



NEVADA LEGISLATURE JOINT INTERIM STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

(Nevada Revised Statutes [NRS] 218E.320)

MINUTES

August 9, 2022

The ninth meeting of the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education for the 2021-2022 Interim was held on Tuesday, August 9, 2022, at 6 p.m. in Room 4401, Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4100, Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, 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
Senator Carrie Buck
Senator Marilyn Dondero Loop
Assemblywoman Brittney Miller
Assemblywoman Clara (Claire) Thomas

COMMITTEE MEMBER PRESENT IN CARSON CITY:

Assemblywoman Alexis Hansen

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ATTENDING REMOTELY:

Assemblywoman Shannon Bilbray-Axelrod, Vice Chair
Assemblywoman Melissa Hardy

OTHER LEGISLATOR PRESENT IN CARSON CITY:

Assemblywoman Natha Anderson

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU STAFF PRESENT:

Jen Sturm, Principal Policy Analyst, Research Division
Alex Drozdoff, Senior Policy Analyst, Research Division
Jennifer Ruedy, Deputy Director, Research Division
Christina Harper, Manager of Research Policy Assistants, Research Division
Sarah Baker, Research Policy Assistant, Research Division
Asher A. Killian, Chief Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal 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 ninth meeting of the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education.]

Will the secretary please call the roll? [Roll call is reflected in Committee Members Present.]

[Chair Denis reviewed virtual meeting and testimony guidelines.]

Chair Denis:

We perhaps have some folks who have never been to one of our interim Committee meetings; I want to take a minute to explain how this meeting will work. We are going to go into public comment in a second, and there will be multiple opportunities to speak this evening. Normally, we do not do that because we do not have enough time, but tonight, we have set aside time to be able to take input. You are going to have an opportunity to give public comment and then we are going to have presentations and questions from the Committee. If anybody in the public would like to ask questions or make comments, I am going to allow that this evening because we want to get that information. Then, at the very end, we will have another public comment period.

The only thing I ask is, if somebody has already said exactly what you are going to say, just say, "Ditto" or "I agree with that." That way, if you have some specific things you want to say, we will have time for that. The other thing that is important to understand is that we are not going to be voting on anything tonight. This meeting is for gathering information about this specific topic, which is the governance of school districts via school boards, so we are going to talk about different options for that.

I want to make sure that we get all the information because it will make it easier to discuss this when we get to the next legislative session. I appreciate all those who have offered to give presentations this evening, and we want everybody that wants to participate to be able to do so. I ask that you try to be as concise as you can so we can let everybody have that opportunity.

AGENDA ITEM II—PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Denis:

We will start with public comment.

[Chair Denis reviewed public comment testimony and submission procedures.]

I will limit public comment to three minutes so we can get to everybody, and you can comment on anything. However, if you start giving comment that is a personal attack on someone or that kind of thing, I may stop you. We want to make sure we are getting comments that will help this Committee understand your concerns as we move forward.

I will begin with those wishing to make public comment here in Las Vegas. Is there anyone here in Las Vegas who would like to make a comment?

Vicki Kreidel, Private Citizen:

I am a veteran Clark County School District (CCSD) teacher of ten years and president of the National Education Association of Southern Nevada. This is an extremely important topic for a host of reasons, but mostly because it is misguided and will not actually solve the most important issues facing public education in Clark County or in Nevada. I have been attending board meetings for several years and there have always been some disagreements among members as there is with any governing body, even this one. Like you all, trustees are regular Nevadans and there will always be personality and policy differences. It is inevitable, however, that those disagreements, whether personal or related to policy, are simply not enough to do away with the elected trustee system.

I would like this Committee to note when we all began hearing about this issue. Sure, there have been a couple of minority party bills over the years, but nothing that got a hearing or had any traction. Suddenly, in 2021, this became a bigger issue, and you must ask why that happened and who is advocating for this the strongest. Prior to 2021, we have had trustees with issues and indiscretions. For example, we had one trustee who was not even allowed on a CCSD campus without adult supervision. Was this idea proposed then? No. My point is, what has changed?

With the election of Trustee Lisa Guzman, an organization became a full-blown push for appointed school boards. It is that simple. The group under its current executive director has never made a peep about trustees who were not allowed on campus without supervision. They have never spoke out against the rampant online bullying of teachers from anti-public education trustees. The Clark County Education Association (CCEA) is not trying to get appointed boards in an effort to remove those types of voices and that is notable. Instead, they spend time attacking Trustees Cavazos, Guzman, and Ford, who are consistently in the minority for policies and decisions that would legitimately help educators in CCSD. They have never been silent about their dislike for those three women and that is why we are here today. This push for an appointed board is based on two things: hatred for particular trustees and the need to control. It is all about political manipulation. This hearing today aids them in that manipulation. This standalone idea failed during the last legislative session but was then buried in a larger, unrelated bill during another secretive process that shut out stakeholders in the final hours of the session.

True remedies for the dysfunction lie far outside of appointing members. For example, we could allow teachers to serve on the board, as we are the only ones who are excluded. That expertise is missing, and that change could benefit the district far more than a political appointment. We should be moving towards more democracy, not less. I have looked at several studies of appointed boards versus elected boards. I saw no data that supported appointed school boards over elected. It even appears to trend away from appointed boards to elected boards.

Appointed boards also have the consequence of making the community feel as if they have no voice within their own school district. As a veteran educator, I urge you to please not support or recommend a transition away from elected school boards to appointed school boards. From equity issues to our teacher shortage, we have far more important matters to be working on than this. Most importantly, appointed school boards will not improve student outcomes.

Kenny Belknap, Treasurer, CCEA:

I am a high school social studies teacher in CCSD, and I serve as the CCEA treasurer. I am here today to speak about our school boards here in Nevada and why it is long overdue that changes are made to the makeup of these boards.

You do not have to look very long or hard to see that the school board in Clark County is a dysfunctional mess that lacks any resemblance of a functional board. If you have been unlucky enough to sit through one of their meetings in the last year, you would have witnessed the turmoil. There is no structure to these meetings. Board members regularly attack each other while on the dais. They rarely ask questions of value and spend almost no time reviewing student data, setting goals, and tracking the progress of their goals. A school board is supposed to be the public oversight of taxpayer dollars being spent to educate our children, but when you have dysfunction like we do, there is no oversight, and the district leadership is left to do as they please and answer to no one.

Over the last several legislative sessions, CCEA has worked with many of you to increase the state's investment in education, work that has resulted in a significant investment by this body like the additional \$500 million you added to the pupil-centered funding formula last session as well as the historic tax increase on mining that goes to education starting this next calendar year. All of us here know that even with the funding that has been added, it is not enough to put Nevada's children on equal footing with the rest of the nation.

The Commission on School Funding has reported that it will take an additional \$200 million in new funding every year for the next ten years to bring us up to the national average. It is already challenging enough to find revenue sources to fund our schools, but it is made even more challenging with the circus that CCSD puts on every two weeks, undermining the trust the public has in them to spend those dollars appropriately. It is long overdue that we change the makeup of this board to mirror an education board that is highly effective in their oversight and spending of taxpayer dollars.

The Nevada State Board of Education is made up of both appointed and elected officials and does great work to ensure that the money they are trusted with by the public is spent in a responsible and effective manner. The way the CCSD Board of Trustees have conducted themselves has eroded the trust of the public and the educators who work for the district to dangerously low levels. Their conduct does not reflect the value of the public and the balance that a hybrid board would have in bringing both expertise and trust to the board to execute their primary responsibility: making sure our kids are educated.

I believe we must have appointed positions added to our local school boards because if elected officials will not be the adults in the room, we need to put someone in the room to ensure that our students get the best possible education with the funding that this body provides them.

Chair Denis:

Thank you. I need to make one comment. I want everybody to be able to speak, but we do not allow comments from those sitting in the audience. No cheering or jeering. You need to be respectful of everybody who is speaking.

Stephanie Kinsley, My Children's Advocate:

I agree with the woman who spoke before me. We do see eye to eye on something. I could not fathom why you guys would even suggest appointing people to the school board when the school district should be broken up as a whole. That should be more of a focus.

We are two years into the most blatantly stolen election we have ever had and now you are trying to take away our right to vote because we do not like who you have provided as candidates. When we do vote for people, it does not work out the way we think it will, and we are unhappy with our school board members.

I went to school in CCSD for my entire career, from kindergarten through a bit of college. I do not have all the degrees you guys have, but I need somebody to explain to me how educated people gave up their free mind and said that covering your face and hindering your oxygen is healthy for people, not harmful. Parents are upset that you are forcing unhealthy masks on our children, unhealthy experimental vaccines. You guys want to put abortion clinics into our schools. Our teachers' unions spend five times more on supporting democratic groups such as Planned Parenthood than they do on their teachers' retirement funds. It is more important that Margaret Sanger's hopes and dreams of a genocide get played out than teachers having a retirement fund.

The CCSD is obviously too big for you people to handle. I need somebody to explain this because I have only worked in the private sector. I have always had my jobs based off meritocracy, so I do not understand the idea of being paid more than the last guy to fail worse than the last guy, like our current superintendent; it baffles me. When I was given a location that I had to take over and fix, I was given three months to show a turnaround and improvement.

I am 40 and I went through K-12, and you are still failing, and I am so impressed that now you want to take away parents' rights to vote as a whole. I do see the common denominator with stolen elections being Democrats and I need to ask, why do Democrats want to fund Planned Parenthood and fund the black genocide? Why do Democrats want to give my tax dollars to Ukraine? Why do Democrats want to tax more during inflation? I do not understand you people and I need some help, so if you could help me out with that, I would appreciate it.

Lorena Cardenas, My Children's Advocate:

As a mother who advocates for the best interest of her children, I am here to voice my discontent with yet another power grab from the Democratic party. This issue is not nonpartisan as it has always been Democrats who seek to remove the voice of parents who disagree with their decisions. I have experienced it firsthand; the CCSD school board has always censored parents, cut microphones, and had parents removed for conservative content they disapprove of when it has literally been their job to sit there and listen.

Now the discussion tonight is to further remove our voices by changing the composition of school boards and the way they are selected. They are selected by the will of the people. Why would you want to change that? Can you sense your impending doom at the ballot box in November? Also, how are we supposed to believe that this decision will be neutral and nonpartisan when the presentation includes representatives of CCEA, the largest teachers' union in Nevada, who just recently in this election cycle alone endorsed 27 candidates, 25 of whom were Democrats?

When the legislation attempts to remove the voice of “we the people,” the only change that needs to occur is in the legislation itself. Get out and vote in November, give this legislative body an overhaul, save our voice and save our country, and vote Republican across the board.

John Christian Carlo, Private Citizen:

I also go by “the ghost patriot.” I am very well known in the community. I was a former candidate for school board trustee. My race was nonpartisan, and I like that because I was raised in the South, so I am neither Democrat nor Republican. I am really a Confederate. I am a Bible believer in Jesus Christ and before my election was over, I did try to be as bipartisan as I could be. I am multi-cultured, I speak three languages, I have a bachelor’s degree, I did masters studying, and I went to a trade school, so I am a big proponent of education. I also recognize some Latin Chamber of Commerce members behind me. I think a lot of people know me here.

I would like this interim Committee to think about James Otis and Patrick Henry and other founding fathers as they popularized the phrase, “Taxation without representation is tyranny.” Our country was founded upon this principle, that if you are taking our money, we want transparency with that money, and we want proper representation of the people. I do believe with all my heart that this is becoming a Communist country when we take away the people’s right to vote. The first lady who came up here to speak mentioned that she wanted more democracy, and I think that is what we want. We want more democracy and less Communism in this country.

Also, this Committee should know that NRS 241.020 talks about posting an open meeting three days prior in three prominent places. With as many students as we have—300,000 students—how many parents are not coming to these meetings? I dare to ask, in Carson City, how does the room look there? Is it full or not? But I can tell you, at our board meetings—at the board of education meetings—those rooms are almost empty sometimes, so there is a major lack of attendance.

We also want more financial transparency. I realize that CCSD is asking for \$200 million per year for the next ten years, but they are showing legislators very little transparency, so you guys should know about that.

Instead of trying to appoint people, a better move would be to try to break up CCSD. California does it. I am not the only one who believes this, but this is very nonpartisan, and I just want to thank you guys for giving me some time and thank everyone who came out tonight. I appreciate you guys coming out and I am thrilled to see how many people are here tonight.

Chair Denis:

You cannot see the audience in Carson City, but my understanding is there are a lot of people in Carson. Is there anyone else who wishes to give public comment?

Michele McFie, Private Citizen:

I would pose the question, “Whose children are being taught?” If they are being taught by parents, then I think parents should have a voice on who serves on the board by being able to elect those representatives. If on the other hand, Nevada believes they own the children, then no wonder they would suggest that they should be making appointments for the board.

I think that our constitution recognizes that children belong to their parents and parents should have the right to at least be able to elect board members and representatives for the school district. ([Agenda Item II A](#))

Kamilah Bywaters, President, Las Vegas Alliance of Black School Educators (LVABSE):

I am also the co-chair for Education for the National Action Network's Las Vegas chapter. Thank you so much for having this conversation with the community. It is well needed. We have been waiting for a conversation like this so we could come before our leaders to make very important decisions about education.

Our organization has been on the forefront of education for the past few years, and we recognize that there are a lot of equity issues with our students. We do not blame our current leaders, our current trustees, or our current superintendent for the low state of achievement that our students are in, but we recognize that we need leaders in place who have the capability, skills, willingness, and compassion to move our educational system forward. We need your help, and this conversation is necessary.

I ask as a leader of the community, an individual, and a member of my organization that has numerous conversations with parents and teachers that we continue to have a well-rounded conversation and think about the pros and cons and the advantages and disadvantages for the decision that we are going to make regarding selecting our trustees and superintendents.

At this time, we know that our educational system has consistently been at the bottom, and it seems as though our educational system has been a cash cow. We have not had transparency around how funding is being used to increase student achievement and as achievement is horrible for all our students, you can guarantee that it is even more severe for Black, Hispanic, and poor students. We really need a change.

One thing that is apparent is that we know school boards are being used to disrupt and dismantle democracy. We need you to step in and consider what the community, students, and parents are saying on how you can help to support us and save our state's education system so we can save our students and ensure that they have the best possible life going forward. Right now, we are failing, and the State of Nevada can do much better by stepping in and ensuring that we put proper plans in place so that we have accountability for our students.

William Graham Carter, Private Citizen:

I am a third generation Nevadan. My mother was born in 1921 in Tonopah, where her father was principal of the Tonopah School of Mines. He was a 1910 graduate of the Mackay School of Mines and was also on America's rugby team, which went to New Zealand and Australia and got their butts kicked by people who knew what they were doing.

I love to kind of break kneecaps. People say, "I got here in 1986," and I say, "We got here in 1967 for the second time." I got here when I was four years old, and my dad was part of the crew that reopened Nellis Air Force Base. I got to see the first flight of the Thunderbirds. I saw Spike Jones for my seventh birthday. I am dismayed to have watched CCSD be so horrible my entire life. The logo on the side of your vehicles used to be an A plus, and I said, "False advertising! Sue them!" It has never been good. Back then, it was cheaper to pay off the commissioner than for the casinos to pay taxes. After my mom died, my dad and

I sat in the living room and got to know each other, and on the news, it was reported that one of the commissioners had been popped for taking a \$5,000 bribe. My dad said, "We never got him so cheap." I think that corruption is kind of a Nevada tradition.

As I am sure you know, the marijuana laws were passed with the promise that the money was going to go to education, and of course, it went into the General Fund instead. For the first year, there was \$800 million that the schools did not get; schools have always been the last thought on the minds of the legislators. We have always had the worst school district in the world. I remember being in Nellis when I was in kindergarten doing the exercises like this. I did not touch the paper. I think I was a lefty, and they were turning me into a righty.

Anyway, I do have a friend who is an English teacher who tries to teach English, and her take is that CCSD and California are so peopled by politically correct people that she cannot teach. She tries to teach English, but they were talking about pronouns and that kind of stuff. I agree with the last lady who asked, "Who is being taught?" The kids are being taught, and they belong to the parents, but you want to take away another level of our ability to choose. The lady said Democrats want that.

I do not know if you are Democrats or not, but in the history of America, there has been a tradition of federalism versus local representation, states' rights versus a big, powerful federal government, and I favor the parents having a choice because there is no place in the world worse than Las Vegas for "it is who you know," and you may have all these requirements where people must qualify this way and that way and then somebody is going to say, "My buddy Joe needs a job." Cronyism exists more in Nevada than anywhere else in the world. I think that parents should be the guides of their children's education.

Chair Denis:

I want to clarify one thing about the marijuana money because I hear this often, and I want to make sure that folks understand: it was closer to \$300 million, and it was put back into the education system. When people say that it did not go to education, that is not correct. It was delayed by two years because it was not approved by the Legislature when it originally passed. I do not want to hear any comments from the audience.

Mr. Carter:

Are you saying I am mistaken?

Chair Denis:

Yes, you are mistaken on the fact that the money did go to education.

Mr. Carter:

Is it still going to education?

Chair Denis:

Yes, that is correct. It is still going to education.

Mr. Carter:

I heard it is going into the General Fund.

Chair Denis:

No, a new education formula has been created and all the money for it that is set aside for education is going to education.

Mr. Carter:

Well, I do not care how much money you put into this school district. The Taliban has all the weapons, we should knock the building down.

Chair Denis:

I am not going to comment on that.

Mr. Carter:

Let the principal run the school; let her do the hiring. I am a problem solver. I had a friend who timed out in California who came over here and was having trouble. I contacted CCSD Superintendent Jesus Jara's office and came away going, they are aligned against the teachers and against the students.

Chair Denis:

I wanted to clarify that one thing. We want to make education better and we want to make sure that money for education is going to education. That is one thing I know because I worked on that.

Danielle Ford, Private Citizen:

I attended CCSD starting in kindergarten. I am a parent of CCSD students. I am currently an elected CCSD trustee, and I will share some reflections from that role, but I am here speaking as an individual, concerned citizen and my comments do not reflect the opinions of the entire board.

I care deeply about CCSD, about Nevada, and about the students within it. I now have 17 nieces and nephews who are either in or going into CCSD, and from my experiences with the district from being a student to being a trustee, there are so many people who care deeply. Everybody in this room is here because they care about education. I think there is a way to come up with a solution everybody can get on board with.

I wanted to share that local school boards were created initially to ensure that the political swings every election cycle at the federal and state levels do not trickle into the schools and so that local communities would always have a voice in how education was being delivered to their kids.

In the nearly four years that I have been on the school board, I will tell you that there has not been a single training or even a mention that I can recall about the board's fiduciary duties. There has not been a single training on effective leadership or communication strategies. We have not had a thorough training on Robert's Rules of Order or any parliamentary procedures, nor training on the reorganization.

I have a couple of suggestions that maybe we could all consider before taking away the people's right to elect their local officials. The first one would be to mandate that trustees receive direct training annually from the National School Boards Association, which should

include federally obligated duties so that trustees know whether what is being told to them regarding their role is congruent with how all other boards are operating and so that trustees know that they are making decisions that reflect the intent of the constitution.

The second thing to consider that could help solve these problems is whether the intent is to give the public at large more control over how schools operate, and if that is the intent that everybody wants, then perhaps we should first consider changing the law so that the superintendent becomes publicly elected at large. This change would ensure that everybody—all parents, teachers, and school staff—would have a say in who runs the operations of the district, and local communities could continue to elect representatives from their respective districts to provide oversight, accountability, and transparency so that all voters could then continue to decide whether to reelect that superintendent or not.

The bottom line is that I have looked for it, but there is absolutely no data that shows that either a fully appointed or a hybrid school board is more functional than an elected one. There are better solutions to consider before deciding to change from elected to appointed school boards and take away the people's power.

Chair Denis:

Thank you, Trustee Ford, for taking time to be here with us today. I appreciate those suggestions. I will mention as we move through the meeting today that we are going to hear about different things. A lot of people have been talking about appointed school boards, but there are other things that we have been considering. We are going to talk about those this evening and then there is going to be an opportunity for folks to be able to give some comment or any additional suggestions.

Carolyn St. John, Private Citizen:

At the end of the day, this is about the children. The State of Nevada is 49th in education and you are asking that school boards be appointed and not elected when the people are clearly not happy with the school boards.

We just had a primary. I do not believe they were elected. I think they are hated. I do not know who would have voted for them. I think we are going to find out if we get a good judge on Friday that the election was wrought with fraud. I was at the Commissioner's meeting and at least 100 people spoke about the anomalies in the election, and right afterwards—well, they I think they voted the day before—but they voted again and laughed at us. So if we do not have power there, when it is not about the children directly in the schools, what makes you think we are going to have power in front of an appointed school board that has already ignored the will of the parents that have come to the school board meetings and poured their hearts out about special needs children who could not or should not wear masks because they could not learn?

I do not think we still have a count on how many children lost their lives because they lost their sports or futures because the schools were shut down or they were just so miserable not being with their friends and the damage that the COVID-19 hoax caused everyone. I mean, seriously, wake up people, the people are not going to tolerate the lies anymore. California is wondering where their children are when they went back to school because nobody wants to put them in the schools. What are you going to do when there is no money?

I cannot believe that human beings are not more thoughtful about human life, even when it comes to children. If we were talking about dogs, people would probably be flipping out. Nobody here would want to do anything against dogs or puppies, yet we do this to children. They are the most important asset. They are precious; they are innocent. No one needs to be telling them about critical race theory (CRT) to hate each other. No one needs to be telling them about LGBT L, M, N, O, P, Q, or whatever in the classroom. That is disgusting. That is influencing a child's imagination and influencing their behaviors, and it is confusing them. It sickens me. End the madness. Do not be a part of it anymore, because our savior is watching, and he is going to protect these kids. If we cannot do it, he is coming and he is going to do it for us.

Fernando Romero, President, Hispanics in Politics:

I have two words: public education. Public education means that we as a public and as a people are the ones who elect our officials. Officials should not be appointed by anyone. They should all be elected by the people. I ran for the school board because I felt that the trustee who governs our district, District D, had not even visited one of the 76 schools in all the time that she has been on the school board. I put my name into the ring and I respect the fact that the public did not vote for me.

However, had somebody been appointed to the position, I would have lost anyway because I am here to tell you that one of my opponents is related to an individual who is an elected official. One of my opponents would have been named instead of having been elected, and by the way, that individual did not win. Let me tell you, too, that the various organizations that interviewed some of the candidates went in there with predetermined notions as to who they were going to select to endorse.

In 1998, I was voted into the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce Leadership Program. I was the second of 41 individuals who were voted in. I am a Leadership Las Vegas graduate from 1998. Yet when interviewed by the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce, I was not even considered. Mind you, this is their premier program, yet they voted to nominate an individual who had never visited even one school within her district. That is who they endorsed.

There was an organization of past trustees that also interviewed me. The chairman of that panel is a past president of a school board. She was instrumental in having the present superintendent named to that position and she knows that I am not in agreement with that superintendent because we are still number 49 nationwide for education. That individual has been here three years. He was without a job supposedly for 28 days, yet he sued us for \$2.4 million. He was brought back in, not by the public, but by people who have a lot of influence and money and whose children more than likely have never even been inside a public school.

At this point, I see that this body may be considering the possibility of appointing a public official, and that is wrong. That is the reason you have all these multimillionaires fighting for vouchers, fighting for charter schools, fighting for the \$2 billion budget that is out there that most of us know nothing about. It has been brought up. I will wrap up by saying that past board presidents and members again voted for an individual who has done nothing for the district but be somebody who has been led around by the money people. Public education, please. Public people, vote.

Chair Denis:

We are going to take these last two speakers and then I am going to go to Carson City to give them a chance to comment, because I know we have a lot of people there who wish to speak. I will come back after we are done to see if there are any more, but once again, there are going to be multiple opportunities to speak on specific issues as well as additional public comment at the very end.

Jamie Tadrzynski, Private Citizen:

I am a public school teacher in Clark County, Nevada. Yesterday, I started my 8th year in the district, and my 11th year as an educator overall. Let us talk about money for a little bit. I do not have any because I am a public school teacher and I have Teachers Health Trust. There is no money here, no money for me to wing at opponents, so I get to know elected officials. I get to know their stances, what they believe, and how they will vote on issues that really matter to me.

We throw around the number 49 a lot as well. I am aware that we are 49th in the nation. Everyone here is 49th in the nation, and I think it is easy to get bogged down in the ugliness of that number and to ignore the good that is still there. I have some of the most amazing students who come through my classroom every single day. I have invited public officials to my classroom several times, and only a few have shown up, but my kids do amazing things with very limited resources, and I have seen that.

Two years ago, I ran for my school's School Organization Team (SOT). I was elected and then reelected, and I am now finishing out my second term as SOT. I am likely going to run for a third term. We have had a lot of turnover at my school. There are 40 new teachers on campus. I hope we get new blood on the SOT, but I also think it is important to have someone who has been there and who has seen it.

As a member of the SOT, we get to see the budget and we approve that budget. In the budget where I work, at Canyon Springs, we approved a lot for safety measures. We approved money for better cameras for safety on our campus. We approved money for fences to protect our campus. We poured a lot of money into that, and then the district came back and said, "Hey, safety is a crisis issue, and we are actually going to cover a lot of that, so here is your money back." Now we are sitting on money and trying to figure out what to do with it. We upgraded a lot of the technology for our teachers so that our kids have better opportunities in our classrooms.

After being at that school for five years and sitting as a member of the SOT, there are certain things that have not been approved in our budget. For example, there is not a single line item that will provide for us to build an abortion clinic on campus. You are not going to find that in a single CCSD school, not a single school in Nevada. When we talk about our students and doing the best for them, looking at the financials, and looking at who comes to support our kids, we also must look at the people who come with ulterior motives. That is certainly very prevalent in education, from the things that come out of people's mouths to the clothing they decide to wear en masse. We see it all the time: not everyone who says they are here for the kids are for kids and I think we need to be very careful about that.

To touch on the school board issue, I am not in favor of appointed board. We elect the people we think should represent us and if they do not represent us, we vote them out. It is one of the fundamental things I teach students in my classroom and in my clubs. I have had kids come and say, "Hey, I am the president of Key Club this year." I said, "No, you are not.

We are going to have an election,” and you know what, that kid did not win because his classmates did not vote him to be the president. He walked in and said, “I am taking this position,” but I said, “Not unless your classmates say so.” That is a lesson that he had to learn early on, and I hope he carries it on throughout the rest of his life. When we say we are going to appoint boards, you are appointing points of view. You are appointing a voice that is going to say what you want them to say, not what the people want them to say. There is a real danger in that. I am not happy with all our trustees, but an elected board is the way to go. Appointment is not where it is at.

Chair Denis:

Thank you for your comments and for being a teacher.

Linda Cavazos, Private Citizen:

I am speaking tonight as an individual. However, in full disclosure, I am presently the District G Trustee for CCSD. Regarding the agenda topic tonight and at the previous meetings, my first query would be: What is our goal here? What is our intention? Speaking from my individual perspective, the result of a complex conversation about possibly changing the composition of our school boards needs to have a definitive and collaborative end goal of improving the educational opportunities afforded to our students. With anything less, then we are again looking possibly at private interest, personal agendas, and political gamesmanship, to be perfectly candid.

Addressing the question at hand, we must absolutely look at the value of having a democratically elected school board. Let me pause for a moment to repeat that phrase. Democratically elected school board of trustees who are elected with the expectation that they will not only represent the interests and concerns of the voters who elected them, but who will be strong advocates for all their constituents, including students, families, educators, and the diverse communities that make up the entire district.

With elected official status comes specific job responsibilities in this position: setting the vision, direction, and goals of the district and monitoring those goals; regularly staying informed on policy governance and board protocols; hiring and evaluating the superintendent with informed oversight regarding operations; adhering to fiduciary duties regarding approving an annual budget and other fiscal concerns; and lastly, the truly most difficult category of doing all of the aforementioned with transparency and accountability while serving as community leaders who are accessible to the people. Trustees should be positive role models who are a direct reflection of their communities, always advocating for ways to advance student achievement while exhibiting professionalism, civil collaboration skills, and effective communication.

I do not believe that shifting to an appointed school board will miraculously be a panacea for the problems currently on display. I think that a better option is adding more stringent and structurally logical requirements for school board trustees such as a background checks, as all our employees are required to do; pre- and post-election and training completion requirements, including foundational reviews in budgets, open meeting law, collective bargaining, governance policy and structure, curriculum and personnel basics; and something that is of paramount importance to me—ethics—with specific consequences if the last category is violated.

In closing, I would like to say that our present school culture, both locally and nationally, is in disarray, but turning over the composition of the school board and removing the diverse

voices of the people will not solve the situation. I believe that it will exacerbate it. Currently, on school boards in many districts, including our own, the trustees' own voices are being gradually eliminated. Let us not do that to the voters in our communities. They deserve viable solutions, not exclusion.

Chair Denis:

Let us now go to Carson City. If you wish to give public comment, please come up to the table.

Valerie Fiannaca, Private Citizen:

I live in Reno and have been attending school meetings for the last two years without fail. I do not know everything there is to know about Washoe County School District (WCSD), but I have been a keen observer for the last two years. My first question is: What does the law say? Is there a law that must be changed or passed?

Also, I watched one of our current appointees to our school board, Adam Mayberry, do an interview with the Washoe Democrats and the South Washoe Democrats, and during that interview, he stated out loud that he felt that they should be appointed positions. I should have had my radar go off right at the instant when he said that because he has been a public servant his entire career. I did not hone in on that at the moment, but that should have spoken volumes to me at the time.

In my opinion, this takes parents more out of the loop than they currently are, and they are very much out of the loop right now. You cannot walk into your kids' school without going through a background check or through a whole hoopla of things. You cannot walk into the classroom and talk to a teacher like you could in my day. In my opinion, the school districts should be made smaller to bring the control closer to the communities they serve. It is my understanding that this was legislated sometime in the past during the tenure of Senator Maurice Washington but was never carried out, for what reason, I am not sure.

The beast is out of control. I have watched a lot going on in our school district and giving the government more control is not the answer. Smaller districts are the answer. Break them up and give control back to the communities they serve and the parents they serve. It is the only way to go.

I heard one gentleman speaking and he said there are 76 schools in one district in Las Vegas. That is obscene. That is insane. I cannot even imagine that. It is almost as bad in Washoe County. We do not have an out-of-control situation there. I do not believe we have the same carryings-on in our school district, but it is still bad. We have a \$1 billion budget at our school district, and it is mind blowing that we have seven people controlling a billion-dollar budget; that is bigger than our county budget. I think it is out of control, and this is a bad idea.

Casey Rodgers, Private Citizen:

I have a lot to say, because we all know what Communism looks like. We have learned it from history. We know how many millions and millions of people have been killed because of it, yet you guys keep trying to implement it more and more, bringing bills ahead of things.

None of you are listening to any of the public comment. You are looking at me now for the first time. Do you remember the first ten people who spoke? I doubt you could repeat anything they said, just like Jennifer right here, sitting there looking at her paperwork, trying to act like she is multitasking. Are you paid employees doing anything you should be doing? If I was the lawyer over here, I would be telling you what your job was. Your job is that you work for us. Do you not know that?

Assemblywoman Hansen:

Ms. Rodgers, really quick—

Ms. Rodgers:

No, I am speaking. I have freedom of speech.

Assemblywoman Hansen:

To clarify, they are staff, and the two of us, Assemblywoman Anderson and I, are the elected officials.

Ms. Rodgers:

So, what are you doing? Nobody is listening.

Chair Denis:

Could everybody please be quiet?

Ms. Rodgers:

Denis, I have something to say to you.

Chair Denis:

I am going to ask BPS to turn the microphone off if you do not stop the discussion.

Ms. Rodgers:

Denis, Denis, you cannot do that. I will report a crime in progress because I have freedom of speech and freedom of expression and you keep trying to stop it.

Chair Denis:

I can do that because I am the Chairman of this Committee. If you will please identify yourself, I do not know who is talking there. The record is not clear. All I can see is you and I am hearing somebody else. I need one person at a time to talk and right now you have the floor, and your time is running out, so please finish up and please do not personally attack anyone. Give your comment and we will move forward.

Ms. Rodgers:

The brownshirts are coming and you are a part of it and do not act like you do not know it. I will not stand here and be talked to like that by any chairperson or any Legislative Committee to whom I pay tax dollars. Do you understand, Chair?

Chair Denis:

I am not talking about your comment. Are you going to listen to me for one second?

Ms. Rodgers:

I have freedom of speech and while I have it, I will speak. I have freedom of speech. Everybody who wants to clap behind me can clap and do whatever they want because I will report a crime in progress. I will report you for that.

Chair Denis:

Your time is up. Let us go to the next person. I was trying to give you an opportunity to finish. If you want to have a discussion with me, that is fine, but let us do that offline. We have a lot of people who need to give comment tonight and I cannot have people talking back and forth. There are a lot of opinions here, and we want to hear those opinions, but we must have some kind of order here or we will never actually hear them.

I am going to ask those in the room here to be quiet. I did not interrupt her; somebody else interrupted and I am trying to find out who that was. Now, if you are going to yell out in this audience, I will go ahead and stop this meeting. I am doing this to give people a chance to talk.

Ms. Rodgers:

No, I am telling you what the rules are. See, we have a thing called the Constitution—

Chair Denis:

BPS, can you please cut the microphone up in Carson City? Thank you.

What I am trying to do here is give people an opportunity to talk. We cannot do that if we have people going on and on. I tried to give her an opportunity to finish, but she decided she wanted to go on about something else. Her three minutes were up. We are going to move on to the next person. If you want to speak at the end, you will have another opportunity at the end of to give public comment. Let us move on to the next person. I am trying to be fair here and it is not fair to other people if people take up everybody else's time.

Charlotte Stewart, Private Citizen:

I would have liked to have a speech prepared; however, I spent the last night reading through the 51 pages of the May 3 meeting. After reading that, something I think we can all agree about is that we want more accountability in the school boards. I do not think that bringing in an unelected, appointed person is going to give you accountability. The position is supposed to be nonpartisan and unbiased, but if you have a Democrat or Republican who puts that person into their position, then they are going to spend their time trying to appease that person and their agenda. They will not spend the time worrying about kids or parents.

The school boards should be accountable to parents and teachers. Not a lot of that has happened. I have been to several school board meetings and watched a lot of school board meetings from Las Vegas. I believe CCSD is so large that they probably should be broken up. They do not listen to the people. We are all very frustrated because we feel like nobody

is listening to us, and now they are going to take our vote away from us. We do not even believe that the election was fair, so to have somebody like a governor or a mayor elected in an election that we do not even believe is fair and then tell that person that they can appoint others to the school board is ridiculous. Then, to top it off, you give them taxpayer money. That is insane and I am not okay with that. I think that you should not take away a fundamental right to vote.

I think that there should be some sort of evaluation. There should be some way to evaluate the school board members if they are failing. If weekly or even once every three months you have parents coming in and saying their kid is being discriminated against or beat up at school and the board just sits there and does nothing, to the point where the parents must call the police because the board will not do anything about it, that is a problem. There needs to be some sort of accountability or a way to evaluate them. If you leave it up to the people, that would be great. I know that we can recall them, but that takes a lot of time and effort, and it is just not something that is real. I know that Florida is like third in the nation. So maybe if we look at how Florida does their school boards, that might be an option.

Richard Nagel, Private Citizen:

I believe the basic problem is that we have a lot of good people and no real direction. There is no continuous quality improvement in our schools and by farming that out to somebody who was appointed is totally antithetical to fixing anything. Again, you will still have a six pack without that plastic thing holding them together and everybody will be on their own agenda. We need to have a cohesive, continuous quality improvement program mandated in the schools.

One of the problems that the teachers I have talked to mentioned and why they are quitting is because they must do multiple data entries to satisfy the requirements of unfunded mandates. We must look at what is being legislated for these teachers so they can spend more time in the classroom. There are requirements for how many minutes they can spend on English, how many minutes they can spend on math, and nothing is left over for social studies.

I think that people have been messing with this for too long and we need to go back and let locals have control over that. If you do not like your school board, then source candidates. We have done that in Carson City and there are several candidates we have sourced. Maybe they are not the best people for the job, but I think they work well, and they work hard, and their goal is to take care of the children. The best thing is to let the people run the system the way it has been. Do not steal our votes; do not take away from us. We can enrich this as a group. The system needs to be enriched.

Benjamin Franklin says we have a republic if we are vigilant, and we all, as Americans, need to be vigilant and part of the system, but by taking us out of the system, you are desecrating it. We need to be part of it, and we need to help it work, and by taking the populace out of those decisions, you are destroying the system because you are creating more apathy towards it at a time where we need more involvement in the system. Do not do this. Let us have our elected officials, and let us move forward.

Again, focusing on criteria-based and skill-based metrics on job descriptions and evaluations are the main focus on how to turn a company around. We need to apply those principles to our school systems. We have learned that it works in business. This way, we can have our continuous quality improvement. Money is not the answer. A cohesive forward moment is what we need, and that is where I think we need to go.

Joy Trushenski, Private Citizen:

I agree with Richard, but I have a bit of a different slant on things. The Nevada Academic Education Standards, which used to be called Common Core, is a failing system. Nevada grade school education is ranked one of the lowest in the nation. Reading and math scores at all levels are in the 30th and 40th percentile and have been this way for quite a long time. This is not acceptable, and the Nevada Legislature continues year after year to pour money into this failing system.

School boards follow the policies of the party which controls the Legislature and money. It is the Legislature which can improve the education of our children, but they do not. Instead of promoting reading, writing, math, phonics, critical thinking, a fair and truthful examination of America, world history, and a comparison of our republic with Communist and Socialist nations, the Common Core education system instead pushes CRT, sex education, and transgenderism, all intended to harm the family unit and cause division in our communities.

Also, the education of our children in Nevada is not transparent. Parents are not allowed to voice opposition to what is being taught. In addition, the Nevada teachers' unions usually support Democrats and fund Democratic candidates. This is wrong. We need to get teachers' unions out of politics. We must return to traditional teaching methods and let the teachers teach instead of depending on computer-generated curriculum which supports Communistic ideology. We need to get rid of Common Core once and for all. We need to raise teachers' salaries and reduce administrators' salaries.

Chair Denis:

I want to remind those in Carson City that we do not allow clapping. We are trying to give everybody an opportunity to speak. Let us go to the next person.

Meredyth Keast, Private Citizen:

I come from a multigenerational family. I am helping to raise my grandchildren, and I am concerned about what it is going to be like for them in schools and what they are going to be learning. I really respect teachers. I really respect schools. I have worked in the schools as a paraprofessional after retiring as a pharmacist and I especially love special needs children. I have worked with some of the poorest children I have ever seen in Lyon County, and I feel like that community really needs a voice, but it needs a voice that is voted in, and it needs to represent those children in that community because those people know what their children need.

I would also like to say that I wish we could stick to the basics and let some of these other ethical things be taught in the home. I feel that the parent is being taken out of some important aspects of education, and I would like my grandchildren to get a good education on the basics. I hope someday we can get music and sports and foreign languages; those are all great things, but there are some aspects that need to be left to parents, and parents should be voting who are on the school boards. Thank you for your service.

John Eppolito, Protect Nevada Children:

I am a former K-12 teacher and I have had four kids who have gone through WCSD. Senator Denis, thank you for all you have done and continue to do. I agree with many speakers, including at least three from Las Vegas—the first lady who spoke, Michele McFie, and Trustee Ford—as well as the last one from up here, the lady with the red sweater who sat in this seat from Carson City. I do not remember her name.

I realize you have some special local challenges down there with CCSD. I do not watch them very often, but I did watch the board meeting where the superintendent was fired and then I watched the superintendent get rehired. Somebody called it a circus, and I think that was probably an accurate word. However, Trustee Ford had some excellent ideas on how to make the Clark County School Board work better together, and none of those included appointing board members. It sounds like the biggest problem with the school board is in Clark County. Why would you even attempt to "fix" the other 16 counties where we do not have these major problems? Fix Clark County, but not by appointing board members. I think Trustee Ford had it right.

Over the last 12 years, I spent a lot of time at WCSD board meetings. Please do not get me wrong. I am not saying things are great with WCSD Board of Trustees, but appointing board members will only make things worse. We all know the country is very divided at this point. If the goal is to further divide our communities, appoint board members. If not, please continue to allow parents and community members at the local level to vote for all school board members. You can find 1,500 of us on Facebook at Protect Nevada Children.

Shannon Higgins Coley, Private Citizen:

I have been a Nevada resident since 1969. I went through Clark County schools from kindergarten through the eighth grade and ended up at Bishop Gorman High School. I was not planning on speaking, but I did a little research in the time that I have been sitting here and I found out that there are over 14,000 school districts in the United States and 93 percent of those boards are elected. Very few districts are appointed, and they include the failing districts of Chicago, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Boston. The prevailing reason for those switches from elected trustees to appointed was implemented due to dereliction of fiduciary duties. We do not have that issue here.

In 2015, the current Washoe County School Board President Angie Taylor was asked this specific question, whether she believed that trustees should be appointed. She said, "I do not believe we should take away local voices." I agree with our current school board president, and I believe school boards should absolutely remain local. There are many problems in CCSD, but I do not believe this will solve one of them. The change we need is the breakup of CCSD. If you believe that the only answer for Clark County is this, please keep it in that district and do not make the rest of the state suffer for their failures. Do not take away our voice.

Valerie White, Private Citizen:

I am from Washoe County. I am a retired public school teacher with almost 30 years in the public school system. I have worked in large districts and small districts. I have been involved in union leadership as an officer, and I have seen the politics in districts from the bottom all the way to the top.

I want to talk to you a little bit about unions today because you are going to hear from three unions and my guess is that they are going to be supportive of selecting trustees. And I want to ask you to consider what unions really are before you go that way. Unions are political organizations. I can tell you from experience, their number one priority is protecting teacher pay, teacher jobs, and teacher politics. The unions are political, leftist, Democratic, Socialist, and Marxist. If you do not believe me, go on social media and look at TikTok or Instagram and you will see the teachers in there bragging about how they are indoctrinating the students with transgender philosophy, Marxist philosophy, racial philosophies that are

not representative of the communities that they are teaching within. They are abusing their position as teachers.

Now, unions stick together. As a teacher, I can tell you that if you opposed the political positioning of unions, you could not count on their support. You could not count on other teachers who are also active in that union to support you if you needed support at your school site. When these union representatives come and talk to you in this meeting later today and tell you that they are experts in child development, that they are experts in understanding the psychological or emotional needs of students, they are overestimating their abilities.

Parents in the community have a better grasp on that than the teachers do, but they will tell you that to get your trust, to make you believe them, because they know what they are talking about. They are with children all day. Well, I will tell you, they do not. I have seen it myself, so when they speak to you, please consider the source, and consider that they have political agendas that are very leftist. There is no diversity in it, and I do not believe that their number one goal is to provide a good education for students. I am speaking in generalities. I know there are good teachers out there, and I believe I was one of them. I did the Pledge of Allegiance every day. I kept my own politics to myself. I did not indoctrinate students, and that is what teachers are supposed to do. I wish more would do it today. Please do not support selection.

Betsy Strasburg, Private Citizen:

I have been going to the Carson City School Board meetings for about two years now, and I believe that we have a good system here with 75 enrolled students with 7 members of school board. Nonpartisan. We just had the primary in District One, so the best two ranked choice people went forward to the general election. This is democracy in action. We do not want selection.

I have 35 years of experience in business working with Fortune 500 companies, and they tell us that the best support is provided by the people closest to the stakeholders. That is the parents and the elected officials of the constituents, not the appointees of some unknown somebody somewhere else in the government. I understand that the role of the State Board is decided by a hybrid model, but in Carson City, the school board provides the leadership, the guidance, the governance; and the superintendent is the implementer of those policies, is the manager of a large organization. We have a \$179 million budget, so it is a large organization.

I would like this Committee to focus on the effectiveness and accountability of the school board rather than the composition. We have school board trustees who do not even know the Open Meeting Law. How is that possible? We had a trustee who cannot be a good facilitator of a superintendent contract; he was asked to go and negotiate and then he came back to a board meeting saying, "Well, he said, and she said, and this is the email." That is not good negotiation of a contract, so we need more help in educating our board of trustees on what counts as effective governance and policy making. It is not dictated by the selection process, but by continuous education.

I like the idea of a fixed tenure of a superintendent, and superintendent being an elected position because we suffered from having the same superintendent for 14 years and the school district has been insulated from outside best practices for that time. We have had superintendents from inside, internal candidates for the last four or five superintendents, so it is not 14 years, but more like 25 years that we have been insulated from best practices.

In that period, the academic proficiency of our schools is at level two, which is approaching standards, but not quite there. Our school board trustees talk about the exceptional students who go to Advanced Placement or Jump Start programs, but it is not the exception that proves the rule.

I was a lecturer at California State University, East Bay. I believe in public education; we cannot do without it. We must improve from the bottom of the ranks to a higher rank, and we can do that by having a school board that is effective and accountable. Our school boards do not even have measurable, specific, smart goals for our superintendent. As Mr. Nagel said, how can we have a continuous improvement program if we do not have goals or a way to measure progress to those goals? That is where we need to have the focus of this Committee: on accountability and effectiveness of the school board, not on the selection process.

Tom Hendrix, Private Citizen:

I am from Lyon County. I am opposed to appointing school board officials. I believe the people's ability to vote equals accountability to the voters. Without that there, who are they accountable to? Who will they represent? If they are voted in, they will represent the people. If they are appointed, they will represent those who appoint them. If we appoint, we thereby switch the power to the few and not to the people. Who is best to vet the candidates? I believe it is the people. You have several people who look at a candidate and decide where their vote is going to go. By appointing, we extinguish the people's voice. ([Agenda Item II B](#))

Greg Clausen, Private Citizen:

I am also from Lyon County. This Legislature seems to trust the citizens of Nevada to choose members of their Legislature, but not their school boards. Why? As this Legislature investigates various proposals to take away the voice of the people, there are some questions to consider: who will appoint our school boards? So-called experts? Who will be appointed to our school boards? Again, so-called experts? Who will choose our curriculum? Experts? No, no, no. All these so-called experts have given us our broken government schools. In the end, we need more citizen and parent engagement and involvement, not less. ([Agenda Item II C](#))

Karen Stephens, Private Citizen:

I retired from the Nevada's Department of Education (NDE) about eight or nine years ago. I have been going to school board meetings for the past two years and I have been very dismayed by some of the situations I have seen. Training is needed for these people, but I do not believe that we should just dismiss them. Training is the way to go. Give them tools to be good school board members. I agree with most of the speakers. We, the people, do not want appointed school board members. We want elections. We do not want selections. Do not extinguish our voice.

Chair Denis:

Do I need to remind Carson again? No clapping. It is unfair when we are trying to get people to give their point of view. When you are trying to talk, you do not want others doing that. What I am trying to do tonight is to hear everybody's voices, and you have an opportunity to do that.

Is there anyone else in Carson who wishes to speak?

Assemblywoman Hansen:

It looks like we do not have anybody else who wants to come forward.

Chair Denis:

We will go online now. BPS, could you pull up the first person online?

BPS:

If you would like to speak in public comment, please press *9 now to take your place in the queue.

Janine Hansen, President, Nevada Families for Freedom:

We oppose the appointment of school board members. The purpose of this proposal, to have local school board members appointed instead of elected, is to take away the power of people, parents, and taxpayers to have a say in the schools they fund. This proposal is not only undemocratic, but also anti-democratic. Democracy is defined as the government by the people in which the common people are considered as the primary source of political power. Just as the people are awakening to the tragic mess our schools are in, the powers that be are trying to make sure the people's voices cannot be heard.

The schools are academic failures. They do not prepare children to be Americans, but indoctrinated woke clones, spouting anti-American ideas like CRT, anti-family, and anti-parent ideas like gender identity. The proposal for appointed school board members is brought forth by ivory tower "educrats" seeking more control and less oversight of the failing schools. It is proposed by legislators, not parents, taxpayers, or constituents.

What we need is more, not less, accountability for the failing schools. Elections are the hallmark of accountability for those who are supposed to serve the public, not the "educrats" and special interests. Our tax dollars have been squandered on dumbed down, anti-American, and anti-family curriculum. The great thing is that the public, which has long been asleep, has awakened and now realizes that the public schools have been stolen. Just as this is happening, the proposal comes forth to make citizens' scrutiny of schools more impossible. These appointments for school board members will be selected by special interests with preferential treatment, favoritism, and bias, not subject to the scrutiny of the ballot, thus squashing transparency.

The power of the people is most effective when wielded at the local level. They can meet and speak to school board members who live in their own communities. They can call them on the phone and show up at local school board meetings to speak. This proposal is designed to dilute the power of the people. Appointed people are insulated from the people and are not interested in their concerns because they do not represent them. The appointed people will represent the powers that be. This proposal shows contempt for the people and for democracy. Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this hearing.

[\(Agenda Item II D\)](#)

Lynn Chapman, State Treasurer, Independent American Party:

We oppose appointment of school boards, and a hybrid of appointed and elected school boards. Our school boards in our state are very important to the citizens. The school board controls the schools' policies and budgets. They oversee the academic, legal, and financial health of a school district. They hire and evaluate the district superintendent, resolve

conflicts, and allocate funds. They represent the public interest and serve the diverse values and needs of their community. The people need to see high academic standards, transparency, and accountability from our school board.

We the people want what is best for our children and families. Making the decisions for our communities is important to us and using our right as citizens to be able to vote for people to work in our favor is of utmost importance. Previous generations have fought for our liberties and one of those liberties is the right to vote. Taking away our right to vote for our representation on our local school board is the wrong action to take.

Appointment of any board member is one too many. Please oppose the appointment or hybrid of school boards. Leave the important job of choosing our school boards to us, the parents, and the taxpayers. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to speak on this very important subject.

Erin Phillips, President, Power2Parent:

I am a mother of five children who have all gone through public school in Nevada, and I wanted to call in today because I know that our parents are very concerned about the possibility of this Committee changing their mind to begin appointing school board trustees. I have been very much a part of these meetings for the last seven or eight years and I have seen the dysfunction. Someone used the word circus earlier and I think that that is not too far from what we have seen happen, especially over the last four years with COVID-19 closures.

We have also seen that our parents have been awakened to a lot of what has been going on for many years. They did not realize what was going on but now realized that they need to be empowering themselves to advocate for their kids. When we see parents show up to school board meetings, we know that is an opportunity for them to participate in the democratic process. If you have appointed trustees over elected trustees, there is really no accountability for those people right now.

It is not a perfect system, but there are many things we can discuss on how to make it better. I hope we can have those discussions, especially this upcoming session, but for right now we need to continue to allow parents and voters to have a voice. I look at this Committee and I think every single person on this Committee was elected. Whether you voted for this person or not, everyone on this Committee is elected, and we want the same opportunity.

We think that our children are important. They are one of the most valuable resources we have in this state and parents and community members should have the same opportunity to elect their leaders as we have had to elect our Assembly and Senate leaders as well. In closing, I would just like to say we are opposed to appointing school board members. We think we should continue to have the opportunity to vote and not disenfranchise parents and voters.

Chair Denis:

BPS, are there any more callers?

BPS:

Chair, there are no more callers who wish to participate in public comment at this time.

Chair Denis:

I am going to come back to Las Vegas. How many more people do we have who want to give comment at this point? I see five. I am seeing a pattern, so remember that if you are going to say the same thing as everyone else, say "ditto." If you have some other thoughts, we want to make sure you can share them, but I also want to make sure we have time to be able to go over the presentation we have tonight where you will see all the different proposals that have been made. A lot of this has been talking about one specific proposal, but we have had several other proposals, which include training and other things. I want to make sure we have an opportunity to get to those.

Cyrus Hojjaty, Private Citizen:

Great pleasure for having me here. Thank you for this great opportunity. When you are doing this, man, it shows that you guys are probably obviously losing because we are waking up. There are all these great minds coming up. So yeah, keep doing what you are doing because you are really showing what you got.

Before I begin, I would like to thank you, Mr. Denis, for the nice talk we had several months ago. I appreciate you handling this meeting and I really like your style. However, when you talk about appointments, there are a couple of people in this room who could learn from you. I am talking about Senator Dondero Loop. Last year, I was asking some questions about casino corruption. She just walked away—

Chair Denis:

Cyrus, do not turn this into personal attacks on individuals on the Committee. Let us talk about the education issues.

Mr. Hojjaty:

Okay, well, how can I trust you when I saw you and Assemblywoman Miller and how I got treated in the library? When I wanted to talk about black slavery from the Arab slave trade—

Chair Denis:

You are still doing that. Let us not talk about individuals.

Mr. Hojjaty:

My apologies. Hey, at least you are giving us light in the tunnel, so keep doing what you are doing. The real issue is that what I see the school district is a symptom of a larger problem, this county structure, which needs to be broken up. This is the only metropolitan area that has one county in the United States. Break it up. It worked in 1935. We need to have multiple counties so the school districts will break up or add more trustees and more commissioners. That is the way I see it.

As far as your teaching goes, with lot of things you do, we must do the contrary. We must teach young people the importance of the nuclear family as opposed to what is going on now. We must teach women to be more feminine, to be good wives, good mothers, and get married between the ages of 22 and 27 rather than living this reckless, promiscuous lifestyle or becoming slaves and putting careers in large corporations as their main focus. We must teach men how to be masculine, good providers, and be strong rather than this

thug culture that is being promoted. A lot of things you are doing, keep doing it because we see that the opposite is true. I am really having a good time. I must tell you that. Anyway, thank you so much and look forward to talking to you soon. Those of you who want to keep ignoring me, keep doing it, because you are going to prove people like me right.

Rachel Pena, Private Citizen:

I do not represent my school; I only represent myself and my experiences. I am a public school teacher, and I came here to Las Vegas because I was hired by CCSD as a teacher, and I have experience from various school districts. I came from three years in Compton Unified in California, and CCSD is a nightmare in comparison. That is how bad it is here in CCSD. It was so bad that I had to walk away. It was traumatic. I had Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and it took me years to finally stop having nightmares about it, so that gives you a backdrop. You must listen to us teachers.

Another thing: if you are thinking about taking the vote away from parents or from any of the voters, I will tell you right now that you are going to bleed a lot more students from CCSD. They are walking away. They are going to charter schools and they are finding alternative schooling. Please do not do that. You have the trustees here and even they are telling you do not to do it. They had a lot of opposition, and it is amazing that they come to work all the time getting shouted out, which is fine, but they represent us.

Listen to the people and consider that if you think about taking our voices away, how much more distress that you are going to get. Even by suggesting it, you could hear how many people are upset about it. If you want to sow distress even more so with politicians, this is the one way to do it: by taking their votes away. Please do not do it. And thank you for letting me speak.

Tomas McFie, Private Citizen:

My father was a teacher, I have three sisters who are teachers, and my wife was a teacher. I have two doctorate degrees. We believe in education. However, there was a gentleman named Murray Rothbard who used to live here in Las Vegas. He was an honorary professor at Lee Business School right here at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV). He wrote a book called *Education: Free and Compulsory*. He knew all about that. He escaped from Poland where his teachers and his school board members were all appointed by the Party. I would encourage you to read his book and understand what we, the people, want. We want free elections; we do not want appointed people telling us what we must believe or what our teachers should be teaching our students. That is a parental authority. It is a usurpation of the Divine order, and we would, sincerely appreciate you listening to the people.

The former speaker here is a witness to the mass exodus from our schools. In some districts across this country, 48 percent of students are leaving public education. Why? Because they do not like to be dictated to. My three sisters, all educators, home educated their kids because of the dictation that is coming down in their districts, and we home educated our children as well. If you want to be able to have an input education, then I would advise you to allow the parents and the community to continue to elect their school board officials.
([Agenda Item II E](#))

Helen Oseguera, Private Citizen:

I am also running for a seat in this county for the election in November. I want to make a quick point. If you take the right to vote away from the people, you are taking us right into Communism. The bottom line is that you cannot do that. I am also trying to be an elected official. What if I was just appointed? Would I do a good job? Who knows? If I was elected by the people, as I promise to the people that I am going to serve, I will do my job for them. Not for an oligarch, not for tyrannical governments, and not for Communist governments. We do not live that way in the United States. This is the United States of America. This is not Communist China. This is not Communist Russia. This is not an oligarchy. We are not ruled by kings and queens. We are ruled by the people.

We cannot have people telling us we cannot elect our officials. That is important to the very bottom line of this country. What you are doing, which I think is very suspicious at this point since we are almost a few months away from election in November, is proving to the people right now that you are taking away our ability to vote on a school board that we detest. I can tell you that for sure because I have been to the school board meetings. I see how the school board people act and they should be removed, every single one of them. I do not mean just one or two. They all need to be taken out.

However, I do want to make a point to the school board members who are here today. I am on their side as far as not appointing school board members. I agree with them on that, which means we can all come to an agreement to work together and not be subjugated to a ruling class. We are not going to be ruled by somebody else. We are the people; we vote for our people who we want in office. That is the bottom line. If you do this, you are only bringing yourself into tyrannical governments, and this is your goal at this point months away from an election.

It is ironic to me because not only are you taking our voice, but you are also telling us that you are going to teach our children garbage. Sexualizing our children, grooming our children, turning them into anarchists, and turning them against their parents. They are going to be going down a very bad, black, distant road to what this country is all about. It is about freedom, and it is about teaching our children about what America is and what our freedoms are, not about telling them what skin color, or what sexual transition you are, or any of that garbage that is being taught in school right now. That tells me now that you want to appoint people so you can continue teaching that garbage and not listen to the people.

We do not want this stuff in our schools. We want math, English, history, American history, constitutional history, and we want our children to be taught how to live as productive citizens, not as somebody sitting on a couch smoking a joint and not doing anything for the rest of their life. That is what you are going for and that is what you are doing right now. Our children are not learning at all. They are all in trouble, and you are worried about appointing a board. Come on. Give me a break.

Chair Denis:

I want to clarify one thing because everybody keeps talking about it. We are not voting on anything tonight. There is not anything going to be voted on before the legislative session that begins in February. We are trying to get information and give people an opportunity to have their voices heard. I am going to take these last two and then there will be another opportunity at the end to give public comment.

Judy Leslie, Private Citizen:

I agree with almost everybody here that appointing a school board would not help or solve any of CCSD's problems. I think we should find the \$50 million that has gone missing. Until then, there should be no money granted to CCSD. What has happened to all the millions of the so-called COVID-19 money? We the people need an audit. I cannot trust any of you to appoint anybody who would be suitable because we all know that Nevada is corrupt. It would be somebody's sister, somebody's brother, or somebody's uncle. No, we cannot do that.

Appointing a school board probably will not be an issue with over 4,000 sealed indictments for Nevada and I am sure some of these have your names on them. If you certified the 2020 election, I am sure some of those include the school board commissioners, politicians, judges, doctors, nurses, for crimes against humanity. My only question is, what you are going to do when they come for you?

Chair Denis:

Let us try not to make any comments that could be taken as a threat. If you want me to shut this down, I will shut this down. I am giving you an opportunity to speak this evening. I want people to have an opportunity to be able to speak tonight, so I need you guys to quit interrupting so we can proceed. Whoever is talking back to me right now, I am going to have you removed if you do not be quiet.

Rebecca Dirks Garcia, President, Nevada Parent Teacher Association (PTA):

I am the proud mom of three CCSD students who are thrilled to be back in their school this year and excited for the school year ahead of them. Nevada PTA does not have a specific position on many of the things that you are going to be discussing tonight. Chair Denis, I appreciate your reminder that there are many things that will be considered this evening beyond appointed or non-appointed school positions, but what is most important is that we all recognize that effective school boards are absolutely necessary to the success of our students. We believe that having the voice of the people involved in the process is absolutely necessary as well.

As someone who regularly speaks not just to parents here in Clark County but all across the state, I can tell you that many parents are frustrated with the status quo and with feeling like the system—not just people, but the actual systems and structures of governance that are in place right now—are not adequately giving everyone a seat at the table and ensuring that every student has the opportunity to succeed.

As you can see from much of the public comment tonight as well, so much of what I hear back from families is the paradox we see tonight. People are confused about trustees. Are they elected? Are they not? Are they paid? Are they not? Who appointed this? Who did this? Is there training or not? I think the two sitting trustees who have talked tonight spoke very well on the lack of training and opportunities to make sure that our trustees are prepared for the roles for which they are elected.

So, as we approach these discussions, I would just ask that you focus on that goal, as Trustee Cavazos talked about, which should be the benefit of our children and public education serving all Nevadans. How do we ensure that our trustees are providing oversight and accountability in an effective way? Ask yourself if that is happening now, and if not, how do we move the needle to get there?

Chair Denis:

We will close this first round of public comment. I would like to move to the next agenda item, a presentation on potential recommendations discussed concerning the composition of selection of school boards during the May 3, 2022, meeting. We are going to have a report from our staff on all the different recommendations we have discussed so far in that other meeting. Then we will take a break right after that presentation because we have gone a long time.

AGENDA ITEM III—PRESENTATION ON POTENTIAL RECOMMENDATIONS DISCUSSED CONCERNING THE COMPOSITION AND SELECTION OF SCHOOL BOARDS DURING THE MAY 3, 2022, MEETING

Ms. Drozdoff:

As nonpartisan staff, we do not advocate for or against any measure. As Chair Denis mentioned, this presentation will provide a summary of the general information covered during the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education's May 3, 2022, meeting, which featured presentations, and member and public discussions, on the composition and selection of school boards, as required by Assembly Bill 495 (2021). ([Agenda Item III](#))

As you may recall, during that meeting, the Committee heard presentations from staff, the Education Commission of the States (ECS), and the Nevada Association of School Boards (NASB) on historical, state, and national school board governance topics. It also featured an open microphone setting, which allowed for extensive discussion of these topics by Committee members and members of the public.

This presentation will highlight the central topics that were discussed during that meeting, potential recommendations that emerged from members and participants, and possible discussion questions related to those recommendations. This presentation is not an exhaustive list of items presented at the May 3 meeting, but a summary of the main topics discussed. Additional detail of potential recommendations will be provided for the Committee's consideration at its work session later this month.

Though the discussion during the May 3 meeting was extensive, it mainly fell into five categories: (1) school board member qualifications; (2) election and appointment; (3) board member retention; (4) member training and accountability; and (5) member support. These categories will structure this presentation. As you will see, some of the topics overlapped with multiple categories.

First, the topics discussed pertaining to board member qualifications included implementing certain expectations for board members, as discussion centered on identifying high expectations for members with a focus on accountability and student outcomes, for example. Other topics discussed included developing a shared vision or goals for the school board and aligning that vision to current resources. Finally, it was noted that the current qualifications for board members, according to NRS 386.240, are limited in scope. Currently, the only qualifications for members are: (1) be a qualified elector; and (2) satisfy the relevant residency requirements.

For reference, some of these topics, as they pertain to other states, are covered in a follow-up memo from ECS for the May meeting. It can be found on the Committee's website for that meeting under "Other" exhibits and is titled "Information Provided Following the Meeting-Information on School Boards Provided by ECS."

For example, the memo outlines Arizona's and Utah's local school board member qualifications, including voter and residency status, as well as requirements around serving simultaneously as a board member and a board or school employee. The ECS provides additional details and other examples in its memo, including various educational or professional criteria.

From this category of conversation, one recommendation was proposed through dialogue among Committee members and the public: expand the qualification criteria for school board members.

If such a recommendation is of interest, one question the Committee might consider for discussion is: What additional qualifications should be implemented for school board members?

The next general topic discussed at the May 3 meeting was the election and appointment of school board members. This included discussion on different types of representation on the board, such as educator and student representation, diverse representation among board members, and representation of specific occupations. The possibility of an at-large member on the board and a review of public financing of elections among candidates was also discussed. Finally, the possibilities, risks and benefits, and current examples of appointed and hybrid boards were discussed.

For reference, some of these topics as they pertain to other states are covered in the follow-up memo from ECS for the May 3 meeting. For example, the memo provides information on New York City's and Chicago's school board models, both of which are under mayoral control and have appointed members, though Chicago is now moving to an elected model instead. New York City's model is made up of 15 appointed members and the chancellor, and Chicago's current board is made up of 7 appointed members, though it will be transitioning to a 21-member elected board over the next 5 years. Additional context and information are provided in the memo.

From these conversations, one recommendation was proposed: Explore the possibility of a hybrid school board option.

If such a recommendation is of interest, there are several questions the Committee might consider. They are:

- What qualifications would be required for appointed members?
- Would any qualifications be in place for elected members?
- Who would appoint members?
- Would a change to a hybrid board change the number of members?
- How many members would be elected versus appointed?
- How would constituent representation be determined?
- Would any members serve in a nonvoting, advisory, or other capacity? If so, who?

Next, board member retention was discussed. One aspect of this discussion was board member salary, including its impacts on prospective candidates. Information from the ECS memo may be relevant specifically for CCSD, as certain salary details were provided for comparable school boards. For example, the Los Angeles Unified School District Board

members have earned an annual salary of \$125,000 since 2017, and Miami-Dade School Board members earn an annual salary of \$45,000.

Furthermore, as discussed above, New York City's Panel for Education Policy members do not receive a salary. Likewise, members of the Chicago Board of Education, which is under mayoral control but will be transitioning to an elected board in the coming years, do not receive a salary, and once board members are elected, they will not be compensated either. For reference, according to NRS 386.320, Nevada school board trustees receive a salary ranging from \$250 to \$750 per month, based on county population.

Other topics discussed related to school board member retention included safety of members and efficiency in meetings, which have been topics of national conversations as well. There was some consideration as to whether safety and efficiency may also be tied to training and overall governance. Finally, there was discussion regarding implementing a regular rotation of school board presidents.

From this category of conversation, two recommendations were proposed through dialogue: (1) board member salaries should be increased; and (2) measures should be implemented to increase safety and efficiency during meetings.

If such recommendations are of interest, there are several questions the Committee might consider. They are:

- What should salaries for school board members be?
- What other changes might increase member retention?
- Would a salary increase change who runs for the board?
- What safety measures should be implemented?
- What measures would support school board meeting efficiency?

I will now turn it over to my colleague Jen Sturm.

Ms. Sturm:

Additionally, the Committee discussed topics relating to school board member training and accountability. One main point of conversation was the type of training that board members receive and whether increased or different training should be considered. Within this topic of conversation, discussion included: (1) the timing of training, both in terms of minimum hour requirements and when the training is administered during a member's term; (2) potential concerns regarding a lack of training, including subject matter considerations; (3) the current training requirements for members and the sufficiency of those requirements; and (4) current resources to support board member training.

Discussions also centered on processes of member accountability for completing training and ideas relating to evaluations of board members and leaders. On page 3 of the memo previously referenced by my colleague, ECS offers information on superintendent evaluations, adding that ECS was unable to identify evaluations for school boards being used in other states' statutes or regulations.

From these conversations relating to training and accountability, three recommendations seemed to emerge: (1) implement guidelines or requirements for board member training; (2) implement an accountability system for training completion; and (3) work with existing

entities, like the regional professional development programs, NDE, NASB, or the National School Board Association, to provide initial and continual training, education, professional development, and/or coaching to board members.

If such recommendations are of interest, there are several questions the Committee might consider. They are:

- What types of training should be required?
- At what frequency and duration should the trainings occur?
- What topics should be covered in the trainings?
- Should a minimum score metric or a pass-or-fail system be established, and which?
- What entity should oversee training?
- What entity should administer training?
- How should accountability be assessed?
- What will accountability enforcement look like?
- What should the protocol be for noncompliant board members?

Finally, topics pertaining to school board member support were also discussed. These topics included: (1) the use of staff, including subject matter experts, and other support models to assist board members in their work; (2) the ways that different types of board members, like advisory or nonvoting members, might provide additional support and information to the school boards; and (3) the use of SOTs to inform the work of the CCSD Board.

For reference, SOTs were created by AB 469 (2017), and SOT duties are outlined in Chapter 388G of NRS. For those unfamiliar with SOTs, they generally work and make decisions at the school level and frequently collaborate with school principals.

From this category of conversation, four recommendations were proposed:

1. Use a planning commission model, like that used by the Clark County Commission, to assist board members in their work;
2. Dedicate staff, such as administrative support and independent financial and legal experts, to assist board members;
3. Add nonvoting, advisory members to the boards; and
4. Consider the use of SOT representation on the large school district boards (currently CCSD).

If such recommendations are of interest, there are several questions the Committee might consider, including:

- For nonvoting advisory members, what types of expertise should be sought?
- What would SOT representation at the district level look like?
- What is the consideration for this representation for smaller school districts?
- What would the use of staff or a planning commission model look like?

- Should board duties and/or code of conduct be outlined in NRS or elsewhere? If so, what guidelines or provisions should be covered?

That concludes our presentation. We are happy to answer any questions you may have.

Chair Denis:

Members, do we have any questions or anything you recall from the meeting that we did not cover? For the folks who perhaps did not participate in that meeting, we took suggestions from a wide variety of individuals and then had some additional questions that came up that we could answer or at least get on the record so we can seek to answer them as we consider anything moving forward. As you can see, these are the topics so far that we have discussed.

Tonight, we have several other presentations, but before I close this item, I want to know if there are any additional questions from the members here, in Carson City, or online.

Assemblywoman Anderson:

It is not necessarily a question. I wanted to thank Jen and Alex for all the work that you did to put this together. It is not just the minutes that you put up right away, it is also sometimes getting everything else prepared. Thank you so much for doing a 5 hour meeting succinctly in about 15 minutes. Thank you so much for the work that you do for our Legislature and for our state. It is greatly appreciated.

Chair Denis:

They do amazing work, and it takes a lot to put all these thoughts together in a way that makes sense. We do appreciate our staff.

Are there any other questions or comments? Seeing none, we are going to take a short break. We will be in recess for nine minutes.

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

Chair Denis:

If everybody would please sit down, we will now reconvene the meeting. I need everybody to settle down. We need to get going here. We are going to move on to the next agenda item, a presentation on the composition of school board trustees. We reached out for anyone who wanted to bring a presentation, and these are the ones who came forth.

We have one change here. Representatives from the CCEA, the Council for a Better Nevada, and several other organizations all decided to combine their remarks into one presentation. We are going to have that presentation first, ask some questions, and then move on to the second presentation by representatives of the Nevada State Education Association (NSEA).

Jana Wilcox Lavin, Chief Executive Officer, Opportunity 180:

I wanted to share a little bit about why our organization is participating in this conversation. We have set out a North Star that we believe and hope that our community will adopt to ensure that every kid graduates high school, college, and career ready and prepared to live whatever life they dream. We see good governance as a central component of ensuring

every kid is prepared for the life that they choose to live to benefit our community, themselves, and their families.

We have heard a lot from public commenters tonight, and I did want to recognize that there were several themes, but one theme that really resonated with me, and I think what you will hear from our Coalition tonight, is that the most important thing is that we set out a vision and a target for student achievement. Whatever we choose to do around governance and whatever decisions we choose to make for our state going forward should anchor in what we believe to be true for kids.

I wanted to make sure that we started with the idea that kids should be at the center of each of these conversations. We have an opportunity as a community to come together and define what we hope to be true for every kid in our state and then ensure that our governance practices align to bring that to life. I will now hand it over to my colleague, Dr. Martinez.

Magdalena Martinez, Director, Lincy Institute, UNLV:

I am an Associate Professor at UNLV and Director for the Lincy Institute, a public policy think tank with the focus on helping to build capacity on issues related to health, education, economic development, governance, and social services in Nevada. Part of my role is also to work with community-based groups to help facilitate and inform the public discourse on issues of import.

Today's presentation is one example of how the Lincy Institute works with Nevada residents. School governance, as we have heard today, is a key component to having successful schools that meet the goals for students. At its core, how we structure governing boards represents our values, beliefs, and priorities for our community. Therefore, governance needs to adapt to our changing priorities, values, and beliefs. This is progress.

For some time, there have been several legislative bills related to school governance. Many of these bills have proposed additional training, professional development, and ways to strengthen the existing governance structure. What has become clear, however, is that there comes a time when existing structures no longer meet the needs of their people and new governance models must be considered.

Let me make this clear: you can have the most dedicated committed individuals run for and serve as school board members, but the structure will fail the individuals and, more tragically, our youth and our families. There have been many bills to change governance structures as well, but it is a heavy lift. We recognize that it is a complicated process, so the bills have died or not had the support needed to change the rules of the game for our governing boards.

Since early 2022, a Coalition of individuals representing various constituency groups have come together to discuss and deliberate on what a new school governance model might look like. The following groups, which you see on the screen ([Agenda Item IV A-1](#)), have convened approximately 11 times to identify key principles that can hopefully inform a new school governance model. Along with my colleague who has already introduced herself, I briefly touched on the principles and how these can be operationalized into a new model and with the permission of the chair, we would also like to invite members of the Coalition to briefly share their ideas as it relates to the guiding principles.

The guiding principles focus on representation, qualifications, and accountability, and as my colleagues stated, they are key pillars for a student-centered governance structure. Regardless of the specific structure, school board trustees must have a dedicated commitment to student achievement and the goals of the broader community.

The composition of school boards should represent the diversity of its constituents through identified geographic boundaries in the county. In most counties in the state, a seven-member board may make sense, but in a region such as southern Nevada, where the school district serves a population of over two million residents, it does not make sense. It is the 28th largest metropolitan area in the country, yet it is the fifth largest school district in the nation. Therefore, it makes sense perhaps to increase the board seats by two to a total of nine board members.

Moreover, as we have heard today, about 90 percent of school board models are elected and the Coalition members believe in the voice of the public and the people. One recommendation is to transition to a hybrid board but have elected seats remain dominant on the board. We have submitted a handout with specific suggestions on how and who would recommend an appointed board, and we have also identified a list of existing statutes that may help inform specific language either in Nevada or in other states. Notably, the NDE can serve as a model except for the elected seats in a school board, which should remain the majority on the school board. Finally, we know that the voice of students is essential for education policy, and the Coalition suggested an appointed nonvoting student member.

The next principal qualification underscores the need for continued and more expansive training and professional development after election and/or appointment in which we identify specific statutes and states with robust training and professional development guidelines. I will not go through it in detail in the interest of time, but should anyone have questions, the Coalition members would be happy to answer specific questions related to the handout document that you have all received.

In terms of who is qualified to be recommended for an appointed board, the Coalition members identified at least three core expertise areas, including K–12 systems, financial, and active members in private business or industry. I will now turn it over again to my colleague, Jana Wilcox Lavin.

Chair Denis:

I want to make sure everybody knows that those documents you referenced should be available online. We also have hard copies here.

Ms. Wilcox Lavin:

The last guiding principle that we continue to discuss is accountability. I know we did hear a lot from other representatives here today during public comment around accountability. I think ultimately, once we decide what we want to be true for kids and we nail that down and align our governance structure in that way, we will be able to hold both ourselves and our board accountable to ensure student achievement targets are met. As my colleague mentioned and as the Coalition has discussed, the concept of a hybrid board providing opportunities for differentiated accountability through ways in which board members are identified for a school board trustee is one opportunity to consider for increasing accountability. We are looking at accountability in new ways.

Another would be thinking about what an intervention framework could look like should we not meet targets as we have established. We have proposed looking for targets of student achievement that already exist in a framework already accessible in our state. Those currently include the State Improvement Plan (SIP), which is approved every year by the State Board, or the federally approved Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan, which is currently in practice. We are not suggesting either of those are perfect, but they exist, and they are part of our natural practice in the state right now and set out a course of achievement targets every year. Those are the formal guiding principles and associated comments. We will now allow the other Coalition members to speak.

Paul Moradkhan, Vegas Chamber:

The Vegas Chamber has had a long history of engaging in education policy. The Chamber has supported several bills regarding K-12 education governance over the last several sessions and this has been an ongoing conversation in the state capitol regarding board governance. The Chamber has supported many reform efforts for greater accountability, transparency, student achievement, and most recently, the new funding formula that was passed.

We believe that this session, we need to take a hard look at our current governance structure. One of those options you looked at is a hybrid board of both appointed and elected school board members. The Chamber has worked with other stakeholders on this issue because the existing governance model simply does not work and directly impacts the students in the classroom. The focus of these conversations needs to be on the students. The Chamber's concern is about student success and achievement and that is why we need to look at our governance model and ask if our current outcomes are the best interest for our students in our community.

The simple fact is that what we are doing right now is not working and by keeping the same thing, we will not improve our student outcomes and achievements or benefit from the work that this Committee has done over the last several years to monetize the formula to ensure that students have the resources they need to succeed in the future. The Chamber is in support of this concept, and we appreciate the openness and willingness to have this conversation now and during the upcoming session.

Maureen Schafer, Executive Director, Council for a Better Nevada:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight. We have been involved in many issues that affect quality of life for Nevadans, but principal to all of them has been our engagement in education issues for the past 18 years. As an example, we were involved in the work you did to create a weighted student formula, and we were very involved in the decentralization efforts, which brought decision making closest to students through budget and decision making at the school level.

We will work with anyone who supports children, parents, and families in our communities when it comes to education. We work with labor, we worked with all of you, with parents, and with our fellow business leaders and philanthropists on these issues and many others.

Regarding the issue of governance, we have learned that governance matters when it comes to our work and issues impacting the judicial system, health care, transportation, and education. It starts at the top. When governance is working well and you have a strong system, everything else flows better, but when your governance is not working, you can have the best people and the best ideas, but things will not work as efficiently.

We have grown exponentially as a state in the last 30 years. We have brought more people here. We certainly have more diversity with more complex needs, and our education system is seeing fewer returns than ever. We have more needs and more complexity than we have ever had to deal with in K–12 education. We need to look at our governance by hardworking board members in all of our districts, including Clark County, and be very honest with ourselves that no matter who runs for these offices and plays these roles, it is difficult, if not impossible to successfully fulfill the obligations and responsibilities they have.

We must look at the qualifications, training, accountability, and outcomes we need for ourselves, our students and their future lives, our families, our communities, and our economy that we need from these future workers, their own lives, and their aspirations. We must reimagine governance for the people with the thankless task of implementing it and for the outcomes of kids, families, and the economy that will rely on those future workers. We must make tough decisions. We want to be in it with you. It is not about appointed or elected. It is about defining what we must do to reimagine these roles and governance structures. I tell you—governance matters.

We make these decisions as business leaders and as parents, and we must make these decisions within these education structures because we are not the Nevada of even 5 years ago, let alone 20 years ago. We must be the Nevada of today and the Nevada we want 10 or 20 years from now, because that is what our kids are going to be. We do it as parents, and as education leaders and future community leaders, we must decide what we want for Nevada. We think about this at the Council for a Better Nevada. We want a better Nevada for all of us and it comes down to governance. Let us let us reinvent the system and go forward in that matter.

Marie Neisess, President, CCEA:

The CCEA is part of the Coalition, and we support the Coalition's recommendations. Over the last several years, the community has had a front row seat to the dysfunction and internal fighting occurring amongst the CCSD Board of Trustees members. Their number one focus should be making sound student- and staff-focused decisions, but instead, some trustees attack one another during school board meetings and on social media. The community has witnessed the school board meetings become focused on personal agendas rather than on students.

The Board's dysfunction has negatively impacted both CCSD students and staff due to the actions of a small group of trustees. Student achievement has not been a top priority. The CCSD Board of Trustees need to be comprised of both appointed and elected trustees who have the background needed to focus on politics and student achievement. A hybrid model would ensure that the Board of Trustees have the qualifications and experience needed to oversee a multibillion-dollar budget. We believe the hybrid model should have mostly elected trustees along with some appointees. Again, CCEA supports the Coalition's recommendations.

Chair Denis:

I will start with questions and then ask the members if they have any. When you looked at putting this presentation together, were you looking at all districts in the state following this model, or specifically CCSD?

Ms. Wilcox Lavin:

I would say we primarily focused on CCSD, where most of the individuals in the Coalition participated, but I think the concept of establishing a target for what we want to see to be true for kids and ensuring a governance model that is aligned would be true anywhere, whatever that model ended up looking like.

Assemblywoman Thomas:

This presentation was very enlightening. We currently have a seven-member board, but you stated that you were looking at increasing that to a nine-member board. How did you come up with nine members? How would that be fair?

Ms. Wilcox Lavin:

Ultimately, we wanted to look at how we can continue to maintain publicly elected seats that are still in the majority of the total and account for the rising population in many of our communities. We think that more representation is better, so that was essentially the rationale behind that consideration. I think if you look to the State Board as an example of a statewide body that includes nonvoting members, there is also an opportunity to consider how expanded seats could include additional nonvoting perspectives as well.

I do not think these recommendations are hard and fast. I think these are considerations that exist that we could point to as examples, either within the state or outside it to consider, that are aligned to those principles, but again, we were simply putting forward the framework for discussion.

Assemblywoman Thomas:

That said, in what areas are you looking to put those two additional board members? We have a diverse community coming up, and we have communities that are not represented. When you had this big think tank, did you look at what areas you would suggest those new board members represent?

Ms. Wilcox Lavin:

I think the Coalition members would agree with me that there would need to be more voices included in that kind of recommendation, so we did not go to that level of detail.

Vice Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

First, I would like to thank you for your thoughtfulness for working on this. You brought up some very interesting things. I wanted to drill down specifically on the governance. Can you explain what that looks like? I know we did some things last session, but I was curious if you could drill down on what you imagine the governance aspect and the training would look like. During our meeting, we talked about what would happen if people did not pay attention to those governance guidelines, so if you could expand on that.

Ms. Wilcox Lavin:

I will get started and then hand it over to my colleague. During the May 3 meeting, there was a discussion from the NASB related to a set of guiding principles or standards that they were using to support their training across the state. One of the things we had raised during that discussion was how and in what ways we could evaluate how those standards are being

implemented across the state's governing bodies and if that information could be a way to help us understand the depth and implementation of the training aligned to the standards already being leveraged in the state. We also discussed what sort of ways we as a state could choose to deploy opportunities to understand the effectiveness of both the training and the internalization of that training toward the schools.

Chair Denis:

Do you have a follow up, or does that answer your question?

Vice Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

I can take the rest offline. This is a paramount issue, and Trustee Ford brought up that she did not feel like the fiduciary issues of governance in general were laid out to board members. This could be one way to empower members and set up our board to succeed. We could talk more offline, but I think this is worth exploring.

Chair Denis:

Are there any other questions from members up in Carson City?

Assemblywoman Hansen:

I appreciate the presentation, and I am grateful for the opportunity for us all to discuss, collaborate, and air our concerns. For the record, I was not able to attend the May 3 meeting, but I did watch it last week, and I also went back and watched the hearing on AB 255 (2021), the bill that did not progress, but then this study became an outgrowth of the mining tax bill.

To pick up where we left off on the governance idea and what it looks like, I have had concerns about that on the record from the beginning, and I do not support the idea of appointments. That does not mean I do not think there is a lot of room for improvement, but a lot of times we all want the same outcomes, but we have different ideas about how we get there.

I greatly appreciated Trustee Ford's public comment, and one thing that really struck me was addressing some of the training. I was shocked and so was my colleague sitting next to me that in NRS 386.327, there are only six hours of training required during the first and third years and no practical penalty for failing to complete the training. The consequences of failing to complete the training are limited to having the school board members' names posted on the district's website and notifying the other school board members of the failure. That training requirement was not created until 2017, which is not that long ago, so if we are looking to find ways to increase effectiveness and good governance models, we need more training.

We heard testimony that Chicago is moving from an appointed 7-member board to an elected 21-member board. Considering that 90 percent of school boards are elected, it is interesting that we are considering doing perhaps the opposite of what Chicago, a very large school district, has done. In your studies, what do you take away from the fact that Chicago is reversing what they have been doing? I do not know if that is a fair question.

Ms. Wilcox Lavin:

I am not sure we can speak specifically to Chicago's motivations or those of any other community. Honestly, I think the key is to decide what we want to be true and build a governance model that works for Nevada. Our recommendation is to include components from these guiding principles that help get us there to ensure that students are achieving at higher rates.

Assemblywoman Hansen:

To touch on a different side of this than governance, the superintendent literally is the chief executive officer (CEO) of the school district, at least from my perspective in business and governance. A CEO is a leader, and I know the Washoe County CEO or superintendent has five assistant superintendents. Have we looked at models where superintendents take a lot more of the direction and responsibilities? I know we are laying a lot of the issues on the school boards, and they are elected, so I was intrigued by the suggestion of a superintendent being elected.

In Washoe County, we have spent the last ten years dealing with two very controversial superintendent issues that took up a lot of our board's time, and I know there have been complaints that the boards only spend about 20 percent of the time dealing with students and the schools because they are caught up in all this other stuff that was out of their control when they were dealing with two superintendent turnovers in a relatively short period of time. Did we look at having a superintendent elected or look at districts where superintendents embrace the CEO model?

Ms. Martinez:

The Coalition did not consider those types of questions during their deliberations.

Chair Denis:

If you have other suggestions, especially based on the public comment that we heard earlier, we do have an item later on the agenda where members can bring up some of these issues.

Assemblywoman Anderson:

I appreciate the possibility of a nonvoting student member being a part of the board. I have two questions and I think I know the answer to one of them, but I am not sure. The first might be more of a legal question. I realize that the floor is set by the Legislature as to how many members can be on the board. Is there any discussion about only bringing this question up in Clark County and possibly having the hybrid idea being something that Clark County has made the decision to do only in their county as opposed to having it come to the Legislature? In a nutshell, why is it coming to the Legislature for the entire state when it feels like this is a very large Clark County issue?

Ms. Martinez:

While most of our Coalition members were from southern Nevada, the deliberation focused on the principles that can help guide us statewide. We recognize that CCSD is our largest school district, but we are not the only ones who have governance concerns, as we have heard today, so I think that is a great suggestion. There is opt-in based on population

numbers or student numbers. I know there are many statutes already in place that look by population and that is certainly an option the Legislature could pursue.

Chair Denis:

I am going to have our legal counsel weigh in on that issue. Is there the ability for us to do something for one county or school district versus all of them?

Mr. Killian:

Under existing law, there are multiple different divisions for the governance models of the different county school districts based on the population size of the county that contains the school district. I believe there are seven members in the two largest counties and five members with the option of additional members in some of the smaller counties.

The way that those members are broken up are different. In the largest counties in the state, it is seven districts that are as equal as possible. In the next smallest county size in the state, it is five members in relatively equal districts, and then two members from districts that are each roughly half of the entire county. The Legislature does have the power to make distinctions between school districts based on the size or population count in the underlying counties, so using that same model to revise those distinctions or revise what is provided in each of those different population sizes is within the Legislature's power.

Assemblywoman Anderson:

To clarify, the Legislature can set the number, but can a school district or school board decide to expand on their own without coming to the Legislature? Can they decide that though they are allowed only 7 board members, they want to expand it to 11? Are they able to do that, or do they need to come to the Legislature for permission?

Chair Denis

Mr. Killian, I am going to have you answer that.

Mr. Killian:

Ultimately, yes, they would need to come to the Legislature for permission because the Legislature has established the laws that prescribed the sizes. The Legislature has also prescribed the mechanism where certain smaller districts can come and ask for additional trustees or ask to change the districts from which those trustees are elected from at-large to divisions of the underlying district. The Legislature controls that issue, so the Legislature would have to enact enabling legislation to allow a school district to potentially expand its size up to a specified number.

Chair Denis:

To follow up, the Legislature could put in a trigger where if a county reaches a certain population or size, they could automatically then vote to expand themselves without having to come to the Legislature. Is that something that is an option?

Mr. Killian:

Yes, the Legislature could build that triggering mechanism into the enabling legislation stating that as of a certain population figure, there is automatically a certain number of members added.

Senator Buck:

I was wondering who would potentially appoint these extra two members. Would it be the governor, the Legislature, or county commissions?

Ms. Wilcox Lavin:

We discussed different opportunities for representation and clearly noted that, as we heard from Assemblywoman Thomas, there are obviously some communities that may be underrepresented. This was not a hard and fast proposal. This was a framework of principles, not a thorough plan, because we felt that the thorough plan would be discussed and deliberated among a broader group of stakeholders, including all of you and everyone in the room. We were also looking to local communities and other geographic boundaries that might work given that we have county-wide school districts and looking for greater representation where communities are particularly underrepresented. It would certainly require more discussion, but that was where our conversation lead.

Chair Denis:

Do we have any other questions from the members? I do not see any. Do not make me regret this because I want to get input. The presenters have given a specific recommendation for a framework, and if there is anyone who has a question concerning that framework, I am going to allow about 20 seconds per person to ask a question. This is not an opportunity to go on and give a big speech about how you do not like something. That is not what I am asking here. But if you heard something and you have a question on how that would be implemented, I will allow that. Do we have anybody here who would like to ask a question? Like I said, if it is not appropriate, I will say so and we will move to the next person. We do not normally do this, but I am trying to get some input here because these are some new ideas.

Mr. Carter:

Again, I am probably the oldest guy in the room. I have noticed that there are two kinds of people who are on school boards: people who generally want to help, and narcissistic control freaks.

Chair Denis:

Remember that you are supposed to ask a question.

Mr. Carter:

My question is, did you explore the Legislature coming up with conduct parameters for elected officials? Was that taken into consideration? Did you also consider applying the things in the training and so forth to the elected school board members, not throwing the baby out with the bathwater?

Ms. Wilcox Lavin:

We contemplated that the training would be applicable regardless of the governance model or selection approach so there was an opportunity to consider that broadly in whatever governance model was ultimately selected by the Legislature.

P.J. (Patty) Belanger, Private Citizen:

I lead an education coalition, I am with Americans for Prosperity, and I am also a grandma. If this was a research project, why were other options not researched?

Ms. Martinez:

This was not necessarily a research project, and perhaps I did not make that clear enough. This was a deliberative process by a group of Coalition members. At the Lincy Institute, one of our roles is to help facilitate those conversations. We have researched many education policy issues and you can find all of our policy briefs and information online at UNLV's Lincy Institute website.

Linda Cavazos, Private Individual:

My question is very brief. I just wanted to clarify: when we were talking about the consistent governance policy and hoping that we could incorporate it, are we referring specifically to Silver State Governance?

Ms. Wilcox Lavin:

We did not consider any specific training. The training I was referencing was presented at the May 3 meeting by the NASB, who had a set of standards they used for their training. That is what I was referencing.

Ms. Cavazos:

The reason that I ask is because in the May 3 meeting minutes—and I had to leave that meeting early, so I apologize if I get any of this wrong—I believe Executive Director Deb Oliver referred to Silver State Governance and some of the success they had, and it sounded very similar to what was being proposed today as far as the consistency. You are saying that was not specifically designed to be Silver State Governance?

Ms. Wilcox Lavin:

May I ask a clarifying question, Chair?

Chair Denis:

Yes.

Ms. Wilcox Lavin:

When you ask the question about consistency, can you clarify for me what you mean?

Ms. Cavazos:

I believe that part of the Coalition's presentation was related to governance and that we are talking about having a consistent model. I am paraphrasing.

Ms. Wilcox Lavin:

The three components of the guiding principles are representation, qualifications, and training and accountability, and there is potential for consistent application across the state aligned to a set of standards or beliefs that the community decides are right for kids and aligned to a governance model. I know of the Silver State Governance training, but when we referenced training, we were asking questions specifically related to how training might be deployed in a consistent manner, so leveraging those standards that have already been articulated and adopted felt like something to consider.

Ms. Bywaters:

What is the plan or strategy to include more diverse, Black, or indigenous people of color as a part of this Coalition team to expand the perspective of the framework?

Ms. Martinez:

As my colleague indicated, these are excellent questions that we believe should be deliberated by the Legislature and the community at large.

Chair Denis:

I want to reiterate one more time that we are only asking a quick question so we can get some clarification.

Mariann Humphrey, Private Citizen:

If you proceed with appointees, how long do they last, and what happens if the people are not happy with them? How long are we stuck with these appointees? How long are they appointed for?

Ms. Wilcox Lavin:

Ultimately, I believe that decision would be up to the Legislature, but as it stands now, and hopefully it will continue to expand, the discussions we had with our Coalition talked about similar terms to the current elected terms. One thing we had discussed that did not show up today was the idea that there could be an opportunity to use a trigger as the Chair suggested to pause appointments at some period and reflect on whether they actually met the targets. You could look at implementation for a period of time and then pause and review if things were being successfully implemented. Essentially, the idea would be to keep the same terms.

Ms. Strasburg:

In NRS 389.036, districts were directed to implement the Family Life Committee to evaluate health education courses. There are nine members. The statute also defines what kind of members. In the cases where we have specific numbers or constituents, has the Coalition examined if they have been successful? The Family Life Committee includes a student and a teacher representative, all the things that are being discussed. Has the Coalition evaluated prior implementation of similar process and procedures?

Ms. Wilcox Lavin:

Our primary focus for existing examples in the state was the State Board of Education, which did go through a transition and has demonstrated improved effectiveness. That is the belief, but it sounds like that would be an additional committee for this Legislature and the ongoing discussions to consider.

Mary Porter, Private Citizen:

I have listened to you speak generally of training, and I think you described 12 hours of it. Can you tell me in summary what the components of the training would be? At least in my school district, quite educated people are coming in, so I do not understand what they need to learn in addition.

Ms. Martinez:

I do not believe we identified specific hours of training and the Coalition did not discuss specific “in the weeds” types of training. We believe that those are the types of discussions that need to be had with broader and more specific stakeholders, particularly teachers and educators. We did not discuss specific type of training or hours of training.

Ms. Porter:

So, we have no guidance on that from the Coalition?

Chair Denis:

That is a valid question, and I will put it in the notes so we can have that discussion as the Legislature moves forward.

Ms. McFie:

Ms. Wilcox Lavin, I heard you say a moment ago that there would be standards chosen by the community. I am wondering what community you are referring to—is it the community of parents choosing the standards? Or if it is a community to the Legislature, or just what that community was?

Ms. Wilcox Lavin:

I do not have any decision-making authority of any sort of these standards. The only thing I was referencing is that there are existing standards that were presented by the NASB to be considered that they believed demonstrated standards for effective governance, and that was what we had discussed. I think these ongoing discussions would be where those conversations would happen.

Erica Dengre, Private Citizen:

I saw the list of members that this committee would include, but nowhere did I see any presentation of my community. I work in CCSD as a paraprofessional. Are we going to be part of this conversation or this community? I also did not see special education represented, so are we also part of this community if it is a conversation?

Ms. Wilcox Lavin:

I think what we have tried to convey here today is that there is a lot of room for more voices and there should be more voices in the discussion related to any decisions. What we have brought forward was a platform and a framework to begin a conversation where more voices could be a part of the ongoing discussion before any decisions were made.

Chair Denis:

Before we move on, BPS, do we have anybody online who wishes to ask a question?

BPS:

No, Chair. Your line is currently open and working, but there are no callers at this time.

Chair Denis:

We will now move on to the next presentation by NSEA. Thank you for those of you who asked questions to keep it to that so that we could make sure we get those. They were all good questions.

Chris Daly, Deputy Director of Government Relations, NSEA:

The NSEA has been the voice of Nevada educators for over 120 years. Allow me to make a quick observation as someone who regularly attends public hearings. Tonight's public comment had the feel of the public comment at your average school board meeting in 2022, and I think that fact may be the most instructive thing we learn tonight.

The most pressing issues facing Nevada schools, including the severe educator shortage dominating the headlines, the chronic underfunding of education, violence in our schools, and continuing inequities for disadvantaged students are very clearly not the result of any school district governance model. No, these issues instead are the result of larger societal problems and the continuing failure of state leadership to truly prioritize public education. Appointing school board members will not address these issues.

School board members are on the front lines of elected officials. You got a taste of it this evening, but they are regularly subjected to public comment we heard earlier tonight, and many school board members have had their safety threatened. After resigning from the Washoe County School Board, former trustee Kurt Thigpen wrote this: "I had many conversations with district staff about safety that reminded me of preparing for active shooter drills. At every school board meeting since, the threat level only got higher, school police presence got higher, and the vitriol, hate, harassment, intimidation, and abuse by some members of the public only got worse as time went on."

Appointing school board members will do nothing to improve that dynamic. School boards are responsible for school district governance, yet they are denied the resources necessary to be successful. Everyone in this room knows Nevada is 48th; I think I am the seventh person to say it tonight. We are 48th in the nation in per-pupil funding, and that is not the fault of school board members. For them, it is a set up. You are supposed to run the school district or govern this school district, but you do not get the money to do it. It is a set up. Appointing school board members, by the way, will not mean more education funding.

We also need to be honest about the politics driving the discussion of school district governance. While there have been numerous efforts over the years to raise the issue, it never got this far, not until my colleague Lisa Guzman was elected to the Clark County School Board in 2020. Even though Lisa is a great school board member—I follow lots of elected officials, and she is a great one—apparently, her work is such a threat that one entity filed a complaint against her before she even took office. When that did not work, they decided that they would go after the system of electing school board members.

Former Speaker Jason Frierson told me personally one-on-one that the only reason he introduced his hybrid school bill and included the language in the mining tax deal, which led to this process, was because the CCEA demanded that it be in there. We are here, and tonight we hear about a new Coalition advocating a hybrid school board model that looks a lot like those same old corporate-backed education reform efforts that we saw in the 1990s and the 2000s, reforms that have resoundingly failed to improve overall education quality.

However, after hearing public comment and messaging some of my friends, apparently at least two of the seven listed Coalition members have stated they do not have a position on elected versus appointed or hybrid school boards. Let me put it another way—more than a quarter of the Coalition that you heard from advocating for hybrid school boards do not support hybrid school boards. Meanwhile, there is no evidence that appointed school boards or hybrid school boards improve education quality or student outcomes. None was presented in the May hearing or this evening.

With that said, the NSEA does appreciate this opportunity to continue our engagement and conversation about school board composition. We believe Nevada can improve the professionalism, collaboration, accountability, and responsiveness of school boards and adding educator voices that are sorely missing while also preserving school boards as democratically elected bodies.

I would now like to turn this over to NSEA President Dawn Etcheverry, who has the unique perspective as a former president of the Nevada PTA, a former member of the Storey County School District Board of Trustees, a former member of the Nevada State Board of Education, and an elementary music teacher with 28 years of experience.

Dawn Etcheverry, President, NSEA:

We are part of a long tradition of educators promoting the democratic process. Educators with the National Education Association have played a key role in supporting voting rights, from past NSEA president Charl Ormond Williams' effort to get Tennessee to ratify the 19th Amendment in 1922 to students affiliated with the California Teachers Association who started a campaign to extend the vote to 18-year-olds back in 1967. We believe that participating in the cornerstone of democracy and locally elected school boards represent the American institution that comes closest to the ideals of local self-governance.

Local school boards are in place to ensure that schools in each community reflect the values of the people. School boards provide direction and oversight for the superintendent who manages the day-to-day operations of the schools. They set policies for the district and approve budgets. They also provide direct accountability to the community.

One of NSEA's recommendations related to the school district governance is to end the ban on participation by active educators. As a classroom teacher in Washoe County, I was able to participate in school governance because I lived in a different county at the time, but my

experience in the classroom directly informed my actions and made me a more committed, professional, and knowledgeable trustee.

As an educator serving as a trustee, I was able to articulate students' needs when it came to budgeting and decision making. For an example, education programs are brought before boards as a budgetary item. They are presented to us with big bows and the "fix all" promise, but as an educator, I was able to ask questions about implementation. What I found is that most programs affected cost of the district for more money for extra staffing, and took away from what the state-mandated curriculum was already being taught in our classrooms, making it harder for our teachers to implement and meet the children's needs.

Allowing active educators to serve in school district governance will improve school boards in Nevada. During this hearing and some of the former hearings, some people have alluded to the governance model at the State Board of Education. However, the roles and responsibilities of the State Board are vastly different from local school boards. The State Board is not responsible for running the NDE. The State Board is not in charge of multimillion or multibillion dollar budgets.

The State Board oversees adopting plans and improving the quality of public education in Nevada. While there have been some improvements, Nevada schools are consistently ranked near last in the nation. As a former State Board of Education member, I was involved in the interview and recommendation to the Governor for the hiring of the state superintendent, over whom the State Board has no oversight or ability to hold accountable when procedures are not followed.

I would like to introduce my colleague, Lisa Guzman.

Lisa Guzmán, Assistant Executive Director, NSEA:

I am the trustee for District A in CCSD, but I am not representing the CCSD at all during these proceedings. I want you to know that like other institutions, there are times when school boards do not live up to public expectations. This is true of school districts with elected school boards and those without. The difference is, elected school boards provide the public with a direct line of accountability, and let me tell you, my constituents find me in Smith's and tell me exactly what they want me to know.

Appointed school boards are shielded by an appointing authority who typically has significant other responsibilities in addition to the appointment of the school board. It is extremely rare to see an elected official voted out of office over the actions or conduct of another official they have appointed. This is truer still when the appointment is made by another deliberative body.

Democracy can be messy. Money can have a substantial influence on elections and sometimes campaigns are negative and turn off voters, or you can be harassed and be forced to move from your home—like I did when I first was elected trustee. You could have a typical election—like I just experienced for Senate District 12. Oftentimes our preferred candidates do not win.

In recent years, school boards have become a focal point for a political faction looking to score cheap points with campaigns fueled by disinformation related to critical race theory, masks, vaccines, sex education, and even bathrooms. While these challenges are real, they are certainly not enough to abandon our system of democratic governance. Instead, Nevada has implemented reforms over the years to increase voter participation and make elections

more democratic. We believe school boards would benefit from greater democracy and participation. I do not see how a commission by the county in appointing a board member would make a difference when parents already have voted for who they want to represent them.

Alexander Marks, Director of Communications, NSEA:

While democratically elected school boards bring the greatest accountability of responsiveness to the communities they serve, we do agree that there should be more done in the face of political attacks, which we have seen here tonight, to increase levels of professionalism and collaboration at school boards while also bringing greater accountability.

We have a list of great things we can do long before we eliminate the democratic process of voting, some of which we have already heard, so I am not going to go over each one in detail. First, allowing educators who are currently excluded to serve on their school boards would add a critical missing perspective to governance, increasing professionalism, and bringing day-to-day experience to the board. The addition of advisory seats could bring more breadth of diversity and perspectives to local school boards, including adding important education stakeholders like students, representatives of the PTA, and paraprofessionals. A statewide code of conduct has been discussed for school board trustees, including a process for possible removal for office transgressions, that would set a clear expectation with new lines of accountability.

Instituting regular rotation of school board presidents would also lead to more collaboration between school board trustees and decreased factionalism on the boards. Possibly limiting the superintendent contracts to two years—like the bargaining contracts—and timing seating of the new school board members after elections would make superintendents more accountable to the seated boards and lead to better working relationships.

We have already discussed this, but compensation of trustees that better reflects their responsibilities would lead to more qualified and professional school boards and candidates. Elevating the ballot placement of school board races would also lead to greater participation. It would not be buried at the bottom. Electing school board candidates through ranked choice voting would also reward candidates who are more collaborative, and public financing of school board elections would help level the playing field and will also increase communications between candidate campaigns and the voting public.

Between the audience outbursts we have seen tonight, some of the anti-LGBTQ public comments, and a lot of Communism references, this meeting is a great example of what most CCSD meetings have been like over the last two years, but to suggest that one solution is to appoint all of you would not solve any of the issues we have seen tonight, and we would also stand in opposition of that proposal. This is a glimpse of what we have been dealing with at the local level. Again, appointments would not prevent any of those issues, which I think is honestly why things feel so dysfunctional sometimes.

The suggestions the NSEA set forth would do far more to fix the problems that the Coalition has suggested here this evening, and they would be worth trying long before removing the right for Nevadans to vote for our school board trustees. As always, we stand ready to work with this Committee on any of these important school board reforms, but at the same time, we will fight against any move to make school boards less democratic or shield them from accountability.

Chair Denis:

Are there any questions from Committee members?

Assemblywoman Hansen:

I just looked out the window and pigs are flying. Mr. Daly and Assemblywoman Hansen agree, and that does not happen very often. I appreciate the presentation. I have one question. I know you have listed several concerns, but what is your number one concern with the idea of appointment?

Mr. Daly:

First, to your opening observation of pigs flying, talk to Senator Hansen. Oftentimes, there are odd points of agreement between the two of us. In terms of the biggest concern, I think it would be a move that would not solve the issues schools are facing.

Clark County is back to school this week, and Washoe County will be back next week, and they are facing the shortage of educators, with probably over 3,000 vacant education positions in this state. That is a crisis. I would love to see language in a bill making this Committee do a series of hearings to address that. I am looking here at Assemblywoman Miller, who has worked on the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Task Force, which is incredibly important, but I would like to see more attention on that.

To me, this seems like more of a distraction, and as we saw earlier tonight, Senator Denis was doing his best job to move this meeting forward, but at a certain point, it did not seem like we were getting anywhere. That is the dynamic at school board meetings. Appointing school board members does not change that dynamic. The net effect is to limit the accountability mechanisms that the public has to their board of directors. We would not say that we think school boards are working perfectly now. We think they are not. However, we think this proposal for a hybrid form of governance does nothing to address all the issues that school boards are facing. It just changes the people out.

In the May hearing, an interesting notion came up when we were talking about Chicago and maybe even New York moving from appointed to elected models, and it got me thinking that those school systems are also having lots of problems and difficulties in terms of governance. Folks are changing governance because they do not know what else to do to address or fix the problems in the public education system. We have elected school boards but are talking about moving to appointed or hybrid, and I understand the urge to do something—anything—but it is not going to address the root causes that are plaguing our school districts.

Assemblywoman Hansen:

I appreciate the answer and your being forthright about that. This happens sometimes where we come together and have an understanding with people or positions that we do not ever think would happen, and it is possible because we have dialogue.

Chair, thank you so much for giving us the latitude you have given for the May 3 meeting and the way it was conducted as well as allowing the public to ask questions. That is unusual given the way the Legislature runs. We do not always agree either, but you are always so respectful and I have appreciated your leadership. It is an honor to be a part of this process even though we have our differences. That is how we hopefully find some solutions we can agree on.

Senator Buck:

I was wondering how the NSEA feels about the possibility of an elected superintendent.

Ms. Etcheverry:

In this state, we used to have an elected superintendent. The state went from an elected state superintendent to an appointed one. We do not have a position any further than that. We have seen both dynamics.

Chair Denis:

I want to get clarification here. I do not believe we had a state elected superintendent unless it was many, many years ago. Are you talking more than 50 years back? We should get that clarified at some point. I know we used to have a superintendent that was not appointed by the governor, but by the State Board of Education. I believe that is what we have.

Ms. Etcheverry:

We will have to look because I believe that my first signature is by when I elected.

Chair Denis:

We will get that figured out. That is a good question. I as far as I have been associated with education, we have never voted for a superintendent, so it would have been before that.

Assemblywoman Thomas:

Thank you for the presentation. Actually, it was more of your opinions. I do not believe that was a presentation, but I respect how you feel about the school boards and what happened here today. Chair Denis took charge of this meeting and as we have seen with the school boards, it has not always been that controlled.

I believe that if you have a complaint about a problem, you should have a solution, and the problem with our school boards right now is chaos. That is no way to run a business. Our educational system is a business, and unfortunately, we are thinking inside the box instead of outside the box despite that this state has grown by leaps and bounds. Right now, my concern is with finding solutions. What can we do or put forward to do about our educational system? What can we do about the areas of our community that are lacking in representation? Or about the areas of our community that are affluent and have the resources that they need for their children to progress, and areas where we do not have that? We have a dysfunctional family going on. What can we do to turn this around? We must do something.

Mr. Daly:

In our May exhibit and in Mr. Marks' presentation, we listed eight or nine bullet pointed items, several of them included in LCB's presentation to you earlier this evening, that we believe would help. Our number one proposal is to end the ban on educator participation in school district governance. Now, we know for a fact that educators used to be allowed to run for and serve on their school district's board of trustees. I am not sure which year that the restriction was put into place, but in many states and school districts around the country, educators are able to serve on their school boards.

There may be times where there are conflicts and there need to be recusals on votes, but as former trustee and active classroom educator Dawn Etcheverry mentioned in her comment, educators bring an important perspective. Perhaps sometimes you may see your colleague to your left engage on an issue and think about something in a certain way that you or I, as folks who are not actively in the classroom, might not have considered. That is the type of thing we are thinking about.

Oftentimes when you have an educator who may or may not be a teacher on a school board, they bring their teacher voice and their teacher presence into the school board, which has a professionalizing impact on that board. Additionally, educators oftentimes win school board races when they run for school board, so we think that one change alone could have a dramatic impact on improving the boards.

In terms of representation, I am very aware, for example, that the Clark County School Board of Trustees currently does not have representation from several communities that it has had in the past, including the African American community. That is an issue, and I think that there are two ways to address it. One is an intentional electoral Coalition to look at the races and candidates in terms of candidate recruitment and training and running elections to make sure that representation is there. I can speak as the NSEA's political director that this is something we have had conversations about and are interested in pursuing moving forward, although it does not appear to be in this current election cycle.

The other thing that we have recommended is looking at potential advisory seats on school boards and there are all sorts of communities that are not represented or voices that are not present at school boards. Voting seats are preferable, but short of that, we think advisory seats could give that opportunity for more breadth and diversity of perspective on school boards.

Assemblywoman Thomas:

I appreciate that detailed answer. Those are valid points and that is what our communities are lacking—representation.

Chair Denis:

Once again, I am going to allow questions, but I want to limit the questions to the suggestions that they made. There was some commentary, but we do not need to ask questions about the commentary, only about the specific suggestions they made. Do we have anybody here in Las Vegas who wishes to ask a question? I do not see anyone. Is there anyone in Carson City? It does not look like it, so we will close out this agenda item and move on to the next agenda item.

AGENDA ITEM V—ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION CONCERNING THE COMPOSITION AND SELECTION OF SCHOOL BOARDS

Chair Denis:

I want to open this up to our members to discuss any additional issues concerning the composition and selection of school boards that we have not discussed but you would like to see addressed. I am not seeing any hands going up here in Las Vegas. How about in Carson City? I do not see anyone.

If there are any additional items from the public that we have not covered that you think should be addressed, please come forward. If you have a quick question or comment, come up and tell us what you think. Remember, I want it to be quick.

Jay G. Craddock, Private Citizen:

I went through CCSD, Mountain View Elementary School, Ed Von Tobel Middle School, and Eldorado High School. I went on to graduate from Columbia University and got my master's degree at UNLV. I think the basic problem we have is that we have a group of synergists who are trying to make things work together and we have a group of saboteurs who are trying to tear it all apart. We need to find a way to get these people to understand that the only way that we can do the best for our kids is by working together.

It is a matter of finding the number of school board trustees that we need to cover all the different communities in the Valley—maybe that is 11. Maybe we also need to increase the number of county commissioners, but we are not getting enough voices out there for it to be made into a reasonable discussion. My idea is to increase the number of school board trustees, give them staff, and pay them more than \$250 a month to incentivize the whole idea of working for the school district, and not working for private schools or religious schools, and making it work through numbers and better representation.

Anna Marie Binder, Private Citizen:

A few years back, I was the super angry, frustrated parent who started showing up anywhere and everywhere screaming and yelling and very mad. As many know, I am a mom to a special needs sons, and when this district continued to keep schools closed, I was one of the first people to hit the pavement with my sign and my son in my heart begging for schools to reopen.

In the months that ensued, I did not like any of the trustees. I did not like the superintendent. I did not really like a single elected official. I made that very known, but what I came to realize was that I wanted to help. I guess I had never needed to say so much out loud about how frustrated I was for my children, and over the last couple of years, I woke up one day and I was like, "Well, I can stand here and keep yelling, but it is not going to get anything done, so how can I help?" What did I do? I turned it around and I started helping, and I spent every hour of every day helping our community. In going from that frustration to where I worked for today, I could not have done that without the respect of our elected officials, some who are sitting in the room. I was very fortunate to get appointed to our Audit Advisory Committee for CCSD and our Zoning Committee—responsibilities entrusted to me from our elected officials.

I am speaking because I think I am a prime example of where an appointment works. Everyone who knows me or knows anything about me knows that I only have the children's interests at heart in our community—all of them, every single one. I volunteer in schools that are 30 or 40 minutes away from my home, and I still have four kids in this district, my youngest having just started first grade. I go to every single school board meeting. I missed one last month. There is more than just what you see going on there. There are duties there.

Chair Denis:

I want you to get to the questions. I do not want to run out of time, and you can also speak during public comment.

Ms. Binder:

There are so many rules, and a lot of those rules prevent the very people from doing the jobs that we expect them to do, whether that is the trustees or the superintendent, and we have to fix it. The number one idea I liked was the elected superintendent and I went back and looked it up on Wikipedia. The law changed in 2013.

I guess my overall question is, like tonight, there was so much highlighted to me on the surface of our issues and our problems. How can I help you guys dig a little deeper than that? The problems are just under the surface, and we are skating all around them. And I can get more particular offline, but I can show you many ways why the system is not working. I guess my question is, I know I have your attention right now, but how can I keep your attention to show you those failures?

Chair Denis:

I would suggest a couple things here. One is that you continue to be involved in these meetings. As this conversation progresses, it is going to go to the Legislature, so keep an eye on it there. Nothing will be voted on. It must be voted during the Legislature during the next session, but right now is the opportunity to give your suggestions. You can also send them in, but you do not have to do it all tonight, and that is true for anybody who wants to do that. That would be my suggestion—continue to stay involved in listening and when you have opportunities to give suggestions and work with your elected legislators, do so. They are looking for opportunities to make education better and work on those issues.

Ms. Binder:

I am concerned because we only have one more of these before we head into next year, so time is closing in before we hit the floor next year. That is very concerning.

Chair Denis:

You also have an opportunity to talk to your legislators outside of meetings. Because you brought it up again, I believe that our legal counsel, Mr. Killian, has an answer for the question about the elected superintendent. I want him to address that, so we get that on the record.

Mr. Killian:

There are two separate changes from elected to appointed. The first is that roughly from statehood to 1956, there were county superintendents who were elected. Then, in the eighth Special Session in 1956, elected county superintendents were abolished in favor of making school districts co-terminus with county boundaries and having elected school boards, and the district superintendents became appointed at that time. Regarding the second question, the state superintendent was elected until 1957, when it was converted to a position appointed by the State Board. Then, in 2013, that process was changed so that the State Board recommends names, and the governor makes the appointment.

Chair Denis:

There you have it. I appreciate that and I think it is good to get that on the record. Is there anyone else here in Las Vegas wishing to ask a question or make a recommendation? How about up in Carson City?

Frederick George Wilson, Private Citizen:

This question is for Mr. Killian. What would it take to change back to an elected superintendent of WCSD?

Mr. Killian:

Since the school districts are creations of the Legislature and the Legislature has made the decision to have those positions currently be appointed rather than elected, all it would take would be a bill by the Legislature to convert those positions from appointed back to elected as they were when they were originally created by the territorial legislature back in 1864.

Chair Denis:

Is there anyone else in Carson City wishing ask questions? I do not see anyone, so I am going to close this agenda item. I want to thank everybody who has given suggestions and asked questions. I think this will be helpful as we move forward to the Legislature.

AGENDA ITEM VI—PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Denis:

We are now going to go to our second to last item on the agenda, public comment. We will start here in Las Vegas. Is there anyone here who wishes to speak? No one is coming forward. How about up in Carson City?

Ms. Strasburg:

I appreciate Chair Denis for giving us this opportunity today. It was a very well-run meeting and something that the Carson City School Board could learn from if they were here. Unfortunately, they had a meeting tonight as well.

I would urge the Committee to look at the private sector. The private sector has a chairman of the board and a group of people who advise them on various things and then we have the president, the CEO. That model has worked. If you look at what Apple has done, they have a chairman of the board, an advisory board, audit committees, et cetera, which advise the chairman of the board and his cohorts, but the CEO drives the operating results of the company. The CEO is the superintendent, and he needs to drive the results and be accountable for the data-driven metrics that the school board should insist upon. I like the idea of a rotating term for the superintendent because it keeps the person in that position fresh and eager to learn from best practices.

Ms. Humphrey:

I want to say thank you again for the opportunity to experience and be a part of this meeting. It has been very enlightening. I started going to school board meetings last fall and it was a big eye opener for me. Being an older person, I bring a lot of experience as far as what my own life entailed growing up during the 1960s and 1970s, which was not a very fun time to grow up in a major city like San Francisco.

Anyway, maybe there are problems with school boards and parents, but I know from my own experience observing and speaking that school board people do not listen. You have school board members who sit there and have dopey looks on their faces. They stare into space. They write down messages. You as a parent, grandparent, or a concerned citizen go

there and you want to express your concerns. We went through the COVID-19 vaccines, and masks, and we had doctors speak, but they just went their own way and did what they wanted.

Then we have all the garbage in education as far as CRT, and transgender ideology, and what they want to call sex education—which is more like pornography. That is not why the kids are going to school. We would have a lot more problems solved if kids were going to school to learn and have the golden rule taught to them, if kids felt like teachers cared, they were there to learn, and were all treated the same, not based on color or anything else. I went to school with a lot of different nationalities and races, and we were all treated the same. That is how kids need to be treated, and they will learn better, but it is unfair to have all this other stuff infiltrated to them. We need to let kids be. I agree with so many things others have said. People said kids are innocent. We need to let them grow and grow up slowly. Why do we have to have all this stuff thrown at them?

I think about talking to my little grandson on Sunday, and I do not know what they are going to teach him, but I told him to remember not to let anybody tell him he is not who he is. He is a little boy. That is how God made him. I am sitting here listening to all this and thinking that as a grandparent, I should not have to tell him about these things at seven years old. I told him to always tell his parents stuff and to not let anybody tell him not to tell his parents. This is what we are confronting, and I think that is part of the problem, but I still feel we need to have the community vote and have our voices heard and not have things appointed because the more the government gets involved, the more damage is done.

Sally Zamora, Private Citizen:

I am a mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, and I am representing my family, all the children in our state, the parents, and the people who love our American Constitution. I agree with everything said by these good people. The way they speak up and they are so informed makes you proud to be an American. It was good. You got a lot of practical information as well as how to support our Constitution and keep our country free.

I would also like to say thank you to the Chair. I have been to many meetings that were not run as well as this one. I would especially like to say thank you to our Committee members who came. The rest of them missed out. They were absent as they are sometimes. You all did a great job not only being here, but you made us feel like you were interested. I got you to look me straight in the eyes. I could not believe it.

The one thing I felt was not talked about is our teachers. I am involved with teachers who are friends of mine. They are a little older and many of them are so glad to be retiring. Many of them are getting out of the education system because of what has happened to it, and the sad part of it is that I will say to them, "Please do not quit. We need good teachers, and you are a good teacher." They respond, "I know I am, but I just cannot cope with this anymore." And I will say, "Well, if teachers are the ones to speak up, they will listen. If teachers would all rise up, then maybe they will listen better. They will say that they are afraid to say anything because they might lose their tenure or be fired or ostracized. They are intimidated by the unions. They are scared to speak up. Freedom of speech? Listen to our teachers and encourage them to talk. Do not let them be made to feel afraid of speaking up on an issue that is near and dear to them and that they spend their whole lives on.

I wanted to bring those up to you. I do not know if that was mentioned or not. I know someone mentioned the unions being Communistic and I certainly agree with that, but it is important to take teachers into consideration. I agree with the other people who are concerned about what is happening in our school system like CRT, and how horrible it is to teach children to hate other people as well as their own people. It is unreal.

Chair Denis:

Thank you. Anyone else. We do not have anyone else here. Let us go to Carson City. Is there anyone in Carson City wishing to give public comment?

Mr. Nagel:

I heard a lot about accountability tonight, but there are no concrete things. Everything is rather nebulous. I think we need to have a scorecard or an accountability grid where the superintendent meets this statute, and when we are approaching standards and not even meeting standards, that should be a negative mark on their evaluation. If this person does not meet the criteria to be the superintendent, then that person should be put in a developmental planner. When they fail, they should be sent down the road, and we should find somebody else.

I think that we need to have things put in black and white. Everybody is afraid to hold people accountable. They talk about it, but legally and morally, if you do not have something written down in black and white saying that this person succeeded by doing X, Y, and Z or failed by not doing X, Y, and Z, we are not going to see any improvement whatsoever. We are just going to keep going down this road and scratching our heads because we did not hold anybody accountable. We also failed that superintendent by not giving them clear, concise goals or something to work for, something he could put on the wall and have as a flow chart of what he needs to do to turn this institution around. Then, he can enroll his subordinates in that process, and then everybody is on the same page.

That is how every successful business runs, but we are not doing it with our school systems. We have this nebulous idea where the last superintendent in Carson City in the same category of leadership got a four and a two. Should he have to demonstrate facts? Well, he deserved a two or a four. He deserved a four and we gave him a four because he demonstrated that he met the criteria for a four. We have nothing. Everything is nebulous, and we cannot succeed if we do not know where we are going. We cannot climb that hill if we do not know which hill it is.

Chair Denis:

Do we have anyone else in Carson?

Ms. Rodgers:

I wanted to apologize to those two staffers who I did not know were staffers. I could not read that from up there. I thought you were part of the crew. I apologize for that, but I do not apologize for standing for my freedom of speech.

I would like to say that our children spend most of the day and most of the year in the school system, and it is completely broken. You want to blame society because literally Google or the Internet is now the parent. You guys are up against a lot, and we understand that, but we also understand what is happening in our world right now and we can see how it is transcending throughout society. We are jobless. You cannot get kids to want to work

or do anything anymore because technology is literally taking over. There are a lot of factors at play in here and it is not just about this bill. It goes beyond this, but more than anything, we need to keep you guys accountable. That is all I will say.

Mr. Wilson:

I represent our Lord and savior Jesus and until we get right with him, none of this is going to go right. We need to get right with our Lord. We need to get back into the Bible and come November, there is going to be a big wake-up call across this country. School boards are going to change completely, the Bible and God are going to be brought back into our schools, and things are going to turn around. We must look to him in Jesus's name and thank you, father, for what he did on the cross.

Chair Denis:

Could we go online to see if there is anyone wishing to give public comment?

Ms. Hansen:

I wanted to make a short final comment. I have listened to this entire hearing. The failure of the schools does not rest with the elected school board members, but with the low and inappropriate standards like our very poor curriculum, especially regarding the basics. For instance, we do not use proven teaching methods like systematic intensive phonics, and we have very poor teacher training. We should be looking at these issues if we want to improve education.

We have one of the worst curriculums in the nation. If you are looking to improve education, you are looking in the wrong place and you need to look at the real problems, which are not the school boards; they are the curriculum, teacher training, and low and inappropriate standards. Thank you for holding this hearing and thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your indulgence in allowing the people to have a say. We appreciate that.

Chair Denis:

Are there any other callers who wish to give public comment?

BPS:

The public line is open and working, but there are no callers at this time.

The following written public comments were received:

Abby Wong ([Agenda Item VI A](#))

James Jackson ([Agenda Item VI B](#))

Jo Sherwood ([Agenda Item VI C](#))

Judith Moss ([Agenda Item VI D](#))

Julie Ideker ([Agenda Item VI E](#))

Katania Taylor ([Agenda Item VI F](#))

Larry and Karen Bolin ([Agenda Item VI G](#))

Lisa Durgin ([Agenda Item VI H](#))

Pat Disney ([Agenda Item VI I](#))
Rlucius79 ([Agenda Item VI J](#))
Robert Harris ([Agenda Item VI K](#))
Ron Danish ([Agenda Item VI L](#))
Sheila Danish ([Agenda Item VI M](#))
Sheryl Jackson ([Agenda Item VI N](#))
Tamara Jackson Teasdale ([Agenda Item VI O](#))
Bob Russo ([Agenda Item VI P](#))
Christina Sherbrook ([Agenda Item VI Q](#))
Cori Nickel ([Agenda Item VI R](#))
Debbie Pawelek ([Agenda Item VI S](#))
Deborah Mardon ([Agenda Item VI T](#))
Elisabeth Lernhardt ([Agenda Item VI U](#))
George Spatz ([Agenda Item VI V](#))
Joni Hammond ([Agenda Item VI W](#))
Karin Hockman ([Agenda Item VI X](#))
Larry Rodriguez ([Agenda Item VI Y](#))
Laurie Trotter ([Agenda Item VI Z](#))
Margaret Spatz ([Agenda Item VI AA](#))
Margaret Vander Laan ([Agenda Item VI BB](#))
Michelle Marino ([Agenda Item VI CC](#))
Rick Jonah ([Agenda Item VI DD](#))
Rob Maher ([Agenda Item VI EE](#))
Sequoia Palmquist ([Agenda Item VI FF](#))
Sharon LeBarts ([Agenda Item VI GG](#))
Susan Schultz ([Agenda Item VI HH](#))
Tom and Lorraine Freeman ([Agenda Item VI II](#))
Tony Still ([Agenda Item VI JJ](#))
Barbara Decker ([Agenda Item VI KK](#))
Elizabeth Hammack ([Agenda Item VI LL](#))
Mia Lowry ([Agenda Item VI MM](#))
Pat Smith ([Agenda Item VI NN](#))
Roger Adam ([Agenda Item VI OO](#))
Vera de Arrieta ([Agenda Item VI PP](#))
Jeff Ulrich ([Agenda Item VI QQ](#))
Moe McLeod ([Agenda Item VI RR](#))

Charlotte Parker-Whitby ([Agenda Item VI SS](#))

Lisa Partee ([Agenda Item VI TT](#))

Chair Denis:

Since have no other folks wishing to speak, I will go ahead and close public comment.

I want to thank the members, everyone who presented this evening, and the public that participated. I want to thank you for spending my birthday with me today. I did not bring cake, however. This was a very important issue that we needed to discuss, so I appreciate those who participated tonight. I know it was a slightly different format than normal, but I think we were able to get some information and questions on the record as we move forward.

I know we do not generally hold meetings this late, but I wanted to give an opportunity for people who perhaps could not speak during the day. I cannot overemphasize all the work that our staff do, and I appreciate all that work, and generally, they are not here in the evening, either. This has been a good meeting. I appreciate all the information we have gathered. Our next meeting will be held on August 30, 2022. We will begin at 12 p.m. and there will be a work session.

AGENDA ITEM VII—ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 10:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina Harper
Manager of Research Policy Assistants

Sarah Baker
Research Policy Assistant

Jennifer Ruedy
Deputy Research Director

Jen Sturm
Principal 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	Michele McFie, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
Agenda Item II B	Tom Hendrix, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
Agenda Item II C	Greg Clausen, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
Agenda Item II D	Janine Hansen, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
Agenda Item II E	Tomas McFie, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
Agenda Item III	Jen Sturm, Principal Policy Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) Alex Drozdoff, Senior Policy Analyst, Research Division, LCB	Microsoft PowerPoint Presentation
Agenda Item IV A-1	Jana Wilcox Lavin, Chief Executive Officer, Project 180 Magdalena Martinez, Ph.D., College of Urban Affairs, University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV)	Microsoft PowerPoint Presentation
Agenda Item IV A-2	Jana Wilcox Lavin, Chief Executive Officer, Project 180 Magdalena Martinez, Ph.D., College of Urban Affairs, UNLV	Supplemental Information
Agenda Item VI A	Abby Wong, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
Agenda Item VI B	James Jackson, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
Agenda Item VI C	Jo Sherwood, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
Agenda Item VI D	Judith Moss, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
Agenda Item VI E	Julie Ideker, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
Agenda Item VI F	Katania Taylor, Private Citizen	Written Testimony

AGENDA ITEM	PRESENTER/ENTITY	DESCRIPTION
<u>Agenda Item VI G</u>	Larry and Karen Bolin, Private Citizens	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI H</u>	Lisa Durgin, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI I</u>	Pat Disney, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI J</u>	Rlucius79, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI K</u>	Robert Harris, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI L</u>	Ron Danish, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI M</u>	Sheila Danish, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI N</u>	Sheryl Jackson, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI O</u>	Tamara Jackson Teasdale, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI P</u>	Bob Russo, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI Q</u>	Christina Sherbrook, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI R</u>	Cori Nickel, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI S</u>	Debbie Pawelek, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI T</u>	Deborah Mardon, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI U</u>	George Spatz, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI V</u>	Elisabeth Lernhardt, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI W</u>	Joni Hammons, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI X</u>	Karin Hockman, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI Y</u>	Larry Rodriguez, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI Z</u>	Laurie Trotter, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI AA</u>	Margaret Spatz, Private Citizen	Written Testimony

AGENDA ITEM	PRESENTER/ENTITY	DESCRIPTION
<u>Agenda Item VI BB</u>	Margaret Vander Laan, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI CC</u>	Michelle Marino, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI DD</u>	Rick Jonah, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI EE</u>	Rob Maher, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI FF</u>	Sequoia Palmquist, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
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<u>Agenda Item VI PP</u>	Vera de Arrieta, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI QQ</u>	Jeff Ulrich, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI RR</u>	Moe McLeod, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI SS</u>	Charlotte Parker-Whitby, Private Citizen	Written Testimony
<u>Agenda Item VI TT</u>	Lisa Partee, Private Citizen	Written Testimony

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