlight two states that have established comprehensive approaches to school board training. Georgia requires the state board of education, in partnership with the Department of Education, to craft and oversee local school board member training. The state board convened the task force to, among other things, develop and recommend standards for local school boards and guidelines for member training. The task force established a new framework for member training to support a focus on student achievement that was consistent with local priorities. Additionally, if a school district has a school classified in a certain management status by the state education agency, the school board members of that district have to complete additional training.

New Jersey requires new school board members to complete a training program in their first year in office that serves as an orientation on board governance. In subsequent years, board members must complete a school district governance training on school law and other information to enable more board members to continue to serve more effectively. The New Jersey School Boards Association is charged with providing school board member training and they outline their training schedules based on four topic areas; one area covered each year of the board member's term. These approaches are aligned with the general consensus on what goes into effective school board governance, which brings us to the final section on research concerning school board governance.

While research on school board governance is limited—and often speculative—there are a couple of takeaways with state policy implications on issues ranging from voter turnout and the impact of compensation to effective school board leadership. It is especially difficult to draw definitive conclusions about what works in school board governance, largely due to the unique political and social context in which boards operate, that play a role in both student opportunity and achievement, as well as the day-to-day functioning of the board.

To start with a look at elections and voter turnout. The NSBA highlighted a shrinking pool of candidates leading to uncontested elections and low voter turnout in school board elections nationwide, which may reduce board accountability or lead to less qualified candidates. A recent analysis of voter records in California, Illinois, Ohio, and Oklahoma also found that school boards in majority nonwhite districts are typically elected by a majority white electorate. The authors of the study found an association between boards elected by a majority white electorate and racial achievement gaps within the district. The author suggested moving elections to November in even-years when voter turnout is at its highest and moving to at-large seats, which can lead to increased representation of communities of color. A report from the Fordham Institute, a conservative think tank, supported this claim asserting that on-cycle and at-large elections are associated with high performing school boards.

Additional research has been dedicated to appointed school boards—namely mayoral control in large urban districts. Like the rest of the research, based on school governance, findings have been mixed on the impact of mayoral control. While some studies have found initial positive gains in student achievement as measured by test scores, researchers have not found sustained significant differences from one board type to another. Researchers also cautioned that there are other factors that contribute to improved achievement, so it is difficult to isolate mayoral control in an appointed board as a driver of improved student outcomes. Proponents of a shift to mayoral control, highlight a few pros that may result in improved governance including the strategic use of resources, increased board diversity, and direct accountability for the appointing authority—in this case being a mayor. Opponents highlight potential for reduced community representation and community voice in the school board.

Finally, I wanted to close with a look at claims and findings that could impact compensation or training requirements. We were unable to identify specific research on the impact of member compensation, but advocates for member compensation claim that considering increasing demands of the job, that it can increase the socioeconomic diversity of the board and expand the pool of qualified candidates. Research on effective governance can also point to potential areas of focus for training requirements. The NSBA conducted a literature review to identify eight characteristics of effective governance, including a board organized around a shared vision and goals. A board that holds a belief that all children can learn. A board focused on setting high expectations for student achievement with an accountability focus. A collaborative and communicative culture of the school board. A board committed to data driven decision making. A board that aligns their resources to those shared vision and goals. A board that has developed an effective working relationship with district leadership. And a board that undergoes consistent team development. Other studies reviewed, in preparing for this presentation, highlighted similar characteristics. In addition to practices including effective collaboration with the superintendent, accountability for the superintendent in annual evaluations of board performance—all came up in our research as promising practices for effective school board governance.

I know we have covered a lot in a short amount of time, so we would be happy to take any questions you have. Before opening it up for questions and answers, I did want to refer to the memo that we prepared for today's presentation. It includes all of the content that we have covered in the last 15 minutes. In addition to other state examples, more details on the state examples we shared, and relevant resources—especially in terms of research on effective governance. With that we would love to take any questions and we appreciate you having us today.

Chair Denis:

Thank you. I will go to members first.

Assemblywoman Anderson:

Thank you for the presentation and the memo is incredibly helpful.

My first question has to do with the requirements to serve as a trustee, both in our state as well as others. In particular, when I take a look at the memo on page two where it states that Ohio and Virginia allow for the appointed boards and with the mechanism that is described for the establishment. What exactly are the necessary skills for consideration and is that lined out in law or is that lined out in policy?

Mr. Erwin:

We would be happy to dig into any sort of qualifications that are outlined in law. Based on the Ohio and Virginia examples—they outlined the mechanism in Ohio for expanding the board, but do not provide guidance or requirements around qualifications. In Virginia, up until 1992 all of their boards were appointed by a city-level governing entity, and then they passed legislation that allowed boards to shift to allow counties to shift to an elected board if through voter referendum. Most districts have actually shifted to an elected board, but similar to Ohio, they do not outline clear qualifications. But that is something that we would be more than happy to dig into and see if any states have outlined those qualifications, similar to how a state might require superintendents to meet certain qualifications as well.

Assemblywoman Anderson:

Follow up if I may.

Chair Denis:

Let us put that on the list of qualifications, something that we might get to do some further research.

Assemblywoman Anderson:

The other question I had was, so what I am hearing—I want to make sure I am hearing this correctly—is in the past, it feels like there has been appointed, but now many state legislation is moving now to elected. Am I understanding that correctly? Or have I oversimplified what has been stated today?

Mr. Erwin:

We want to be clear that a majority of school boards throughout the country are elected and have been elected historically. There are some states like Virginia who shifted from appointed boards to elected boards, but they represent the minority; most school boards are elected. In Maryland, they have made specific changes to individual boards rather than making a blanket change—switching from appointed to elected. I would say—short answer to your question—there has been, historically, consistent state policy around elected boards with some exceptions in the states.

Vice Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

I am looking at the slide that you talked about the training. I know it is 4 to 16 hours, which seems especially—on the four end seems very low. I am wondering who is doing this training? I know, in statute, as new legislators, we go through training for like three full days; and we are still learning. I think you said 4 to 6 hours over one year or term. I was wondering who typically is providing that training and what is covered? I would appreciate that.

Mr. Erwin:

Based on our understanding, and we have not conducted a comprehensive 50 state comparison on the issue. So, this is speculating based on the sample of state policies that we have collected. The state's school boards association, or the state's department of education provide the training. I think in some cases the state's department of education might approve training providers who would apply for the ability to offer that training, but for the most part it is either one of those entities. I will go back to the slide on school board training so we can look at some of the content. I think ethics came up as a common issue across states; curriculum and instruction or training on student achievement came up as a common issue; personnel policies, especially thinking about teacher employment contract policies came up as a significant issue; school finance; school law; community engagement and relations; and then general district operations—thinking about providing for school bus services and these different day-to-day operation issues that school districts have to navigate. Those were the main themes that we identified in training. Now, states might use different language to describe these issues, or they might have an additional topic area included. But these were the main ones that we identified from the sampling of states that we looked at.

Vice Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

This question probably is not for you, Mr. Erwin, maybe for someone in the audience who might know what we currently do now as far as training.

Chair Denis:

We are going to wait.

Vice Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

We can write that down.

Chair Denis:

Also, we have Debb Oliver that is going to give a presentation. I am sure she will cover it and we also have our legal counsel. So, we will probably wait to do that.

Assemblywoman Miller:

My first is a request from ECS and even all of the national groups. I think one thing that gets lost when we are having these conversations—it is excellent to see what everyone else across the country is doing—but we are an extraordinary circumstance where we are the fifth largest school district in the country. So much of what is happening everywhere else—I wish I could model everything based on where I grew up in school districts—that the majority, it is very few school districts that even have over five high schools—averaging

one to two high schools, maybe three. So, those are completely different dynamics in states that have hundreds—we have many states with over 1,000 school districts. If we could find out what are the dynamics of the top—the 10 or 20 largest school districts in the country. Because even when we say things like, 'oh, here in this district, they are volunteer, and they do not get paid.' Well, when you have one or two high schools, and you can make it to all the football games and ceremonies. But here, what our trustees are required to do—it is quite extraordinary because of the volume in our student population. So, if we can get that and I know you do not have those dynamics today. But if we could get that information, all of the same categories, but literally being able to plug in and see what the top 10 or 20 do. I think that would be more helpful and more appropriate.

My request for parking lot. But my actual question is—if you could touch back on—I want to make sure I am hearing this correctly when you were discussing about the nonwhite districts that the board members were elected by the majority of white people. So, specifically in CCSD, where are the majority of our students and families are not white. I am wondering if you could clarify that again, please.

Mr. Erwin:

I think to address your first point around the dynamics of the largest districts, we would be happy to look into that. In some cases, these things are not covered in state policy because they are such unique examples. I think we have examples of mayoral control, like in Philadelphia, it is not necessarily addressed in state policy because they shifted the mayoral control after a period of 18 years where the state had control over the district. We will need to do a little more digging to figure out what the dynamics are there. We were more than happy to look into that.

To your second question around the research on the electorate for some school districts. The study looked at Ohio, Oklahoma, California, and Illinois. They looked at voting records and they determined that in majority nonwhite districts, the voter turnout in the voting population was made up of a majority of white individuals who were controlling the outcome of that election, if that makes sense. They pointed out the disconnect between communities around who was voting for school boards and who was directly impacted by school board governance.

Assemblywoman Miller:

With that, do we know if those elections were elections at-large or district-based elections?

Mr. Erwin:

In California, I do know their elections for unified school districts are at-large. I would need to look into Ohio, Oklahoma, and Illinois policies to determine whether or not they were at-large or by-voting district. I believe they were by-voting district, but I cannot say that definitively off the top of my head. I will say that three of the four—I believe this is included in the memo—three of the four districts were on off-cycle elections. I can verify that—looking at the memo here. Those are the dynamics of each state that the researchers were looking into.

Assemblywoman Miller:

Because we are talking about race at this point, could we also in our parking lot put, unless you have it readily available, looking at our largest school districts in the country—because those tend to be the most diverse school districts in our country. What is the racial makeup?

Do the school boards reflect the diversity; whatever that diversity is? Do the school boards typically reflect the student population when it comes to diversity? I know that is not something that necessarily can be controlled. I am just interested in.

Mr. Erwin:

We would be happy to look into that. Since we are a state policy organization, I do think it would be helpful to also reach out to the NSBA, because they do have more direct contact with boards. But like I said, we would be happy to look into that. I do not necessarily have that information at hand.

Assemblywoman Thomas:

Thank you for the presentation, I really did appreciate it. At the end of your presentation, you mentioned evaluation of trustees and the superintendent, and I would like to know, how does that come about? Especially in light of trustees are elected and/or the superintendent is appointed by that election of trustees. How do other states evaluate that leadership?

Mr. Erwin:

That came out in the research, but we did not necessarily dig into the state policies addressing that issue. I know we can dig into our legislative tracking to see what requirements are in policy around superintendent evaluations, but I am not sure what a board evaluation would look like. That was one thing that a researcher identified—and I believe it would be internal—but I think the NSBA would be a good resource on that. We can see if there has been state policy movement, or if the researcher was referring to a practice that takes place internally among board members as well. I am sorry, I cannot provide more information at the moment.

Chair Denis:

That might be something also with Ms. Oliver could maybe address that. I know they are part of the national organization.

Who else has questions? Let us go to the public to see what questions you might have.

Mr. Vellardita:

I was wondering if you had any more detailed research on the experience where a school district transitioned from one model of governance to another, whether it was from elected, to say a hybrid, or appointee, or vice versa. And then whether or not you have research that drove the change. In other words, why did all of a sudden—not all of a sudden—but why did a change in the governance model occur? Is there any research on those two areas?

Mr. Erwin:

I think a lot of the research is primarily focused on large urban districts who have shifted to a model of mayoral control in one way or another. One of the studies that was included in the memo was Philadelphia—and from my understanding—the state had taken over the schools for a period of about 18 years and then transitioned it to mayoral control. I believe their board compensation is written into the city charter, which makes also makes it a unique example as well. I do not have a ton of insight other than the history of state takeover. In Cleveland, their school district is under mayoral control with support of a

citizen nominating panel, and that was also the result of a takeover as well. In Ohio's policy, they require after four years of mayoral control during that transition from state takeover to mayoral control; they require after four years for voters to vote on whether or not the district will remain in mayoral control or if it will shift back to an elected board. In New York City, I would need to dig into the context of the shift to an appointed board to understand the driver there. That decision was made in 2002 by the state legislature, but I am unsure of the context off the top of my head. I would want to point out since I did include a few examples of a transition from state takeover to mayoral control, that that is not always the case. I believe Chicago has historically been an appointed board and that was unique in the State of Illinois. I believe Boston has had an appointed board for a significant amount of time and it was not necessarily a transition from state takeover. I really have to dig into those unique examples, but I know we did include a study on Philadelphia. There is a wealth of research on mayoral control and its effectiveness with the consensus being that there is not a significant difference between an elected and appointed board and a lot of that comes down to the many other factors that influence student achievement. I hope I answered your question.

Chair Denis:

We also put it on our list. We are not expecting to get all the answers today, but we want to get the questions, so that we can get the answers.

Debb Oliver, NASB:

I am adding these into a presentation for you. But this is from the NSBA about elected and appointed school board members, and a percentage of 50 states and Washington D.C.—59 percent of all school districts are locally elected, 19 percent are primarily elected. I will put this on a graphic, so it is much easier for you to see. Then urban school board members that are elected or appointed; we have 82 percent of urban districts that are elected officials, 15 percent are primarily appointed, and only 3 percent have elected and appointed in them—that is from the NSBA.

Jana Wilcox-Lavin, Opportunity 180:

My question to the presenters is around whether or not in your research you were able to identify any potential outcomes or intention of a particular government strategy? Did you hear anything that established what those elected bodies wished to be true from their school boards and/or establishment of a series of outcomes or a set of criteria that they were hoping to see accomplished through a particular selection? I ask the question because we are having a pretty technical discussion about governance, and I think it is in the context of what we want to be true for kids. I was curious if there was any research that nailed down intentions on a particular selection of a government strategy.

Mr. Erwin:

Unfortunately, we did not come across additional information specific to the intention or goals around a shift to a specific structure. I would defer to the NSBA. I appreciate the context that Ms. Oliver provided because they do have a lot more of the perspective on the ground workings of local school boards. And I wanted to reiterate the point that we really honed-in on examples of appointed boards or hybrid boards, but they do remain the minority nationwide. Unfortunately, we were not able to identify research on that and I think I would defer more to an organization that does work directly with school boards—since we are focused on those state policies.

Rebecca Dirks Garcia, Nevada PTA:

You mentioned briefly when you were talking about the disparity in diverse districts, but yet whites electing the trustees. A quick comment—that seemed to be less prevalent where there were at-large seats versus districts. Can you elaborate on that? Or if there are significant differences when there is more at-large seats available versus doing districts and how that plays into representation?

Mr. Erwin:

We linked to the report in the memo, and I would encourage folks to look directly at the findings. The researchers suggested, as one of the recommendations, that districts shift to at-large elections, and they cited other studies that pointed to the fact that this resulted in more diverse board membership. But with the limited timeline, we were not necessarily able to go as deep into those studies as we would have liked. I would defer to the research that we linked. Unfortunately, I cannot provide more information off the top of my head.

Chair Denis:

Other questions?

Mr. Daly:

Following up on the Chicago example, which I think is interesting. It seems as if Chicago is moving historically appointed; I think was it governor and then mayor, some state entity and then the mayor of Chicago, but moving to fully elected by 2026. It seems as if this is a change that Chicagoans overwhelmingly support. Polling or there have been various votes in the city of Chicago that show between 70 and 90 percent of Chicagoans support moving from the appointed to the elected model of school governance. I have been trying to think about why Chicago and we have heard some testimony here today, that some people in Las Vegas would prefer appointed to the elected board—yet an overwhelming, and I do not know if there has been polling in Las Vegas, Clark County, or in the State of Nevada on that—I have not seen it if there has. But an overwhelming majority of Chicagoans support moving the other direction. And it seems to me, I can think of three reasons why, I am wondering if our presenters have any of their own thoughts, but my thoughts were: (1) voters sometimes like having the opportunity to vote. So, if you are going to poll Chicagoans, registered voters, or if you are going to take a vote—those are all voters obviously weighing in. Voters typically support their ability and their right to vote for decision makers. I think many of NSEA's points around why democratically elected school boards are a better model despite a lot of issues and problems that we have seen in recent years, perhaps Chicagoans agree that elections—while they can be messy—are preferable in terms of choosing governance. The last thing, and I do not know if this helps the overall pointed position that my organization has, but I will add it into the conversation anyway for fairness. I do not think Trustee Cavazos is behind me anymore, so, I would say school governance is very difficult and I am wondering if there is some element of trying anything. So, Mayor Lori Lightfoot appointing a Chicago School Board, nearly half of Chicago schools are not meeting the state standards—that is not working, whether real or perceived, whether there have been gains in performance metrics in Chicago schools or not. The perception in Chicago, I would say similar to the perception here in Las Vegas, is that something is broken in the school system. And so, if there is something broken, perhaps our governance model is not working. Just food for thought. Panelists, have you looked at anything like this or public opinion on school governance, or the Chicago example specifically—perhaps the Clark County example? I know that there are 17 school districts, but oftentimes here in Las Vegas we talk about the CCSD. Have you looked at this?

Mr. Erwin:

I appreciate your insight especially as you are thinking about the individual dynamics of a city. I have two points that I want to convey. With our presentation, we are an unbiased, nonpartisan organization, and I hope that none of this came across as advocating for one route or another. Being state policy focused, we do not typically wade into the local dynamics of a school district, but we do understand that these decisions are rooted in the community context—the political context—that could result in very different decisions from Chicago to New York. I think looking at the New York Legislature, they are debating right now whether or not to shift from mayoral control back to an elected board. Chicago after years and years of debate decided to make the shift from appointed to elected. From our position, as this national organization, we do not necessarily have insight into what those decisions are, but we understand they are deeply rooted in community dynamics. If there is one thing we know about school boards, whether elected or appointed, boards work differently across the board. We are based in Denver and there are a number of school districts around us that all operate in very different ways despite having a similar governance structure. A lot of times that comes down to dynamics within the board, between board members, the political tides in communities that result in shifting priorities. So, I think the points you raised are really important, but they are not necessarily things that we can provide insight on as a state policy organization.

Ms. Schafer:

To go off my colleague Jana Lavin from a few minutes ago from Opportunity 180. I think that we have to go back to what the intentions here versus the structure at least from one perspective. It is about students. It is about outcomes. It is about our families. It is about economic development. So, what are we trying to accomplish here at the end of the day?

Our organization focuses on tax policy. We focus on healthcare. We focus on judicial issues. But we know the difference between an educated and uneducated citizenry helps all those other issues, if we have an educated citizenry. We spent a lot of time in this space. The only reason we got in this space, almost 18 years ago, was because of challenges that came about with dysfunction at the school board level. And then of course, we wanted to do better by the outcomes that were not happening with the enormous investment with the district and districts at-large throughout the state, but no less with Clark County.
The pragmatic side of it is, how is it functioning from a structural perspective? Because we are all leaders from a political perspective, leaders from a business perspective, you have to look at how is it running itself, and then we were pulled into the government side of it. And then you look nationwide, how else is everybody else doing it? Then we started looking at it from a structural perspective and then we got into this whole appointed versus non appointed because that seems to be how everybody else is doing it.

One of my colleagues on the dais talked about well, how is everybody else from CCSD—a large urban perspective. We did a little bit of research, and the research is only about 10 to 12 years old maybe—Rick Hess from the American Enterprise Institute. And it seems like—and argue with me because I am not a researcher, I am a business girl—at-large urban districts, the academic gains predominantly happened with the minority kids over time and then they begin to even out. But again, it is 10 years and the gains consistently happened in the nonacademic functions of the district. That is where you see it hit out of the park, but those are where the gains are. I will take those gains here right now because we do not seem to be happening anywhere right now.

From the intentional perspective, when we have focused on this in a renewed effort over the last year, we are looking for accountability because nobody's accountable, it is kind of camp-run amok, and we are looking for representation. The diversity element is important to us—we do not have it near enough—and we are looking for participation. People seem shut out of the process. So, those are real important elements. If you have those elements in the conversation, then we can get to a structure that everybody is agreeable on. Our group is less stuck on the structure than the intentions that get us back to kids, outcomes, families, economic development, and more respect for the investment you make in these systems—and then we will get to a structure.

So, yes, appointed versus elected, we need to get on something that works because it is not working right now, everybody. We do not have enough money in the state to go around as it is, and you are putting a lot of money in this process—a lot. But it is about kids. It is about diversity. It is about participation. It is about inclusion. It is about engagement. And those elements are not in the process right now—they are not. And that is where the conversation is at right now for all of us. If we have those elements in, I think the structure will emerge but when we talk about what the research is, when we look at the research for large urban districts—and thank you for that question from the dais—that is what we are seeing with the research—it is so young about 10 years for large urban districts. If I had to make a game day decision right now—on second base—I would take it in a heartbeat for the money you put into it.

Anna Binder:

With all of the districts that you looked at in your study, are they all a part of Chiefs for Change? And are they all members of the Council for Great City Schools?

Mr. Erwin:

I am not sure off the top of my head. I know that the Council for Great City Schools came up a couple of times in our research but cannot say with authority whether or not the districts we were looking at are members in that organization.

I also think to the point around the research base, it is young, and it is extremely difficult to isolate governance as a driver of improvement. An important point that we wanted to convey during this presentation, because there are so many factors at play, there are changes to state policy that could impact improvements; there are changes the local policy and different things like that. Back to your question around whether or not they are involved with Chiefs for Change or the Council of Great City Schools. I am not positive.

Ms. Binder:

I believe that would be important and I will touch more on that after Dr. Oliver's presentation. But this wonderful woman said, "I am just a parent and were shut out because the governance policies that exist, at least here in CCSD, shut us out—That is a huge factor. We do need oversight. We need some type of policy higher than the board of trustees so they can do their job efficiently. And we, a lot of us—not all of us—but we believe that the Chiefs for Change is a huge problem with that for us.

Chair Denis:

Thank you. Other questions?

Warren Hardy, Council for a Greater Nevada:

This is more comment than anything. The gentleman from the state teacher's association rhetorically asked the question, "Is this an effort to do something?" I think the answer to that is yes. This is an effort to do something and if you are going to do something, I think you start with governance because that is where the buck starts and where the buck stops. I do not think any of us have any preconceived ideas of what then happens after that governance correction. I am not an expert in education by a long shot, but I do know if you are going to fix something, you have got to start at the top and so the answer to the questions. Yes, it is an effort to do something because what we have currently is not working, it is not working for our kids, it is not working for our parents, and so I have no preconceived notions of what comes next after the governance, but that is where the accountability lies and that is where the buck stops. So, I think that is where we start.

Mr. Vellardita:

I want to share this with folks in this room and the panel of legislators. The turning point for my organization was after the 2019 Session. There was a piece of legislation passed, it was AB 309 and many people might remember that bill because there was embedded in there was a salary increase for educators. That was a bill that we worked with Speaker Frierson. There was another component to that bill and CCEA had spent a year of research and worked hand in hand with LCB to try to figure out how can we generate additional revenue for instruction at the local level, and there were statutory and constitutional restrictions to that because of disparity arguments, all money had to flow from the state. But we did find—and it became part of AB 309—that a county commission could pass a tax for a number of reasons, and two areas around education that it could pass for were pre-K and adult education. And the pre-K is foundational for anybody that knows in terms of advancing a child's education with a good base. There were up to that point investments in pre-K in this state, but not on the scale that our educational system needed. Now that bill passed, and the county commission held a joint meeting with the school board trustees to talk about how they could use that sales tax—I think it was a half a cent; I think they passed a quarter of a percent at that point. The discussion was around pre-K, not necessarily adult education, but to pre-K. The county commission wanted to partner with the school board trustees down here on setting up pre-K opportunities for all these kids. We were at that meeting, and nothing came out of that meeting because the school board trustees, at that meeting, were not cooperative with the county commission and it was not made up of the current members of the Clark County School Board, some of them, but it was a different group of school board members. Now, if that is not an example of school governance that has been provided a funding opportunity to increase instruction—not any instruction—significant instruction for kids and they failed. For us, that was a moment something has to be done.

Mr. Moradkhan:

I think from the Chamber's perspective—and first of all, thank you to the presenters, I think this is very helpful—is that communities across the country and states are looking for models. I think starting this presentation this morning, is that our current models are based in 1956. In 2019, we updated the funding formula. Communities have to relook at their governance structures, the funding formulas, and for Nevada that has been 56 years on this particular topic, but I think from the Chamber's perspective and why we are engaged in over two decades on this issue, is that while we are looking at K through 12 governance discussions, were also having higher education governance discussions in this community. I think there is a parallel track that there are concerns from the employer sector that employ the graduate, the CCSD, and those students have to be the career-ready or

college-ready. And I think it is the Chamber's perspective that something has to be done because those students are not ready to go into higher education at times or into the workplace. And for us not to do changes, I think it is a concern and this is not a result of six months of an issue or one bad year at a school board level, this has been ongoing. I think that this history shows that if we do not do anything, that nothing will change our economic development efforts, our workforce development efforts, and trying to recruit new companies here. As we hear the Chamber, and I know other groups do too, this education system is absolutely a factor if folks are going to come to Nevada—if they are going to stay here. To the point that was being made is something has to be done either through a hybrid change of governance, additional qualifications—something has to be done for our community or if not, we are going to fail our students.

Chair Denis:

I want to make sure right now, we are on this presentation, and I want to hear all these comments. We are going to have a section—if you have ideas and where we need to go. But I want to make sure that we get to all the presentations, so that we can then have these other discussions. I do not want to get too far off track here.

First of all, let us see anybody that has not asked a question yet? I am going to go to a second chance here.

Ms. Binder:

I recently came into contact with THThealth's last audit. I also have a very comprehensive spreadsheet of all of CCEA's financial contributions for elections for the last three years. THThealth…

Chair Denis:

At the beginning, I said we were not going to talk about individuals. Let us not talk about individual groups, because we want everybody to participate today. So, if you want to make a comment, make a comment.

Ms. Binder:

If we are going over governance, we have to start at the top. We cannot postpone it beyond next legislative session.

Ms. Garcia:

So, wondering in your review, you commented on how sometimes large school districts are falling under different governance models or different statutes within the state versus the rest of the population per se. Our problems are not related just to Clark. Elko had massive upheaval in the last year with their governance structure as well. But what are the findings on that? Is it typical to see different structures if there is a large urban district concentrated within a state so that there is a break off model for certain sized districts versus keeping a standardization for those under a certain population size?

Mr. Erwin:

From our findings, it was not as common to have an entirely different model for an urban district. We have the high-profile examples in Boston, Philadelphia, New York, New York City, and Baltimore City, but it is not necessarily the case across the board. I think the Utah

example we cited, if the district has a population of over 100,000 students and they will have more board members. But we did not necessarily find different sections of code specific to cities in every state. I think you can point to reasons why Chicago, Philadelphia, New York City do you have those different sections of code considering how large they are as districts, but if we cannot necessarily speculate on the intent of the legislature, why they carved it out? It was not extremely prevalent, but for some of these major metropolitan areas, states decided to carve out different policies for those cities.

Chair Denis:

In the research, was there anything that would give insight into the size of the board making a difference one way or another—if it is larger or smaller?

Mr. Erwin:

No, we did not find research on board size during the review period. We did look for any resources on the impact of the size of the board. But yes, did not find an individual study. I think some of that comes down to how do you isolate the impact of board size when so much of governance is dependent on internal board dynamics? So, short answer, we were not able to identify any research that dug into that. It does not mean it does not exist. We can continue looking, keeping an eye out for any studies that address that.

Chair Denis:

Thank you.

Mr. Daly:

There was a comment in the discussion about some of the genesis of getting here being the 3 percent raise item in 2019. It seems to me that the timing had more to do with 2020, and the election of Lisa Guzman to the CCSD Board of Trustees out of district A. I will say this about elections—having done elections for 25 years or so—sometimes you win elections and sometimes you lose elections, and I think all the elected on the dais get this in terms of accountability, but with elections it is not perfect—the role of money in elections, the participation, the discussion around voting patterns, various communities, white voters out voting Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities—there are all sorts of electoral issues. And I think from the legislature, what we have seen over the last couple of sessions is a real strong push to increase participation, to try and go for greater levels of enfranchisement. It is interesting that there is the conversation with school boards that it seems to be in part, moving in the opposite direction while the conversation around electing members of the legislature, governor, or federal representatives is moving into the one where how do we work to improve and then perfect our democracy. I think it would be great if we could have a conversation. I am not sure if there are going to be presentations this morning more about that. I know that some of the discussions of at-large, some of the discussion of looking at queuing elections up with the presidential general election—those things make sense. But I think there is all sorts of other things, conversations around rank choice that are happening that would allow for an entire election to be completed in the November general where there are greater numbers of voters and ideas around public financing to limit the negative impact of money in elections. I think all of these things should be on the table and in the discussion because I agree that something should be done, but if you want to go somewhere and end up in the right place, you do not get in your car and drive in any direction, you need a direction to go in and then drive. I am hoping that we can figure out what direction we want to go in before we take off and go on a joyride.

Chair Denis:

I think we are here today because we are trying to figure that out. Any other questions? I know we have some more; I am going to go back to Senator Buck. Anyone else have a question? Let me know.

Senator Buck:

When districts are failing to perform and boards become an unprofessional spectacle, you mentioned that there were state takeover of districts. Have we looked at that possibility? I know that there are receiverships in the charter school world. I do not see how you are going to legislate common sense behavior and expectations of a board. Another idea with the hybrid opportunity—I wondered if anyone looked into this—I know that on charter school boards you have to have an attorney and accountant—so job specific roles. Is that a possibility to build a hybrid model, in that respect?

Mr. Erwin:

We can look into board qualifications. I know there are some things in policy around boards needing to select an executive director. We can see what information there is on treasurers, councils, whatever that might be. We did not see anything specific to that in our research, but we also were not looking for those provisions. To your question around state takeover and receivership, those fall more in our understanding of school improvement. The findings on those policies are extremely limited, very mixed, and it very much depends on the state, the school system, whatever it might be. We can do additional research and share our resources on those efforts that fall in the way we conceptualize state interventions around school improvement but cannot necessarily speak with authority on their impacts right this minute.

Chair Denis:

Mr. Killian, I am going to ask you to chime in on, there are a couple of different things that people talk about elected versus appointed, but when it comes to qualifications, are limitations in the law, as far as implementing qualifications for any model that we do?

Mr. Killian:

Under current law in Nevada, it is NRS 386.240. The qualifications, and as a preface, currently in Nevada all school board members are elected, and so the qualifications for trustees in NRS 386.240 are very limited. You simply have to be a qualified elector and you have to satisfy the relevant residency requirements. Those always include living in the county where the school district is based depending on the size of the school district, some seats maybe at-large. For some of the smaller districts, there are requirements on whether you live in the county seat or not. But that is the extent of requirements for school board members in Nevada law right now. There is no constitutional prohibition on the Legislature establishing further qualifications, but as of right now, basically you have to be a qualified elector and you have to live in the county; there are no qualifications established beyond that.

Chair Denis:

So, that I am clear, you said there is no constitutional prohibition to create some qualifications in that.

Mr. Killian:

That is correct.

Chair Denis:

And that would also apply in an appointment situation, correct?

Mr. Killian:

Yes, if the Legislature chose to move from a fully elected model to some sort of model that includes appointments, the Legislature would be free to establish qualifications for the appointed members for the boards.

Chair Denis:

Other questions from members? Do you want to wrap this up for us, before we take a break?

Mr. Quiner:

Just a follow up with some of the qualifications, the training, the election, the appointed versus elected. We talked about composition diversity. We talked about composition quite a bit, nationwide provision that ECS provided us, perspective, et cetera. So, if anybody has a big issue that I missed, or the committee if you have another issue that you want to add, I am happy to do so.

Chair Denis:

Do we have any additional things that we missed? No.

We are going to take a break. We will be on recess until 10:45 a.m.

I am going to turn it back over to Mr. Quiner.

Mr. Quiner:

Our third presenter is Dr. Oliver of the NASB.

Dr. Oliver:

Thank you for having me. Committee, for my time with you, I would like to talk to you about elected school board governance, focusing on Nevada, and what is going on in Nevada. I was listening to comments today and appreciate the presentations and the information that was shared at a national level, looking around at what is going on in governance. But I think there is something that is very important for all of us to understand, which is, what is school board governance? We are going to dive into some of that.

I am with the NASB. In our association, all of our membership are trustees throughout the state; we are a nonprofit organization, and the government of the Association is by the elected trustees. Each of the 17 districts are represented on our board, and both Washoe and Clark counties have an additional one or two representatives on our board, which is looking at their student population and what they are doing. We feel that there is

equal representation on the Association board to give us a unified voice in what is of interest and what needs to be supported. I am here today to share with you, ideas and concepts coming from our governing body from all of our elected members in the State of Nevada.

Our Association focuses on training and information. We are the provider of training—professional learning is how I like to call it. It is leadership and governance, and everything that is revolved around the professional learning that the school board members go through has the lens of school board governance—which is a different beast at times as we all know, than other types of governance, say, nonprofit governance or any other kind of governance.

The focus is on school board governance. The advocacy work that the Association provides is from the voice of all 107 members of our Association.

We offer policy support—not necessarily services—but we offer policy support to districts that need advice or help with the policies as they begin to write and administer them. As the question was asked earlier, they not only write policy for their district, but they also uphold that policy and represent the policy that they are writing within the work they do.

We also provide superintendent searches. Within the last three years, we have supported four districts with their superintendent searches, because that is a main role of the school board to hire, support, and work with their school superintendent. We work closely with our membership to support them in their searches. And that is with training around; what does that look like? It is helping with finding candidates, how to vet their candidates, and looking at everything in that search service. The NASB is also an affiliate of the NSBA. The NSBA also provides training and support to our membership. There is a national conference that was recently held at the beginning of April where they hear the national voice. There are opportunities for school board members to come together with those from around the state to collaborate, share ideas, and exchange things that are going on within their districts and within their state.

There are regions. We belong to the Pacific Region, which are the states over to the far west of the country and gather monthly with our regions to talk about issues and things that are going on. This is an opportunity of that collaboration and understanding what is happening legislatively in different states. What is happening within large districts, and what is happening in our rural districts—and the conversations are rich. Those that attend the regional meetings, then bring back and share information with districts. That helps shape the direction and ideas that our Association has. I think a key piece that we all have is that all children should have equal access to an excellent education and that is a goal of both of our organizations.

So, this is what we would advocate for, that locally elected school board members provide citizen oversight of the community's schools and protect the public interest of preserving a free and equitable public education system in the United States.

There was a question that was asked. I wanted you to see that when we look nationally—this information is from the NSBA—that 59 percent of school boards throughout the United States and Washington D.C. are locally elected and 19 percent are primarily elected; then we have the equally elected and appointed; 4 percent primarily appointed; and 8 percent are mayoral control or have no board.

The other piece here, as we were talking about the elected or appointed in urban schools—what does that look like? Eighty-two percent of our urban schools—the larger schools—are primarily locally elected and this is from the Council of Great City Schools. As one of our commenters, this is where this information is coming from. Looking at elected school boards, 96 percent of school districts have elected school boards, including two-thirds of the 25 largest districts in the United States. Thinking progressively and how that moves us forward, it gives local control for schools—schools are the hub of any community—showing up to a basketball game at the local high school or one of the many local high schools, to a volleyball match, a track meet, a drama, an art showing—schools are the heart of a community. And very valuable to every community is having a voice in what that school looks like. It was shared earlier that there is no set idea of what it looks like because it is set on the vision and the values of the board, which represents the vision and the values of the community. That is why they look different in different communities. We are going to see schools that might look different within our state. If we look at White Pine to Carson City, it looks different from Washoe to Clark. The vision and the values set what it looks like for our schools and our districts.

I am going to bring this back to Nevada. Where are school boards in Nevada? We have 17 locally elected school boards—we have 17 districts in the state. Each county has a district and each of those has an elected school board. We have 15 rural communities or what we would say are rural—Carson, I know they do not think so, but they fall within that parameter—and then we have two urban districts and that is Clark and Washoe. Each are governed by statutes and regulations that have been set through legislation. The qualifications—which we have already discussed—the ethics that they follow also come from legislation. The terms that they have, we have discussed, they have four-year terms and have three of those. And then the training is also governed by regulation, which I will talk more about.

So, a legal basis for governing boards. We looked at NRS 386 and that statute describes what the governing body is. It gives that there is no authority to any single individual on a board that they are a board member by statute. That is a board of five or seven depending on the district that they are in. So, it might be five or seven individuals with one voice and the board's power comes from that one voice or what we call the team concept—it is a majority voice. While there may be dissenting opinions and ideas on every board, there is the power to talk about those. But when something comes to a vote on the board and a majority has ruled one way or the other, on whatever the topic is, the board then needs to come together and support that decision. That is when we look at school board governance, we are able to, what we may say, 'hey, we have watch dogs and things of this nature coming in.' The board itself is a unit with one voice—maybe five or seven voices to make that one voice.

Why elected boards? Why are they so valuable? They model the democratic process for stakeholders, and that includes our students. To see the elected officials governing their schools is an amazing model for our students as well as our community. We know that schools are so valuable to everyone in our community and having an elected board creates an interest and creates engagement in the schools. They do have a voice when we have elected school board members in who they are choosing to represent them on the board as well as having those conversations with their neighbor as they are on the board. It allows for more direct access abilities for the families having the elected boards because again, they feel as though they have had that opportunity to elect them in and say, 'this is the person that we want to represent our ideas, our vision, and our values of what that is.'

It creates for us here in Nevada, that nonpartisan idea in who is running our schools, that it is nonpartisan, which is in the best interest for students and for those that work in the district. The largest number of elected officials in the United States are school board members. Over 90,000 school board members in the United States are elected officials. We have 13,600 local school districts in the United States. And I should say 86,000 of those 90,000 are elected. So, as we have been talking and the conversation has been going, the elected—there is a purpose behind that elected and that is that voice and choice of the constituents within the community to be able to have their voice in Nevada.

As I mentioned, in Nevada, we do have 107 elected members representing their areas, their districts, their regions, or their open areas, within their school districts. When we think of that stakeholder engagement recently was looking at ethnic minorities, and how does that represent as we look at elected officials? It offers an opportunity for our ethnic minorities to get involved. It gives them the opportunity to have the representation that they are seeking, that we need to help them seek, and helps them to provide that community service by having elected board members. It ensures the ability to have that door open for anyone in the community to be involved. It gives them that opportunity. We want to leave that door open to ensure the involvement of our public in our schools through school board governance.

Direct accessibility for families. Elected school board members have increased responsiveness to their stakeholders—they have been voted in; they have been given that, we trust you; we want you to represent us. So, there is a feeling that there is more ability for that conversation—that two-way conversation—to occur between the people in the community and their school board members, and increased opportunity for discussions through community conversations. School board members will go out into their communities, sometimes sitting in high schools or elementary school libraries, and open up to the community and talk to them to find out what is going on, what is happening? Here are some things we are thinking about as a board. How does that relate to you? What are the issues? What are the things that you are seeing that we need to help focus on? So, there is an opportunity there with our elected officials to have that kind of relationship with those that have voted them in.

We talked about voter turnout, and in the last presentation, we heard that there was not great voter turnout. These are some percentages from our last election. In Clark County, the Trustee A seat had 80.35 percent voter turnout. You can see what they are here when we get to the county commissioner level—county Commissioner A was 77.61 percent and Commissioner B was 75.71 percent. This shows that the community wants to be involved in choosing their school board members. For Washoe county, here again, we can see such similarities, there is not enough disparity. I think, here to say, from Trustee A in Washoe County at 87.45 percent, and then Commissioner A is 86 percent, Commissioner B is 84 percent. So again, an example that our communities are turning out to vote for their school board members. To give you an example in a rural community in Elko County; we had 76 and 75 percent for the school board members and the county commissioner at 85 percent. So again, showing our community is interested in having a voice in their school boards, in their schools, and the direction that their schools are going.

I know Ms. Sturm shared these with you on what the compensation is for school board members, but here we have under 20,000 is $250 per month; for over 20,000 to under 100,000 is $400 per month; and over 100,000 population is $750 per month. That can be paid out bimonthly or monthly, and it also includes reimbursement for travel, mileage, food, hotels, all at the general services rate (GSR)—the government rate. As a comparison, looking at our Clark County Commissioners, they earn a yearly salary of approximately

$72,000, and they also receive benefits. In a comparison, and I will say, CCSD is one of—because I do not know 100 percent if they are the largest employer in the state, but we are looking at a governing body that is making $750 per month to govern the largest employer in our state—something to think about. Washoe County Commissioners earn on a salary of approximately $66,000—it may be more than that, but that is why I have the approximates there.

This is where we need to start looking at, what do school board members know? How are they doing the work that they do? From AB 451 (Chapter 386, *Statutes of Nevada 2019*), each elected or appointed trustee will complete in their first and third term, no less than four hours of instruction—no less than they have to have four hours to all of this list that is here: the laws relating to public records; open meeting law; laws relating to local government; employee management relations; laws governing the system of K–12 public education; the state laws relating to local government and ethics; identify and prevent violence including without limitation, sexual violence; financial management including oversight, accountability, and audits; and the fiduciary duties of a member of the board of trustees of a school district. When we look at this statute, we are looking at school board members that need to have no less than four hours of training on their first and third term covering all of these items. It is a big bite in four hours of what is required. Assemblywoman Miller, when you mentioned earlier, we heard of 4 to 15 hours—the thought of 4 hours, is that all, because you had said we go through three or four days of deep training. Over the past several years with our school boards, the training has been completely focused on these topics, very deeply focused specifically on school board governance. That is a shift, thinking of the requirement of the training that could be an opportunity for growth and support of accountability around the role of a school board trustee. Accountability to what type of depth of knowledge that they may be needing to gain when they take the seat. Again, I am throwing ideas to think about because we want to have effective school boards, and we want to have effective school board governance—very different than other things.

Take a moment to think about it, but what does effective school board governance look like? What is effective school board governance? I am going to give you 30 seconds to think about that. Effective governance provides a structure that reflects the community's values and the vision—school boards set the vision and the values of the district. There is a direct correlation between our school board and what goes on in our schools at the classroom level. There is a commitment to be effective. There is a commitment by all on the board to serve all children equally, equitably, and the whole child. There is a democratic process for all of the stakeholders to have a voice in what happens in a school board, in their meetings, prior to their meetings, in the policy they set. That they are directly accessible to policy makers to be able to share what is going on. That there is accountability and transparency on the board. Much of that occurs in our open meetings, but we have to have that accountability to our school board members ethically, morally, fiduciary, in a governance way—and it is nonpartisan, that we are not looking at politics for what happens in a school—that we look at the governance structure, that is about student achievement.

Effective governance, there are some key studies—they are not deep studies as you recently heard in the past presentation on school board governance and the kind of research that we would like to have and understand. The *Lighthouse Study* is the most recent. The *Lighthouse Study #2, Standards of Effective Boards* brings around the ideas that we utilize to understand what is effective board governance. So, the Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) with support of the NSBA conducted this ongoing research on effective school boards and their role for advancing student achievement. The studies identified eight characteristics of school boards with higher levels of student achievement and how

they lead their districts towards high performance. The conclusion of this study is school board actions are a key part of a culture of improvement, and school boards can create conditions that promote student learning. Key focus on student learning. I will get to the eight characteristics in a moment. The outcome of this study—and a quote from this study—"Student outcomes do not change until adult behaviors change." I will say it again. "Student outcomes do not change until adult behaviors change." So, who are those adults—which adults have to change their behavior? Are we pointing to the principal, the parents, the teachers, school board members, the superintendent, the administration? We can go all over the place and say the adult—whose adult behaviors are we talking about? In every workshop that I do, in every training that I do, whether here in Nevada or outside of Nevada, student outcomes do not change until adult behaviors change starting with me—and that would be true for everyone in this room and everyone that is listening to this workshop today starting with me. Student outcomes are the most important thing. The only thing that a school provides is—what they are there for—to help develop the whole child.

Effective school boards, what do they look like? I know that Mr. Erwin said—these eight ideas that we think of for effective school boards are: (1) commit to a vision of high expectations for student achievement and quality instruction, and they define clear goals towards the vision—these goals are smart goals, they are clear goals that are student-outcome focused, the idea of schools is to promote the growth, health, and well-being of our students academically, emotionally, and personally; (2) they share strong beliefs about what is possible for students to achieve and their ability to learn, as well as the capability of the school system to teach all children at high levels; (3) they are accountability-driven, they spend less time on operational issues and more time focused on policies to improve student achievement, and if we go back to that first one, when we know we have clear goals and are working to achieve those, these others fall into place because the goals are the end marker that a school board is working toward, and 50 percent of a school board meeting should be spent focused on their goals, which are student outcomes focused; (4) to have a collaborative relationship with staff and the community and establish a strong communications structure to inform and engage both internal and external stakeholders in setting and achieving district goals; (5) they are data savvy, they embrace and monitor data, even when the information is negative, and use data to drive continuous improvement; (6) they align and sustain resources, such as professional development, to meet district goals; (7) they lead as a united team with the superintendent, each from their respective roles with strong collaboration and mutual trust; and (8) participate in team development and training, sometimes with their superintendents, to build shared knowledge, values, and commitment for their improvement efforts. When we think of effective boards, that is what our goal is. These characteristics are the goals that we look to help promote. We help grow these characteristics in our school board members.

The effective governance teams, their primary focus is student learning, performance, and the whole child. They set the vision and the values of the district. They do establish the mission and the goals for the district; that is through the voice of their constituents that they are representing. They understand what the needs are, what the desires are, and they bring those with them and effectively fulfill board responsibility; they are ethical, and they follow legal behaviors. They maintain or use their current policies, and if their policies are outdated, they need to understand and change them based on data; based on things that are informing the policy that they need; and they delegate authority and monitor progress. Once they have set the goals—which again I will say are smart goals—they monitor that progress. We are looking at goals 3 to 5 years; guardrails that are put into place monitoring those goals on a quarterly basis to make sure if there are adjustments and

things that might need to be made as they look at their data. They are respectful and should be collaborative relationships within and among themselves, with their superintendent and staff.

We have school boards and then we have the governance team. The governance team includes the superintendent. They are reliable; they represent their community—all of their stakeholders—and they do that by listening, by going out and finding out what they need to know. They engage in professional training—professional development—to improve their government practices.

I just mentioned, the governance team is the board and the superintendent. I am going to take us through about what this relationship looks like, because it is very different. At the state level, we have our state board of education and our state superintendent. This governance team is not directly related to that relationship. That is a different governance structure, while very functional and doing amazing things—I will talk more about that in a moment. This is school board governance. They understand and respect each other's roles. They understand who they are. They work to have two-way communication. Presidents typically meet with their superintendent on a weekly basis to know what is going on and to have a heads up what is going on—if there are special work meetings that need to occur around things. They will have an understanding of their roles and responsibilities to understand what is the superintendent's job and what is the school board's job.

What is the difference between the board and the superintendent? It is a big one. The board decides the what and the superintendent decides the how, and that is where we have to have those clear lanes for effective governance. That is where that two-way communication really is important. The board hires the superintendent—that is their primary role, hiring and overseeing the duties; determining the vision and the goals of the district; they approve the policies that the district has; reviewing and approving the budget—understanding what a budget is very crucial; they approve contracts—they approve contracts in many ways. They also are the oversight of the superintendent's contract. They monitor progress of the district and student achievement that is occurring in the district. Whether there is student achievement on the plus or if it has got a backslide going down—they monitor that progress so that they can monitor and adjust what is going on. They are the community advocate for the school. The superintendent then takes the goals—that have been set based on data—develops an action plan, complies with all regulations, and the superintendent is the one that is in charge of the staff and the operations of the district—that is the how.

When we start to cross those lines, that is not what we consider effective governance. The school board governs, and the superintendent manages. There are a few other ideas for you to see what the differences are. Together they make that governance team. Understanding these roles for a school board trustee is incredibly important to know that we are not the ones that are setting the budget—we are approving the budget, as an example.

Some of the challenges, they do serve as a team, they are not individual, there are five or seven voices coming together and they work to maintain unity and focus. When we have effective school boards, as we have found in the *Lighthouse Study*, when we look at that, we see eight characteristics. We know there is effective governance happening and then we know student achievement is going to follow at a higher level from what the studies have talked about. A challenge of school board governance is operating in a dynamic and uncertain political climate or uncertain political times. 2020 brought us all to an interesting perspective and our school board trustees were—I am going to say—I think we all know they were taken to task. There were very uncertain times, which is a good way to call what was going on. As I know, you all felt much of the weight, our school board trustees felt

much of the weight—what was going on. I think the voice of the community came out loud and clear and strong at school board meetings on how much they do care and how much they do want to be involved in their child's education—in their grandchild's education. The support necessary to govern through these challenging times comes back to some of the accountability that we can maybe think about in the future in supporting the trustees where they are. So how do we get there? How do we move to effective governance, and is it through training? It is through continual training and coaching. Joyce and Showers' research started in the 1980s and has been redone back in the 1990s and in the 2000s, talking about support in learning does not happen at a one-time event, but it is the ongoing coaching where we actually see a change in behavior, a change in growth, learning, application of the learning that has gone on and that is at 95 percent with coaching; we will see an increase of 5 percent is what we will see on a one-time training. We get it, and we revert back to what we have known or what we have done. At the NASB, we follow evidence-based professional development; we utilize the research to develop, and to find the training to support the ongoing.

The Silver State Governance (SSG), and there is a history of what SSG governance is. The SSG is what we named this—it is the student outcomes focused governance, and it is a governance model, which should be considered a framework, not a model. It is a framework to hang good governance on. It helps build characteristics that we look for with guidance through coaching. This model was developed by AJ Crabill, who at the time was the Deputy Commissioner of the Texas Education Foundation, Chiefs for Change, and the Council of Great City Schools worked together on this framework, looking at all of the research and implementing that into what do we need, how can we get to a student focused, outcome focused governance framework or model. Nevada's Department of Education (NDE) then worked with some local groups and hosted an interest meeting in 2018. In 2019, the Guinn Center, NASB, and NDE came together to look at this and say, this is powerful, this is good, and provided a pilot training. We had four districts; three districts go through the pilot, and subsequently we have had six different districts go through the SSG two-day training; and the State Board of Education has gone through the two-day training. Through the training, they utilize smart goals; that is looking at data of their student outcomes to see where the gaps are and understanding what that data is saying and finding the gaps to focus on growth. That is where they set their goals. Interim goals are set so they can learn how to progress monitor as we are moving forward. The guardrails are set so that the superintendent has the guardrails, which allows the superintendent the leeway to do what needs to happen operationally to be able to move forward and raise student achievement. There is ongoing coaching that goes along with this model. All of the training that the NASB is doing here has a focus of student outcomes focus to it. So, everything that the training that is provided by NASB has that. The State Board of Education has gone through, they set two amazing goals for the state: (1) focusing on student outcomes and that is raising from the top 20 to the top 10 academically, nationally, because we are in the top 20 academically when we look at academics alone, and (2) increasing the career and technical education (CTE) of the CCNR diploma. Big overarching goals that districts, schools, and our school board members are aware of and working to put their goals together to support these state goals. It is the first time Nevada has had these kind of state goals and so the direction there is student outcomes focused, which has been awesome. Lincoln County School District has began implementing SSG. In 2019, they were one of our first pilot schools to go through, and Superintendent Pamela Teel and her board have been utilizing this framework through the Coronavirus Disease of 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. They did not lose ground academically. They stayed or increased with the focus that they had, and to date, they are on track to meet their goals. So, following what research tells us works and we know it is there.

Professional learning that NASB provides is a new board member orientation—it is a half-a-day. It is an overview of what to expect as a new school board member and then comes back several months later, after they have been able to be at a few meetings and get a lay of the land to have something to draw upon for that support. We provide mentors now to newly elected school board members. Some of our seasoned members have become mentors for the new trustees, so they have somebody outside of their district to talk to and ask things about and have that support that they need—some of the questions that you cannot ask your other board member, or you do not want to because you are curious of whatever—we have the mentoring.

We have a new president training for new board presidents so they can understand the ins and outs of what it means to be a school board president—that they are not doing that alone. They now have a cadre of 17 presidents that are able to connect with, share with, and support each other through. There is an annual conference that provides ideas and training around all of the topics that they are needing to look at, all focused on school board governance—all focused on AB 451.

Accountability, NASB supports: (1) the transparent decision-making process and local control; (2) increased accountability for school board trustee's accountability—for the training, if they have not met the four-hour minimum, their name gets placed on their school district website and that is the extent of that accountability; and (3) mandatory training and enforcement for all trustees—and by mandatory training, although we have that currently, would be a deeper level of support in training, matching that accountability so that there is a better understanding of the role that they play. It is a large role, and we believe there is more in that accountability side we could support them to get there.

I will close with this. That NASB believes locally elected boards of education represent the most fundamental element of a democratic society and are the embodiment of representative government. It is critical that school boards set the vision, establish the values, and outline the goals of the district. All board action is student-centered as they set policies, hire superintendents, and participate in advocacy on behalf of all students.

Chair Denis:

Thank you. Questions?

Senator Dondero Loop:

Thank you for your presentation. I do not know if you can answer this or if this goes in our parking lot, but with all this training, I do believe there needs to be more—and I understand that it is the first and third year of their term—maybe those are not the right placements, or they are? But why is not it working? Why are we still experiencing issues and not us specifically, but across the United States? I know we are talking about Nevada, but this is not a localized, I mean, it is localized to us because we are here. But if the training is happening, is it going by deaf ears? What is happening that it is not part of the process?

Dr. Oliver:

I would offer an opinion, not based on research—we can offer training, but that does not necessarily mean that the training is occurring with all trustees. A one occurrence of a training, again 5 percent of that training is actually what sticks with someone. When we look at how the learning process of what is going on, maybe there is more coaching that needs to come on longer terms of that—a real understanding of the role. We also have

accountability around training on school board behaviors. What does it mean to be on the school board and what does that behavior look like? What are the expectations? That is something that is not there. The ethical and moral side of that when somebody is not performing their duties as a school board member. What is the accountability for that? We look at restorative justice in our schools right now and the process to help our students learn what behaviors, understand themselves, what is going on, understand their social-emotional side and aspect of where they are, understanding their emotions. When we look at restorative justice, that is a foundation of what that is and giving the students the opportunity to come back and relearn and understand. Similarly with school board trustees nationally, that would be something that we have at a national level as executive directors have talked about to say, how do we bring some of our rogue board members—for lack of a better term—looking at a national level, what do we do? How can we support their growth and understanding what is going on? That is why training is critical, but it has to have some sort of accountability to it to make it work, and it is really ongoing.

Senator Dondero Loop:

My suggestion might be for the parking lot is that we reassess that it would be the first year and the third year. I always say as an educator, the first year you do something is the first year you do it, right? So, you are unconsciously unskilled. Second year, you do it, you become consciously unskilled, you start to know what you do not know, but you still need to do those things. If you are skipping that second year, by the time you are in the third year, whereas in the educator world you become consciously skilled, you skipped that step. So, that might be something we want to consider is doing the training at different times, because I cannot imagine doing the job I am doing without some ongoing training.

Assemblywoman Anderson:

Thank you for the presentation. I have many questions; I will ask three. The first one; the word accountability is used often, and I greatly appreciate that both as an educator and then also as a taxpayer—as all of us are in here—but what is meant by accountability? What is that going to be, a nasty email that many of our teachers get if they put in a missing assignment and it comes up as a zero. I believe that is happening right now in Clark, where people will get a nasty little email that says you put that in wrong. Is it accountability, where somebody stands up and says you did this wrong? Is accountability where the president of a school board says you need to do this? What do you mean by accountability other than the election day? I need more definition than that awesome term because it is so easily misdefined.

Dr. Oliver:

Accountability, I believe that is something that this group here today is going to be discussing what that could look like. I believe, as an Association, when we have gotten together; when our school board members have gotten together; our board of directors have gotten together and talked about accountability. It is to be able to somehow have the ability to not just send a nasty email but to actually make a difference in whether it is behaviors, not following policy. We have policy—school boards have policy that they are supposed to follow. But what happens when somebody does not? We can move to a censure, but what happens prior to that? When we are talking about that kind of accountability, what is the accountability at the state level? What kind of training? Because four hours of training every first and third year, is that sufficient? What is the accountability to that, putting our name on a website? So, maybe if I did not finish as an example, opinion, but maybe if I did not achieve those four hours then in year two, I need to achieve

those four hours. And if I do not, maybe there is time to do that. But if I do not achieve that at that point, maybe I need to sit out of being a board member until I get them done.

Types of accountabilities, I mean we have more than a written thing of here you are—those are first steps. What happens afterwards? What if we are ethically not doing our job as a school board trustee? What kind of accountability needs to occur for that? What creates that? I am not one to say what that should be. I am here to bring to light that those are things that we can think about, and I know as a community can come together to understand and do.

Assemblywoman Anderson:

That brings up other things possibly that could be done also at the local level where the policies can be created in that fashion. I am going to move on to understanding the role of the board and superintendents. The board approved contracts. The superintendents are able to have something to do with all employee's relations and negotiations. Does that include all members that are not part of a collective bargaining agreement, who are able to get bonuses? Is that under the board or is that under the superintendent? Who makes that sort of decision, which I believe has been made in the past year or so in one of our school districts here?

Dr. Oliver:

I might defer to. Mr. Killian.

Chair Denis:

Mr. Killian, do you want to answer that?

Mr. Killian:

The best answer to that question might be, it is complicated. Ultimately, the school district board is what votes on and approves the budget, which would include those particular line items. However, the way that those line items are decided is left to the discretion of the board, the superintendent, and any relevant collective bargaining groups, even if the particular employees may not be members of that group. It is a difficult question to answer. Generally, it can happen differently in each district. The vagaries of the collective bargaining process and the bonus bargaining process are difficult to describe in general terms.

Assemblywoman Anderson:

I want to clarify, is it that they are not able to be members of a collective bargaining group, they are members of the executive branch. But if I am understanding, then that is a decision based upon the budget that is approved, but it is up to the superintendent to make the decision as to how to utilize that budget. Am I understanding that correctly?

Mr. Killian:

Yes, the superintendent would make the decisions on what is included in the budget that is presented to the school board. But the school board would then make the decision on whether to approve that budget or not, and that is the budget that then the organization would live under—both entities have a role in that process. I think it is probably the best way to describe it.

Assemblywoman Anderson:

I believe it is under the chart that has to do with effective school boards, which went through eight items. Is the interpretation of number four, is that where being a strong employer would come in, because you made that point earlier in the presentation, which I greatly appreciated, is that our school districts are in fact many times the largest employers in districts—but yet I am not seeing where exactly that is defined either in this item. I do agree with you that students should always be the number one item, but we also have to think of it as a business; there are investments and professional development for educators, whether they are bus drivers, teachers, principals; and those investments when they leave after five years, which is a huge professional development investment. I am wondering where exactly as the role as an employer listed as a school board trustee and member?

Dr. Oliver:

From the *Lighthouse Study* of effective school boards, these are the eight characteristics that were uncovered that came out of that study to say; these are the eight characteristics that create a strong school board that then has student success. When you were talking about number four, has a collaborative relationship with staff in the community and establish a strong communication structure to inform and engage both internal and external stakeholders in setting and achieving district goals—50 percent of a school board meeting should be on those student outcome focused goals. The other 50 percent is on the business of the district and so it is not a one shot only, but 50 percent of what they are doing should be focused on that. Around that when you mentioned the bus drivers—and anybody else that works in a school—they all directly touch and impact our students in many ways and so they are embraced within when we talk about that communication and collaboration, they are a part of that, it is a community. And when we think of a district community, within a district we have a classroom community, we have grade level communities, and it expands from there where we have our schools and the school community, and it goes to our feeder schools and that community that surrounds to the district as a whole. The board of trustees is responsible for ensuring that all stakeholders have a voice when we look at these characteristics; that is all stakeholders, so that is our business community, our parents, and our staff that works in the cafeteria. It is inclusive of everything that you are talking about. They are not desperate things that we are plugging together. It is the whole package. It is altogether.

Chair Denis:

Other questions from members?

We will go to public questions. We are on a subject about elected school boards—the current ones that we have. We are not trying to make any decisions today on this issue, but we want to clarify any questions that have come up in your minds.

Carrie Kaufman:

This is on the record; I am writing about this. I want to follow up with what Assemblywoman Anderson said. I would like to know what the accountability is for school board members who break the rules—who tweet during meetings, who post on social media during meetings, who attack teachers or what have you. It seems to me that aside from 'do not do that,' there is really nothing that keeps them from doing that. The other part of it is, as Assemblywoman Anderson pointed out, she brought up the raises that were given in a certain school district for two executive committee members and the trustees of that

school district were plain lied to about how that worked and were totally surprised that so much of a raise was given. When one person said, "Hey, I do not particularly like this phraseology." They were sort of batted away, but they turned out to be absolutely right. That phraseology was what allowed $431,000 in raises to be given. So, how do you keep the superintendent and those people accountable for not lying to their board?

Chair Denis:

Remember, we do not have to answer all this stuff today if we do not know the answer, but we definitely need to do some research if we do not know the answer. We are not talking about specific—she mentioned that specific—

Ms. Kaufman:

I am asking everyone that question. We need to have school boards accountable. I do not see it as a one-way street.

Dr. Oliver:

That is, the accountability piece is, as our board might say, is a missing piece. The accountability piece is a two-way street, and what does that look like? The NASB has talked about accountability amongst itself and how do we do this? Is it NASB that should help hold accountable for behaviors, that you are speaking about, where does that come from? And we can do as much training, Assemblywoman Anderson as you said, we can offer as much as we can, but there does come a point in time where mama bear needs to step in and say that is not okay. And what does that look like? I think that is something as we are looking forward in the school board and the operations, on what might a shift look like? Well rather than starting completely over, what is it that we can do to increase the value of the structure—increase the structures that we have in place to see if there are things that we can do along the way—accountability would be one of them.

I appreciate your question, who holds the superintendent accountable? Well, that would be the board. And again, the board is a team of five or seven with one voice. A majority rules; the majority votes one way, that is the direction that a board takes. I do not know, that is the beginning of the thought process around a very tough question.

Chair Denis:

Definitely accountability, and I see that on the board there.

Ms. Binder:

Dr. Oliver, I admire and respect you, so when we are talking about accountability—tomorrow there is a suggestion presented in some paperwork from NASB to the board for the work session—it is item number three, page four—trustees will inform the superintendent if they intend to ask a question at a board meeting. Can you explain how that is supposed to work? As I would think my elected official—I would expect them to ask any question they deem relevant and not ask for permission to ask that question. Can you explain that?

Chair Denis:

We do not have to get into the whatever of NASB, but it is how it relates to trustees.

Dr. Oliver:

This would relate to trustees, is the recommendations that have been made or the thoughts behind what will be in the report to the Clark County School Board, is based on their policy, and that is where I think I could leave that.

Mr. Daly:

This is a question for Dr. Oliver, but do not feel it has to be all you. I know that the genesis of this conversation has to do with school board governance and questions around professionalism, accountability at the school board level; at the same time, a bigger concern of mine, professionally and personally, is a lot of the other dynamics that we have seen at school boards and around public education generally. It seems at least over the last several years that school boards—public education generally has become the target of a focused political attack that is coordinated, that moves disinformation around a number of subjects; we have seen masks, efficacy questions, vaccines, critical race theory, we now have the book burning thing, curriculum around sex education, gender identity issues, et cetera. I think some people know this about me, in a previous life, I was a local elected official who apparently was quite controversial. I was very controversial for a decade in a place that took its local politics very seriously. I think in the ten years I had—what the police considered—one legitimate death threat in ten years, and I was very, like, I am on the Fox News, the New York Times, the Washington Post, and all that—had one death threat that was serious in ten years. I know school board members that get legitimate death threats regularly here in Nevada. And so, there is kind of a different time, I am very lucky not to be very high profile, folks maybe know me in Carson City, but I do not keep a high profile—I am not subject to those attacks.

But the question is, amidst this environment, what is the advice of NASB to your members in terms of how school board meetings are run or how to deal with the vitriol or these very personal attacks? Violence. I know, you know this very emotional piece written by former Washoe Trustee Kurt Thigpen—which moved me personally; you had a majority of the Elko Board resigned, different sides and then resigning for different reasons, but I think there were only two school board members there at one point. In terms of governance, start at the top with governance, but it seems we almost need to start at the bottom or at the very top—depending on how you look at a power flow chart. There does seem to be the social, cultural, political dynamic where all of a sudden school boards are in this elevated position. I know that I, as a local legislator and from watching the state Legislature here pretty closely in Nevada, it does not seem like these meetings or meetings that I used to go to, which were kind of fun and there were lots of side shows there too, but not the same level of—jeez, I do not even know what to call it—but the atmosphere is thick, and it is not just the Clark County School Board of Trustees. It is a lot of school boards across the state where there is a very thick and potential powder keg type of dynamic around them. When you think of governance, well, maybe if they are not elected and maybe if they are appointed, they get more insulated. But it does not seem that is necessarily the case nationwide. It seems as if school boards, regardless of how they are selected, have been subject to this. And it seems that might be a question or a dynamic that we collectively should figure out. It is not just on Nevada, because it is not unique to Nevada, but it seems like that discussion should be happening as well.

I did ask a question in there, Dr. Oliver, but it had to do with in the last couple of years, in terms of this dynamic that I am talking about, what conversations at NASB have been like and what you have been talking to board members across the state about?

Dr. Oliver:

The climate in many school board meetings became volatile many times throughout the state. The emotional support that NASB worked to provide its membership, not only NASB as the organization, but the individuals within the organization; the conversations, as I mentioned, the mentors, but the friendships that have occurred throughout their time with NASB of their connecting to support each other, giving guidance to board presidents, and running their meetings; in how we keep open meeting law so that it is open to all for their public comment yet maintain civility. We talked about those things. We supported our presidents with weekly meetings and having them get together and talk about what was going on, how they were handling things, and what was going on. As for some of the vitriol that you are speaking about. It did cause personal, emotional stress on board members throughout; where we did have board members leaving because of the situations that they were put under; whether it was death threats, other violations that were happening on their property to them throughout the state. When we get in times like this, it is for a school board—for that president—to be able to run a meeting so that it is still in accordance with open meeting law, having the time for the public comments to be able to continue with that, but then be able to have the ability to bring in the sheriff or the police to keep it safe. Not only safe for the board members, but for those community members that are in the meeting, to be able to stop public comment when it is aimed at an individual or does not meet their policy—not policy—but when it becomes a personal attack. So, those are some of the things that NASB did.

To answer your question, what NASB did to support during that time. It was support and more understanding and training of what needs to happen. Each board president then had to take that and do what they needed to do in their own communities. It looked different in every community. Here in Clark County, there were school police, as well as city police, which would be at some of the meetings. And in Washoe the same, there were several different counties that had to stop meetings and completely recess and stop the meeting or adjourn the meeting because of what was going on in their meeting rooms. As they are behind the dais and some of them do not have a dais—there is not a real separation. For example, in Carson City, the only way for them to leave would be through the crowd that was not being too nice, personally attacking. And the fear that they all had going through—and when I say they all, I am talking about probably a majority of our school board members in the state. That is what we did. I do not know what else to take that, a lot occurred during that time. I think there were some lessons that we have learned to help maybe be more preventative so that those situations then would not get out of hand—as some of them did previously.

Chair Denis:

That is an important issue. At some point, we need to have this discussion because regardless of how you get a trustee elected or appointed, they are going to have to deal with, and if you want to keep good people, there has to be a way to have civil meetings and get things done. I think that is an important discussion.

Ms. Wilcox-Lavin:

My question, Ms. Oliver. Thanks for your thorough presentation. We saw a lot and we heard a lot in all of the presentation today that routed back to student achievement. If you looked at the effectiveness standards that you outlined, which spoke a lot about student achievement and in particular aligning to student outcomes. I was curious if NASB has completed any third-party audits of our current trustees—our current composition—across

our districts, against those standards. If you have anything you could share and if not, I would say perhaps an important thing we can move forward with in short order, because all of the meetings are online. We could do a retro analysis of our current trustees against those standards to establish what in terms of composition, policy, or practice, and if there are any hold backs against those standards, what those are, that might give some direction to next steps.

Dr. Oliver:

We have not done a thorough investigation or research into what each district and what the makeup might look like and where they are through informal types of evaluation and with each individual board understanding where they are and thinking of what their needs might be. That has been the approach that we have taken in support for them, and that has been in a direct relationship with their whole governance team. So, their superintendent and their school board looking to say we have room for growth; let us do a self-evaluation. Where are we? Or gosh, we are not anywhere. What do we need? How do we get started in moving forward with goals with what our board is supposed to do? As a formal no, we have not done that. That may be something that would be interesting to look into.

Mr. Vellardita:

Thank you for your presentation. I concur with the previous speaker. I think the presentation would be more helpful if you squared the PowerPoint with reality, because what I saw is not what I see at CCSD; 50 percent of a school board meeting is not spent on policy discussions around student outcomes, and believe me, these are marathon meetings—to find ten minutes of that—good luck.

What I would like to suggest, Senator Denis and members of this Committee, I would like to see if we can bring part of this discussion closer to Nevada experience. And the one that comes to mind is the Board of Education that made a significant change in its governance model—had a before and an after, there were reasons for it. There was a transition process and there was an outcome—they deal with public education. Even though it is not a local education agency (LEA), but it is part of NDE, it serves in the capacity of adopting regulations and works with the superintendent around compliance for LEAs. I think the fact that that board went from all elected to a hybrid model—where there is elected and there are appointees and there are qualifications, and there are also other stakeholders that have input to where we have today—a relatively functioning Board of Education. I think there is value to that for this body, but also for moving into the 2023 Legislative Session. We do have examples of changes that occurred, and they were driven for certain reasons. I would strongly advise that perhaps we look at what occurred at the Board of Education, and democracy was not compromised.

Chair Denis:

Other questions? Questions from our members?

Dr. Oliver:

If I may, the State Board of Education has moved to a hybrid model, and it is working excellently—it really is with who is on and what it is. The variance between what the State Board of Education does, and the local school board does—I want to reiterate the difference is that the State Board does not have the direct authority over the state superintendent.

They are not approving contracts. Again, I am wanting to make clear of the difference. They do not negotiate contracts, nor do they evaluate them. Those are two differences there—wanted to make that clear.

Assemblywoman Miller:

As we are listening, as we are having this discussion and of course, I appreciate everyone's positions and all of the challenges that I believe that we all agree upon—the challenges, the need, and the desire to do the best that we can for our students and our education system. I keep thinking about the core and we keep asking all these questions, and we are coming up with some suggestions, and because we are in a thought generating process where I keep going back to, especially, the questions specifically about accountability. I think of, as we are talking about government at its core, we are all trained—the foundation of our government has been a separate but equal balance of powers among three branches. When I consider that the school board would be like the Legislature, the school district and superintendent would be like the executive branch. The real question when it comes to accountability is then who is that third branch? Who is the judicial branch? Who is that, because we know how the three branches work? No one branch has ultimate powers and the other branches are able to undo the work and then that can be undone; that is the cyclical amount of powers. I guess, as we are talking about it and yet I think someone dated back to the 1800s—in the past 150 years that we have had this established style—who is the third branch? And maybe that is the key that is missing. So maybe we are stuck into this two—maybe that is the question, and I know that is not an answer. But to think about that, maybe that is where we are struggling because we do not have that third branch to balance the two—especially when it comes to accountability. So, if we are in a process where we are thinking and coming up with ideas and thoughts of what we can do to move forward, that to throw it in another direction that maybe it can be more than what we are trying to do with these two.

Chair Denis:

As you said that, the thought that came to me was the citizens that vote could be that third. Right?

Assemblywoman Miller:

I would say the citizens with all three of these branches already have the ability because the highest level of accountability can happen on the ballot, right? Except for that immediate, when a policy or a law is or is not being followed with fidelity, or with intent, or if there are decisions that are made that would go immediately against whatever should be happening. Or if there are certain standards put in place that we need our school boards to do this. We need for them to follow these laws like the districts and the superintendents. We need them to follow these laws and policies and on and on and on. Who then can immediately say, 'hey, this is not working'? Because with accountability—we always know there is accountability at the voting booth, but it is that immediate accountability because again, students, staff, and communities do not always have four years to wait for a change or something to be addressed.

Chair Denis:

And then as an additional comment. But in our situation the judicial is not necessarily that quick either. Right? I mean that gives the judicial branch is the one that gives you the ability if there is a dispute between the two. Right? So, you are talking about something that might be even quicker than that.

Assemblywoman Miller:

I am not even necessarily suggesting it as much as I am pondering on it, maybe that is where the challenge is. We do not have that third component.

Chair Denis:

It is a very good question. Other questions? Anyone else?

Ms. Binder:

I can give you two perfect examples of when that could have been used for our students in the past 12 months. One had to do with the superintendent's attempted closure of Global Community High School. And then also, I do not think we could ever get confirmation if the Family and Community Engagement Services (FACES) was going to be completely discontinued. But the community showed up for those two issues and held them accountable to make sure those services like Global. For those unfamiliar, Global Community High School is the only high school in Clark County that completely serves our immigration children and our refugees, and then FACES is our community engagement. They have several offices and they do a lot of services for the community, and so in 12 months the community almost lost those two things and we had to show up and we had to hold them accountable, that we should not have, who sits around and waits for a ball to drop and like Assemblywoman Miller said, it is like the distress that causes our students in the interim when they know that the adults who are supposed to be there to support them, and we get money for these services for them. I cannot imagine what some of the students and families went through in the brief periods of time when those issues occurred. I am very grateful that we had the community members that we did that stood up against it. I think right there when that was brought up, how many more things are happening that we do not even know about to know that we need to stand up for something until it is happening, or it has transpired. That is really important—that is very important, and I appreciate the thought on that.

Chair Denis:

Any other questions? You want to wrap this up this section up?

Mr. Quiner:

Well, we heard a lot. I came up with a different sheet for the accountability piece because we heard so many aspects thereof on accountability that certainly, we talked about enforcement. How do we enforce accountability? How do we do the training, the timing, the requirements thereof and the sufficiency of the accountability, the duties, and the training—somebody even mentioned superintendent accountability. And then obviously there was a lot of talk about the training requirements. In the end we got into the retention of members. How do we retain? I would say also recruit, retain, maybe reward the right people to serve on these boards, and obviously during the pandemic, safety became an issue for all over. I am from Denver and the wars we saw on the news over some of these meetings were really sobering. And then conductive, effective, efficient meetings for school boards. Did I miss anything that the members would like me to add? I crossed off some of these so we could shrink them down because we are going to eventually vote on these or let people participate on what they prioritize. Did I miss anything from your standpoint?

Assemblywoman Thomas:

A suggestion was made. I think that is what I heard, salary about compensation for school.

Mr. Quiner:

I have that, Assemblywoman Thomas.

Assemblywoman Anderson:

I do not know if this needs to go on the parking lot or if it is something that really did—I still appreciated the clarification. It is the amount of time that is used on policy information. I think it was mentioned the policy piece, it was 50 percent/50 percent, but yet, how much time does that take? I think that is a good point that we need to start to zero in on as a body looking at that. How much time do we allow people to think about those things?

Mr. Quiner:

Anything clarifying policy and school business.

Chair Denis:

Alright, we are going to close out that item.

The last item is going to be anything that we missed that you want to make sure that we are talking about so that we need to get more information.

The last item on the agenda is regular public comment. So, let us take a break. If you want to come up, you can take a look at the list during the break and see if there are some things that are missing or things that you would want to bring up in our other discussion.

We are going to go ahead and start. We are going to move to item four—we are on item number two on the agenda, but the fourth discussion item, so what did we miss? What do we need to make sure we are talking about? And you saw the recap of what we have talked about so far and you have been here, and you participated, and I appreciate that. So, try to be concise so that we are not here for the rest of the afternoon, and give us some thoughts.

Ms. Wilcox-Lavin:

I wanted to share, appreciate the conversation and what everyone is sharing and what feels missing a little bit is a framework to give us some guardrails for the conversation around what is a pretty significant adaptive change. We are having a lot of technical discussions about voting and composition, which are important. I wanted to put on the record a framework of some guiding principles that I and some colleagues have been working on this particular topic that I think could be valuable as we continue to push on the conversation. There are three major guiding principles. The first is around representation so that the composition of the board should represent the diversity of its constituents through identified geographical boundaries. I think the idea here is to say we do not have to decide right now what those boundaries look like, but we certainly can think about them in the context of representation that matters. Qualifications. So, composition of board members represents the expertise aligned to this specific role. And again, I think if we were to take all the comments in today's conversation, we can map a lot of what was discussed against these guiding principles and then be able to have a real conversation about which of the mechanics we think makes sense to bring our vision to life. But first, we have to align on

what we actually want and what that means for kids, which I think is still sort of nebulous in this discussion. And then the last thing is around accountability, which I know is a term that has been shared a lot today and appreciated the Assemblywoman's push for definition—I think that really matters. In the context of the guiding principles that I am putting forward, it means various methods on how trustees are selected, and then ensuring board members carry out their commitment. What we have identified as the state's goals, either using the state's federal submission for Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which is the ESA Plan or the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP), which is reviewed and approved every year by the State Board. I think it is hard to hold a school district accountable to the goals exclusively set for themselves and looking at the state's goals gives us at least a benchmark in a framework to push all the districts forward. So, I wanted to share those for consideration as the conversation continues to organize the discussion.

Chair Denis:

What other discussions, comments?

Mr. Daly:

For folks on the Committee. The Nevada State Education Association did submit public comment. I am not going to read it, so you can read it at your leisure, but want to make a couple of points. One, I love this format. Thank you, Senator for providing it for us. I do not know that we are going to get to agreement in the room on where to move in terms of governance models, but maybe we can get to some type of compromise where there is mostly agreement, but probably not full agreement.

A couple of random points. One, I am one of a handful of people in the room that engages in school board elections. Senator Denis, I believe you are now on the board of the A Better Choice (ABC) PAC, is that correct? Which was formed, I believe, a few years ago to as an independent expenditure committee to engage specifically in Clark County School Board of Trustee elections. The PAC that I am the treasurer of—Strong Public Schools Nevada—has engaged in school board elections in Clark County and elsewhere in the state. I believe Mr. Vellardita was here, and he has some PACs as well. I believe Paul from the Chamber has VISPAC, which is engaged a little bit in school board elections. And so, there are people in the room that do engage. One thing from us at Strong Public Schools is a great pool of potential candidates for school boards. Our members mostly are ineligible to serve on their school boards due to conflict. Sometimes, you have cases where you have a teacher who teaches in one district and lives in another, and they are able to serve on school boards. Our Vice President Dawn Etcheverry, who is a teacher in Washoe, served on the Storey County School Board—was a very good school board member, in my opinion. So, maybe educator representation, an educator voice on school boards is something that the Legislature could look at and take up. I know that there is a conflict that is there, but if that conflict is public and addressed in a specific way by the state, that could work. And then as someone who spends a bit of my members' money on these elections, along with some member leaders that I work with—maybe something about more democracy instead of going away from democracy. How do we expand democracy? I have seen that at the Legislature over the last two years, and potentially moving school board races up physically on the ballot. The idea of at-large, I think it is worth consideration. I think ranked-choice; we will see what happens with ballot measures that are out there. But I think for school board races, that could work. My last election that I won was one of the nation's first under a ranked-choice voting system. I thought that it would be bad for me because I was strident, but conventional wisdom is that ranked-choice voting favors more moderation in terms of candidates and more collaboration between candidates. I know that partisans do

not love ranked-choice voting and I was there at one point in my life, even though I did ultimately support the proposal that brought San Francisco ranked-choice voting in 2006.

Lastly, I would say public financing of elections, obviously there is a long precedent in terms of federal public financing, it has been done in some places around the country. But if you mitigate outside money, then you can have a truer reform of democracy. So, those are a few of our ideas. We have a list of bullet points of potential ideas that also could be helpful. We appreciate this conversation.

Chair Denis:

Other comments? Any questions or comments from the members? Everybody is being quiet.

Assemblywoman Anderson:

Based on the last comments, do we have the student voice represented in our school board as a school board trustee anywhere? I think at the State Board, we do. But at the local level, do we have a student voice as well? I know that Washoe does. I do not know if it was a state law or how that was worked as well.

Dr. Oliver:

There are several school boards in the state that do have a student representative on them. That is something that has been a conversation among different boards to add that voice. There is no requirement from the state for that.

Chair Denis:

That is one of the thoughts that I had as we were going through all this is—where are the students in that process.

Other questions or comments?

I am going to finish up this item. Do you want to wrap it up and then you can talk about that issue?

Mr. Quiner:

Thank you for your participation. What I heard, and feel free to correct me, we have a framework for guiding principles for change and in that there were three items:
(1) representation; (2) diversity; and (3) qualifications and accountability for members serving. Is that fair?

The other thing I heard was eligibility of members to serve and having an educator representative. Then I heard expanding democracy in state board elections. Should we consider an at-large member and ranked-choice voting? I assume that is a voting process.

And then considering public finance of elections. Assemblywoman Anderson added perhaps having a student voice at meetings—some do and apparently some do not, and there is no universal requirement for that.

After we finish the meeting, you all will get to come up and vote 3 times, you get to vote 1, 2, or 3 on your preference for the most important things to give the Committee guidance,

and at least vote for your preference on how this process moves forward. So, you will get to pick 3 things.

Chair Denis:

This is only for the public; members will not do that because we get to vote at some point in the future.

I want to thank everybody for being here today and participating in this process. I think we have had some good discussion. As I talked to some folks, we did not hear any totally off the wall ideas, but there were some things that we have heard before. One that I always throw out to get people to think about is what about having smaller boards, more local, that then also have representation on a bigger board—like a consolidated board—nobody's ever talked about that, I do not know that anybody does it across the country, but they do it in—I know a library district that does that in New York where they have smaller boards and then they send a representative to the consolidated board. If you run across any of those ideas, make sure you send those to our staff—they will include that. Of course, you can send in any other ideas that you think about after the fact—send those in so that we can have those.

We will have another meeting at some point to consolidate all of this. Then somewhere down the line, in one of our last couple of meetings of the Education Committee, we will have a discussion about how we as a Committee might want to go and where we want to go. So, keep an eye out for that, we will have another one to see if maybe we can coalesce around anything. I have not made up my mind on where we should go, and I think there might be some things, as was mentioned that we could coalesce around—so that could help. I think remembering that we are trying to make this better for our kids—we, the adults have to do the right thing so that we can do the right thing for our kids.

AGENDA ITEM III—PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Denis:

The next item is public comment.

[Chair Denis reviewed public comment testimony procedures.]

Ms. Binder:

I realized we missed a huge discussion today, which is the fact that NRS 388G already has a component for municipalities to have education advisory committees. We can, maybe, potentially look at somehow working into that law, to tap into a broader or more general type of different type of oversight too, but that is built within that law. There is a lot of teachers upset right now that this is a meeting that they cannot attend, and they always feel like their voices are not prioritized and heard. I did point out to Ms. Salt that she was the only educator other than Ms. Lazos that submitted written public comment. So, maybe I will spend time reaching out to the teachers and getting them to submit their ideas for a future meeting. I want to reiterate what Ms. Lazos said because I think at the last legislative session, a lot of us testified against appointed boards, but it was predominantly because I think we all felt that it took away constituents' ability to hold their elected officials accountable. I am sure you will read that too. I also believe if I email something in, does that get lodged in public comment?

Chair Denis:

Yes. You can send things in under this section, which would be public comment. If you wanted to send stuff in for the previous stuff that we talked about under the discussion, it would get there.

Ms. Binder:

Great. I am going to attempt to get Trustee Ford to produce to you; she has a very extensive file of research and tracking that she has been doing, Chiefs for Change, A. J. Crabill—I think that you should all review a lot of what she has put together of what has happened across our nation anytime that they are involved in our education systems. I will send that forward, or if she does not do it, I will send it.

Chair Denis:

Thank you. Anyone else wishing to give public comment? Since we are only taking public comment from this room, I do not see anybody else coming forward.

I want to thank everybody today for being here, testifying, and participating. I know that some have mentioned that it is hard for some of the teachers to come, especially when we have our meetings during the day, but we also have to use staff and to make it work, but we might be able to work something at some point to do something in the evening. We will have to look at the schedule.

For today's specific meeting, I want to reiterate, I wanted to make sure that we were able to have discussion, and that is the only reason that we did not do the meeting online. You could hear it online and watch it, but you could not participate because it is hard to have these deep discussions that we needed to have in this in this instance.

I appreciate everyone being here and an archived version of this is available online. Our next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 18.

The following written public comments were submitted for the record:

- Sylvia Lazos (Agenda Item III A)
- Alexis Salt (Agenda Item III B)
- Nevada State Education Association (Agenda Item III C)
- Darlene Andersen (Agenda Item III D)

AGENDA ITEM IV—ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 12:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Christina Harper
Manager of Research Policy Assistants

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Jennifer Ruedy
Chief Principal Policy Analyst

_____

Jen Sturm
Senior Policy Analyst

_____

Alex Drozdoff
Senior Policy Analyst

APPROVED BY:

_____

Senator Moises (Mo) Denis, Chair

Date: _____

MEETING MATERIALS

AGENDA ITEM	PRESENTER/ENTITY	DESCRIPTION
Agenda Item II A-1	Jen Sturm, Senior Policy Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB)	Microsoft PowerPoint Presentation
Agenda Item II A-2	Jen Sturm, Senior Policy Analyst, Research Division, LCB	Handout - List of Bills Related to Board of Trustees
Agenda Item II B-1	Ben Erwin, Policy Analyst, Education Commission of the States (ECS) Lauren Bloomquist, Policy Analyst, ECS	Memorandum on Nevada School Board Governance
Agenda Item II B-2	Ben Erwin, Policy Analyst, Education Commission of the States (ECS) Lauren Bloomquist, Policy Analyst, ECS	Microsoft PowerPoint Presentation
Agenda Item III A	Sylvia Lazos	Written Public Comment
Agenda Item III B	Alexis Salt	Written Public Comment
Agenda Item III C	Nevada State Education Association	Written Public Comment
Agenda Item III D	Darlene Andersen	Written Public Comment

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